

# MATRIX 108

The news magazine of the British Science Fiction Association

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## Determinants

It's now much less than one thousand days to Intersection, the Glasgow SF Worldcon in 1995 and the pace of programme planning is hotting up. This is leading to deadlines clashing like Scylla and Carydis. Discussing Worldcon programming has put me three days behind schedule with *Matrix*, but it also means that the Worldcon news is very up to date.

You, the reader, may think that my preoccupation with Intersection is irrelevant to you. I disagree. I think that this is the best opportunity BSFA members have had for at least three years to be able to meet with other SF readers and club members from all parts of the world. The Guests of Honour — Samuel Delany and Gerry Anderson — span the SF/Media divide in addition to being perfectionists in their own field. More Guests are to be announced and it is probable that the cream of current British authors will be there, mixing with people, able to answer questions and, in more formal mode, giving speeches or being interviewed.

I've listened to the plans for the programme and if everything works even half as well as the designers suspect, there will be scintillating inter-active panels, hands-on workshops and plenty of unexpected special events in addition to the more normal Worldcon activities of the glittered Masquerade and the Hugo Award announcements.

Of course, there's also the opportunity to contribute to the Hugos with your votes and suggestions. A couple of days ago, it was suggested, for example, that Iain Banks should be nominated for a Hugo, if only because of his ingenuity in naming spacecrafts. The Hugos don't have to be dominated by *Asimov's* like this year. I'm not knocking the fiction nominated, I found some of it stupendously powerful. But it is a good sign that Brit Dave Pringle is nominated for Best Editor and some *Interzone* fiction attracts votes.

OK, I know that a lot of you may not wish to attend conventions. You read SF and that's enough for you. I respect your wishes. And yet, I keep thinking of a recent conversation I had at a party:

He: (searching for a topic of common interest) I like fantasy, juggling and medieval weaponry.

Me: (totally uninterested in two of the above): Fascinating. You sound as if you'd enjoy reading Roger Zelazny's *Amber* series.

He: (goes into ecstasies at length about Roger Zelazny).

Me: It's a pity you weren't able to see Roger Zelazny when he came to Leeds this summer.

He: WHAT!!!!!!

The point I'm trying to make is that readers may have a mild spark of curiosity about the people who create the SF/F literary worlds which they, the readers, devour. Maybe someone might wonder about authorial intentions. Who better to ask than the author?

Looking back through my files, I see that Steve and

I was aware of SF cons back in '78. But we were shy, broke, more interested in talking or kissing or eating exotic food. It wasn't until 1985 that Steve went to a convention. He was wandering through the streets of Leeds and saw a Viking unloading books outside a hotel. Intrigued, he followed this warrior and found a small desk inside the hotel with friendly people, willing to explain what was happening and how to join in.

I held out for longer. I still read SF, as well as Fantasy and even Mainstream. I went to a con only to because it was held in the town my relatives live in. I was going to escape from these wierdos as soon as possible (or even sooner).

I guess Steve had an inkling of this. As I stood hesitating at the bar entrance, not knowing what to expect and not wanting to stay, he called me over to a group of people and suddenly we were deep in conversation about John Wyndham. They were all strangers — who in their right minds remembers a tableful of names tossed at you? — and yet they were interested in my ideas, they had read the hard SF I prefer and they had some rather thought-provoking ideas too. I decided not to go just yet. The next day (!) I was walking round the hotel diffidently looking enviously at all those groups of friends in conversation. Someone looked up. To me, he was a blur, as I hadn't got my glasses on. But he recognised me, he said hello and this time, when I went over to talk with that group, we talked about time travelling.

The rest, one might say, is history. I started putting together a SF fanzine and got to know more people bit by bit — three years ago I took over *Matrix* after Maureen Speller resigned. I was scared. I knew I could produce a fanzine every three months, but I wasn't so sure if I could manage a regular bi-monthly club magazine with the same quality as Maureen had consistently produced. In fact, without Maureen's generous help and encouragement, I wouldn't have managed at all.

It's a bit easier now, because I know quite a few people and know their SF specialties and reporting strengths. But I still haven't forgotten those people who helped me when I was timid and new to cons, so frightened at risking snubs from people that I would sit in the foyer pretending to be lost in a book. And that's one of the reasons why I agreed to look after the fan programming for Intersection. It's doing something to pay back all the kindness and patience shown to me. Not that this is the only reason: I get a buzz from the combined thrill of fear and excitement caused by planning my budget and spare time schedule for the next two years.

I'll be looking out for fellow BSFA members in Glasgow. We might not talk about John Wyndham necessarily, we could angle the conversation towards Samuel Delany. We could discuss Gerry Anderson's work. And, more importantly, we could enjoy ourselves. Let's try to meet.

Cover Art by Steve Jeffery  
Next deadline 15 November 1993

# News

From: Ellen Key Harris, Mark L Olson, Keith F Lynch, H Vaisanen, Terry Pratchett, Rob Meades, Seth Goldberg, David Bratman, Jeanne Caggiano, Brad Templeton, Kathryn Whitworth, Jeff Allender, Donna Goldblatt, Patrick Nielsen-Hayden, Andrew Hamlin, Andrew B Goss, Patrick Dominick and your editors

## Artistic Generosity

Karel Thole, who was the artist Guest of Honour at Helicon at Jersey this Easter, requested that money raised from auction of his artwork should be given to the BSFA. Four prints from a Calendar of his own work were sold, thus raising a very welcome £76 for BSFA coffers.

As if that is not generous enough, he also requested that the remaining posters should be donated to the BSFA.

## Hugo Awards

ConFrancisco, the 51st World Science Fiction Convention, has presented the 1993 Hugo Awards and John W Campbell Award at a ceremony in the Moscone Convention Center, San Francisco, California, on Sunday, September 5, 1993.

This ceremony was hosted by ConFrancisco Toastmaster Guy Gavriel Kay. ConFrancisco received 841 valid ballots for the awards. They were counted and verified by the ConFrancisco Hugo Administrators, David Bratman and Seth Goldberg, with the assistance of a computer program developed by Jeffrey L Copeland.

Best Novel (tie):	<i>A Fire Upon the Deep</i> by Vernor Vinge (Tor)
	<i>The Domesday Book</i> by Connie Willis (Bantam)
Best Novella	"Bernacle Bill the Spacer" by Lucius Shepard ( <i>Asimov's</i> , July 1992)
Best Novelette	"The Nutcracker Coup" by Janet Kagan ( <i>Asimov's</i> , December 1992)
Best Short Story	"Even the Queen" by Connie Willis ( <i>Asimov's</i> , April 1992)
Best Non-Fiction	<i>A Wealth of Fable: An informal history of science fiction fandom in the 1950s</i> by Harry Warner, Jr. (SCIFI Press)
Best Dramatic Presentation	"The Inner Light" ( <i>Star Trek: The Next Generation</i> ) (Paramount Television)
Best Professional Editor	Gardner Dozois
Best Professional Artist	Don Maiz
Best Original Artwork	Dinotopia by James Gurney (Turner)
Best Semi-Prozine	<i>Science Fiction Chronicle</i> , edited by Andrew Porter
Best Fanzine	<i>Mimosa</i> , edited by Dick and Nicki Lynch
Best Fan Writer	Dave Langford
Best Fan Artist	Peggy Ranson

John W Campbell Award for Best New Science Fiction Writer of 1991-1992: Laura Resnick

Special Committee Award for building bridges between cultures and nations to advance science fiction and fantasy: Takumi Shibano

The number of ballots counted were as follows: Best Novel 702; Best Novella 570; Best Novelette 575; Best Short Story 606; Best Non-Fiction Book 474; Best Dramatic Presentation 760; Best Professional Editor 579; Best Professional Artist 569; Best Original Artwork 625; Best Semi-Prozine 623; Best Fanzine 369; Best Fan Writer 386; Best Fan Artist 361 ballots counted; Campbell Award 429.

The World Science Fiction Society Constitution also requires that the number of ballots preferring No Award to the leading candidate be compared to the number preferring the leading candidate to No Award. If the former number is greater than No Award shall be declared the winner. This eventuality did not come even remotely close to occurring.

In the following set of statistics, the numbers in each line are as follows:

- 1) the number of ballots preferring the leading candidate to No Award;
- 2) the number of ballots listing the leading candidate but not No Award;
- 3) the total of 1 and 2;
- 4) the number of ballots preferring No Award to the leading candidate;
- 5) the number of ballots listing No Award but not the leading candidate;
- 6) the total of 4 and 5.

For Best Novel the figures have been calculated for both winners.

Novel (Willis)	143	380	523	8	33	41
Novel (Vinge)	147	328	475	13	24	37
Novella	99	281	380	13	48	61
Novelette	104	257	361	13	55	68
Short Story	115	338	453	10	47	57
NonFiction Book	105	178	283	4	39	43
Dram. Pres.	178	339	517	20	89	109
Prof. Editor	111	301	412	12	47	59
Prof. Artist	108	303	411	4	39	43
Original Artwork	120	367	487	6	34	40
Semiprozine	150	262	412	18	40	58
Fanzine	104	135	239	5	54	59
Fan Writer	100	153	253	10	54	64
Fan Artist	70	145	215	10	54	64
Campbell	56	191	247	13	63	76

A number of statistical points about this year's Hugo results may be noted.

The number of voters has decreased since last year. This is to be regretted, as this year's Hugo results, more than most, prove the truth of the old saw that a single vote can swing an election under the right circumstances. With one tie (Best Novel), one margin of a single vote (Best Semiprozine), and one margin of two votes (Best Fan Artist), the closeness of this year's results will perhaps persuade more Worldcon members to participate next year. Note that in both close categories, the winner was not the nominee with the most first-place votes, so additional votes transferred from lower-ranking nominees can also make a difference.

The tie for Best Novel is only the second tie in this category in Hugo history; the first occurred in 1966 between Frank Herbert's *Dune* and Roger Zelazny's *This Immortal (...And Call Me Conrad)*.

This is the second occasion in recent years that *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine* has swept the short fiction and Best Editor categories; the magazine achieved the same distinction in 1991.

With its win for "The Inner Light", *Star Trek: The Next Generation* becomes the second television series to achieve Hugo recognition since the rule requiring individual episodes to be nominated was established in the mid 1960s: its predecessor was, of course, *Star Trek (The Original Show)*.

## Honorable Mentions

Many worthy works and persons that were not among the top five nominees in their categories received sizable numbers of nominations. The following list includes all non-finalists that appeared on at least 5% of the nominating ballots cast in their categories. (This cutoff point was chosen because Section 2.6 of the WSFS Constitution prescribes that as long as there are three nominees, no additional nominee shall appear on the final ballot unless it meets that threshold. It seemed appropriate, then, to note all nominees that received that much support.)

Note: Eligibility of the following items and accuracy of the information about them has not always been confirmed.

### Novel

*A Million Open Doors*, John Barnes (Tor); *Anvil of Stars*, Greg Bear (Legend/Warner Questar); *Count Geiger's Blues*, Michael Bishop (Tor); *Mars*, Ben Bova (Bantam); *Chanur's Legacy*, C.J. Cherryh (Daw); *Last Call*, Tim Powers (Morrow); *Oracle*, Mike Resnick (Ace); *Was*, Geoff Ryman (HarperCollins); *Far Seer*, Robert J. Sawyer (Ace); *The Hollow Man*, Dan Simmons (Bantam); *Labyrinth of Night*, Allen Steele (Legend/Ace); *Snow Crash*, Neal Stephenson (Bantam); *Aristot*, Walter Jon Williams (Tor); *Briar Rose*, Jane Yolen (Tor)

### Novella

"Cloon the Emperor", Isaac Asimov (*Asimov's*, April 1992); "Silver or Gold", Emma Bull (*After the King*); "The Death of Reason", Tony Daniel (*Asimov's*, September 1992); "Crux Gammata", J.R. Dunn (*Asimov's*, October 1992); "Blood Relations", Julia Ecklar (*Asimov's*, June 1992); "The Virgin and the Dinosaur", R. Garcia y Robertson (*Asimov's*, February 1992); *Resurrection*, Katherine Kerr (Axlotol; Bantam); "Grownups", Ian R. MacLeod (*Asimov's*, June 1992); "Mark on the World", Dean McLaughlin (*Asimov's*, July 1992); "Synthesis", Mary Rosenblum (*Asimov's*, March 1992); *Thebes of the Hundred Gates*, Robert Silverberg (Axlotol; Bantam); *Dew X*, Norman Spinrad (Bantam); "Damnbanna", Nancy Springer (F&SF, December 1992; Axlotol); "Griffin's Egg", Michael Swanwick (*Asimov's*, May 1992); "Naming the Flowers", Kate Wilhelm (Axlotol)

### Novellette

"Jumping the Road", Jack Dann (*Asimov's*, October 1992); "Dust", Greg Egan (*Asimov's*, July 1992); "Into Darkness", Greg Egan (*Asimov's*, January 1992); "Breakfast Cereal Killers", R. Garcia y Robertson (*Asimov's*, June 1992); "The Vulture Maiden", Marc Laidlaw (*Fantasy and Science Fiction*, August 1992); "Vanilla Dunk", Jonathan Lethem (*Asimov's*, September 1992); "Sepoy", Tom Purdom (*Asimov's*, December 1992)

### Short Story

"50 Ways to Improve Your Orgasm", Pat Cadigan (*Asimov's*, April 1992); "All Vows", Esther M. Friesner (*Asimov's*, November 1992); "The Kennedy Enterprise", David Gerrold (*Alternate Kennedys*); "Alfred", Lisa Goldstein (*Asimov's*, December 1992); "Steelcollar Worker", Vonda N. McIntyre (*Asimov's*, November 1992); "The Last Robot", Adam Troy-Castro (*SF Age*, November 1992)

### Nonfiction Book

*Inside Science Fiction*, James Gunn (Borgo); *The Hacker Crackdown*, Bruce Sterling (Bantam)

### Dramatic Presentation

*Bladerunner: The Director's Cut*; *Death Becomes Her*; *Freejack*; *Toys*

### Professional Editor

Martin H. Greenberg; David Hartwell; Kim Mohan; Patrick Nielsen Hayden; David Pringle; Mike Resnick; Charles Ryan; Terri Windling

### Professional Artist

(note: Michael Whelan (declined) received 61 nominations)  
Jim Burns; Frank Kelly Freas; Nicholas Jainschigg; Tom Kidd; Keith Parkinson; Ron Walotaky

### Original Artwork

(note: *Fire Upon the Deep* by Boris Vallejo (declined) received 10 nominations). Cover of *Anvil of Stars* (G Bear); Bob Eggleton; Cover of *Analog*, November 1992, Bob Eggleton; Cover of *Labyrinth of Night* (A Steele); Bob Eggleton; Cover of *Super Hugos*, Frank Kelly Freas; Cover of *Asimov's*, October 1992, Nicholas Jainschigg; 1992 Hugo Award base, Phil Tortelluci

### Semiprozine

*Aboriginal SF*; *SF Age*; *SF Eye*

### Fanzine

*Anstle*, ed. Dave Langford; *Astromancer Quarterly*, ed. Joe Maraglino; *Event Horizon* (OASFS, Orlando); *Spent Brass*, ed. Andy Hooper & Carrie Root; *Trapdoor*, ed. Robert Lichtman

### Fan Writer

Avedon Carol; Sharon Farber; Arthur D. Hlavaty; Teresa Nielsen Hayden; Robert N. Parker; Roger Sims; Leah Zeldes Smith; Kimiye Tipton

### Fan Artist

Sheryl Birkhead; Brad W. Foster; Alexis Gilliland; Ian Gunn; Joe Mayhew; Ingrid Nielsen; Tarsi Wayne

### Campbell

(note: Maureen F. McHugh (ineligible) received 31 nominations)  
(note: Poppy Z. Brite (ineligible) received 14 nominations)  
Jack Nimersheim; Susan Palwick (ineligible)

## Prometheus Awards

At ConFrancisco, the Libertarian Futurist Society presented the Prometheus award to James P. Hogan's *Multiplex Man*, and the Prometheus hall of fame award to Ursula K. LeGuin's *The Dispossessed*. The awards were presented at 3:30 pm on Saturday September 4th by Emperor Norton, at the Speaker's Corner in the Moscone center. The award was accepted for James Hogan by Brad Linaweaver.

## Electric Science Fiction Award

These results were calculated from Hugo-style votes sent in by computer network users on USENET, the internet, GEnie and other networks, and in particular from readers of the 1993 Hugo and Nebula Anthology from Clarinet, which included all the Hugo and Nebula nominees in these categories. Both Nebula and Hugo nominees were available on the ballot.

### Short Story:

"The Mountain to Mohammed" by Nancy Kress

Novellette: "Danny Goes to Mars" by Pamela Sargent (Neb)

Novella: *Stopping at Slowyear* by Frederik Pohl

Novel: *A Fire Upon the Deep* by Vernor Vinge (Hugo)

Professional Artist: Bob Eggleton

Fan Artist: Stu Shiffman

Fan Writer: Evelyn C. Leeper

Professional Artwork: Dinotopia by James Gurney (Hugo)

New Writer (From the Campbell Nominees): Nicholas A. DiChario

## Books Forthcoming

### Del Rey

Anne McCaffrey's *Chronicles of Pern: First Fall* will come out in hardcover in November — all the stories in it are thought to be new. It will be followed by another Pern novel a year later. The second book in the *Starship Troupers* series, *We Open on Venus* will be published in March of 1994. The third and final volume, *A Slight Detour*, will be out later in the year — probably August. In the meantime, Del Rey will be publishing another Wizard book: *the Wuch Doctor* in February '94 in hardcover and December '94 in paperback. Also next year, a collection of Larry Niven's *Beowulf Schaeffer* stories, *Crashlander*, will be published in April. It includes a new story, plus a never-before-seen framing story linking it all together.

### Tor

The first Yuletide book mentioned this year will be *Christmas Forever* edited by David G Hartwell, coming in November. Inside there will be never before published stories by Gene Wolfe, Alan Dean Foster, Rudy Rucker, Charles de Lint, Patricia A McKillip and others covering subjects like strange virgin births born of science and magic to the last Christmas at the end of time. Extra-terrestrial leeches plot to commercialise Christmas; an orphaned child and his computerised guardian celebrate together; Christmas in a far distant future brings peace to a warring planet; a Silent Night is spent with Frankenstein; and more. Another collection of stories comes from Terry Bisson with *Bears Discover Fire* and other stories and yet another collection is edited by Robert Bloch, *Monsters in our Midst*, with authors such as Ray Bradbury, Lawrence Sanders, Ramsey Campbell, Charles L. Grant, Lisa W. Cantrell, John Coyne, Ed Gorman and Jonathan Carroll. The aim of the anthology, it seems, is "to cause even cynical hardened readers to cast glances at strangers to divine bad intentions. The authors have spared no one in their efforts to terrify the victims readers of this chilling volume". Back to SF, Mike Resnick's *Inferno* is scheduled for December. Jehanum was an ideal world once yet within twenty years it has become the most notorious charnel house in the galaxy. William Masterson is the one doomed to work out why — and he will find out some very unpleasant things in the process. The final December SF book will be Steven Barnes' *Firedance*, which continues the story of Aubrey Knight who appeared in *Streetlethal* and *Gorgon Child*. Knight was supposed to be a killer for organised crime, but instead has become a champion for the underclass who are still rebuilding the devastated core of Los Angeles.

Patrick Nielsen-Haydon is hoping to take delivery of a manuscript of *Down In Flames* (the collection of stories by well known SF authors in which they trash their own universes) from Norman Spinrad "any month now", after which it will take about a year to get into print.

### Baen

Look out for two *Wing Commander* books in the near future: *End Run* by Christopher Stasheff and Bill Forstchen and *Freedom Flight* by Mercedes Lackey and Ellen Guon. The December lead, though, is Harry Turtledove's *Case of the Toxic Spell Dump* where modest Environmental Protection Agency bureaucrat David Fisher finds himself up to his neck in skulduggery and magic most foul instead of the toxic pollution he has come to expect. Likewise, Andy Westin, in Rick Cook's *Mall Purchase Night*, has no idea what he is getting into when he becomes a security guard. Nor was he aware that the mall he is guarding was built on an elven power source. He can fairly be described as "bemused", especially when the elven princess spots him. The author appears to be a martial expert computer journalist/author. Colin McIntyre, too, had a moderately orderly life as a NASA astronaut before

the beginning of David Weber's *The Armageddon Inheritance* (sequel to *Muineers' Moon*). He then gets kidnapped, drafted, promoted beyond his wildest dreams and finally feels "a little stressed". It seems too good to be true that Kevin Senecal merely wants a professional career and comfortable housing. Jerry Pournelle has different ideas for him in *Exiles to Glory*. December reissues include three Wizardry books by Rick Cook, Jerry Pournelle's *Falkenberg's Legion* (at last a military genius who believes that mankind deserves a better fate than eternal bondage and doesn't have any ideas about being ordinary), together with David Weber's *Path of the Fury*, where pirates raid ex-commando leader Alicia DeVries' quiet home world, torture and murder her family then leave her for dead. Not only is she not dead, but she's pretty mad and she's out for vengeance.

### Pan

Larry Niven, Jerry Pournelle and Michael Flynn combine to produce *Fallen Angels*, which is coming in November. It's Earth 2073. New Ice Age. Two astronauts recruit a group of SF fans in a desperate bid to escape the frozen mid-West. When reviewing it in his fanzine, *Lan's Lantern*, George J Laskowski wrote that "The book is touted as being a tribute to SF fans and fandom. There are lots of in-jokes, and familiar characters to authors (my favourite section is the one memorial to Clifford D Simak) and places and Tuckerisms abound. *Lan's Lantern* is even mentioned. This will probably get nominated for a Hugo, though I don't think it deserves such a nomination. However, it does deserve some recognition, and maybe a special award, for its more realistic (and somewhat overblown) view of fandom".

Michael Flynn's debut SF thriller, *In the Country of the Blind*, which won the Compton Crook/Stephen Tall Memorial Award for Best New Novel, is another November publication, as is Isaac Asimov and Robert Silverberg's *The Positronic Man*, based on Isaac Asimov's "The Bicentennial Man", this novel explores the future potential of robotics.

Larry Niven and Steven Barnes combine for *Achilles' Choice* coming in December. It's the 11th Olympiad, but tests are mental and well as physical. Winners go on to join the Earth's ruling elite. Losers die. Losers who "boost" in an attempt to win but don't, die. This story is full of action, sex and thrills. There's more violence in Martin Middleton's *Circle of Light*, where four soldiers set out to find a prince and save a kingdom. There's fantasy from Lois McMaster Bujold (her fantasy debut) with *The Spirit Ring* where the magician is reluctant and his daughter eager in the usual battle for survival with a medieval backdrop. Hard science comes from Dennis Overbye with *Lone Hearts of the Cosmos* (Picador December). It uses the story of the cosmologists who research the future and past of the universe to assess how much mankind has discovered and how.

### HarperCollins

Piers Anthony collaborated with Robert E Margroff for *Orc's Opal* (October £4.99), as Kelvin Knight Hackleberry had a lot of enemies and only one hope: Horace, a dragon. In contrast, there is Jack Womack's *Elvissey* (£4.99) which features Nazi flying saucers over an alternate 1950s Memphis and the abduction of Elvis Presley. *Green Mars* by Kim Stanley Robinson is also an October issue (£14.99) — second in the *Mars* series. Red Mars has gone, ripped apart by the violent and failed revolution of 2061 and the First Hundred and either scattered or died. While the rebels are underground, the transnational corporations, aided by the UN, are rebuilding the ruined cities and mining valuable resources; and they have a dream of plundering Mars for purely altruistic motives, namely for the benefit of a starving Earth. Mars can be terraformed and bought and sold. Hiroko, Nadia, Maya and Simon, some

of the remains of the First Hundred, know that technology is not enough to reclaim Mars, they need trust and co-operation, both of which are as thin on the ground as the air they attempt to breathe. Mars has always been an obsession for Kim Stanley Robinson and this Mars trilogy has taken about seventeen years of meticulous planning and investigation. The third volume is still to come.

Volume four of Stephen Donaldson's *Gap* series is published in November: *Chaos and Order* (£14.99). This astonishing story continues with Morn Hyland, Angus Thermopyle and Nick Succorso forming an unlikely alliance on board the *Trumpet*, trying to escape the wrath of the pursuing Ammon aliens. Volume three of that series, *A Dark and Hungry God Arises*, comes out in paperback (£5.99), and Stephen Donaldson is working on the next *Gap* volume at his home in New Mexico. Two books by the Niven/Pournelle collaboration have just been published: *The Mote in God's Eye*, reissued, and now *The Moat Around Murcheson's Eye*. The *Moties* are back. Bury and Renner may have an unorthodox appreciation of Motie intelligence and ingenuity, but it's going to take all their ingenuity to sort this one out.

There's more Science Fiction from Frederik Pohl with *Mining the Oort* (£15.99). Mars is home to Dekker DeWoe and so he travels to Earth when there is a chance to mine the Oort Cloud comets which are being brought into Martian territory to supply water and air. Things get rather complicated in Earth as he has to fight for the life of his planet. In contract, there is *India's Story* from Kathryn S Starbuck, wife of Raymond E Feist, and now author in her own right. India has psychokinetic powers and needs a special teacher. The journey to the new teacher is "treacherous" and India will have to travel out of her body through time and space — it's a psychic thriller which relates to virtual reality. Colin Greenland's *Harm's Way* is published in December (£4.99), sweeping the reader off to a romantic era where Britannia ruled the stars and where Sophie stows away and her destiny waits for her on a frozen moon of Jupiter while she heads towards it, via the pleasure gardens of the Moon and the cruel canyons of Mars. A vastly enjoyable book.

## Legend

November books are shared between two authors: *The Venging and Moving Mars* from Greg Bear together with *The Dragonbone Chair* and *Stone of Farewell* from Tad Williams. The last part of Peter Morwood's *Prince Ivan* trilogy, *The Golden Horde* comes in December, an enjoyable but violent climax to the series, with Greg Egan's *Quarantine*, Robert Sheekley's *Status Civilisation* and *Mind Swap* and another Peter Morwood book, *Clan Wars I*. 1994 will start with *The Frogs of War* by Andrew Harman, before an Orson Scott Card dominated February.

Legend's first graphic novel, *Legend*, by David Gemmell, illustrated by Stan Nicholls and Fangorn (Chris Baker), was published in October, in a celebration which also relaunched the Legend imprint, with a new logo. *Legend the Graphic Novel* (£9.99) relates the story of a small group of heroic defenders who battle against the might and magic of a colossal army. David Gemmell's new books *The First Chronicles of Druss the Legend* (£14.99), *Druss the Legend* (£8.99 export only) and *Waylander II* (£4.99) were also published in early October.

## The Women's Press

An anthology of *New Myth and Magic* comes in November with stories and extracts from Sara Maitland, Jane Yolen, Ellen Kushner, Katherine V Forrest, Leigh Kennedy, Patricia A McKillip, Jean Buffong, Mary Wings and others, which illustrate women's relationship to mythology and magic in terms of their inner strength and in their interactions with the outside world. Another seasonal book is *A Women's Book of Shadows*

by Elisabeth Brooke, which provides a comprehensive and authoritative guide to witchcraft as a "celebration of life".

## Headline

A collection of stories in hardback from Tanith Lee is published in November. It consists of a novella, *Nightshade*, where a love triangle attracts the attention of a creature of darkness. The stories include "The Mermaid", a familiar creature of mythology seen from a new and chilling angle; "Meow" examining the human-feline relationship; "A Room with a View" on the horror of bricks and mortar; "Paper Boat" inspired by the death of the poet Shelley; "The Janfa Tree" looks at tree spirits while "The Devil's Rose" does not appear to have anything to do with roses.

Two other books to look out for are Gwyneth Jones' *Flowerdust* (£16.99), which takes just one episode from *Divine Endurance* and illuminates it like a traditional Malay frieze and Graham Joyce's *House of Lost Dreams* where a couple find sadness in their dream home, watchers outside it and horror in and around the beautiful Greek villa.

## Nemuco

*Fire and Air* by G G Davies was published on 1 October (£11.90) and consists of a triptych of SF stories. The first, *The Search for Time* shows a man voyaging through time to meet himself, with the general aim of discovering the nature of time; the second *A Space to Live* shows a scientist who talks of faster than light travel, being interviewed and the third *Mind Under Matter* takes a super computer running a massive space station malfunctioning as the starting point. Nemuco Press can be found at PO Box 1115, Kings Norton, Birmingham B30 1SJ.

## Terry Pratchett signing tour

It looks like this right now (some dates aren't settled):

- 29th October: Belfast (Easons)
- 30th: Dublin (FP or Waterstones) and then dropping in on Octoon in the afternoon
- 3rd November: Hammicks, Harrow — 7pm
- 4th: Waterstones, Leadenhall Mkt, London — 12.30pm
- \* Books Etc, Oxford St — 6.30pm
- 5th: Dillons, Ealing Broadway Centre — 12.30 pm
- \* Murder 1, Charing Cross Road — 5.00pm
- 6th: Andromeda, Suffolk St, Birmingham — 10.00pm
- \* Forbidden Planet, London — 3.30pm
- 18th: Heffers, Trinity St, Cambridge — 1pm
- 19th: George's, Park Street, Bristol — 12.30pm
- \* W H Smiths, Union Street, Bath — 4pm
- 20th: H J Lears, Royal Arcade, Cardiff — 11.30am
- \* Forbidden Planet, Lear St, Cardiff — 3pm
- 23rd: Waterstones, Orchard Square, Sheffield — 12.30pm
- \* Probably Dillons or Waterstones in York
- 24th: Austicks, Woodhouse Lane, Leeds — 12.30pm
- \* Waterstones (talk/signing) Albion St, Leeds — 7pm
- 25th: Waterstones, Southport, Merseyside — 12.30pm
- \* Waterstones. Fishergate, Preston — 7.30pm (and afterwards talking to the local SF society. 26th Sherratt & Hughes, St Ann's Square, Manchester — 12.30pm — then on to one at Odyssey 7 in the Precinct Centre at 4.30pm

## Library of Tomorrow Cancelled

Clarinet is sorry to announce that the Library of Tomorrow project, which was to have been an electronic SF library available on an "all you can read" basis for a flat fee, has been cancelled or at least put on indefinite hold.

Demand and interest from the limited announcements made were far too low for this to become a viable project. It would not be fair to the authors to continue, nor a suitable investment.

The anthology of Hugo nominees and winners (which now, due to a lucky accident has TWO Hugo-winning novels in it) continues to be available online and on CD-ROM (see review by Dave Bell later in this issue).

## NESFA Recommendations

For a second year, NESFA is maintaining a list of Good Stuff to read. Any NESFA member who reads something they think is good enough to be considered for a Hugo can add it to the list. It's neither definitive nor complete, but it contains the stories, novels and non-fiction works that a bunch of well-read fans feel are worthy of Hugo nominations.

### Novels

*Forward the Foundation* Isaac Asimov; *Agyar* Steven Brust; *The Door into Sunset* Diane Duane; *The Thread that Binds the Bones* Nina Kiriki Hoffman; *Lord of the Two Lands* Judith Tarr; *The Destiny Makers* George Turner

### Novella

"The Night We Buried Road Dog" Jack Cody *F&SF*, Jan; "Dancing on Air" Nancy Kress *Asimov's*, Jul; "Into the Miranda Rift" G. David Nordley *ASF*, Jul; "Down in the Bottomlands" Harry Turtledove *ASF*, Jan

### Novellette

"The Shadow Knows" Terry Bisson *Asimov's* Sept; "Sunshine, Genius and Rust" Jeffery D Kooistra *ASF*, May; "The Dakna" Jamil Nasir *Asimov's*, Sept; "The Ape That Ate the Universe" Ian Stewart *ASF*; "Men of Good Will" J R Dunn *Amazing*, Mar

### Short story

"Tourist Attraction" Juleen Brantingham *Amazing*, Aug; "Afterschool Special" Paul DiFilippo *Amazing*, Jun; "Touching Fire" Nicola Griffith *Interzone* 70, April; "The Battle of Long Island" Nancy Kress *Omniv*, Feb/Mar 1993 "Blind" Robert Reed *Asimov's*, May

### Non Fiction

*Once Around the Bloch* Robert Bloch; *Adventures in Unhistory* Avram Davidson

### Dramatic Presentation

*Jurassic Park*; *Timescape*; *ST:ING* 19/6/1993

Nominators were: Claire Anderson; Dave Anderson; Elisabeth Carey; Gay Ellen Dennett; Mike DiGenio; George Flynn; Pam Fremon; Mark Hertel; Rick Katze; Evelyn Leeper; Paula Leiberman; Tony Lewis; Jim Mann; Laurie Mann; Mark Olson; Priscilla Olson; Kelly Persons; Tom Powers; Joe Rico; Sharon Sbarsky; Pat Vandenberg; Monty Wells; Ben Yalow.

## The Shock of the New

L Sprague de Camp writes that his nine Regional Rivers time-safari novellettes will be out from Baen in November, as *Rivers of Time*; also, Donald Grant has contracted to publish his autobiography, *Time and Change*.

R A Lafferty was interviewed by Tom Jackson recently and mentioned "No, I don't read much Science Fiction these days. I never did read very much except for about a four month period when I read several hundred of what were supposed to be the best Science Fiction books ever. This was when I first decided to major in Science Fiction, as it was selling for me and other things weren't. Well, it was a good crash course and I am glad I absorbed it. And I read quite a bit of Science Fiction during several of the golden ages or 'little golden ages'. But the present time is not a 'little golden age' and I do not read much Science Fiction.

"Of the current SF writers I probably like Gene Wolfe the best. And Gregory Benford, David Brin, Greg Bear (the three busy bees), John Shirley (I don't like his opinions or the movements he attaches himself to, but he can write), Madeleine L'Engle, Robert Bloch (he's been doing it for more than fifty years, but he's still good), James Hogan (I think of him as a young writer, but he's forty-eight), Michael Bishop, Ed Bryant. And Ray Bradbury who is still at the top of whatever it is that he writes. I have no idea why so many writers on this short list have names beginning with 'B'. I had nothing to do with naming them".

Graham Joyce writes that *House of Lost Dreams* was set on the island of Leebos, where he lived and wrote his first novel *Dreamside*. Unlike the protagonists, however, he lived in a shack on the beach. His second novel, *Dark Slater*, has just been purchased by German publishers Bastel and some of his short stories will be appearing this autumn in *New Worlds 3*, *Dark Voices 5* and in this year's *Best New Horror*.

David Wingrove can envisage a life after *Chung Kuo* and mentions "I have numerous projects in the works, including the possibility of an American film version of *Empire of Ice* — a script based upon half of Book Six of *Chung Kuo* — and several novellets, set before the first book. But I especially want to write about my family, the last three generations, the whole subject of working class families who settled in London and within those three generations were changed completely by the world around them. My father was sent into the Navy when he was 18, he didn't have any say in it. Now that must have been as alien as anything in Science Fiction". *Beneath the Tree of Heaven* (Book five) is being published in December, with *Days of Bitter Strength* in 1994. There are also promotional and very attractive bookmarks showing the new covers with the slogan "Blade Runner meets Shogun in the Epic Future History".

Amy Thomson, author of the new novel, *Virtual Girl*, where a middle-aged nerd synthesizes a beautiful woman and loses control of her, was asked by Andrew Hamlin if she'd ever seen *Weird Science*, a film about two young nerds who synthesize a beautiful woman and lose control of her. She replied that had not seen it and had instead worked from the story of Pygmalion — "with a twist". Although the protagonist Maggie watches a man having sex with her and "began to understand why humans feared and desired sex so much... She felt more than a little sorry for humans. If this was the closest they could get to each other, they must be very lonely indeed". Amy Thomson refuses to write erotica, and her Maggie never enjoys intercourse.

Leo Frankowski does plan to write more time travelling Stargard books, but they are coming on very slowly, possibly because the ending of his current series seemed so very final. He's also partway through some other book projects that may see print sometime soon.

Pat Cadigan's rumoured new book *The Woman in Red* will appear, probably next year. She writes: "The *Woman in Red* is one of the books Mark Ziesing is going to publish, but [it] isn't published yet. In a fit of enthusiasm, Mark announced it when he thought I might be able to hand it in immediately — however, the manuscript needs some work and so Mark decided to publish my collection *Dirty Work* instead".

Roger Zelazny's latest book, *A Night in the Lonesome October* is intended to have all the standards of horror writing and is not an Amber book. It is

described as being well plotted with some well characterised animal inhabitants, including Snuff, the watchdog, who narrates. Illustrations are by Gahan Wilson who may possibly have collaborated on it.

**Terry Pratchett** writes that the first three Discworld books are being published on audio tape by Transworld on November 4; the Trucker trilogy likewise on September 23. Tony Robinson (Baldric in the *Blackadder* series) is doing the readings.

**Sterling Lanier** writes that his health is good, and that he is three chapters (of a projected twelve) into the next *Hiero* novel! He expects completion by Christmas or so of this year.

**Tonke Dragt** is considered to be the best Dutch novelist this century. When asked by Thomas Cool whether she classified her writing as Science Fiction, she replied "In truth, I don't write at all. All these stories write themselves. If you ask why I have become a writer, I would have to give the same answer which Picasso has given: would you ask a bird why it sings? A story will grow while I hold it. My books are my children. And they don't like to be locked up. It would be nice if you'd put them on different bookshelves from time to time. Oh, it's such a pity that people rely on labels. Some people won't touch a book if the spine says it is SF. And if the book is *1984* or *Brave New World*, it's suddenly not SF but literature".

## Obituary

**Chad Oliver** (Dr. Symmes C. Oliver) died on August 9, 1993, of cancer. He wrote *Mists of Dawn*, *Shadows in the Sun*, *The Shores of Another Sea*, *The Winds of Time*, and the award-winning Western historical novel, *The Wolf is My Brother*. He taught in the University of Texas Anthropology Department for 38 years.

According to the Steven Udey eulogy in *The Austin Chronicle*, (August 20, 1993) in the early '70's, Chad "found himself cast in the unasked-for role of Dean of Texas Science Fiction Writers" by Howard Waldrop, Lisa Tuttle, Bruce Sterling, and Udey; and later, as friend to them.

I only met him a few times, but would not hesitate to describe him as 'a gentleman and a scholar', gracious to neos and pros alike.

He will be missed.

— Kathryn Roth Whitworth

## Magazines

**Grotesque 2:** A4, 44pp, £2.50 or £9 for a four issue sub from David Logan, 24 Hightown Drive, Newtownabbey, Co Antrim, N Ireland BT36 7TG (cheques payable to "Grotesque Magazine")

Fiction by Paul Pinn, Rhys S Hughes, Kim Elizabeth Laico, David W Hughes and Kevin Lyons, Peter Revelly, Graham Andrews, Trevor B Wentworth, Peter Tennant, William Meikle, Andy Cox, Michael J Pont and W J Johnson. Artwork by Desmond Knight and Hertzian Chimera. Letter column and small press listings.

**Black Tears 1:** A5, 58pp, £1.75 or £6.75 for four issues from Black Tears (Subs), 28 Treaty Street, Islington, London N1 OSY (cheques payable to "A Bradley").

Fiction by Mark Samuels, David Logan, F G Walker, Tony Lee and S V Copestake. Book and film reviews. Small press listing.

**Dementia 14, No 12:** A4, 56pp, £2.80 or £8.50 for four issues from Pam Creais, 17 Pinewood Avenue, Sidcup, Kent DA15 8BB (cheques payable to "Pam Creais")

An illustrated journal of the arcane and macabre. Fiction by Joel Lane, Hertzian Chimera, Paul Pinn, David Logan, Allen Ashley, Rhys Hughes and John Carter. Artwork by Kerry Earl, Dom Ganzell, Steve Lines Stephen Skwarek, Dallas Goffin, Roddy Williams, Peter Queally and Alex Mathieson. Articles on the fiction of William S Burroughs and Jorge Luis Borges. An interview with freelance journalist Steve Green and a retrospective look at the art of Steve Skwarek. Letter column and reviews of obscure books. Small press listings.

**Albedo 2:** The editorial gives different definitions of Science Fiction, before launching into "A Life for Life" by Nu Lyons followed by an interview with J G Ballard in which he gives his reaction to Cyberpunk "I'm very impressed with Gibson and Sterling and the others. What I think they've done is to bring Science Fiction back to its roots in the here and now; to its roots in the real, which was its great strength in the Fifties. A remarkable percentage of Science Fiction stories and novels in those days were concerned with the here and now, and gradually through the Seventies, for whatever reason, fantastical elements began to intrude into Science Fiction more and more. It became an escapist fiction altogether, losing all interest in scientific change, losing all interest in commenting on the present day. It lost interest in its predictive and cautionary roles and turned into nothing but entertainment. Futurists sagas and planetary histories with infusions from the occult and horror fiction and God knows — a real unholy concoction that lacked all moral authority, something that the Science Fiction pioneers of the Fifties certainly had. And I think the Cyberpunks have attempted to bring Science Fiction back to the present day". There is more fiction with Robert Neilson's "Off Season", Sydney Venner's "Walk with Me", John Kenny's "Detritus" and Adam White's "Residuum" with reviews and an article on Virtual Reality. (2 Post Road, Lusk, Co. Dublin, Ireland).

**Exuberance 6:** A4, 72pp, £1.95 or £7 for four issues from Jason Smith, 34 Croft Close, Chiffenfield, Herts WD4 9PA (cheques payable to "Exuberance Magazine")

Fiction by Paul Beardsley, Elliot Smith, Gavin Williams, Roderick MacDonald, Stuart Palmer and Robert Campbell. Artwork by Roger Morgan, Russell Morgan, Dreyfus, Philip Rowlands, Kerry Earl and Rik Rawlings. Letter column. Film and book reviews. Kim Cowie 'sounds off' about *Lord Horror* and censorship. An interview with Stephen Donaldson.

**Peeping Tom 11:** A5, 48pp, £1.95 or £7.25 for four issues from David Bell, Yew Tree House, 15 Nottingham Road, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire LE65 1DJ (cheques payable to "Peeping Tom Magazine")

Fiction by Mark Morris, Kevin Mullins, D F Lewis and R P Jeffery, Conrad Williams, David Logan, S Worthington, Deborah Beard and Peter Strip. Artwork by Dreyfus, Chick Kid, Andrew Haigh and Dallas Goffin.

**Cyberspace Vanguard:** "News and Views of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Universe". Editor(s): T J Goldstein, Sarah Alexander, Administrator. For more information, write to Cyberspace Vanguard, POB 25704, Garfield Heights, OH 44125, USA

**Quanta:** "Quanta is the electronically produced and distributed magazine of Science Fiction and Fantasy. As such, each issue is packed with fiction from amateur and professional authors from around the world and across the net." Write to: Quanta, 3003 Van Ness St. NW #S919, Washington, DC 20008, USA



## SF Academic Network

Although there has been a growth in the study of SF and Fantastic Literature in general at University level in recent years, the SF academic still seems isolated. We [James Kneale and Andy Butler] think our situations are typical. Andrew Butler is studying in an English Department and often encounters the suggestion that the material he is reading is nothing more than escapism. James Kneale, a geography post-graduate, usually creates total bewilderment in both disciplines. They met by chance at a convention on Philip K Dick and have been swapping material and ideas ever since.

They know that there are others out there in similar positions, and so James has proposed that they establish a network of British Academics engaged or wishing to be engaged on the study of SF and related genres — for example, quest fantasy, horror, Utopian fiction, and soon. The network should cover as many disciplines as possible: literature, film, cultural studies, history, the history of science, and the social sciences generally.

Primarily the network would be geared to the needs of post-graduates, but they do not wish to exclude under-graduates, lecturers, teachers or the more serious fan. The network would act as a channel for sharing information about conferences, secondary resources, institutions such as the Science Fiction Foundation, and so on. More importantly, it will offer the reassurance that there are other people out there, studying similar projects.

If you are interested in joining this network, or have any suggestions or comments, please contact either James Kneale (PG, Geography Department, University College London, 26 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AP) or Andrew Butler (PG, Department of English, University of Hull, Cottingham Road, Hull HU6 7RX).

## Competition

To mark National No Smoking Day 1994, FOREST (Freedom Organisation for the Right to Enjoy Smoking) is announcing a free competition for short story writers. The judges will look for mind-opening sceptical Science Fiction, Fantasy or Horror of any kind on the theme "Health and Freedom", to broaden and enliven what is often a narrow, unimaginative, ill-informed debate. Judges will include Mat Coward, George Hay and Marjorie Nicholson and five prizes will be awarded. The closing date is 16 January 1994 and all entrants must be over the age of 18. For more information, contact Marjorie Nicholson at 071 823 6550 (w) or 081 851 6450 (h) or write to Forest Story Competition, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH.

## The Doomsday Book Cover

The cover of the US edition of Connie Willis' *The Doomsday Book* caused much negative attention from US SF readers. David Ian Salter described it as "godawful romance-novelsque cover art". This view may have been shared by booksellers, since Andrew Brian Goss noted that when he was in "The Stars Our Destination," they have put a plain blue piece of paper around every copy of *Doomsday Book* in the store, with a typewritten note that says something to the effect of, "This is a great book, and we know that you wouldn't look at it twice if you could see the real cover that's on it." On the back, the piece of blue covering paper has typed on it all of the rave comments that appear on the back of the actual cover.

Other readers were somewhat irate, for example Elizabeth Willey commented: "So the name 'Connie Willis' on the cover means nothing to all the above-average, non-judgemental SF readers who don't judge books by their covers, even at a specialty store presumably catering to the informed and

sophisticated F&SF reader. I see. The genre awards Connie Willis has earned for this book and for her other works are as dust in the wind. So be it.

"As for the cover looking 'romance-novelsque', this is bigoted and needless bashing of one (much larger and more profitable) genre by a reader in another. Heaven forbid that I should be mistaken for a follower of the wrong genre, one I deem beneath me! (This couldn't possibly happen with a cover like that of *King of Morning*, *Queen of Day*!)"

"Science fiction covers past and present have little to boast about. (*Friday* — babe with cleavage. *Revenant* — why is she half-naked? *Alternate Warriors* — half-naked guy with weaponry; why should I pick up this book? *In the Cube* — babe with a gun. *Galatea in 2-D* — babes galore. *The Robin and the Kestrel* — she seems to have forgotten to stitch together a lot of her seams. All those phallic unicorn covers. All those phallic weapon-idealizing covers. All those sterile phallic spaceship covers.

"Science fiction and fantasy have their own set of embarrassing cover icons, folks, and you'd be wise to remember that. As so many voices here keep asserting, it's what inside that counts: the cover is point-of-sale advertising.

This point is emphasised by Dorothy J Heydt who comments "How nice! Reminds me, in a contrarian way, of the bit of paper that used to be posted on the wall of 'The Other Change of Hobbit', near the authors beginning with N. It said something like 'We don't carry the Gor novels of John Norman, and here's why.' And they'd pinned to the wall a couple of sample pages from a couple of sample Gor novels'.

A final word from *Sea Wasp* who puts it all into perspective: 'C'est la vie. I don't know about other readers, but the genre awards ANYONE wins mean diddly-squat to me (if I ever win one, that's nice, but it still won't mean anything other than a few moments of cheers and so on) ... awards don't mean all that much except that the book is probably basically coherent and not a complete embarrassment to the profession of writing. So I don't generally look for author names, and even the author names I do know don't usually get me to buy it; I have to READ it first, before I spend the godawful amount of money that books require these days.

"As far as the cover is concerned... Elizabeth Willey later lists all the horrible covers [she has] seen on SF books. So what? Do 5,000 bad covers mean that we should ignore another bad cover? Or that people shouldn't try to avoid displaying bad covers, while still keeping the book available?

"Now, if Connie Willis herself thinks that the cover is great, well, then I'd say take off the wrappers and let the chips fall where they may; if she thinks the cover is representative enough of the book, or will simply sell enough copies to make it worthwhile, that's cool enough with me. Otherwise, let the discriminating salespeople send this somewhat less than subtle message back to the people in charge of the cover art."

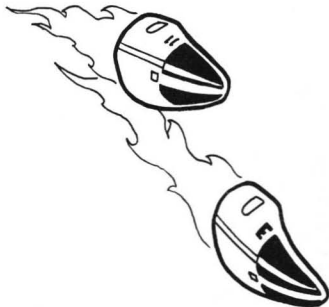
## Comics

**The New Testament:** published every term by Comix Plus, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY 13210, USA.

Bulky graphics magazine with variable contents, but well worth a look. Contents include "Dead Hendrix" by Andy Sanford and Ryan Michael Donlavey, "What is it that keeps her from love" by Matthew Oliveri, "Omega Corps" by Dan Giancola, "Urban Stalker" by Michael Paulin, "Captain Caffeine: The Caffeinknit Returns" by Peter Nicholls and "Assassins and Messiahs" by Quang Pho. More information, including back issues, from Ryan Dunlavey, 230 Windsor Way, Doylestown, PA 18901, USA, who also has *Evil Twin*, a collection of his comic stripes which appeared in Syracuse University's student paper and *Das Book*,

which has the same format as *Next Testament* including "The Crimson Spatula and a feature length "Omega Corps".

**Scattered Comics:** I have an underground comicbook company called *Scattered Comics*. There are three different titles that come out monthly. All centre around the unseen battles of the spirit world. These books are for "mature readers". Contact Jason Dube for more information at 1226 Almondwood Drive, Antioch, CA 94509, USA.



## Stop Press:

To mark National Library Week and the transfer of the Science Fiction Foundation Collection to the University of Liverpool, it is a delight to announce that Ramsey Campbell, the finest British horror novelist, will be placing many of his manuscripts on deposit with the collection.

He will present his mss in the Taylor Room of the Sydney Jones Library on Monday 1 November at 2pm. He will also be reading from an unpublished portion of his novel *The Parasite*, which is set, appropriately, in Liverpool University.

Ramsey Campbell's connections with libraries are built into his fiction, although as with much of his work, those of a nervous disposition are warned to treat carefully. The short story "Call First" warns us not to be too curious about the customers' home life, while "In the Shadows" offers a macabre version of a traditional entertainment in a children's library. Another Liverpool library is part of the background to the novel *The Face That Must Die*, while a redundant librarian giving the profession a second chance is the central character of *The Count of Eleven*.

Ramsey Campbell's latest book is *The Long Lost* (Headline).

The Science Fiction Foundation Collection is a unique library of Science Fiction, Fantasy and related genres; perhaps Europe's largest collection of such material and an invaluable resource for scholars and researchers from all over the world.

The University of Liverpool is delighted to welcome the collection.

## Unfinished Business Maureen Speller and Catie Cary

Our first duty this time is to apologise to our members for the non-appearance of *Vector* in the last mailing. Catie Cary now works in Derby during the week, which has involved her having to adjust to new working and travel routines and led to a consequent delay in work on *Vector*. The mailing you are now reading has also been slightly delayed, but we envisage no major problems in the future.

We very much appreciated your patience over this matter.

Responses to the first "Unfinished Business" were few but to the point. We have received some offers of help with distributing membership forms and these are all being taken up. Thank you to the people concerned.

It has been suggested that bookmarks would be more convenient and effective as promotional tools, a view with which we agree. We now have a design for bookmarks and hope to have these available by the end of the year. If you are interested in distributing bookmarks, please contact Maureen Speller at the administrative address and she will send you a batch as soon as they are available.

We have had requests for handbills and posters, and these are also a possibility for the near future. We are currently commissioning a design and hope to have material available after Christmas. Look out for further information concerning this.

In the meantime, any ideas on recruiting new members would be gratefully received, as would any offers of help.

We are grateful to Stella Hargreaves for pointing out that the first week of November is National Book Week and suggesting that BSFA members might like to talk to their local librarians about promoting the BSFA during this week. Contact Maureen Speller if you need membership forms in bulk, giving numbers.

We would also like to ask for some assistance from BSFA members attending Novacon. We are hoping to have a table in the dealers' room, selling memberships, BSFA magazines, books and anything else which seems feasible as well as running a raffle. We need kind volunteers willing to spend an hour or two during the weekend running the desk with us. The more people who give up an hour of their time, the less time anyone will have to spend at the desk. Instructions will be provided and also, if enough people volunteer, company as well. We recommend it as a good way of meeting people.

If you are willing to volunteer, please contact Maureen Speller before the convention or alternatively, look for the desk in the dealers' room at Novacon. If you can't find it, it isn't there and you can rest easy.

Likewise, it is not too soon to be thinking about new year's Eastercon at Liverpool. As with Novacon, we will be advertising in the programme book and distributing flyers with the membership pack, and running another desk. On the grounds that even more BSFA members are likely to attend the Eastercon, you'll probably need to spend even less time working. Volunteers are eagerly sought to help during this weekend.

Mention of the Eastercon brings us, of course, to the Annual General Meeting which will, we hope, be held during the convention. Negotiations are currently underway to book the time and place and the announcement will come with the last mailing of the year.

We need to know now if there are any issues people wish to discuss at the AGM so that they can be put to the members prior to the AGM. If you have

anything you wish to raise, please contact Maureen Speller as soon as possible. We aim to have any necessary issues discussed before the AGM so that those attending may vote from a position of greater authority.

It goes without saying that if, at any time, anyone wishes to raise matters concerning the running of the BSFA or its future activity, they should contact the Administrators, who will ensure that these topics are aired in a future "Unfinished Business". We cannot help with your problems and grievances if you don't tell us what they are.

Finally, please take note of the flyer which accompanies this mailing. We cannot afford to send subscription reminders under separate cover any longer. Many other magazines rely on the intelligence of subscribers to check the mailing for the status of their subscription; we hope that BSFA members won't prove to be the exception to the rule. As you can see, you will have two warnings, one that your subscription is due with the next mailing, one that your subscription expires with the current mailing. It is then up to you to spring promptly into action.

We realise that this situation is not ideal; with luck it should be temporary. The Administrators are working on other inexpensive methods of giving you due warning of your subscription expiring. In the meantime, please bear with us.

If you are worried about losing your subscription, do please consider taking out a standing order. Contact Elizabeth Billinger, our Treasurer (address on inside front cover of *Matrix*) for further information. And for those who have already got standing orders, do check that you are paying the correct amount of money.

In our next column, we will announce the name of the new Information Officer and, as always, report any news concerning the running of the BSFA. Any correspondence concerning general administration and miscellaneous matters should be directed to Maureen Speller, 60 Bournemouth Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5AZ. Tel: 0303 252939, daytime and evenings before 10pm. If you reach the answerphone, please leave your name and number. If you have received no return call within 48 hours please call again. The machine occasionally eats calls for no obvious reason.

## SF in a Quiet Zone

As far as fanzines are concerned, everyone had something better to do. Only two Brit fanzines arrived in the last two months. One was *Champion Maurice*, a thin production which is probably vastly hilarious, as it is full of in-jokes. But the other was Ken Cheslin's *The Olaf Alternative*. The Olaf of the title, a time travelling Viking who seems to appear in the wrong place at the right (or wrong) time, darts through the first half of the fanzine, dodging articles like Buck Coulson's "The Day the Indians won the Battle" or Ted Tubb's "Fait Accompli" where the Professor defines SF. "That's what SF offered" he said "Hopes. Dreams. Promises of power, travel, security — all the things which were so desperately yearned for by those who responded to the bright promise of the pulp magazine ... SF was escape. It opened doors of the imagination. It was release and showed the way to a modern Utopia". Half way through, the fanzine flips over for the letters half, losing Olaf on the way, but the definitions of SF continue. Martin Gittins suggests it is "an investigation in a fictional extrapolation of the applications of science or technology upon society — the political dimensions, its epistemology and ontology to how technology changes our conception of the world". Alan Hunter takes the view of SF a step further by writing "now that many of the dreams of SF have been realised, such as tv, computers, holographic images, space travel, etc., all it has brought is strife, suffering and starvation on a global scale. This is reflected in the literature". That's only a fraction of the letters — the bulk of which reflect the view that *The Olaf Alternative* is getting to be one of the most thought-provoking fanzines around.

The analysis of the term SF is continued in George J Laskowski Jr's *Jan's Lantern*, which has Ken Carter at one extreme claiming that "SF is the leading edge of science, and science is itself a leading edge. Of what? Of human exploration of 'This Place' that we all awakened into at birth ... science is our best exploratory tool for 'This Place' and SF lines the road ahead of science". Lloyd Penney weighs in, though, from another angle: "I think that our demands for 100% accuracy in the science in our fiction makes the term Science Fiction an oxymoron. That makes it look like we don't want hard SF in the far future, but in the near future, where the science involved is near to our own level, or it is our own level".

Letters take up ten pages of this massive hundred and fifty page fanzine (and it's moderately small print too). The SF flavour blends into the contents, with articles on Abraham Merritt and James Branch Cabell. Steve Lofton writes on SF/F, claiming that "From SF/F, I learned that right reasons are a matter of perspective, not a matter of truth ... SF/F shows one new worlds and ideas; fires the neurons". George Laskowski characteristically has a strong SF content and has also produced special issues on A E van Vogt and Theodore Sturgeon. On a lighter, but no less serious note, Robert Sabella looks back at some of his SF memories and wonders who else remembers when Arthur C Clarke and Walter Cronkite covered the first manned landing on the moon or how critics really reacted to the release of 2001: A Space Odyssey (as opposed to how they now claim they reacted to it) or Robert Silverberg insisting that James Tiptree Jr must be a man under the pseudonym. This all reminds me, most unfairly, of an incident at a well-known SF specialist bookshop.

Me: Terrible news about Heinlein dying, isn't it?  
Assistant: Was he one of our customers?

*Jan's Lantern* also has a mix of general pieces, though my favourite was Bruce Burdick's Spanish travelogue beginning "So there was this bull in my face. I exaggerate. The bull was across the street. But it was a narrow street".

There's normally a travel article in Dick and Nicki Lynch's *Mimosa*, but this issue has movies as a theme with specialist articles by David Thayer and Terry Jeeves. For a change, SF takes a subsidiary role in the letter column: Isaac Asimov and Harlan Ellison appear as vignettes and Harry Warner Jr comments "how much more fantastic SF films used to be when I didn't know a thing about how they were made".

There's a lot in common between *Mimosa* and *the Olaf Alternative* — the editors haven't lost that spark of enthusiasm which leaps out from the pages and grabs the reader. I think there's that same enthusiasm with *Jan's Lantern*; although it's pleasant to read and very user-friendly, the reader can easily feel intimidated by the size and weight of it. Which would be a shame.

*The Olaf Alternative* (Ken Cheslin, 10 Coney Green, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 1LA)

*Champion Maurice* (no address given, but could probably be obtained from Alan Sullivan, 30 Ash Road, Stratford, London E15 1HL)

*Jan's Lantern* (George Laskowski Jr, 55 Valley Way, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304, USA)

*Mimosa* (Dick and Nicki Lynch, PO Box 1350, Germantown, Maryland 20875, USA)

## Fanzine Listings

These fanzine listings are supplied courtesy of Jerod Pore, who edits *Factsheet Five*. If a price per issue/subscription is not given, then the fanzines are available for "The Usual" — a polite request, letter of comment or contribution (or all three). They have a US bias: that's partly because Jerod is American anyway, partly because there have been so few Brit fanzines published (which I have seen) and partly because I thought it would be interesting to show unfamiliar fanzines. To give a yardstick of the level of the

reviews, I have included a review Jerod gave of *Matrix*.

**ABERATIONS: Adult Horror Science Fiction and Dark Fantasy** Issue 7 1992  
A slick color cover digest of explicitly sexual and/or horrifying SF and/or fantasy fiction. A variety of artist and styles complement well the short-to-medium-long fiction pieces; the short poems range in quality. The often openly woman-hating fiction features her blood and his sex; don't these SF guys ever grow up? The juvenile scared-of-women fiction really doesn't deserve the slick cover and flawless typesetting. Still, I detect talent, creativity and imagination. #5 contains cartoons, a snake charmer, a Satanic truffle conspiracy, a prostitute who fucks aliens to win a bet, and an oh-so-typical vagina-cats-men story; however, the paedophilic conspiracy piece was excellent. #6 contains the truth about E A Poe, a typical woman-eaten-by-lover story, a lively and clever circus sidehow adventure, twins, a sculptor, and a typical woman-abused-by-captor story. #7 contains a blood banquet, some modern fiction pieces, and an SM story. Pretty reliable SF wank-fodder (for guys, that is). There are some gems as well.  
\$4.50 Each. Subs: \$31.00 for 12 issues to Jon Herron, Experiences Unlimited, 544 Ygnacio Valley Road #13, PO Box 8040 Walnut Creek, CA 94596

**AMBERZINE** Iss#2 August 1992  
A big, beautiful zine about an intriguing RPG that is set in Zelazny's *Amber* multiverse and uses no dice! An amazing concept. A zine for fans of *Amber* and RPGs. The bulk of *Amberzine* is made up of stories extrapolated from long-running *Amber* campaigns. Some are quite good, and don't require intimate knowledge of Zelazny's writings to enjoy them; others are a bit too super-hero for my taste and do require a few readings of the *Amber* series to make sense. The tips, letters, and Q&A sections make the *Amber* game system sound like an excellent time waster for a decade.  
\$10.00 per copy, subs: \$40.00 for 5 issues to Erick Wujcik, Phage Press, PO Box 519, Detroit, MI 48231-0519

**CELTIC PAMPLEMOUSSE** Iss#5  
Jim rants about what's on his mind. Fortunately for us, his rants are thought provoking and the subject matter is quite interesting. The highlight of Ver 5.0 of CP is "Star Trek: (Brainwashing) The Next Generation" in which Jim exposes the subtle racial stereotypes of the ST:TNG plots, subtext and ambience. The Federation as the idealized white man, the Ferengi as the Jews and so forth. A novice's perspective on The Internet and personal explorations of the impulse to do something heroic are other topics of note. Plus reviews, surreal lists, letters and avoiding current events. Lotsa bang for the buck.  
Jim Munroe, Licksplit Ventures, 66 Greyhound Drive, Willowdale, OT M2H 1K3 Canada

**DEROGATORY REFERENCE** Issue 73  
Another personal/SciFi zine, this one quite friendly and readable. It starts off with a long story about Author's move to Yonkers NY, his pets, his computer, and the books on his book shelves. The rest of the zine delves into his SciFi interest and covers *Worldcon* and the Hugo Awards.  
Arthur C Hlavaty, PO Box 52028, Durham, NC 27717

**FRAME OF REFERENCE** Issue 5  
A small zine with a few poems and illustrations. In here she reviews Terry Pratchett's *Discworld* series, prints a maze that may (or may not) be solvable, shows a few typewriter tricks, and prints a few poems by her friends.  
SASE Each to Susan Groppi, 631 Quackenbush, Wyckoff, NJ 07841

**FROM SUNDAY TO SATURDAY**  
Irregular newsletter intended for APAs but also available for a stamp. Here he wrote about amateur press publishing, its history, its influences, and the current state of fanzine publications. Recommended to anyone looking for introduction into the world of APAs.  
1 stamp/SASE Each to Don Fitch, 3908 Frigo, Covina, CA 91722

**GREAT SHARK HUNT** Issue 17  
A community freebie with a real obsession with Dr Hunter S Thompson. This one has a long interview with Kurt Vonnegut, killer food, tattoos, and lots of tidbits about HST.  
free!!!! Each to The Great Shark Hunt, P.O. Box 54634, OMAHA, NE 68154

**HARSH MISTRESS** Iss#1  
New & Improved Golden Age space opera. But, shit, at least it's well-written and interesting space opera. "As long as people are willing to stand up and be counted, our future will remain bright." So goes the optimistic editorial of *Harsh Mistress*. A new zine with no cyberpunk, no new wave, no nothing with a "dark, ominous tone." OK, if you like peppy, snappy futures thick with that ST optimism, then get *Harsh Mistress*. Cynics need not apply.  
\$5.00, Subs: \$12.00 for 3 issues to Warren Lapine, Harsh Mistress SFA, PO Box 13, Greenfield, MA 01302

**INFINITY Vol#1** Iss#1 Winter 1993  
"Devoted to the support of local gaming in particular: roleplaying, board and computer games." Strategy, tactics, reviews and clues are presented in an entertaining style. The clueless might get lost by some of the game-specific data, but the fictionalized accounts of some scenarios make for fun reads nonetheless. A variety of gaming systems are covered here, including a couple that I've never before heard of. Convention and computer game reviews. Thanks for the Wolfenstein tips! My kid and I blast the Nazi zombies for hours.  
\$1.00!! to Steve Parenteau, Global Gaming Enterprises, PO Box 537, Woonsocket, RI 02895

**INTERCEPTED Vol#10** Iss#9  
It is a paper-based MUD/MUSE with a one-month response time. Talk about unreal time. Think of *Intercepted* as a combination APA and RPG that pastes-in various cultural bits and pieces. The poker game at the Addams mansion has been interrupted by the kidnapping of Morticia by either Yug Sothoth, The Master or the Vegetable Liberation Front. Meanwhile, the furries and adventurous humans are having an interspecies orgy in Central Park. It's Bill Burroughs watching cable TV.  
\$2.00 to Kay Shapero, 12536 Short Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90066

**IT'S: The Monty Python Fanzine** Issue 13  
The idea of a Python fanzine is brilliant. And in some ways it's lives up to its promise: Fanzine news, classifieds, some good reviews. Unfortunately, sometimes *It's* is to good writing as Spam is to food. Issue 13 features a long article on Palin's A&E travel series and a Douglas Adams excerpt. Plus real-life Pythonish experiences. I hate to be a crabby critic, but what I'd like to see is something like great sketch transcripts, skills from the show, and certainly more silliness in general. Still, it's worth it if you're a diehard fan.  
\$3 Each to Sheila Gibson, P.O. Box 365, University Station Syracuse, NY

**LAVENDER DRAGON Vol#3** Iss#1 The newsletter of Kindred Spirits, an Affiliate of the Gaylactic Network.  
The one and only (that we've seen) gay fanzine. The latest *Star Trek*, *D59* is reviewed, along with the already cancelled *Space Rangers* and *Babylon Five* one-shot. Also reviewed is the updated *Shadowrunners* RPG and the new *Cyberfiction Lethal Interface*.  
AAOTGN, PO Box 160225, St. Louis, MO 63316-0225

**LOST WORLDS: The Writers' and Artists' Science Fiction and Fantasy Forum Showcase** of new SF&F writers, presumably for publication in 'real' magazines and/or anthologies. All authors are identified by name and a code and publishers are invited to obtain reprints, and what the fees will be for such. Now that all the authors' stories are complete in an issue, *Lost Worlds* is a much more enjoyable read. The writers and artists should be getting exposure in real magazines.  
\$1.25, Subs: \$13.00 for 13 issues to Holley Drye, HBD Publishing, P.O. Box 605, Concord, NC 28025

## MAINSTREAM Iss#15

An Old School fanzine (mimeographed on that weird twiltone paper, even) of faanfic, conventions, personal experiences, furies and lotsa LoCs. Jerry and Suzie were FanGoh's at two conventions separated by half a continent, so they decided to relive the hell of doing a live zine (like their *Spanish Inquisition* band in 1976) at both Minicon in 1990 and Westercon in 1991. Contributors (William Gibson, Andy Hooper, Jon Singer, Stu Shiffman, Kate Schaefer, Taral, David Emerson, Jeanne Gomoll and Terry Garey) read their pieces, accompanied by overhead projections of artwork. Jerry & Suzie transcribed the speeches for *Mainstream* 14/15. Between questionable sushi, lost airline tickets and the notoriously unreliable cars of many trufen, it's amazing that the live and printed versions were produced at all. Content-wise, Andy Hooper's "Caro Fanatico Numero Uno" is an epic piece of faanfic. The personal stories (including the tale of producing the zine) are most touching. Gibson's recounting of a yuppie bar in Barcelona when the bombing began in Baghdad was flashback inspiring. Is *Mainstream* the ultimate faanzine? Could be. But if you don't understand fanspeak, you might have a hard time understanding it.

Jerry Kaufman and Suzanne Tompkins, Pacific Fantod Press, 8618 Linden Avenue, Seattle, WA 98103

## MARKTIME Iss#21

A sorta perzine that primarily deal with Mark's many interesting hobbies/obsessions. APAs, baseball, radio air checks, DXing, SF conventions, trying to travel to every county or major city in every state in the country, zines, Star Trek. Mark seems to be having way too much fun to "Get a life."

Mark Strickert, ELCA Copy Center, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631

**MATRIX:** The news magazine of The British Science Fiction Association. More than just a clubzine, as *Matrix* is packed full of news about SF. News, news and more news. Who won which awards and who is writing what, conventions and other gatherings on the horizon, Harlan Ellison's latest medical adventures, Julian May's car crash, and Marion Zimmer Bradley's legal problems with a "shared world" writer. Plenty of reviews and a short piece on Robert E. Howard. Way better than *Locust* and without all the fuzzy snapshots.

## MIDNIGHT ZOO: Exciting Horror, Science Fiction, Fantasy, &amp; Science Fact Volume 2, Issue 6

Much better stuff from the *Aberations* publisher. A slick color cover, flawless typesetting and excellent graphics complement the essays, interviews, columns, long and short fiction, poetry, and book and movie reviews. A very nice all-around SF zine. #4 has ghosts & ghost stories, an interview with Denise Dumars, and some suitably creepy Halloween stories with pumpkins and vampires. #5 has a cool skeletal bride on the cover, an interview with J N Williamson, a mysterious painting, a chess master, and some very special Siamese twins. #6 is the Santa Claus issue, with paranormal proofs, a crown of thorns, and a tragic radio station adventure. Recommended for SF fans. \$6.00 Each. Sub: \$40.00 for 6 issues to Experiences Unlimited, 544 Ygnacio Valley Road #13, PO Box 8040 Walnut Creek, CA 94596

## PERELANDRIA Iss#106 February 1993

Long-running play-by-mail anything game zine, with the occasional political and hobby commentary. And just what can one play-by-mail? Besides the ever-popular Diplomacy, there's snowball fights, railway rivals, even Monopoly! 21 pages of game results that are probably meaningless to those who don't play the games, but I find Diplomacy game results to be entertaining.

\$1.00 to Pete Gaughan, 1521 South Novato Blvd. #46, Novato, CA 94947-4147

## WriteBack

If you wish to respond to any of the letters here, or introduce a subject yourself, please write to Jenny and Steve Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP, by the deadline:

15 November 1993

## On the BSFA

From: Philip Muldowney, Golden Harvest, Tamerton Foliot Road, Plymouth PL6 5ES

Like some slimmed down Siamese twin, the *Matrix* arrived all forlorn and lonely, without its *Vector*. One appreciates the problems of a consistent bi-monthly publishing [schedule], glitches do tend to happen! What had me screaming at my clichés, though, was that unfortunate phrase "due to circumstances beyond our control". AAAAGGGHHHH! The dread phrase of anonymous bureaucratic cock-ups everywhere. Shades of flawless faultlessness from BR to the BBC, would it not be simpler to say someone goofed? [See the *Unfinished Business* column for an explanation — Ed.]

With regards to the mailing service, what is the correct position, as regards the costliness of it? There seems to be a direct contradiction within what is said in *Matrix* about it. The BSFA minutes state "moving over to use the services of the Mailing House ... has added to our expenses, but not significantly", yet, at the very start of her column, Maureen Speller sounds the sirens warning "The move to a professional mailing service ... is eating into our reserves at an alarming rate". These seem a little puzzling, is the mailing going to bankrupt us? What are the comparative figures?

I wonder if this eternal quest for ever substantial membership is somewhat of araith. Adverts have been placed, at some expense, where they should have been noticed by the people who have the most interest in it. Yet, those adverts have not really produced many tangible results. The BSFA has been around for thirty five years, has there ever been a time when its membership was more than between one and two thousand? Even in the boom SF years of the early eighties? With the impending rumours that VAT will be imposed on magazines and books, that is also something that the BSFA will have to consider very carefully, if it actually does come about. The present limit for paying VAT is £36,000, if income is or would be (some would say that we should be so lucky!) above this figure, then the treasurer will be involved in the onerous and worrying business of keeping VAT records and paying [then] reclaiming VAT. I really doubt if any treasurer would willingly take on that basket of snakes voluntarily, and with no pay!

Changes I would like? Crosswords that I could do! The old conflict between fan and SF news will probably read its head, fan news does make for a lot of gossip which seems to go down well. The publishing news might be steamlined though ... personally I am more interested in the specific books that are to be published over the next few months, and not have to wade through interminable quotes from publishers blurbs, cause I neither care for nor trust the info from publishers advert material. The book news is just too verbose

From: Benedict S Cullum, 21 Worsley Grove, Levenshulme, Manchester M19 3AF

Although my main interest is in the written word, I am not averse to the Association standing by its own stated purpose and promulgating any aspects of SF; be it written, drawn, spoken, filmed or otherwise played out whether on stage or at home (RPG). Perhaps these differing segments can be afforded a discreet presence in *Matrix*, building on or emphasizing the current coverage. I don't see this as a weakness, rather as an acceptance of the fact

that *Matrix* is a magazine and that, as such, it requires an overtly magazine format.

I sometimes wonder that with such publications as *Critical Wave* and *Cassandra* whether *Matrix* and *Focus* are necessary at all. Could not the BSFA sub-contract the production of the latter to the editors of the former? As it happens, my feeling is that this would damage the BSFA because the culture of in-house publications might weaken and if/when the *Critical Wave* and/or *Cassandra* folks decided to call it a day then perhaps there would be no one at the BSFA willing to take over ...

If money does become available, though, I'd not argue with the idea of the BSFA buying up one issue each of some of those small-press fiction zines that have suffered through over printing; distributing these once or twice yearly, either with or instead of *Focus*. So there is no misunderstanding, I'm not talking about a BSFA fiction magazine, rather the use of BSFA monies to buy up back issues of those (sufficiently well-produced) magazines that have of late publicised their financial embarrassment following underselling a particular issue. No single editor/title would receive this treatment more than once, the price paid would need to be exceedingly keen and safeguards against abuse would need to be rigorous.

I'd suggest changing the current Standing Order system to a Direct Debit one to avoid losing out when subscriptions go up. In addition, all those who failed to increase their Standing Orders as a cost to the Society, I read, of £500 should be informed by means of a further announcement in both *Matrix* and *Vector* that failure to make up the difference will result in their subs being curtailed by one mailing.

From: Daniel Buck, Croft of Kincardine, Boat of Garten PH24 3BY

You were asking for opinions on *Matrix*. Firstly layout. Having just flicked back through a few past issues, it seems to vary regularly, but my preference would be for that used in no 107, clear with plenty of space. This makes it far more appealing to sit down with and skim read to extract the information of interest to oneself.

You're right when you say it is the sort of magazine one picks up intermittently, reads on the toilet etc. So, am I happy with what I receive every other month? As a general rule, yes. The news keeps me in touch with what is going on in the rest of the country and of the rest I have quickly learnt those sections which hold no interest for me, such as anime and the crossword which, every time I have tried it, has proved impossible. When I have time or become sufficiently animated, I enter the competition or write a letter.

Of particular interest is the BSFA profiles section and if anything is to be expanded, I should like more in the fanzine, club and convention columns, by way of encouraging the reclusive novice in these fields to get out there and make himself heard.

From: E R James, 31 Castle Street, Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 2DH

The August/September issue, coming on its own, emphasised what a good job you do.

I really do appreciate the amount you cram into your publication. I like the short informative paragraphs, so much better than the wordy reviews and interviews through which I never manage to wade. [I like to skim interviews and pull out a literary snapshot of the author. It doesn't give the whole picture, but can be thought-provoking — Ed.].

The article by the late Trevor Jones saddened me. He was kind enough to use pieces by me. Although I had many stories in Carnell's magazines, the metamorphosed *New Worlds* was not to my taste and I soon ceased to take it. I suppose I was not good enough for it.

## Sexism

From: A Barton, Flat 2, 70 Egmont Road, Sutton, Surrey CM2 5JS

John Madracki (in *Matrix* 107) claims as an example of "how PC and humour can be mutually exclusive" Clarke's stating that his witticism would all "recommending not nice girls, but naughty ones" as astronauts' companions, would "be rightly condemned as blatant 'sexism'".

For the benefit of John, and anyone else who needs it explained to them, it's not the joke that is sexist, but the hidden assumption that astronauts will all be male. People likely to be offended include women who dream of being astronauts, and anyone who dislikes sloppy thinking.

Come to think of it, there is another hidden assumption. Spotting this is left as an exercise for the reader.

## Do Martian Explorers Read?

From: Terry Jeeves, 56 Red Scar Drive, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO12 5RQ

I was intrigued by the idea of planting sundry recorded discs on the surface of Mars — who is likely to read them apart from humans from Earth? In which case, it would be a lot cheaper to hand them out down here. Just assuming some alien being discovers the things in a future millennium, just what are his chances of being able to (a) decipher how they are recorded and (b) being able to create a player? I say this, because even recordings techniques of Earth have become almost unplayable. Given an Edison wax disc, you'd have to find a museum gadget to play the thing. The same with a Magnetophon wire recording — which could be easily mistaken for — and use as, a spool of thin wire for umpteen purposes for which it was not intended. I have dozens of reel to reel tapes and one irreplaceable player. You can't buy them in local shops anymore and have to buy expensive professional jobs if you want to play a reel to reel. Cassette recorders are going the same way. How many people can play 78rpm records, or even 45s? Decks no longer have those speeds of stylus. Now with CDs around, the LP is on the way out. Given another hundred years and some totally new system will most probably have wiped out all existing systems. If we can't play the Martian recordings, fat luck for a bunch of aliens.

Incidentally, in *Unfinished Business*, Maureen Speller says that the new mailing service is "eating into our reserves at an alarming rate" yet in Kev McVeigh's Report he says "the Mailing House ... has added to our expenses, but not significantly". Surely, both can't be right?

Changes for *Matrix*: Taking zines bit wise in one long run tends to obscure what is being discussed. Wouldn't it be clearer to separate them as done under fanzines listed? How come no Mexican report? [Because no one sent one, because I didn't ask for one — but there is one in this issue].

From: Jim England, Roselea, The Compa, Kinner, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY7 6HT

I was slightly dumbfounded by the article about a collection of SF stories being sent to Mars on a compact disc. For one thing, the plan may be unduly hopeful. For another, it is surely possible (to say the least) that the first human explorers of Mars would have no way to play the CD or to read microdots and that, supposing they had, their plight might be such that a collection of SF stories would be the last thing they would want to read! I can't help thinking of the grand-sounding "time capsules" being left for our descendants to discover in the foundations of terrestrial buildings; very often they turn out to be not valuable items, but stuff like old newspapers and empty Kellogg's cornflake packets that schoolkids have been encouraged to put there!

On to Maureen Speller's article in which she says that "life membership [of the BSFA] is available for the sum of £150". She says she is "reminding" us of this, but I, personally, didn't know it, and I am slightly dumbfounded again. Why? Because it seems to me that this commits the BSFA to sending some members (in their twenties, say) all its publications for the next sixty years or more; either then or ceasing to exist before then, going back on its word, or (gulp) taking a contract out on life members. Can she be serious? Expressions like "selling off the family silver", "mortgaging the future" and "not letting the polluter pay" come to mind. It's sort of like the national debt in microcosm. What about our BSFA descendants?

The recent stuff in *Matrix* about role playing games has started to read like gobbledygook to me. I can imagine, vaguely, what they are, but there must be tons of oldies (like me) who can no more work up an interest in them than they can in (say) three dimensional chess or in what records are top of the pops. It seems rather hard for the younger generation to explain what they are — like trying to explain Scrabble without a board — or why anyone would want to bother with them.

Two negative thoughts that come to mind, however, are:

1. Like pop records, these RPGs are largely produced for commercial reasons and it must be in the manufacturers' interests for them to have a short shelf life.
2. Like lots of TV for kids, they are not educational and encourage fantasies of violence, leading to anti-social behaviour. I can imagine that, in the future, when Virtual Reality is an everyday experience, it will be even more dehumanising.

Although not interested in RPGs, I was very interested in something you said in a past issue about e-mail. It was the first time I'd heard of it and I'd love to know more, but am hampered by having no hands-on experience of computers (although I'm literate and numerate). I've often thought that, in a future Utopia, we'd all have access to all existing knowledge in the world, at the touch of a button. But then I think of ways in which access to information might have to be restricted, even in Utopia. There has been the Data Protection Act, since 1985, to prevent the "misuse of personal information", for instance, and most people would not want their children to have unrestricted access to pornography. Could someone tell us more about e-mail in *Matrix*?

## Booksearch

From: John Ollis, 51 Belmont Road, Luton LU1 1LL

Regarding Phil Nichols' piece in *Matrix* 106 about Waterstone's Booksearch, it is the same service as that operated by many secondhand book-dealers. I've been using this service for several years and have obtained about three hundred out-of-print SF books (and some others) this way. I thought the system was generally known. Approximately 20% of dealers are in the scheme. My local dealers say there isn't a list of dealers. They submit my list of books to a trade mag. (*The Book Dealer*); it is printed (waiting list about six weeks), and dealers send a note of what they have together with detail of H/B, P/B, condition, price, etc. My dealer pays the other dealers on my order. On receipt of books, I pay my dealer — the books are sent to them. The only dealer whose details I know is the local one: C K J Booksearch, Unit 89, Market Hall, Arndale Centre, Luton, LU1 2TB (tel: 0582 30933). If you mention my name to them, I might get a discount!

## Smoking

From: Stephen Baynes, 33 Avon Crescent, Romsey, Hants. SO51 8PX

John Madracki, in his letter in *Matrix* 106, seems to think that the reason non-smokers complain about smokers' smoke is because they enjoy frustrating

smokers. This is not so, it is purely because we want to breathe clean and healthy air. If someone develops a device that does for smoke pollution what the walkman has done for noise pollution (one free story idea here), then I am quite happy for smokers to smoke as much as they like without disturbing anyone. Just don't send me your medical bills.

I note that John Madracki does not actually justify smoking in any way. Nor does he claim smokers even get any enjoyment from it. I can only assume that they do it to irritate non-smokers.

I wonder what John Madracki would think if I sprayed him with dirty water? After all to use his own argument "it may be unpleasant and if prolonged it can be detrimental to a few but, for most people, occasional contact with a spray of dirty water is hardly life-threatening" (FOREST (Freedom Organisation for the Right to Enjoy Smoking Tobacco) also sent a large amount of information including a SF-inspired poster entitled "Invasion of the Body Snatchers" with Virginia Bottomley, Brian Mawhinney and Edwina Currie cast as the Liberty Snatchers, with Des Wilson, Clare Short and Jerry Hayes as the Alien Invaders. There is also a FOREST short story competition listed in the news column).

## Information Service

### Phil Nichols

Answers seem to be a bit thin on the ground in recent weeks, but there's never a shortage of puzzling teasers for your friendly Information Officer to tackle. Here's one question that's got me stumped. Do you recognise this story?

"... a short story, published before 1980, and possibly a classic writer. The story is written in a kind of allegorical style, and tells of a scientist or astronomer who watches the stars from a high tower. The general populace hate him, burn his tower and destroy his telescope. He hides underground in a mine and eventually goes blind, but in his memory he can still see the stars as brightly as before ..."

If you recognise this tale, why not drop me a line to the address at the end of the column — and put our questioner (and me) out of their misery.

Now we continue with another of our (very) occasional mini-guides to SF. The aim of these guides is to suggest areas to explore for the newcomer to SF, act as a reminder of what-you-once-enjoyed to the jaundiced fan — and just pass on a little enthusiasm for what's good in the genre. And so, to this end, here's a short piece on the late, lamented —

## Theodore Sturgeon (1918-1985)

Theodore Sturgeon died in 1985, leaving a handful of novels and a couple of hundred short stories. In a long but fitful career, spanning almost every age of modern SF, he seemed to move with the times, never attempting to cash in on what was fashionable, but always reaching for something higher.

From the late 1930s, Sturgeon, like Asimov, Heinlein and co., was closely associated with John Campbell's *Astounding* magazine, helping to define the new, sober, scientific SF of the time. Many of his stories from this era suffer from a clunking technology, making his *fantasy* tales more appealing today: in "It" (1940) there's a monstrous thing in the woods, a thing which just *is*, does what it *does*; "Cargo" (1940) is a pure fantasy set on a merchant ship. But where Sturgeon writes from life, as in "Killdozer" (1944) (inspired by his experience with earth-moving machinery) the technology is not only real, but something he takes a delight in.

It was after "Killdozer" that Sturgeon was struck by the first of many severe writer's blocks. When he emerged from it, his fiction developed a much more humanistic thread, with frequent tales of love and togetherness of parts coming together to make more than a whole. In the 1950s he fit perfectly into (or, again, helped define) Horace Gold's *Galaxy* magazine. In his classic novel of the period, *More Than Human* (1953), half a dozen characters — each of them in some way less than human — "bleesh" together into a gestalt consciousness, the next stage of human evolution.

Sometimes in Sturgeon it's the world that represses or misunderstands, as in *The Dreaming Jewels* (1950), the case of the girls in *More Than Human*, or in "Clastrophile" (1956). Other times it is ourselves. Salvation frequently comes through an idea Sturgeon struggled towards for long periods of time.

In *Medea* (edited by Harlan Ellison, 1985), Sturgeon talks of his obsessive idea that "... among our species there is a window which is open and we don't know when it's open. And there is something it opens to and we don't know what to put into it. And that window closes. And we have all gone through this experience where we know somewhere within us that window has opened and that window has closed". It is this window of opportunity, or of enlightenment, or of understanding, that provides the hope and joy of Sturgeon's stories, particularly "Slow Sculpture" (1971), "To Marry Medusa" (1958) and *More Than Human*.

This window also provides a clear distinction (if one were needed) between Sturgeon and the author he is most often compared to: Ray Bradbury. Yes, there are both sentimentalists and yes, they both deal repeatedly with children and adolescents, but whereas Bradbury's view is forever nostalgic and (as I have argued before in this column) increasingly coloured by a powerful sense of loss, Sturgeon returns again and again to thoughts of what might be, if only we would ask the next question.

If you would like a check list of Sturgeon's books currently in print, please send me a stamped addressed envelope. And — as usual — if you can help the Information Service, or would like to be helped by it, please write. The address is: Phil Nichols, 17 Allsops Close, Rowley Regis, Warley, West Midlands B65 8JB.

[If this has inspired you, *Lan's Lantern 36: A Theodore Sturgeon Special* may be of interest. It is a fanzine published by George Laskowski, 55 Valley Way, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304, USA, and can be requested or purchased (\$2 or thereabouts). The contents are: Recollections of Theodore Sturgeon by George Laskowski; Dissecting Laughing Gas with a Scalpel: On the Art of Theodore Sturgeon by Eric M Heideman; Sturgeon Without Ketchup by Tom Digby; Theodore Sturgeon is Alive in Valhalla by John Thiel; A Tribute to Theodore Sturgeon by Janice Morningstar; Theodore Sturgeon, William Tenn and Summer 1972 by Barry Childs-Helton; My Mentors: Heinlein, Sturgeon and Bova by Spider Robinson; Thank You, Mr Sturgeon by Laura D Todd; Theodore Sturgeon: An Anecdote by Alexis A Gilliland; Theodore Sturgeon: A Chronology by Robert Sabella; Served with Love, Garnished with Style: The Fiction of Theodore Sturgeon by Dennis K Fischer; Tributes to Theodore Sturgeon by Jeanne Mealy; illustrations by Crystal Marvig, Sheryl Birkhead, P L Caruthers-Montgomery, Tom Dow, Linda Leach, Greg Litchfield, Berislav Pinjuh, Spider Robinson and John Thiel].

## Star's End Andy Sawyer

I've officially been Librarian/Administrator of the Science Fiction Foundation for three days (although I spent some time beforehand on the mountain of post which would otherwise have kept me busy for several weeks). So I can't tell you much about what's going to happen over the next few months, though I am working on a couple of ideas which may generate useful publicity.

Number one priority is sorting out the shelving and cataloguing, after a gap of several months, though, I can't praise too highly the achievement of Joyce Day and the Friends of Foundation in the way the move has been organised. This has only been matched by the way the unpacking has resulted in everything being where — according to the comprehensive notes I found waiting for me — it ought to be. Thanks to one and all.

Thanks also to everyone who ensured the continued future of the collection: the Council of the Foundation, Joyce and Pat Green (again) and their team of helpers and all those writers, artists, editors, critics and fans who have donated material or support in whatever form. You know who you are, and I do hope we can continue working together. And while I'm in expansive mood, a tip of the hat to my sister's boyfriend for bringing the collection up to Liverpool (this is true, as I discovered from her some time after the event!)

(An aside: many of them most indefatigable workers for the Foundation are people I only know by name, some not at all and it's quite possible if I go on listing names that I would inadvertently miss out some key figure in the whole process. But I think I should mention the late Ted Chapman, Honorary Librarian from 1987, whose death in July 1991 meant that he missed this new development. I only met Ted once but I liked him, and it's already clear to me that he worked extremely hard for the Collection. It's sad that he was not able to be here to share in what I hope is a new era).

Liverpool University Library have welcomed me and look forward to a long and rewarding association with the Collection. I have discovered donations from various people — including a set of the *Luther Arkwright* graphic novels from Bryan Talbot whose wife, it turns out, was until recently a member of the University academic staff. Thanks, Bryan: my own collection of *Luther Arkwright* has an annoying hole in it and now I'll be able to catch up on the episode I missed! Or at least I will, sometime, after I've added a large quantity of books to stock.

I'm dealing with enquiries from day one, which is a hopeful start. The Collection is available for use, and researchers — librarians, writers, editors, publishers, teachers and students of all shades — are welcome to contact me at the Sydney Jones Library, PO Box 23, Liverpool L69 3DA (051 794 2696). Please note, as I believe Joyce used to say somewhere, that there is only one of me and I am not here all the time, so while visitors are welcome, an appointment must be made. The collection is for reference only: material cannot be loaned, though (subject to the copyright regulations and the scale of charges of the University Library) it may be possible to photocopy material.

One query with which *Matrix* readers might help: Dr J Ingham, 41 Rosemary Avenue, Early, Reading RG6 2YQ is seeking material with an Eric Frank Russell connection, especially copies of the early '40s zine *Futarian War Digest* (which contained letters from EFR) and the mid-late '30s magazine *Ida and Victoria* in which EFR published articles on inter-planetary communication.

I can't finish without asking for things and what I'm asking for is — anything to do with SF! But, in particular, can I ask all fanzine/small press editors if they would consider sending a copy of anything they produce to the SFF Collection, think of it as a copyright library! Eventually I'll be working towards some sort of "wants list" but meanwhile I can tell you that I would greatly appreciate donations of all kinds of SF-related graphic and audio-visual material and especially any books by or about Philip K Dick. Also, I want to collect as much information as I can about the Liverpool fandom pre and post War, and to build on our collections of material by or about writers with a Liverpool or Merseyside connection — for example, Eric Frank Russell, Olaf Stapledon, Clive Barker, Ramsey Campbell and John Rankins (Douglas Mason). And the selection of Edgar Rice Burroughs books appears to be incomplete and not in good condition ...

What do you expect after only three days in the post.



Meanwhile, there's time to be silly. I think I'll start sharing with you some of the undiscovered gems of the Collection. I was quite taken with Berl Cameron's *Sphero Nova* (Curtis Warren, 1952), with its cover of lurid orange macho-looking spaceships hurtling towards a purple moon. You open the book and discover that you can send off for a booklet to see your inferiority complex. Looks like someone had SF readers well and truly sussed ...

Pride of the bunch so far (and it will take some beating) is Stella Clair's *Susie Saucer and Ronnie Rocket* (Werner Laurie, no date, but obviously early '50s). It's a children's book about "Susie the little flying saucer" who lives on the planet Venus. It knocks *Budgie the Helicopter* into a cocked hat and in fact is quite charming. If you are very good at Eastercon, I'll read it to you.

#### Addresses

**Foundation:** *The Review of Science Fiction* edited by Dr Edward James is now published c/o New Worlds, 71-72 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0AA

Donations of material can be sent to the SF Foundation c/o Special Collections, Liverpool University Library, PO Box 123, Liverpool L69 3DA

For information about/offers of help and money to Friends of Foundation, contact Rob Meades, 75 Hecham Close, Walthamstow, London E17 5QT

Inquiries about the MA in SF Studies, due to start in October 1994 should be addressed to Dr David Seed, English Department, Liverpool University, Liverpool L69 3BX

The aim of this course is to build on the interest in Science Fiction shown by students, who will be asked to consider the formal and thematic aspects of a broad range of works from this exciting and varied body of writing. At the heart of Science Fiction lies a speculative energy which will be examined in relation to such issues as gender and the limits of the genre. The course material will be mainly twentieth century and mainly written in English, although some Continental writers such as Yevgeny Zamyatin or Stanislaw Lem will be included. Module topics will include Utopias and Dystopias; Robots, Mind and Intelligence; Science Fiction and the Cold War; Genre Definitions; Time Travel and Alternative Histories; Science Fiction and Gender; Alien Zones: Science fiction and the Horror Genre; Special Author, Philip K Dick and will be taught by David Seed (course director), Tony Barley, Simon Dentith, Nick Davis, Val Gough, Geoffrey Ward and Linda Williams (English Department), Professor Stephen Clark (Philosophy), Richard Haslam (Institute for Irish Studies) and David Edwards (Physics).

## Skywatching Mark Ogier

Since Sky One stopped showing new episodes of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, I have found it increasingly difficult to sit in front of the tv without feeling that something is missing. Although the channel is now repeating the entire series again, starting from the first season, the fact that these stories lack the polish of latter episodes — and that I have seen them all at least three times before — means that they are a poor substitute for the kind of original and exciting material that typified TNG's latter seasons. But there is some solace for Trekkers enduring this particular variety of cold turkey in the form of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*.

A shiver ran down my spine while watching the first episode of this *Next Generation* spin off: it struck me that this was not simply the start of just "another" SF TV series, but the continuation of a modern mythology. To the best of my knowledge no other tv series has been revived so successfully, and then gone on to spawn a totally new series that looks like emulating, if not surpassing, the success of its predecessors. Sky clearly thought a lot of the

series, because they started advertising it several weeks in advance with mysterious short trailers urging viewers to "watch this space" and letting them know that "DS9 is coming". It was nice to see a SF series get such a lot of hype. And for a change, the hype was valid. At the time of writing, I have seen only three episodes of DS9, and have been impressed with the quality of the acting, the writing and the special effects — which, as in *TNG*, are kept firmly in second place to the characters. And what characters! One of the things that annoys people about *TNG* is that all of the main characters are so darned nice to each other (I believe this was due to a stipulation of series creator Gene Roddenberry), but in DS9 we have main characters shouting at each other, going over their commander's head to complain about his behaviour, and generally failing to get along. This, of course, makes for great conflict and riveting television drama.

Deep Space Nine is a rather run-down space station orbiting the planet Bajor. The station was built by the violent Cardassian race during their occupation of the planet, but has now been placed in Federation control following the Cardassian withdrawal. But there are many Bajorans who regard the Federation presence as little more than another occupation.

In charge of the station is Commander Benjamin Sisko, played with stony-faced authority by Avery Brooks. His second in command is Bajoran Major Kira (Nana Visitor), one of many Bajorans who have little time for the Federation. The other central characters are Odo (the shape-shifting) security officer, a Ferengi who runs a bar and gambling emporium, a greenhorn doctor, a beautiful woman who is actually the latest host of an individual from a symbiont race called the Trill, and engineer Miles O'Brien, recognisable to *TNG* fans as the former transporter chief of the *Enterprise*. While the various parties do their best to get along, there are frequently times when tempers fray because of the problems of administering the station.

These are not made any easier when a wormhole is discovered nearby. Unlike earlier such discoveries in the *Star Trek* universe, this one is a stable doorway to another sector of the galaxy and offers those who enter it a chance to travel vast distances without taking months to do so. Naturally, this opens up avenues for commerce and scientific research, and as well as keeping an eye on DS9 and its motley crew, Sisko has to oversee access to the wormhole.

This relatively complex background, when compared to the "seek out new life" angle of *Star Trek* and *TNG*, puts DS9 in a different category to its predecessors and gives the writers the chance to explore characters much more deeply. After the two pilot episodes (the first was OK, the second got a bit tedious), we were presented with a story about a Bajoran terrorist group, with politics and loyalty the focus of the storyline. This is a far cry from the sort of "rockets and rayguns" sci-fi that typifies some earlier *Trek*.

On the strength of the first three programmes, DS9 comes across as mature, adult SF that is light years ahead of other SF programmes on UK tv at the moment. SF on tv or film is never going to be as sophisticated as SF in books, but DS9 is about as near as tv is going to get without alienating its audience.

That's enough *Star Trek* for this month — this column is in danger of turning into "Trekwatching" if I'm not careful. But it has to be said that there has been precious little SF in evidence on the movie channels of late.

One of the most entertaining premieres to surface recently featured the return of the two gormless heroes Bill and Ted who, following the success of their *Excellent Adventure*, go on a *Bogus Journey* in the sequel.

The plot has the two present day Bill and Ted killed and replaced by their robot doubles from the future. While the robots set out to wreck any chance the duo might have had of winning a rock concert contest, which somehow provides the basis for the future society of Earth, Bill and Ted end up in Hell.

This provides an opportunity for a hilarious parody of Bergman's *The Seventh*

*Seal*, as Bill and Ted take on Death (a great performance by William Sadler) in an attempt to win back their lives. But they don't play chess, and instead opt for Battleships, Cluedo, table top football and - best of all - Twister. There are no prizes for guessing how it all turns out, but for those with broad minds and young hearts, the film - like its predecessor - is refreshingly different and provides an entertaining couple of hours.

## Quagdrop the Mercotan Lives! Harry Payne

Remember *Lensman: Secret of the Lens*? Right, the anime with the truly cringeworthy plot put out by Harmony Gold a few years ago? The one you could watch if you didn't have time to sit through the *Star Wars*™ trilogy and get *Tron* thrown in for good measure? The one shown to death on Sky? Why in the name of Kiono's tungsten teeth and curving carballoy claws are Island World releasing it?

Actually, they're not. What they are releasing, but are keeping uncharacteristically quiet about, is in fact *Lensman: the Special Edition* with fifteen extra minutes of footage, the original music soundtrack, and a much better script. With "Director's Cuts" and suchlike surfacing all over the place nowadays, I would have expected them to blow their trumpet a little louder on the score. Modesty in advertising sells no extra video tapes.

Meanwhile, back at the plot, take the superlative pulp novel *Galactic Patrol* by the late E E "Doc" Smith, bring it more or less up to date, add a few easily recognisable cultural icons and some competent Cray computer graphics, and you have a very watchable film indeed. Those viewers who feel it bears more than a passing resemblance to an aforementioned cinematic blockbuster sequence are reminded, both here and on the box cover, that Mr Lucas drew on the 1930s Space Opera (as well as many other ideas) for his films: *Lensman* merely returns the compliment. Indeed, in several places, it shows how animation can be the superior medium to work in when dealing in SF or Fantasy: it's cheaper to paint the fantastic than it is to build it from scratch, and think of all the money you save on hiring those sound stages at Shepperton ... Not to mention Derek Meddings' salary.

I won't go into details of the plot, which should be instantly recognisable to any SF aficionado, irrespective of whether s/he has read "Doc"'s books or no. However, I will state that it is refreshing to see a modern work which has not only studied its origins, but builds on them in a thoroughly entertaining fashion. I first read *Galactic Patrol* at the age of thirteen, which is probably the right age to read the *Lensman* series (seven books in all, of which *Patrol* is the third, but a self-contained story). Watching *Lensman* brought back some of the sense of wonder that "Doc" instills in his audience, and made me want to go hunt the originals lurking somewhere in my book collection. I can think of no higher praise.

On my arbitrary scale, the Island World release of *Lensman* merits an A. Buy it, use it as an example of what anime can be to show to potential fans of all ages (the PG certificate helps in this), but above all, enjoy it. QX?

## Noticeboard

**Brian Stableford:** *The Way to Write Science Fiction* by Brian Stableford is offered to BSFA members at a reduced price: £8 in hardcover; £5 in paperback. Signed copies of *The Empire of Fear* are also available, £10 in hardcover, £5 in C-format paperback. Post free within the UK. Also *The Asgard Trilogy*, special slipcased edition signed by the author, limited to 500 numbered copies. £10 + £1.50 UK postage and packing. Order from Brian Stableford, 113 St Peter's Road, Reading RG6 1PG.

**Gimmix:** Full colour laser t-shirts with image up to A3 size. 4 Wooburn Manor Park, Wooburn Green, Buckinghamshire HP10 0ET (Tel: 0628

521451).

**BSFA Meetings in London:** Despite hopes that we had finally found the perfect venue, the London Meeting is still homeless. After being turned out of The Conservatory because we were not drinking enough, we did indeed find the perfect venue, but the pub is also used by twenty eight different Masonic lodges, who often require a room at short notice. Consequently, the landlady refused to take a regular booking and the meeting organisers did not feel they could run the meetings without this guarantee.

In the meantime, Mark Plummer is seeking a new venue. If you are aware of a pub in Central London with a reasonably sized private function room, please contact Mark Plummer (Tel: 081 656 0137) so that we can investigate further. The sooner we can find a new venue, the sooner we can start regular meetings again.

— Maureen Speller

**The Snuff Centre:** It has been said that snuff stimulates the mind; most snuff takers say it is refreshing and invigorating and counteracts the mental fatigue caused by the stress of modern life. Flavours available include Aniseed, Attar of Roses (for after dinner), Vanity Fair (wallflower flavoured), Black Rappee (prepared from well-fermented, fire-cured Nyasaaland Puducah tobaccos), Irish High Toast (not a snuff for the beginner) and the coarse-milled Princes Dark, which dates back to Regency days. G Smith & Sons, 74 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0B9 (Tel: 071 836 7422).

**Wanted:** Episodes 6 and 7 of the David Lynch comedy series *On the Air* shown recently on BBC2 television. Blank tapes available. Telephone Antony "Doppelganger" Shepherd at 0782 207423.

**Pax Christi Hotel:** B&B staffed by international volunteers, nearest tube Kenilworth Station. Dormitory accommodation, cheap evening snacks, £8 per night. Our Lady's Hall, Falkland Road, London NW5 (Tel: 081 800 4612).

**Dr Who:** I am looking for Dr Who/Sci Fi magazines to advertise my mail order books. Any help would be welcome. Darren Meaker, Domino Books, Unit 10 Station Road Workshops, Station Road, Kingswood, Bristol BS15 4PJ.

**O'Hagan's Sausage Shop:** High meat/low fat content sausages made without chemical preservatives, so should be eaten or frozen almost immediately. The range is impressive — a pork and spinach recipe was discovered in the Samuel Pepys library in Cambridge; others include apple, prawn, ale, olive, juniper berries and coriander. 192 Trafalgar Road, Greenwich, London SW10 9TZ.

**Videos for Sale:** BBC *Blakes 7* PAL videos for sale (Tape 1 - "The Way Back"/"Space Fall"; Tape 2 - "Alpha"/"Time Squad"; Tape 3 "The Web"/"Seek-Locate-Destroy"; Tape 4 - "Mission to Destiny"/"Duel"; Tape 5 - "Project Avalon"/"Breakdown"; Tape 6 - "Bounty"/"Deliverance"). Anyone interested? Make an offer. Contact Steve Trease, 67 Gairn Road, Aberdeen AB1 6AP, Tel: 0224 571592.

**Alleged torture victims in Kashmir:** They are dying because of a lack of renal dialysis equipment. In Kashmir, there are only two dialysis machines, one of which is operational, for a population of eight million. If you want to help, please contact Dr Siraj Shah at Parrock Street Surgery, 186 Parrock Street, Gravesend, Kent DA12 0E (tel: 0474 569748).

**Lord Dunsany wanted:** I am looking for his fantasy and also detective novels. The fantasy I like anyway and would like to own, but I am sure that his detective said that Charing Cross Station was one of the few places in the world where, if you stayed long enough, you would meet everyone, even the person you were looking for. Jenny Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP (Tel: 0532 791264).

# The borders of SF and F

Funnily enough, Michael Swanwick, in the September *Asimov's* lead editorial, states that Fantasy and Science Fiction have at last come to the parting of the ways. Fantasy has become a substantial genre in its own right, and he waves it a fond farewell. Trouble is, when you start a discussion of the two, you are down to definitions, and those are as insubstantial as catching quicksilver. There are numerous SF paradigms that are probably fantasy ... telepathy, teleportation, take Julian May's characters far-speaking over hundreds of millions of light years. No doubt there are innumerable others ... there has been a long tradition of the two genres merging in a somewhat hazy area in the middle.

The modern Fantasy publishing genre is not necessarily the historical view of Fantasy as per Fritz Leiber *et al.* The post-Tolkien and Terry Brooks Fantasy is another animal altogether. The blockbusters that crowd the shelf now, have much more in common with the historical novel, than the mid-century fantasy. Indeed, one gets the feeling that a whole load of fantasy novels are quasi-historical without having to do the research. In many ways, the modern fantasy blockbuster has also committed many of the sins of SF — perhaps because they come from similar areas. SF has its accepted background of FRL, robots, space exploration, mind communication etc., etc., which are used as implicit by most modern SF writers. Equally, the medieval mish-mash of serfs and nobles, swords and damsels in distress. Then, if you have read one, then you seem to have read the lot.

Of course, people being what they are, the majority of people pick from the menu available, and have a broad reading meal. Who is to say that the fantasy of Guy Kay or Tolkien or C J Cherryh is not the equal of most SF? The only trouble is, that the very success of the modern blockbuster epic fantasy, has again illustrated Sturgeon's law.

— Philip Muldowney

As for the vexing question of the Fantasy/SF divide. I confess that I am far from being up to date with books available in either category. My rule of thumb is that stories set in medieval earth (most often Britain, even though not so named) be they alternative world or sword or sorcery, do not as a rule involve any scientific research or principle and are therefore fantasy. Other planet stories (even though the social development of the people living on the planet is akin to that of historical earth societies) should, if well written, involve some hard and so-called soft science. Astronomy, Planetology, Botany, Zoology, is the planetary system orbiting the sun or suns, is the terrain, flora and fauna at least plausible? Biology, Sociology and possibly Psychology if the characters are earth descendants, could they possibly survive and adapt, is the culture portrayed consistent with itself and any stimulus outlined in the narrative, are the actions of the main protagonists psychologically feasible? Take the science along with a fantasy element and I would suggest the books straddle the line, I would include the *Dune* series and the *Dragon* series as straddlers. *1984*, which is purely an extrapolation of the author's perceived society political and social science along with some supporting technological extrapolation, I would put in the SF category. Bob Shaw writes SF, his technological inventions may be very pseudo-science, but have hard science background knowledge and his stories are very good on sociology being about the type of society that would develop given the wide spread use of his inventions. Zenna Henderson writes SF, regarding mental powers are no proven rather than as fantasy, she uses sociology and medical knowledge to develop her stories.

The foregoing is a very personal rule of thumb and there are some space operas that don't come into the SF category (the author having no more scientific knowledge than is available to any one reading a popular science article in a magazine) but are enjoyable yarns for all that. I have enjoyed books from every category and while I can understand that categorisation may be relevant to publishers and authors, I don't think fans should get too hot under the collar about the matter.

— Pamela Boal

Is there a divide at all? Surely far future SF can be indistinguishable from fantasy — who's to say that a magician isn't the result of an inherited genetic implant. Perhaps that's the difference, the jargon used to describe what goes on. If the hero doesn't age during his sleep, by reciting a spell and experiencing flashing lights as he settles onto his bed, then this is fantasy, but if he gives instructions to his computer and is enveloped in coloured fields of light upon retiring, then we are firmly in SF. Or should we say that all writing that isn't based strictly in realism must by definition be fantasy. Therefore, SF is merely a sub-genre of Fantasy, one in which the fantastic elements are explained through the use of science and technology, however far-fetched this might be. Let's look at Anne McCaffrey's *Dragon* books. They are generally accepted into the field of fantasy and certain began in that vein, yet now all the goings on are explained scientifically in the latest books. Does this mean the first books have now become SF since they have a scientific grounding?

*Dune* could be taken as an example of a cross-over book. It is marketed as SF, and with the Empire and such like fits within the definition, but for the majority of the time with Paul in the desert, the witch-like Bene Gesserit, the Fremen, it could have been written as fantasy. So our divide is one of language and perception — for me, *Lord of the Rings* will always be Fantasy and *Foundation* always SF, but they will stand side by side on my shelves. If a friend who loves fantasy asks to see my shelves and borrow a few books, he will have to wade through both genres and select what he likes, possibly having taken some of what I perceive as SF.

As far as Horror goes, it can be within any genre. It will tend to have that element of fantasy (ie not realism) in it, but not necessarily. Horror can strike anyone, anywhere, anytime, whether he be a hobbit called Frodo, a robot called Marvin or a Liverpudlian today. Was *Hound of the Baskervilles* a crime novel? *Clarissa* a romance? *The Prisoner* SF?

— Daniel Buck

I don't think genre labels are of much significance any more, except to the marketing people and a few readers so blinkered they won't consider anything from outside the genre they feel safe with. Novels like *The Stand* and *Firestarter* are based on Science Fictional premises, but because of the gore content and King's track record, they are presented as Horror. Alternate time stream stories such as Orson Scott Card's *Alvin Maker* series would once have been clearly recognised as Science Fiction, but now they are marketed as Fantasy because Fantasy sells more. Books like *The Doomsday Conspiracy* by Sidney Sheldon about alien contact and *Descent From Canada* by Harold Robbins about the quest for immortality are sold as thrillers or general fiction, because no one associates those writers with Science Fiction and it's unlikely their readers would look for them on the shelves reserved for that genre.

The genre boundaries have never been hard and fast, and there has always been cross-fertilisation between genres. The past ten years have seen an acceleration of this process of blurring genre boundaries, perhaps mirroring what is going on in the real world, where our old, safe categorisations are rapidly failing, forcing us to rethink many things we once took for granted. I welcome this shift, in fiction at least, and believe it will be of enormous benefit to writers and readers alike.

If you forced me to define the difference between Science Fiction and Fantasy, I'd say that in the latter a writer's imagination plays a greater part; Science Fiction, in contrast, is a speculative literature. The worlds of *Dune* and *Foundation*, however imaginative the events that take place in them, are rooted in our present day, whereas that of Middle Earth grew from seed in a writer's head. Science Fiction is about what might have been and might yet be; Fantasy is the realm of what never could have been and never will be. It's a tentative argument and not one I can state with any great conviction. Increasingly, I feel where books are concerned the only labels which matter are "good" and "bad", which are entirely subjective. We should concentrate on finding more of the former and leave genre dogmatism to those with nothing better to do. After all, if you enjoy a book, does it matter if that book is Science Fiction or Fantasy? I think not.

— Peter Tennant

## Hugo/Nebula CD-ROM

### David Bell

This is a wonderful collection of SF, a useful collection of related Internet archives, and a frustratingly variable sampler of fandom. If you have a PC or Apple Mac which can handle multi-media, you can get at everything. If you are limited to text, the data is accessible. If you don't have a CD-ROM drive, this is a good reason to get one, because it is a snapshot of the SF world and a valuable historical resource. Last year you could get the short fiction over the Internet. This year you can get almost everything: all the Hugo-nominated fiction, all but two of the Nebula-nominated short fiction works, samples of the writings of the John W Campbell Award nominees, samples of art, fanzines and fan-writing, over a decade of SF discussion on the Internet, *The Enchanted Duplicator*, and, as usual, Dave Langford. There are interesting lists that tell you about SF on particular subjects, such as Alternate Worlds. There are tv episode guides. There is damn near everything, and I have a deadline to meet.

For the text side of things, the software works pretty well. I am not convinced that computer screens can replace books; it would need some pretty massive changes in technology and the publishing industry. The technology works, but don't try to persuade me that I can tuck it away in my pocket. At least, not without special pockets that the tailors call "game pockets" and everyone else calls "poacher's pockets". If you want to look at the pictures or at the video clips of some of the authors, things seem to work better in a 256-colour video mode. For the text, it is better to read colours for dots on the screen. Unfortunately, many of the upper-level menus are based on pictures. Reading the notes, the multi-media software used has some serious weaknesses, and that is for both Microsoft Windows and for the Apple Macintosh. The other problem for the pictures is that they are far too big. A good computer monitor will show about a hundred dots per inch. The pictures have been scanned at two to three hundred dots per inch. You only see a small part of a magazine or book cover, or of any other picture.

Despite that, the graphics are spectacular. I am not sure that it was right to represent particular fanzines only by scanned pages, but Brad Templeton and the rest of the team were in a hurry to put things together. Given more time, they might have been able to work around some of the problems.

Some aspects of the CD-ROM could only have been handled by a computer. For *China Mountain Zhang* you can hear the author reading the first chapter and telling you how to pronounce the Chinese words. How many books would come with a tape? The annotated version of *A Fire Upon the Deep* is essentially the original, electronic, manuscript with all of Vernor Vinge's notes to himself. I suppose it beats waiting for your son to look at the back of those examination scripts, and serious literary criticism types will be treading on their tongues. The notes don't get in the way, because all that shows are a few odd symbols in the margin. The video clips are nice, but they do show how much computer power multi-media really needs. Even as a tiny window, I'm only seeing four or five frames per second. And it really makes Microsoft look a little inept for not writing software that will cache a CD-ROM drive.

I was a little disappointed by the way in which the fanzines were treated. *Lan's Lantern*, *Stet* and *Mimosa* are represented by scanned images of pages, with the usual size problem. All except one page of *Stet* are in black and white, all are standard BMP files, and the multi-media software can only reliably display them when my machine is its low-resolution 256-colour mode. Oddly enough, the one multi-colour page can be displayed in the 16-colour mode I usually use. While graphics are the only way to deal with cover art, it is a bit pointless to include only that and the contents pages. I suppose that there are problems with copyrights, but it isn't much use for deciding how to vote for a Hugo ballot.

The one area not covered is that of the Dramatic Presentation Hugos. Hollywood, it seems, isn't interested in Awards made so long after a film or TV programme is shown. Pictures, especially moving pictures, take up a lot of disk space. Instead, the space gets filled by the SF-Lovers Digest archives, and a lot of other data. Some of these files are rather too big for commonly used software to easily cope with. It turns out that the program I use to view big files can't handle these. LIST.COM will work, but there are big problems with searching for particular text, since it has to read the file from disk. One file runs to over seven megabytes. There is also the rec.humor.funny archive, which is tolerable padding. Some of it is even funny.

Some of you will want details. There is so much stuff on this CD-ROM that there is no way I can tell you about everything. Both "Protection" and *China Mountain Zhang* deal with future totalitarian-socialist versions of the USA. *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* with a twist? Well, we can argue all you like about the relevance of the winter of 1989/90, and the euphoria of Confucius, the Worldcon in the Netherlands, has faded, but the story of "Protection" rings a bit too much of a Bat Durston in its re-working of the Gulags. *China Mountain Zhang* looks better, from what I've read so far. Mike Resnick, in "The Lotus and the Spear", turns out to say a lot more about the idea of an ordered society. What do you do about those who would rebel? It is a much more evocative story, spear-like in its sharpness.

*The Enchanted Duplicator* has been floating around SF networks for several years. The fanzine *Pulp* once did the first part of it in the style of a computer adventure game. In one sense, it is seen as the fanzine Bible, but look at some of the trouble that gets tangled up with Bibles. Like the Bible, some people are inclined to take it too literally in a changed world. A lot has happened in the last forty years. Go and read it for yourself, and you will see so many of the same sorts of enemy floating around fandom today. Some things don't change quite as much as they seem. *The Enchanted Duplicator* of today may be as much plastic and silicon as it once was steel and rubber.

Parts of *Let's Hear it for the Deaf Man* have been in my fanzine library for years; other examples of the fan writing have not. Harry Warner Jr gets stuck into Tom Godwin's *The Cold Equations* with some serious criticisms of the flaws of the story. And yes, there are a lot of ways out of the corner he paints the characters into. Somehow, he seems to miss the possibility that the story is a fable, in which case it is pointless to argue about whether or not foxes can talk. Which reminds me. Tucked away in the joke books, there is the *Star Trek* versus the Road Runner story. In the form of the Captain's Log.

One important point is that two of the Nebula novellas are encrypted, since it was only possible to get the rights for USA publication. The source code for the decryption program is included ... I don't think it will be as easy to crack as that makes it sound, but there is one possible weakness in the system.

The original inspiration was the distribution, last year, of Hugo-nominated short fiction on the Internet. Last year, I felt that some of the stories were not even SF or Fantasy, though one, at least, was very fanzine. This time round, there have been problems, and some things will have to be done better. I don't like struggling with multi-megabyte text files. I hope the scheme can be repeated. I'm just trying to imagine the look on Brad Templeton's face when he gets a stack of those three-inch Amstrad floppy disks from all the British fans nominated for Hugos at Intersection. Or maybe even cassette tape. Does anyone want to borrow my old TR5-80?

If you have a CD-ROM drive, this is worth getting. Cost is just short of \$35, or £24 when it hit my credit card. For that, you get five novels and over thirty works of short fiction. You get a snapshot of the SF World in the middle of 1993. This isn't quite a CD-ROM killer app, which will persuade everyone to get the hardware, but it is worth getting if you are thinking of buying a CD-ROM drive, or have some temporary access to a drive. [Published by Clarinet Communications Corporation, 4880 Stevens Creek Blvd., 206 San Jose, CA 95129, USA. ISSN 1-56941-01207]

## Clubs

Taking full advantage of the willingness of new students to come to the Freshers Fair and join any societies going, Aberdeen went one better and organised a day long convention, Condensed. Addresses of some University societies follow:

**Aberdeen:** Contact: Aberdeen University Science Fiction & Fantasy Society, Luthuli House, SRC Building, College Bounds, Old Aberdeen, Aberdeen (contact Peter Binfield)

**Brighton:** President: Dan Laufer. Contact: Final Frontier, Students' Union, Cockcroft Building, Moulsecoomb Site, Brighton University, Brighton  
**Cambridge:** Cambridge University Science Fiction Society (CUSFS); Chairbeing: Nick Clarke; Fanzine: TTBA; Contact: Helen Steele, 38 Scotland Road, Cambridge. Phone: 0223 564483 (evenings)

**Imperial College:** Imperial College Science Fiction Society (ICSF). Contact: Imperial College Science Fiction Society, Imperial College Union, Prince Consort Road, South Kensington, London SW7 2BB

**Keele:** Contact Paul Wilder, 14 St Edmunds Avenue, Porthill, Newcastle under Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 9AB. Phone: 0782 621215

**Leeds:** Leeds University Science Fiction Society, Leeds University Union, PO Box 157, Leeds LS1 1UH

**Middles:** Bill Ray, 24 Tash Place, New Southgate, M61 1PA

**Oxford:** Oxford Speculative Fiction Group. Contact Mark Charley, Wadham College, Oxford OX1 3PN

**Warwick:** University of Warwick Science Fiction and Fantasy Society (UWSF&FS). Contact UWSF&FS, Arts Fed Pigeonholes, Students' Union, University of Warwick, Gibbet Hill Road, Coventry, CV4 7AL

## NSSFA Extinct

During this productive Annual General Meeting meeting in Leeds at the end of July, the official version of the NSSFA was voted out of existence. There will continue to be a mailing list and, for the moment at least, Gareth Ross of Cambridge will act as a central information point (e-mail and snail-mail) for all societies wishing to contact others or wanting other information regarding SF events etc. As part of its death-throes and to use up the money left in the account, a booklet is to be produced (edited by Andrew Adams). This booklet is intended to help societies run events and provide services. It will consist of a sequence of hints, information etc. on what the various societies do well, what problems they have encountered, how they have overcome them, both in detail and in general. Some of the topics suggested have been: Running an SF library. Showing Films or videos. Guest talks. Running small conventions.

What I am wanting is as much information from each society about what they do well, and how they do it, and what they do badly and how they do it. Just to give you an example, Leeds runs a very successful Library service for its members, we have over 2500 SF books and it forms the most active part of our society. Recently we have finally started running films at an overall profit. not all our films make a profit, but those that don't are usually classic films we want to show. But we have had very little success with guest talks (at one recently the Chairman of the society was the only person to turn up apart from the guest and the guest's SO). What Leeds will do is explain how our library is run, what we feel are the factors behind its success, and the same with our films. We will also try to explain what we feel our failures might be with discussion evenings and guests. The deadline for this information is fairly long-term, given the amount of enthusiasm for past ventures among the Student SF community. I'm wanting to have enough information by Eastercon (SowWester, in Liverpool, Easter 1994) to make a short presentation about it to those present, and will then edit the booklet for presentation at BaCon (next year's Unicorn at Cambridge). So, get your thinking caps on and get writing. Contact me, Andrew Adams, at Flat 18, 26 Brudenell Road, Leeds LS6 1BD. (Tel: 0532 789237).

## Convention Latest

The 1996 Worldcon, L.A.con III will be held August 29 through September 2 1996 at the Anaheim Convention Center, the Anaheim Hilton and the Anaheim Marriott in Anaheim, California, very close to Disney World. Guests of Honour are James White, Roger Corman, Takumi Shibano and Sachiko Shibano and Elsie Wohlheim. Toastmaster is Connie Willis. Non pre-supporting non-voters can register at \$75 to August 15 1994.

The address is L.A.con III, c/o S.C.I.F.I., PO Box 8442, Van Nuys, CA 91409.

Los Angeles received 926 votes at ConFrancisco and 206 mail-in votes for a total of 1132 votes. The choice "None of the above" received 50 votes at the door and 11 votes by mail. Write in votes were cast for Hawaii (18 at the door, 1 by mail), Minneapolis in '73 (3 at the door), La-La Lane (2 at the door) and I-6 in '96 (2 at the door).

Others receiving one vote each were Rottnest Island, W.A., Prudhoe Bay Alaska, hold over funds, Timbuktu, R'leyn in '96, Ougadougou, Reyjavik Iceland, L-5 in '95 and Spuzzum B.C. One vote was illegal or invalid.

The second Progress Report for Intersection, the Glasgow Worldcon in 1995, has just been printed and has an alphabetic list of interesting and, perhaps, obscure facts about Glasgow and previous Glasgow conventions by Ian Sorensen. Some gems follow: James White dedicated one of his Sector General books to the local group, Friends of Kilgore Trout, and even created for classification FOKT to describe creatures who, when threatened, bunch together in a carpet-like group entity with a tartan pattern. Unfortunately, Ian adds dryly, "the more they join together, they lower their intelligence becomes". Back in 1985, both Harlan Ellison and Anne McCaffrey were Guests of Honour and Harlan took writing a piece on her for the programme book with great seriousness. He wrote "She murdered her first husband to gain control of his steamship line. For three and a half years she ran the most infamous brothel in Calcutta; a churnal house in which a British MP met his demise at the hands of a paid of Eurasian houri notorious as the only practitioners of the dreaded 'wolf trap' position". Anne McCaffrey took this with her usual good grace, adds Ian, as dryly as ever, and "in public, only threatened to kill him twice".

The aim of the Progress Report, though, is to give a feel of the Congress Centre where most of the convention will be held (some programming will be in the adjacent Moat House hotel, some evening and late night programming will be in other hotels). One plan which is immediately noticeable as being new to British conventions is the Fan Faire. It has been tried at several large US conventions. The idea is to give different groups a showcase. There will be lots of displays, pictures, photographs and quizzes from the informative to the entertaining together with workshops and very special events.

Another scheme is The International Twinship Scheme, which can be either Direct or Virtual. Intersection is trying really hard to attract people from all over the world, not just the English speaking countries and various forms of assistance are being offered to foreign SF readers who would otherwise not be able to afford to come. Colin Fine is co-ordinating this scheme, and can be contacted at the new convention address: Intersection, Admail 336, Glasgow G2 1BR.

Attending membership from October 1993 is £60 and will rise in small stages as the convention approaches. The convention has set up a central address for mail: Intersection, Admail 336, Glasgow G2 1BR, United Kingdom.

There are various agents for more far flung SF readers to write to:

**Australia:** Justin Ackroyd, GPO Box 2708X, Melbourne, Victoria 3001

**Benelux:** Kees van Toorn, Postbus 3114, 3003 AK Rotterdam

**Canada:** Lloyd and Yvonne Penny, 4 Lisa Street, Apt 412, Brampton,

Ontario L6T 4B6

Croatia: Krsto Mazurancic, D Zokajka 1, 41430 Samobor  
 Czech Republic & Slovakia: Eva Hauser, Na Cihadle 55, 16000 Praha 6  
 Finland: Toni Jermann, Junailijankuja 1 B 29, 00520 Helsinki  
 France: Ellen Herzfeld, 189 Rue du Faubourg, Saint-Denis, Paris 75010  
 Germany: Matthias Hofmann, Kirchbergstr. 14, D 7800 Freiburg i Br.  
 Ireland: Brendan and Helen Ryder, 30 Beverly Down, Knocklyon Road, Templeogue, Dublin 16  
 Japan: Masamichi Ishikawa, 523, 1-5-11 Inaba, Higashi, Osaka 578  
 North America: T R Smith, Box 15430, Washington, DC 20003, USA.  
 Norway: Heidi Lyshol, Maridalen 235A, N 0467 Oslo  
 Poland: Piotr Cholewa, Al Zwyciestwa 8/22, 41 200 Sosnowiec  
 Romania: Alexandru Mironov, Calea Dorobanti 191, Bucuresti  
 Russia: Mikhail Jakubowski, Per Podshipnikovei 12, kv 10 344102 g. Rostov on Don  
 Sweden: Carina and Andreas Bjorkind, Funjunkaregatan 9, S-482 46 Linköping  
 Ukraine: Leonid Kouritz, Admiral Makarov Str. 58 # 24, 327001 Nikolaev

One of the aims of the programme planners is to involve SF readers and they are especially interested in ideas from BSFA members. If you wish to contribute, please write to one (or more) of the following (more addresses next time):

Fan Programming: Jenny and Steve Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP (tel: 0532 791264)

Science Programming: John Bray 28 Russell COurt Oakhill Crescent Surbiton Surrey KT6 6EE 081-399-7502 jbray@cix.compulink.co.uk or Amanda Baker and Dave Clements 3 Bishop's Court John Garne Way Marston Road Oxford OX65-722798 dlc@astro.ox.ac.uk acb@mail.ust.cam.ac.uk — there is also an electronic mailing list called 'intersci@robots.ox.ac.uk', to join mail 'intersci-request@robots.ox.ac.uk', which goes to the organiser, Adrian Cox.

## Mexican

Jan van 't Ent

I went [to the castle ruins in Scarborough] Sunday morning to discover a fairly extensive walled-off cliff top and the impressive wall of the dominating keep. The whole complex is kept up by the English Heritage, which seems to do a pretty good job of it. I found it an interesting little excursion, although I was probably most intrigued by finding out that it was German WW1-battlecruisers of the Hochseeflotte that did the final bit of destruction to the medieval castle. That seemed almost like a time paradox, or maybe a bit like a swords-and-spaceships story.

[Mexican] was a very nice con, and the programme looked very interesting. The interviews with the Guests, next to Pat Cadigan there were also Ian McDonald and Norman Spinrad, were a nice way to get to know something about the authors. Alas I missed the McDonald interview by Paul McAuley, which was on Friday, so I still don't know much about him.

The Cadigan interview by Paul Kincaid was my very first programme item of the con. In that we could learn some things about Pat's view of the world, which sort of matches the world in her stories, at least in so far as to say that the world we're living in isn't okay. Her writing seems to be basically that of short stories, which occasionally she gets so interested in that it gets worked out as the whole novel. *Mindplayers* started as a short story about a "neurosis poddler" until the character of Nelson Nelson came in and the whole thing became a much different story about a "pathos finder". here, and in *Fools*, it's the human mind, and memory, that's the focus of the stories; it's a fascination with changes, from kids' play, to the show people put on to be seen differently than they are, or even very real changes because of accidents, etc. *Synners* was a sort of experiment that grew out of the short story "Rock On" — that is the story in Sterling's *Mirrorshades*, and as such probably one

of her best known stories. These are also the closest she comes to the original Cyberpunk genre; computers and hackers and virtual reality all take a part there, albeit fairly close to current technology and speaking of experiments: so was the short story "Fifty Ways to Improve Your Orgasm", that started from a discussion on Delphi (another electronic forum) about blubs selling a story ... well, this is a good one, and of course the only better one ("Fifty More ...") has been done too. It's about an alien form of the past ways of humans, by the way, and mostly works on the gimmick that the aliens can't make a difference between coming and arriving; fairly good, but somewhat uneven (and fifty seemed too high a number to really keep it interesting)

I also went to the Spinrad interview by Ellen Datlow. It had an interesting start when Norman mentioned that he wasn't really interested in politics at all, which came as somewhat of a surprise to all ... Of course, Norman later amended that by agreeing that he, perhaps somewhat like Dickens, wants to include a "whole" world in his stories. And coming from a political family, he naturally found that politics just belonged in such a world now. After living in France for several years now, but mainly because of all the travelling all over Europe, Norman felt himself to be more like a truly international writer. What he thinks especially fascinating to see is the multitude of differences that appear over such short distances. As for his view on the publishing industry that isn't so favourable. Norman thinks it's gotten much too commercial: "They buy shit, and they know it". Although he makes a difference between novels and short stories, the last being written much more out of love than with any real commercial goal. To make a living, though, many writers are simply forced to expand their novella ideas into full sized novels or even series, and that just ain't no good.

Other interesting programme items included "Waves of Synchronicity" (on trends), "The Long and Winding Road" (on getting into print), "Dangerous Visions" (on self-censorship), "Peasles and Trofts" (on [il]literary fantasy and Tom Shippey's lecture "The Critique of American in Contemporary Science Fiction"). Alas, I got side tracked often enough to have attended only a few of them.

Despite the fact of this being a "literary" convention, there were also enough fanish items to attract quite a few. The most brazen thing was the stealth video programme (with many passers-by entering the room only a step or so to see things like *Piranha Women in the Avocado Jungle of Death*). Of course, there were some book launches and parties, but also items varying from fan-writing to a quiz, and from a fan auction to bed-time stories. (Okay, not quite so fanish, but a nice note to end on).

## QL Review

Barbara Davies

The voice-over introducing each week's episode of *Quantum Leap* (absent from the first season — perhaps there were complaints from bewildered viewers) goes: "Theorising that one could time travel within his own life time, Dr Sam Beckett stepped into the Quantum Leap Accelerator and ..."

The underlying premise of this SF tv series doesn't bear too much close examination. The time span doesn't go before the 1950s and the location is the United States, except for a brief foray to Vietnam. The "unknown force" which drives Sam seems to be God — though his purposes tend to be unclear. As for changing history through his actions, this is completely ignored by *Quantum Leap*, unlike *Star Trek*, which met the concept head on in "City on the Edge of Forever" where Kirk had to let the Joan Collins character be killed.

It might be fair to judge *Quantum Leap* on its merits. It aims for the "feel good" factor. Every week, Sam spots evidence of injustice and fixes it. Just like that. He is good looking and talented — musical, personable and a genius to boot. The series has an innocent, irresistible charm — and Scott Bakula

playing Sam Bockert is certainly easy on the eye. Concerning the plot, it was an original idea to make Al a hologram, but there are niggling doubts, for while Al can follow Sam through space and time, the explanation is rarely forthcoming, if ever. There are continuity problems too — clothes affected by the breeze, the hologram casting a shadow like any solid person. And, most irritating of all, wouldn't Al have sorted out his hand-held computer access device by now? After three seasons?

Then there is the stock situation which always appears. Al is always letting his lust for women distract him and Sam continues to address Al in public, so it looks like he is talking to himself. Don't these super-intelligent scientists ever learn? But it is nice to see a male tv star confident enough to wear female clothes whenever he leaps into a woman. Unfortunately, there is inevitably a patronising aspect to a white, all-American male sorting out problems which blacks or women are unable to sort out for themselves. And the solutions sometimes leave a lot to be desired; Sam solves sexual harassment by punching the offender in the face! Is this really what men think women do?

Considering the series has been going for so long, there are some good signs. This season has seen some of the most adventurous and effective ideas yet — my favourite episode had Sam becoming a chimpanzee used by a space agency and it is interesting to see writers occasionally pushing ideas further. Mind, some episodes have had credits for two co-executive producers, one supervising producer and four producers — talk about over-kill. With that many cooks, it's surprising that anything other than pap ever gets onto the screen. Even so, Sam's catchphrase as he first assesses each situation seems to have transferred itself indelibly into my consciousness. Oh boy! Oh boy!

## Anime

### Geoff Cowie

Now in the shops are the following videos:

**Warriors of the Wind:** (First Independent cert. U, PAL, £5.99, 94 mins). Re-release of cut and dubbed version of Miyuzaki's famous environmental fable, *Nausicaä*. The animation is superb, and it's cheap, so if you can't get the original uncut version, get this.

**Judge:** (dir Hiroshi Nagishi, Manga Video MANV1017, PAL, 50 mins, English dialogue, cert 15, £8.99) The story begins in the offices of a large Japanese trading company, some of whose executives have been dipping their fingers in the till and dealing dirtily with those who might expose this.

In the world of *Judge*, justice is ultimately dealt out, when the ordinary legal system fails, by the Law of Darkness. The dead seek retribution from the spirit world for the crimes committed against them, and their pleas are communicated through the Statute Book, a living collection of judicial precedents recorded on human skin and controlled by the merciless Judge of Darkness. In the real world, the hero is Mr Nice Guy, clumsy, passed over for promotion and treated with some contempt by his colleagues, except for one girl who is clearly fond of him. His secret identity is known to nobody. He is an attractive character, but the name of Clark Kent comes rather too quickly to mind. When he stumbles on some clues rather by accident, the real action begins.

*Judge* is a very black comedy. The animation is nothing special, but the British dubbing is good and the storyline holds one's attention sufficiently for the fifty minutes to pass pleasantly enough.

## Look out for:

**Crying Freeman** (Part 2/9, dir Daisuke Nishio, Manga Video MANV1015, 50 mins, PAL, cert 18, £8.99) Adapted from the manga about a man who is

forced into becoming an assassin for a tong gang. The anime follows this plot fairly closely. Typically Japanese in the juxtaposition of beauty, tenderness and extreme violence. The episodes are fairly self-contained.

**Doomed Metropolis:** (Part 2, dir Kazuhiko Katayama, Manga Video MANV1015, 50 mins, PAL, cert 15, £8.99) A continuation of the interesting and stylish anime incorporating 20th century history, horror and psychic powers.

**Ultimate Teacher:** (dir Toyoo Ashida, Manga Video MANV1018, PAL, 50 mins, English dialogue, cert 15, £8.99) Ganbachi escapes from a secret genetic engineering lab. Briefly, he becomes a teacher and meets Hinako, beautiful gang leader and wearing of the "Velvet Pussy" pants. Much thuggery, innuendo, farce and underwear flaunting follows. Likely to be enjoyed by naughty schoolgirls.

**Mangamania:** This new UK-published magazine mainly consists of reprints of popular American-translated Japanese *Manga* such as *Akira*, *Godzilla* and *Appleseed*, but it contains several pages of anime and manga news and reviews covering the British, American and Japanese markets. It's rather downmarket in style, but, at £1.99 for 128pp, good value.

## Competition Corner

### Roger Robinson

### Results of "Tele-Vision"

Thanks to all seven entrants, who between them produced twenty verses of very varied formats — from "in the style of Allen Ginsberg" to the more recognisable limerick. The overall winner by a very short head was John Madracki, from (in joint second place) Nigel Parsons and Sue Jones. Thanks also to Sino, Peter Redfern, Andy Mills and David Greenwood (of Luxembourg) who also entered. Here is a sample:

**BLAKE'S SEVEN** — John Madracki

A dead litho' printer from Devon  
Had to rate his own work, while in heaven,  
He'd met William Blake,  
And just for his sake  
He marked himself five, to Blake's seven.

**HAIKI** — Nigel Parsons

Martians came to Earth  
In merc'y powered rockets  
Fuelled from Hg wells

**HAIKWHO** — Sue Jones

Dusty horsehair smell  
Back of settee  
Saturday night  
— Scents of wonder

## Crossword Results

A very healthy 25 strong entry with less typos than some of you thought. First out of the hat was Terence Chapman of Reading, to whom congratulations and a prize is due. Unlucky runners up are Susan Francis and Neal Asher.

# "Linkages"

A straight quiz this time. All I need are the names that link each pair below, one name per pair. Just to give you the idea, the answer to 1 is Wilson. *Hothouse* is by Brian WILSON Aldiss and the *Illuminatus!* series is by Robert Anton WILSON.

Hothouse and *Illuminatus!* series; Babel 17 and Mark Twain; The Long Walk and Fay Wray; Alex Raymond and Dorsai; A Torrent of Faces and Kate Wilhelm; Discworld and Daleks; Film 93 and The Sodom & Gomorrah Business; Rama II and The Six Million Dollar Man; Puckoon and The Sword in the Stone; All 58 Laser book covers and Planet of Whispers; Sidney Jordan and Ivan Yermakov; J B DiGriz and Viroconium; The major SFWA award and A Scottish SF magazine; The No 1 SF fan and Dr McCoy; Riverworld and Come, Hunt an Earthman. Answers please to Roger Robinson, 75 Rosslyn Ave, Harold Wood, Essex RM3 0RG by 15 November, please.



## Across

- 1 Incite Tarot suit to generate ovigerous receptacles (7)
- 5 You or I sat back to finally enjoy *Lord of the Rings* etc. (7)
- 10 Devise song for worms (8)
- 11 Rest head here with cry of pain -- take medicine first (6)
- 12 Convention held in south-east? No, Glasgow! (5)
- 13 Unrestricted commerce is rated, perhaps? (4,5)
- 15 Knot in gravity provides Ford Prefect's mode of transport (8)
- 17 Mean one to have finally taken care (6)
- 18 Stones Israelite, otherwise remains inconclusive (6)
- 19 Saturn -- it turns for skydial one (8)
- 20 How Blish's cities fly -- turn vertiginous (9)
- 21 Intelligent transport systems come back (5)
- 24 Having got up, disturbance is near (6)
- 25 River found in Dune, surprisingly not proven (8)
- 26 Where wind whales come from, a helm is shattered (7)
- 27 Take fruit to hospital for author (7)

## Down

- 2 Science fictional societies throw me critical pages (8,7)
- 3 Barbarian goes to convention with a neo at first (5)
- 4 Niven's protector eats first of roots in recreation area (4)
- 6 Recognise good qualities of increase in value (10)
- 7 One who puts up with large amount raised by muse, right? (9)
- 8 Fantasy cross -- yer wand is waved, an ogre is captured ... (5,3,7)
- 9 ... monster raised to tarsman's laboratory? (6)
- 14 Individual history based on knowledge of genetics etc. (10)
- 16 Robe woven by church -- man goes crazy (9)
- 19 Incomplete fascist has to pull up ringwraith (6)
- 22 Masters use erbium in microwave amplifier (5)
- 23 Irritation caused by ticket halves being swapped (4)

## Matrix crossword no. 9.

### Solution to Matrix crossword no. 8.

	A	W	R			H		A					
O	F	L	I	G	H	T	Z	E	L	A	Z	N	Y
R	N	E	N	L	M	A							
L	I	T	E	R	A	T	I	M	O	B	I	L	E
C	S			N	E	E	Y						
J	A	C	K	C	R	E	A	T	U	R	E	S	
N	I	A	P		S		T						
	A	N	D	D	A	R	K	N	E	S	S		
S		U		I	O	O	T						
H	E	A	D	L	I	N	E	D	L	O	R	D	
A	L	A	C			S	A						
E	D	I	T	E	D	E	V	E	N	T	I	D	E
O	E	D	S	O	I	E							
S	W	O	R	N	I	N	U	N	I	C	O	R	N
S			E			S	E	S					

