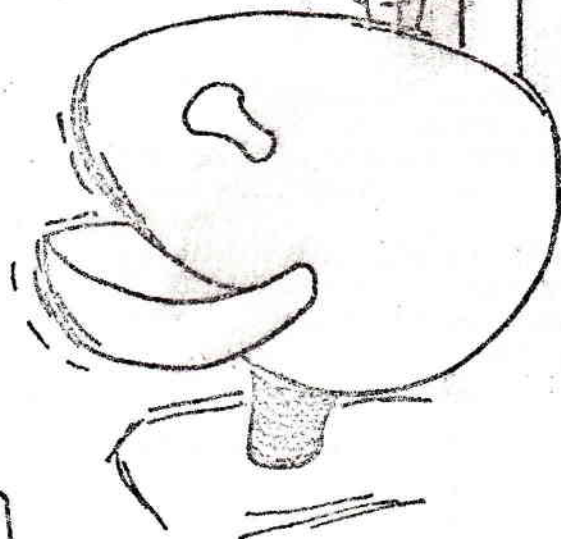
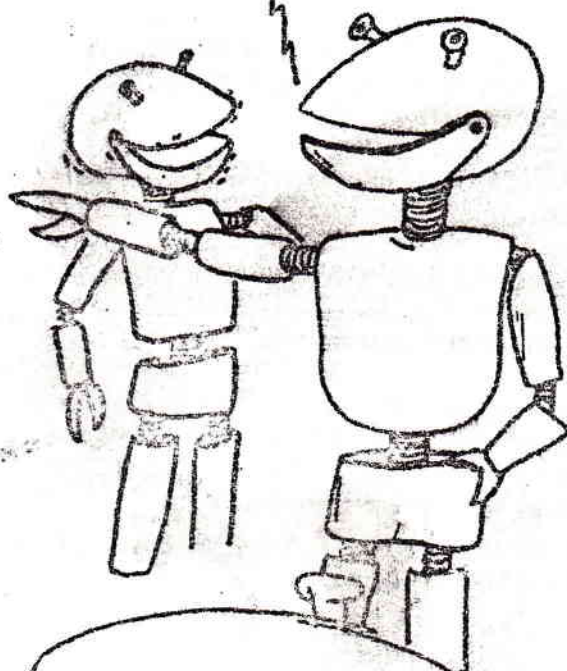
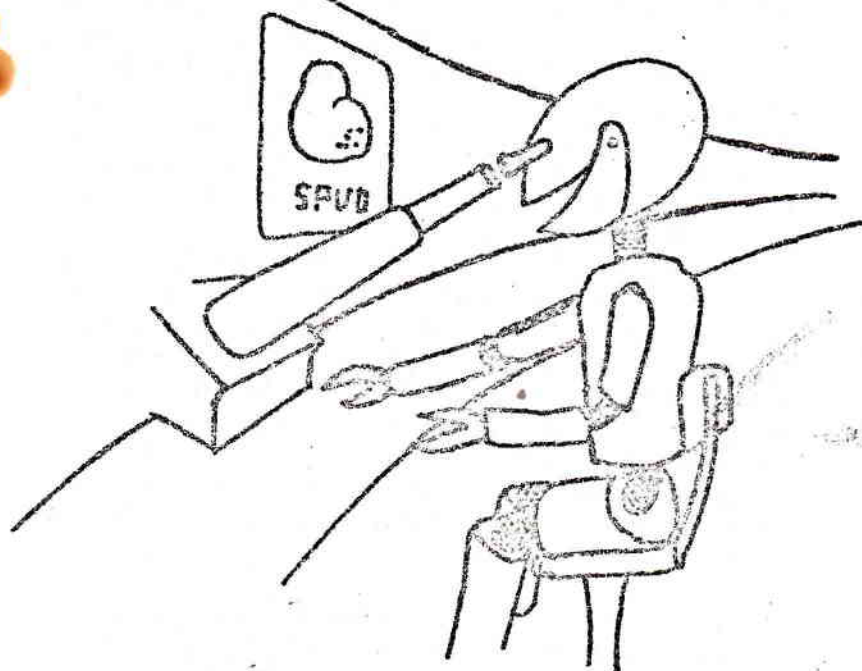


THESE HUMANS OBVIOUSLY ARENT  
ALL THICKOES, SOME  
ACTUALLY READ  
MATRIX.



MAT  
17  
RiX

jackson's island...an escape & an editorial.

For once, the editorial is not the last bit of MATRIX to be typed, so I may take the opportunity to spread myself a bit and chat about nothing in particular. Things have been happening on and about the Island, the most important, of course being the arrival of Harriet Elizabeth at 2 p.m. on March the 2nd (right on time!). At the moment she's beginning to realise at last that there's a whole world out there - and that when she howls in the evening Dad rushes from the typewriter to pick her up. Most times, however, she exists in a sort of eat-sleep-excrete cycle, pausing only to gaze wisely at the chaos about her as if she knew something that would make sense of it all, but isn't telling. A welcome addition to the family. (Thanks for the card, Paul!)

Rosamund, meanwhile has discovered my pile of SF MONTHLYs and leafs through them at every opportunity burbling about robots, spaceships and monsters - is it true that SF is expressly designed to appeal to mentalities of two and a quarter - or have I fathered a being of rare and discriminating taste? Draw your own conclusions. Mary, for her part, has overcome her aversion to SF sufficiently to decide that she wants to see CLOSE ENCOUNTERS, so as soon as H can be left to sleep through the time it takes to visit the cinema, off we go to see STAR WARS for the non-SF-fancying intelligentsia....

Printed by Keith Freeman and his magic duplicator: without whom, etc. etc.

Views expressed in MATRIX are not necessarily those of the BSFA. Opinions expressed by Committee members are to be taken as personal ones except where stated otherwise.

Proofread by Dave Cobbledick (that is: the bits that  
I had time to send him!)

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3 MEMBERS NOTICEBOARD  
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                                & Richard Bancroft.  
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Cover by Andy Elliot; interior artwork by Derek Harkness.

This issue of MATRIX is dedicated, of course to Harriet:

I hope she sees some things that will make her  
time happy  
It all comes in so fast it all comes in....

She knows who she is without looking  
She says it out happy when the feeling is there  
She's an all new person who says just what she  
feels  
She's a fat-faced goddess of nowhere....

From CHINA (Grace Slick) on the Kantner/Slick  
album SUNFIGHTER.

Casting my gaze outwards from the family circle, what do I see? Could it be that SF has Made It???(again). As you'll, probably know, CLOSE ENCOUNTERS was given a Royal Premiere performance. I have, of course, written to the Queen hoping that she enjoyed the film and telling her about the BSFA, so no doubt the next issue of MATRIX will appear with one of those funny "by appointment to...." stamps. Either that. or it won't appear at all when I get arrested for subversion, cheek, high treason, and being one of those naughty people who bought the sex pistols' comment on our National Figurehead.

But as well as having gained the Ultimate Accolade, SF appears in some unlikely places, too. In this issue, Helen Brown and Richard Bancroft take a not-too-serious look at some minor manifestations of TVSF. I'd like to jump on the bandwagon and talk about my favourite TVSF programme - namely, LUDWIG.

Ludvig, created by Mirek and Peter Lang, is a cartoon character currently showing on Granada TV to round off the childrens programmes. He/she/it appears to be a mechanical ovoid living with a number of small furry animals and birds of various descriptions (obviously symbolic of the possibility of the technological and the natural reaching a true harmony). Ludvig and friends are observed by a mysterious individual sporting deerstalker hat and binoculars who comments on the scene from time to time. From within Ludvig's body appear when needed a multitude of arms and legs and objects such as tennis rackets, yoyos, umbrellas and other things with which to amuse or exasperate the various hedgehogs owls or rabbits which share the glade. But who or what is Ludvig? A robot who has escaped from service? An alien? What is the significance of the observer? Obviously, deep metaphysical questions are bubbling under the



surface... anyway, it's nice to see Ludwig van Beethoven get a credit for incidental music in a cartoon show.

There has also been some more conventional SF - by the time you get this, THE HITCH-HIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY will have ended. A pity: I hope you all heard it (Radio 4) and enjoyed it as much as I did. A comedy space adventure, it proved the point I sometimes make that radio is the ideal medium for SF (and comedy). Could TV have given us a whale manifesting itself 300 miles above the surface of a planet (see Phil S-P's letter) or an evening out at the smartest restaurant in the Universe to see the final death of the entire cosmos? A lovely series - and scrub that word 'conventional'. It was on its own; the latest in scientific speculation meets the oldest of jokes....

Play of the week on March 15th was STAR-GAZY ON ZUMMERDOWN by John Fletcher. Despite my well-documented (see lettercol!) mistrust of violence I thought this lacked conflict. Only in the last part where the history of the bloody transition to Utopia was surveyed was there much power. The mixture was strange. William Morris' 'News From Nowhere' visits 'Undercurrents' magazine? Characters talking like 19th century stereotypes lived in conjunction with computers and a projected starship. Blake's Albion, Gerard Winstanley's Commonwealth was linked to 21st century technology, as Town and Country engaged in ritual negotiations concerning their services to each other. Perhaps the TUC and CBI could take up the hint? I thought the whole thing completely loony and enjoyed it tremendously - but then, it depicted my ideal society. But why wasn't Richard Thompson given a credit for his song "The New St George", sung in the play?

This issue: letters and more letters piling in and as yet I don't know just how many remain to be typed! Consequently I'm not sure how long this issue will be... MATRIX still continues to look at fanzines, but instead of capsule reviews in the 'Freeman' tradition, Roger Waddington takes a more in-depth look at recent issues of three fanzines emanating from the U.S. or Canada. Helping with the 'Newshounds' are Paul Fraser, who has undertaken an inquiry into the activities of certain figures in the SF world who certainly seem to be earning their royalties, and Mattin Hatfield, who has provided some Media Notes. Comments on all these new 'appointments' are welcome, please, as are comments on anything else you feel moved to comment on, and anything else you may feel moved to send me.

And don't forget the competition - the prize for the winner being a paperback or an OBE depending on whether the Queen answers my letter!

#### MEMBERS' NOTICEBOARD

WANTED.... Philip K Dick - 'Confessions of a Grop Artist' 'Cosmic Puppets', 'A Handful of Darkness'; "Rolling Stone" No. 199 6/11/75; "Daily Telegraph Magazine 19/6/1975; Keith Roberts' - 'Inner Wheel'; "Eternity" Vol 1 Nos. 2 & 3; any issue of VERTEX (except 6/73 and 12/73; Back issues of ALGOL (pre no.21), SFR (pre no. 40); ALIEN CRITIC 4,5,6, (original editions only); any issues of PSYCHOTIC and of RICHARD E GEIS.

If you can supply, contact Michael J Cross, 41, redland Drive, Kirk Ella, Hull HU10 7UX.

The Leicester SF group is putting out a fanzine, ETH-ERIEL SKIE which is now available. Editorial consultant is Simon Green, 37 St Laurence Rd, Bradford on Avon Wilts.

R.L. Barycz' YCZno. 1 is available for trade/SAE from 16, Musgrave Rd, New Cross Gate, London SE14 5PW. ("Here I was counting on a nice pat on the head from ol' Fallible & now I learn that he's shuffled off to draw his pension & my little zine is going to be exposed to the tender mercies of someone sound in wind and sharp of tooth. It's not fair" Tell I don't review fanzines but I enjoyed this bundle of somewhat lunatic ramblings on such subjects as a discussion of Man as God's first zine. Recommended.))

STEEV HIGGINS, 18, St Austell Ave, Tyldesley, Greater Manchester M29 7FY, plans to start a fanzine this summer and welcomes contributions on such subjects as comics, rock music, modern art, modern poetry and other areas of contemporary culture, as well as SF.

DAVE COBBLEDICK's fanzine TIOFART is now available (he's our membership sec. so his address is on the previous page), and he's looking for contributions for future issues.

The 'alternative arts magazine' LUDDS MILL is available from Andy Darlington, 44 Spa Croft Road, Teall st. Ossett, West Yorks WF5 0HE. The current issue (14) contains poetry, an article on jazz musician Bix Beiderbecke and more. Among the goodies scheduled for issue 15 are stories by BARRINGTON J BAYLEY and STEVE SNEYD.

S.P.U.D.S.??? The purpose of S.P.U.D.S. is to help the amateur publisher to exchange his material for that of other amateur publishers. He can select the publications he prefers and his choice is not restricted to SF. The first three months of membership are free, with no obligation to remain a member. For more details of SPUDS., send S.A.E. to J.S. Cairns, 15 Brinkburn St, Sunderland SR4 7RG. For membership (and list, when published), send F/C S.A.E. with details of your publication/s, including weight.

And with that came this cryptic message... "BSFA member "X" has completed a novella "E.N.R." and hopes that it will be published next year, if only in a

(Anon.)

Why not mention it..... the Liverpool Echo (28/3/78) carried a short interview with Your Editor concerning SF, the BSFA, and NOT ufos.....

MITCH LEVY, 108 Evelyn Ave, Ruislip, HA4 8AQ, writes: "I am one of the driving force behind a prospective magazine, called the Science Fiction Effect. We are a group of determined students who want to produce a high class SF magazine, revolving around up and coming authors and artists. At the moment the magazine is in a state of flux, as there is too little literature for even two issues. The magazine, we hope will contain the following types of story. hard core SF, Science Fantasy, Sword & Sorcery, and possible one-offs on Fashion, weaponry etc. We are all very enthusiastic to see the magazine off the ground, but the delicate question of money creeps in; we're all doing this for nothing, and cannot pay for the manuscripts we accept, unless the publishing goes ahead. But if anyone wants to send us their stories, then we would like to hear from them on this basis."

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 RTC EXTRAS ....from Bill Little.

SFERA is the publication of the Norwich SF group, a very impressive 50page plus fanzine, well loaded with some equally impressive fiction especially in issue two. Anyone wanting a copy - and I can heartily recommend it - send a PO for around 55p to Alan Marshall, 1 Trandall Rd, Sprowston, Norwich.

ETHEREAL SKIE is produced by the Leicester SF group. It's a little slimmer than SFEAR, but no less enthusiastic. Contains a very funny look at the role of beer in science fiction ("Mild is a <sup>H</sup>arsh Mistress") by (believe it or not) Red-nosed Mulligan. Also contains fiction and excruciating jokes. Its priced at 35p which includes p&p. Drop a line to Tony Cullen, 43 Station Rd, Kirby Muxloe, Leicester LE 9 9EL.

Steve Cowperthwaite has requested material for a fanzine called KADFlyer, that the Stafford Group

are producing. Please rally to the cause. Steve's address:  
84, Marston Rd, Stafford, Staffs ST16 3BY. If we can keep  
him busy enough he might not have time to attend the Queen  
qig; should stop him gloating!

The Nottingham SF Group's magazine SCIENCE FICTION FORUM is available, containing an article on Jack Vance, part 3 of a long article on Philip K Dick, with an update to the Dick Bibliography as well as book reviews and fiction. Available from Howard Davies at 42, Park Road, Lenton, Nottingham.

The Ribble Valley SF Group meet on the last Sunday of each month at 12 noon at the Commercial Hotel, Clitheroe, Lancs.

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COMPETITION TIME!!!!

OK all you hundreds of people who are keen puzzle-solvers and love nothing better than pitting your wits against some fiendish task, here is this issue's competition. Below you will see a list of book titles. Only they aren't the real titles! Rearrange the letters to find the title of a book by a major British author of SF. Five titles, five authors, old and new. Send in your answer to the MATRIX editorial address and the first correct entry will win a prize.

AND SOFT SHE RAMS

HE VIEWED ROCK HARTS

HEY THAT OFFSIDE DRIFT

STEVE BRILLO

## THE WRATH WORLD FOES

Anyone sending in mss of novels under those titles will be disqualified!

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Some book news just arrived from NEL: Their May 22nd list includes reissues of HAVE SPACESUIT, WILL TRAVEL and GLOCRY ROAD (Heinlein); WARLORD OF MARS (Edgar Rice Burroughs); THE GODMAKERS (Frank Herbert) and CREATURES OF THE OUTER EDGE (Jerome Clark & Loren Coleman).

Geoff Love & his Orchestra have recorded STAR WARS & OTHER SPACE THEMES; includes STAR TREK, SPACE 1999. (Music for Pleasure).

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And now a serious bit. One member has complained that on receiving his mailing it always turns out to have been opened and re-sealed, probably by GPO men looking for smutty mags or something. Has this happened to anyone else? If so, let Tom Jones or myself know and if this turns out to be a widespread practice we'll have a word with the Post Office Consultative Committee. Thanks. ((Andy))



\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\* SF YOU MAY HAVE MISSED.....?? \*\*  
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SF IN THE UNDER-FIVES TV PROGRAMMES.... by Helen Brown.

Two ingredients are needed to make such a study. The first is a strong desire to know what your child is watching. I was 18 before I watched TV on a regular basis, so that I hadn't any knowledge of what TV could do to a child's mind. I was strongly influenced at an early age by a dodderly old science teacher who believed that TV was a perverter of young minds, and a total waste of time. If my child was to watch TV, so was I, to see what evil it would do.

The second ingredient is a starvation of SF novels. Not due to a lack of them, but lack of time because of the aforementioned child's demands. So I watch these programmes, hoping for a little SF stimulation. If you look hard enough it can be found.

There are some programmes that by no stretch of the imagination can an SF theme be found in. These are the ones that deal with everyday life.

The other side of the coin is the fantasy with enough basis in real life to let the child cross the bridge from its world to the make-believe one. These include CHORLTON AND THE WHEELIES and MUMFIE. These two have one thing in common - the wicked witch. The goodies are the little characters - Chorlton is the ever-happy dragon who lives in Wheely Land. The Wheelies are animated toys on wheels, and happy they are. To destroy this happiness is the desire of the witch, and the plot of this series. In MUMFIE, the witch doesn't like the good manners of the little elephant Mumfie, and seeks to capture them.

In between are the more SF oriented ones. I'll deal with a few individually. What better to begin with than the arrival of a spaceship, and out come four aliens who can talk English, and sing, too? Their tales are all on the theme of how helpful they, and, with the aid of their magic guitar, they help us Earthlings. They are known as ANIMAL QUACKERS. The aliens, called Bongo, Boots, Rory, and Twang, are portrayed by actors instead of the more common animated puppets, or cartoons. These creatures are very similar to Earth animals except for small details, e.g. Rory, who looks like a lion, is blue. The programme brings spaceships (albeit a flying-saucer shaped one) and the stars a little closer to the under-fives.

Another super-animal is ISSI NOHO, a panda. He can, with the aid of a small card with numbers, make up an appropriate poem, add the appropriate number, and the result, after a blinding flash,

-5-

is a quick trip to the past, or a person/creature is summoned from the past. Is this card a miniature time-machine? Or a pact with the devil? Perhaps I see more into the magic card than a child would. Yet the fact that a child will accept that something so small can do something so powerful must be a step in the direction of accepting the technology of miniturasation.

The subject of Time-machines brings me to MR BENN. His connection with the past is through a costume shop. He goes, picks up a suitable costume, be it cowboy, knight, or astronaut, and takes it to a changing room. After putting it on, a door leads on to the correct milieu - 19th century America, 14th century England, 21st century spaceship. After his adventure the shopkeeper appears, to guide him back to his own time via the correct door. Is this really timetravel, or does he just dream with the aid of a special drug? MR BENN is a cartoon series, and the lovely part is that no attempt is made to explain that entering a doorway can lead to a different time-zone. It reminds me of THE DOOR INTO SUMMER, and THE CORRIDORS OF TIME.

Telepathy is not forgotten. BAGPUSS is a saggy, baggy old cloth cat who is brought to life by a chant from his owner. In the live state he can tell stories by mental pictures which all his friends can see and experience. His friends have been brought to life by the same chant that revived him - they are mice, a rag doll, a wooden woodpecker and a toad. The mice ask BagpuSS to visualize what an object they have found is for. They then experience his visualization. The experience can be so vivid that sometimes they ask to have it stopped. It is reminiscent of TELEPATHIST (THE WHOLE MAN), taking one's friends into fugue and not coming out ("....dust on their eyeballs.")

Let us go back to aliens among us with BARBAPAPA. These aliens are blobs, with eyes, who are shapechangers. Fortunately they are friendly and use their powers to preserve the environment, and shun adult humans. The barbas are nine in total, Barbamama, Barbapapa and seven youngsters with descriptive names such as Barbastrong or Barbabelle. They have empathy with Earth animals and help them for the amusement of the Earthling children.

If, however, you wish to visit other planets, it can be done. THE CLANGERS are endearing creatures who communicate by whistle-like sounds. A translation is supplied, to the amusement of the under-fives. I must tell you about the last one I watched. An Earth spaceship (a duplicate of the LEM) lands on their planet. The astronaut collects rocks as the Clangers watch from their holes. They feel sorry for him only finding rocks. They give him some of their precious blue-string pudding. Do you know what that naught astronaut did after getting tangled up in the string and falling in the Soup - Dragon's soup? He took off in his spaceship with great haste! Yes! He did, and without so much as a goodbye!

By this time you will be justified in thinking that I'm neurotic about SF. I think I am. The causes must be obvious. I stated them at the beginning - watching too much TV and not reading enough SF.

((And continuing our light-hearted look at SF you may have missed, here's....))

THE TVSF SD.... by Richard Bancroft.

Many moons ago TVSF began to amuse and inspire us through its efforts to dish up propaganda collectively called the TVSF Ad. At first, robots dance puppet-like in their ecstatic praise of the universal ambrosia - Wondermash. Pincerd, positronic, even Kermit-like in appearance they roll and belly-laugh at us poor humans and our inadequate urge for survival based on the dinosauric potato. Various other models on the work assembly line creating more of their likenesses test the neurosynaptic stimulating gas clouds extracted from the cylinder Mannikin. Meanwhile the bosses are on vacation in Wonder-1 Butlinland. Two we know by name, that inflated duo Toot and Ploot, those aliens all the way from Venus who accompany a human host in their frolic and fun. Some humans must leave for home and one 2.4 family unit are given the once-over by an ALIEN CRAFT from another galaxy (type UFO - Universal inverted flying saucer with its meat balls triangulatively hanging out) for the express purpose of scanning their ground car, a superb technological miracle, the Toyota carriage.

Watching over their gastronomic needs the humans rely on super-human hero the 'Cross and Blackwell Super-Soup Man', an inferior version of the childrens' super safety-hero the Green Cross Code Man (later to become the hooded breath of death - Darth Vader) who outstrips the well-known supermarket super-hero who, not unlike the UFO, nearly has his....hanging out.

Is there nothing new in SF?

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\* \*\*\*\*\*  
\* ROUND THE CLUBS.....with BILL LITTLE.  
\* \*\*\*\*\*

Sorry to have to kick off the feature with an apology, but I think one is necessary for the omission of this heretofore regular feature from the last issue of MATRIX. The reasons are complicated, but Andy's succinct phrase, used a couple of issues ago, "an administrative cock-up", would seem to cover it quite well. I'll make sure it doesn't happen again.

On with the show... Carrying on after DC's interesting start isn't something I've found too easy. The fact that he's at the other end of the country has made the take-over a little difficult, but I hope I've overcome that now. Things are moving, and the letters flowing in. Keep them coming please. To those local groups who have already given Dave details of their set-up, can I ask for updated information for future editions of RTC?. To

anyone who'd just like to exchange letters from the club point of view - I'd be delighted to hear from you. Alan Marshall, of the Norwich group is keeping in close contact with our own Stoke on Trent SF society, and, I believe, the Ribble Valley group. It's a nice thing, this exchange of letters, and I hope I can encourage all those groups who are out in the cold, or feel that they are, to drop a line to any other group, via me at first. It can be a fruitful exchange, I assure you.

Just a few things before we get to the club 'profile'... Alan Marshall has asked me to pass on that the Norwich SF Society has a new Venue. They meet at the 'Champion' public house, Chapelfield Rd, every Wednesday.

Tony Freeman, of the UMIST SF&F Society tells me that his group has a high proportion of overseas students who will be returning to their respective countries when the course ends, so if anyone has any information about the SF scene, and any organized groups, in countries like India, Malaya, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, please let me know and I'll pass the word to Tony. A golden opportunity to spread the Word to other countries.

Richard Bancroft of the Ribble Valley SF Group tells me that his group meet once a month, on the last Sunday in each, though I'm not quite sure where the venue is. Enquiries to Richard at 7, Woone Lane, Clitheroe, Lancs. They are hoping to produce a fanzine, Polaris, and look like having Mike Coney as Honorary President...

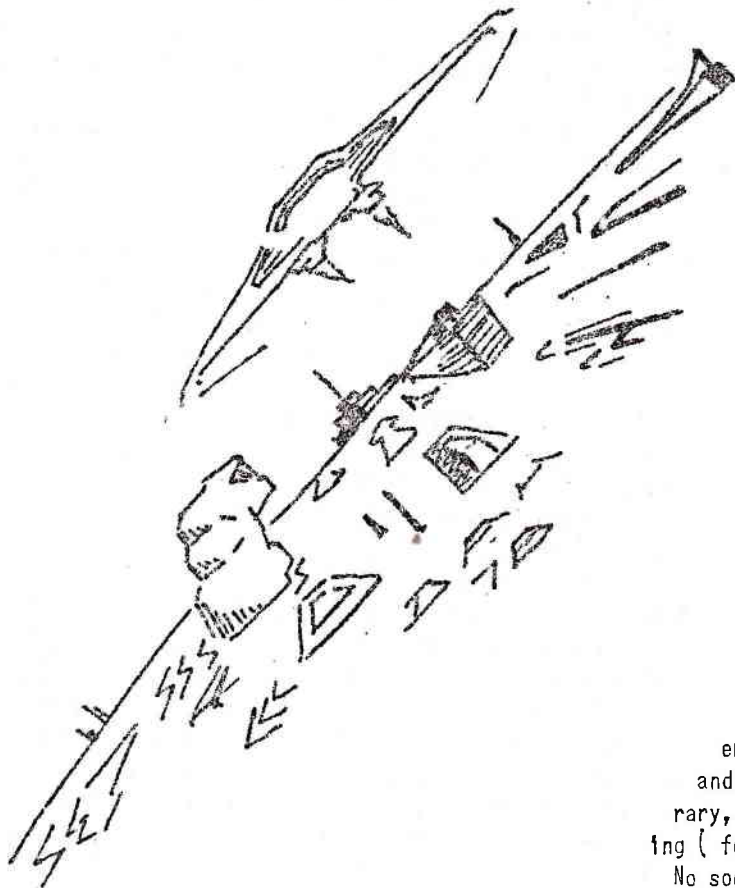
This issue features the Stoke on Trent SF Society. I must confess I did have initial doubts about the 'ethics' of doing a piece on the group I belong to, but DC tells me that we were slated to go into this issue, so what the hell... Mind you, just so that I don't go completely overboard, I'll pretend, for this item at least, that I'm not the secretary of the Society and I know nothing at all about it.

The Chairman, Chris Hall, formed the society, organized a twelve-month programme of events, and launched the inaugural meeting in December 1976. Thirty-plus folks turned up at that one, but regular attending membership soon settled and stabilised at around thirteen, though fully paid-up membership is up around the twenty-plus mark. The society meets on the first Tuesday in every month at the WEA, Cartwright House, Hanley, meetings starting at 7.45pm. The atmosphere, even when guest speakers attend, is always relaxed and informal and puts no pressure on the casual attendee - something, Chris says, they want to encourage. The aims are to bring SF to as large an audience as possible in the SoT area, and to further this aim, the society are engaged in producing a play (SF, of course) for broadcast on local radio. It won't win the society a Grammy award or anything like that, but it will get SF, and the group, considerable publicity. More about this project as it comes to hand.

Highlights from 1977 included talks from experts on subjects as diverse as UFO's and the "High Frontier" space colonisation programme. Chris wisely left room for the members to have informal chats on Isaac Asimov, music and art in SF, and, believe it or not, "Ten Favourite Stories", meetings which really broke the ice among the newcomers and set the year off to an encouraging start.

Naturally, funding the group was/is a problem, though the society showed initiative by going ahead and organising a sponsored walk which raised £60+ for group funds and allowed them to realise a few ambitions and book a couple of well-known authors for their 1978 programme: Terry Greenhough in March (and also





on the capital in late May. As if that wasn't bad enough, they'll all be taking relatives. A sort of 'bring the wife' day-out.

On the broader scene, Chris Hall is anxious to hear from other groups, and would like to see the formation of a widespread, informal inter-club exchange leading to the establishment of closer links between all local clubs. Already links are forming with the Norwich group as a result of DC's last feature on them, and it would be nice to think that this could expand.

Stoke on Trent SF Society, though not quite two years old, have set themselves impressive targets and have, I think, the drive and determination to see them realised. They have passed a viability crisis and seem to be set to go from strength to strength. Membership may be on the small side at twenty, but it's really what those twenty can accomplish that matters. A nice club to belong to.

Anyone wanting to exchange mutterings on any thing raised in this little sketch, well, please contact the Chairman, Chris Hall, at 33 Petersfield Road, Chell, Stoke on Trent. He'd be very pleased to hear from you.

hipefully in Oct/Nov to present the prizes in the short-story competition the Society is staging), and Bob Shaw in May. Fired by these accomplishments (and a bank balance healthily in the black, it must be added) Chris is already dreaming of asking the "Unorthodox Engineer" himself along to give us a chat - Colin Kapp. A further measure of the ambitions of this local group is their plan to stage an annual Public Lecture for the people of Stoke on Trent. Plans are well advance to invite a famous name speaker to lecture on some aspect of science - something along the lines of the annual Royal Society lectures, though on a smaller scale. Chris believes that this is the sort of thing that not only engenders good publicity, but could also gain SF a more respectable image.

The Society does produce a publication though at the moment it could best be described as an informal newsheet. Plans are afoot to expand it gradually (cost, again has to be carefully watched) into something more ambitious later in the year to coincide with the short-story competition. Fanzine readers be warned!

Members have access to a library which totals, at present, about 100 volumes. Additions of new paperback are made each month, as well as BSFA material and SF magazines. Tapes are also being added to the library, including a record of the proceedings at each meeting (four-letter words and all), just for posterity.

No society is complete without an annual outing, and one is currently being organised. Since Blackpool can hardly be regarded as the Mecca of the SF world, members will be descending upon

Any of you group chairpersons/spokespersons (and I know there are about twenty-three of you out there) wanting to drop me a line, please feel free. Thanks. See you next time around.

(Bill Little)

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And now...THE ROGER WADDINGTON FANZINE COLUMN.((So-called because I haven't time to think of a smart-ass title!))

THE NATIONAL FANTASY FAN: Vol. 37, No.6 (December 1977)  
(Joanne Burger, 55 Blue Bonnet Ct., Lake Jackson, Texas 77566  
USA. Dues: \$3 per years.

As the official clubzine of the National Fantasy Fan Federation (or the N3F, for the blessed sake of shortness!) this could be said to bear some relation to the zines put out in the name of the BSFA on this side of the pond; and certainly they have much in common, besides being zines of old and established organisations, weighed and usually found wanting in the very span of their years; and they do keep on coming out, unabated!

There's 85 mimeoed pages-worth in this issue, covering the whole remarkable range of N3F activities, and reading very much like a company report where there's been another successful

year, a report from the Chairman, the financial situation and a brief reminder of the aims of the company; and this is where the N3F has been criticised, that it spends too much time just chitchatting and not enough in the cut-and-thrust of debate, not agreeing but decreeing; though with the wide continent that America is, from sea to shining sea as their national anthem has it, and the resulting gap in communication from fan to fan, from group to group, it couldn't really be anything else! But the reports fill most of the issue, from all the 18 different projects and departments, from the Birthday Card Project through the N3F Historian by way of the Round Robin through to the Welcomittee, and all intermingled with Con reports, book reviews and reports, fanzine news, SF games; almost staggering in its scope!

Though this isn't all. Their letterzine TIGHTBEAM reads like their Matrix to the INFF Vector, and shows their less serious side - where even Matrix might fear to tread! - with letters from the members, occasional book reviews and articles - including one very useful one listing and reviewing the Hugo nominees - and a general air of unrestrained lunacy, only held together by the efforts of the editor in the shape of Lynne Holdom; this is the warm and welcoming reality of the N3F, where the drive and enthusiasm of its members really shines through.

Maybe a slight correction: INFF could be their Vector if they didn't ignore the open-ended field of higher SF criticism, in concentrating (maybe wisely) on providing a service for their neofan members, nurturing them until they can take part in the long and often bloody debates that the rest of fandom enjoys. The N3F has often been criticised for being a calm sea in the raging ocean of fandom, but how else can we train the generations of fen to come without having them run screaming from fannish life as it is?

So this issue is a marvellous insight into how much the N3F can offer, over and above the BSFA. Write to Joanne Burger, enclose an IRC, tell her you're interested in joining, and see just what the N3F is all about! It might seem like the unnecessary security of belt and braces, to be added to the benefits of the BSFA; but believe me, it can add a whole new dimension! Too, the dues are going up later this year, by common consent. So it might be wise to act now.

BOOWATT No. 24 (November 1977)

Garth Edmond Danielson, 616-415 Edison, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2G 0M3, Canada.

(Show of interest, or if you must, \$2 for 6 issues)

Boowatt has long been regarded as the archetypal crudzine, that far-from-mythical entity where the mediocrity of the writing is only matched by the illegibility of the reproduction; though unlike the

rest of that motley crew, taking in the view from young and eager fen with their first mimeo to established fen who should know better; issue after issue has been brought out with panache, drive, and a refusal to admit that there could possibly be anything higher to aim at! (And indeed, crudzines form a very necessary part of fandom, for who hasn't balked at locating a big, thick and glossy zine filled with big names and big opinions from both pro and fan? Whereas locating a crudzine does mean that anything you write can only seem great literature by comparison!)

But Boowatt has been changing these past few issues; undergoing that sea change that comes upon all fen, exposed to the efforts of those few who make their fanzines something to be proud of, art as well as communication. The rot set in the Xmas before last when, along with the usual mind-boggling inanities, there came a little gem of a book, both in size and intent; his "Xmas Booke" for 1976 with his written impressions of the joys of Xmas past, and the tipped-in illoes of Stu Gilson and Stephen Riley (if such a bibliographic term can be applied to the productions of fandom!), and since then he hasn't known when to stop! Last issue had bubble-gum cards of CHARLIE'S ANGELS and SPACE 1999 scattered tastefully throughout the pages (if you can describe SPACE 1999 as tasteful - there are stronger words? together with a bound-in, full-colour tourist brochure of Manitoba and a pister of Canada's only longjohn superhero, Captain Canuck. This issue had two limited edition prints of the work of Larry Todd (a very up-and-coming artist, judging from the quality of these examples) and a set of postcard size prints featuring the savage varieties of Xmas 2076 from the warped imagination of Tim Boxell; not to mention a press-out, slot-together Valentine, which may have been entirely personal; so don't believe that date line!

But the evidence piles up that Garth has decided that the medium is as important as the message, that you can maybe excuse a lot if it's presented in an original way; and with the heart-searching yet ultimately joyous impressions by Mae Strelkow of the short and happy life of her son Danny printed within, Boowatt is rapidly approaching a state of high art! Too, Garth has been reported in another fanzine (through a review of the same) with an article on brands of beer, as writing somewhere up to the standard of the rest of us mortals; so that change might yet be reflected in his own zine!

It's certainly a zine to follow; well, after you've been down so far, the only way is up!

YANDRO 241 (December 1977)

Robert & Julia Coulson, Route 3, Hartford City, Indiana 47348, usa.

Yandro has been a fannish institution almost from the first of those 241 issues - making it one of the oldest of fanzines still in existence - and even gathering a Hugo on the way. That longevity is, I suggest, not due to such important aspects as have been widely debated within fandom, such as the excellence of the production, or even the high level of SF criticism (which in this zine is put where it belongs, among the book reviews), but that it hasn't aimed too high, or even too low; it's just gone along as easy and comfortable as an old shoe, brought out when its editors have felt like doing another issue, and not in response to pressure. And somewhere a



And indeed, Yandro has changed very little from that day to this; the passing of the years only noted by the fact that their thirteen year old son who started his own "Coulumn" in their pages is now absent in the issue through his job in the local cable TV; plus the mention of another book rolling off the Coulson typewriter!

I may be biased in asking you to subscribe (after all, it was Buck Coulson who printed my first LoCI!) but it's a zine that I can recommend highly. He has an English agent to make it easy, in the shape of Alan Dodd, 77 Stanstead Rd, Hoddesdon, Herts., and highly competitive rates of 5 issues for £1.85 or 10 for £2.90; and in passing, Alan would appreciate a copy of your own fanzine, probably even more; judging from his letter in this issue, he's probably one of the forgotten men of fandom.

And now, a message from William Blake....

Is an immense world of delight, clos'd by your senses  
five?

And now... (FANFARE)...

WHAT ARE THEY DOING?.....By Paul Fraser.

STEPHEN JONES, one of the editors of FANTASY TALES, tells me that no. 3 should appear sometime around summer and that the cover story will be The Lean Wolves Wa it by John Wysocki. The actual cover will be by Stephen Fabian. Other stories will probably be by Denys Val Baker and Andy Darlington (somebody's been hiding their light under a bushel...). nos. 1 & 2 are still available from him (33 Wren House, Tachbrook Estate, London SW1V 3QD) at 60p and 12p p&p.

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himself. At the moment he is trying to finish a piece of hackwork before Eastercon. ((Hope he did))

MIKE ASHLEY says that Orbit have lost an anth of his called Splinters From The Mind into some mysterious limbo... Meanwhile Gollancz will be bringing out Mrs. Gaskell's Tales Of Mystery & Terror in June. His massive history of the SF mags has had its fifth and final volume delivered to NEL, who are toying with the idea of a simultaneous paperback. As for articles, well, these are due in Galileo, SF COLLECTOR, and WEIRD TALES COLLECTOR. At the moment he is working on a reference book that may be of interest to fantasy fans. It's called The Seven Wonders of the World AND IS DESTINED FOR Fontana.

TOMAS M DISCH has completed and sold various works. His new SF novel On Wings Of A Song has been accepted by Gollancz for their fantasy list. A childrens fantasy called The Brave Little Toaster: A Bedtime Story For Small Appliances has just gone out to market. Concepts, a 17,000w novelet is in Harlan Ellison's anthology MEDEA. The Man Who Had No Idea is in the next WINTER'S TALES and various poems appears in TLS, Poetry, Paris Review, Little Magazine, and Tribune.

BRIAN STABLEFORD is completing his doctoral thesis on the sociology of SF (for which he is trying to find a publisher) and a history of Witchcraft that was started by James Blish before his death. He is also at work on a novel commissioned by Fontana. As for work completed and about to see print, well, it'll be coming thick and fast. Pan will be publishing The Fenris device and Swan Song in July and have also acquired rights to the Realms of Tartarus trilogy that was abandoned by Quartet after the first volume. Hamlyn have bought the first couple of novels in the Daedalus series and DAW (U.S.) will be bringing out vols 4 & 5 in paperback this year. In late summer a fantasy called The Last Days Of The Edge Of The World will be published by Hutchinson Junior Books and according to Brian it's one of his best works so far sold in the u.k. He also has sold a short story to WEEKEND for one of their fiction extras and has an article on James Blish due to appear in FOUNDATION.

IAN WATSON's next novel is Miracle Visitors due from Gollancz in July. It's about the UFO phenomenon and what it might be. At the moment he's into a new novel set in hyperspace and on an alien planet, and expects to be finished by late summer. Apart from his short work in April F&SF (My Soul Swims In A Goldfish Bowl), and ANTICIPATIONS (The Very Slow Time Machine) he also has an 18-month old story in THE LAST DANGEROUS VISIONS called Universe On The Turn. He says TLDV is definitely promised for Xmas '78

as a three boxed set from Harper & Row and that it runs to 600,000 words! (That's roughly three Stand On Zanzibars) UK hardcover and paperback rights have been sold.

CHRISTOPHER PRIEST's recent work seems to be coming out in one quick spate. Bob Silverberg's NEW DIMENSIONS 10 has a story called Whores, F&SF have The Watched, a novella in their all-British April issue, and a hefty 17,000 w. novelet (as yet unscheduled) called Palely Loitering. Last, but not least, is The Negation in the anthology he has just edited - ANTICIPATIONS. This contains short work by Watson, Shaw, Sheckley, Harrison (SF's first Irish Joke), and Ballard. Mutability is an extract from Tom Disch's forthcoming novel and A Chinese Perspective is a huge (over 25,000w.) novella by Brian Aldiss. This is to be published by Faber in April, and they also have a collection of Chris' called An Infinite Summer lined up for early '79. This will contain the title story and the ones mentioned above. Round about the same time you'll be able to get the paperbacks of Anticipations and A Dream Of Wessex from Pan, along with reissues of Inverted World, Indoctrinaire (revised), and Fugue for a Darkening Island. And he's just away to start a new novel...

BEN BOVA has given me the contents of ANALOG for the next couple of months. The April issue has the conclusion of Joan Vinge's first novel The Outcasts Of Heaven. She was featured in the March biolog and is a lot better looking than any of the other mug shots that they have had so far. Also, two novelets, Shipwright by D. Kingsbury, Happy Head by Orson Scott Card (this may be part of the novel due from Analog Books in a couple of months). The shorts are The Near Zero Crime Rate On JJ Avenue by Wilson Tucker, Publish And Perish by P. Nahin, The Runners by Bob Buckley. The May issue contains three novelets; The Nuptial Flight of Warbirds by Algis Budrys, Mikal's Songbird by Orson Scott Card, Renewal by B. Johns. The shorts: The Satyr by Stephen Robinett, Fixed Price War by Charles Sheffield, University Medical vs. Diplocloccus Pneumonia by D.L. Cox. Fixed for the June issue is View From A Height by Joan Vinge, Star-Swarmer by Greg Benford, Backstage Lensman by Randall Garrett. Likewise, the July issue has To Bring The Steel by D. Kingsbury and Kinsman To Lizards by J. Williamson.

GARRY KILGORTH's novel In Solitary is due from Penguin as a paperback in December. They are also publishing his latest novel The Night Of Kadar in December '79. (Faber are doing the hardcover in September). As for short stuff, there's A Noose Of Light in NWISF 31 (which, he assures me, will appear before the end of the world) and a novelet called A Warrior Falls in Pulsar 2. He has just submitted his third novel Soul-Brothers to his publishers.

KEITH SEDDON (ex-editor of VORTEX) has just finished writing a childrens book with his wife Jocelyn Almond. It's a 'sort of fantasy' and JA has done 15 illustrations for it. At the moment he's writing a SF-Gothic-Detective-Thriller and says that special requests will be considered. Finally, he's trying to inflict the remains of already scheduled stuff from VORTEX on some publisher.

BRIAN ALDISS will soon be off to visit Sumatra and the Australia. Meanwhile he's still involved with Brothers of The



Head, which is elling well, so there will be other editions to come. The Igara Testament is the second volume of The Malacia Tapestry and whereas he has just seen what the framework of the book will have to be, he doesn't intend writing it for a couple of years. A Rude Awakening, the third book in the Horatio Stubbs quartet is due after Easter; Enemies of The System, a short polemical novel, is due from Cape in June, and a long epic, metaphysical poem accompanying amazing pictures will astound the world next year. It's called Pile. (Must be with all the sitting writers have to do.)

HARRY HARRISON has just sold The Stainless Steel Rat Wants You 3 times. No, he won't get done for fraud, it will appear as a serial in the first issue of Isaac Asimov's SF Adventure Magazine, as a hardcover in early autumn and from Sphere as a paperback soon after. About the same time, Pierrot are publishing Mechanismo, a pictorial history of machinery in SF... "same format as my Balls of Fire"

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MEDIA NOTES.....from Martin Hatfield

#### 1. STAR WARS 1

'Star Wars 1' is expected to net \$300M - \$400M worldwide with over \$200M from sales of toys, books, records, etc. Director/writer George Lucas is expected to receive \$80M which will be invested in the four corporations he has recently set up in the US. 'Star Wars Corp.' will produce all the SW offspring. 'Medway Productions' will produce other films including a sequel of Lucas' AMERICAN GREFFITI (1973). 'Sprocket Systems Inc.' will perform special effects for the SW films and others. Finally, 'Black Falcon Ltd' will market all spin-off.

Ten SW sequels are planned, one to be released every two or three years until the end of the century. Steven Spielberg (CLOSE ENCOUNTERS) and Brian de Palma (CARRIE) are rumoured to be interested in directing. Lucas, who has temporarily given up directing, is currently working for free editing APOCALYPSE NOW, directed by his friend Francis Ford Coppola (THE GODFATHER). He hopes to direct another SW "about 20 years from now."

Alec Guinness, who was signed on SW for a percentage of the box-office, could net up to \$1M for his role. He will, however, have to pay 90% extra taxes to the government.

#### 2. STAR WARS 2

Pre-production and special effects shooting on SW 2, tentatively titled THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, begins this summer. The principal photography of the \$10M sequel will start next January and FOX hope to distribute the film in the US by Xmas 1979. Irvin Kershner (THE FLAM FLAM MAN: RAID ON ENTEBBE) will direct a screenplay written by Lucas and Leigh

Brackett (wr. THE BIG SLEEP, RIO BRAVO, plus much magazine SF.) All principal characters from SW1 will be featured, with Hamill, Ford, Fisher and Prowse repeating their original roles. The arctic wastes of Lapland and the jungles of Central Africa will be the major location sites.

#### 3 CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS was premiered in London on March 13 as the Royal Film Command Performance. The London opening at the Odeon Leicester Square netted in excess of £56,000 in advance bookings. Most reviewers have summed up the film in one word: 'brilliant'. One hard-bitten American columnist was actually in tears at the end, so moved was he by the final half-hour special effects sequence.

Director Steven Spielberg has reserved space on one of the first Space Shuttle flights (1980) for a camera to take out-of-this-world footage for a sequence to CLOSE ENCOUNTERS. NASA is currently selling space aboard the shuttle at a rent of \$ per square foot. Spielberg's next project will be 1941, a war film, to star John Wayne.

#### 4 U.K. PRODUCTION 1978

The following films are amongst those scheduled to commence production in the U.K. this year:

SKYFALL (dir. Robert Lynn), THE DEMOLISHED MAN (Fox/dir. Frank Yablans), FLASH GORDON (dir. Bernard Williams & Nicholas Roeg ('Don't Look Now'/'The Man Who Fell To Earth')), ALIEN (Fox/dir. Ridley Scott ('The Duelists')). The last film in the list, THE ALIEN, is a "thriller-horror film set in space" which begins shooting in Turkey and Shepperton this June.

#### 5 METEOR

At a cost of \$16M this is reputed to be the most expensive disaster movie ever made. Directed by Ronald Neame ('Tunes of Glory'/'The Poseidon Adventure') from a script by Stanley Mann. Stars Sean Connery, music by John Williams ('Star Wars'/'Close Encounters'). A world-wide emergency occurs when a comet strikes a meteor producing a shower of fragments, several 5 miles in diameter, which head toward Earth. Those which fall manage to hit New York and swamp Hong Kong with a tidal wave. ABC TV in the U.S. will screen the film three years after its release, for which they paid \$3M.

#### 6 THE SURVIVOR

The James Herbert novel THE SURVIVOR (NEL) has been scripted by David Ambrose and will be directed by Laurence Myers ('The Greek Tycoon'). The film has a \$4M budget and will commence shooting in the U.K. this year.

#### 7 THE FURY

Distributed by FOX and due for release this year, 'The Fury' was directed by Brian de Palma (Phantom of the Paradise/'Carrie'). Stars include Kirk Douglas and John Cassavettes. The plot centres around a teenage boy who has psychic powers.

#### 8 FILMS DUE FOR RELEASE IN UK DURING 1978

HOLOCAUST 2000 (Rank) dir. Alberto de Martino, stars Kirk Douglas, Simon Ward. SWARM (Warner) dir. Irwin Allen, stars Michael Caine, Katherine Ross. Henry Fonda. SAVAGE

BEES, INCREDIBLE MELTING MAN, SPIDER MAN (Columbia). DAMNATION ALLEY (Fox) dir. Jack Smight ('The Illustrated Man'/'Airport 75') from Roger Zelazny's novel (Sphere). Due for autumn release. A tiny band of nuclear war survivors venture from their underground base to discover what has happened to the world. It may not bear much resemblance to the novel, judging from reviews.

COMA (MGM) dir. Michael Chichon ('Andromeda  
Starin'/'Westworld') from his own screenplay based  
on the recently released novel by Robin Cook. Stars  
Genevieve Bujold and Michael Douglas.

LORD OF THE RINGS (United Artists). dir. Saul Zaentz and Ralph Bakshi ('Fritz the Cat'/'Heavy Traffic'/'Wizards'.)

FANTASIA (Walt Disney). re-release of this cult classic with a new stereophonic soundtrack.

9 CHILDHOOD'S END

Abraham Polonsky (not Roman Polanski!) the  
scriptwriter and sirector ('Force of Evil'/'Tell  
them Willie Boy is here') is currently working on  
a screenplay of the Arthur C. Clarke novel,  
CHILDHOOD'S END. (Source: BFI, British Cinema 9)

## 10 LASERBLAST

The story of a youth who wreaks chaos and destruction after being transformed into an alien by a power-pendant from outer space. Contains 12 minutes of animated space sequences. Stars Keenan Wynn and Roddy McDowell. Due for U.S. release in April.

## 11 THE DAY THE WORLD ENDED

A new disaster epic, to star Paul Newman, records how the eruption of a volcano almost destroys a Caribbean island. The film is based on a book by the U.K. journalists Gordon Thomas and Max Morgan Witt. Paramount recently signed these two writers to script a new TV series "the story of the biggest disaster the world has ever known." No one is saying what that disaster was.

12 OSCARS

STAR WARS won awards for sound effects, special effects, art direction, costumes, original score, and editing. CLOSE ENCOUNTERS won an award for cinematography.

References : TIME magazine 6/3/78 - STAR WARS  
SCREEN INTERNATIONAL - other info.  
THE GUARDIAN - Oscars.

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BOOK NEWS.....

From Gollancz: (March) IF THE STARS ARE GODS (Gregory Benford & Gordon Eklund); STAR LIGHT, STAR BRIGHT (Alfred Bester); (April) DRIFTGLASS (Samuel R Delany); (May) SHIP OF STRANGERS (Bob Shaw); (June) THE SIXTH DAY (W.J. Burley)

DREAMSNAKE (Vonda N McIntyre).

From Magnum: (March) THE TRAVELLER IN BLACK (John Brunner);  
(April) SHAKESPEARE'S PLANET (Clifford D Simak); (June) FAROUT  
(Damon Knight)

From Sphere: (May) MISSION TO THE UNIVERSE (Gordon R Dickson);  
GUNPOWDER GOD (H. Beam Piper); THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES READER  
(2 vols) (Peter Haining)

From Sidgwick & Jackson: (March) MIND OF MY MIND (Octavia E Butler); STAR BRIDGE (James Gunn & Jack Williamson); A HERITAGE OF STARS (Clifford D Simak); SUPERMIND (A.E. Van Vogt); (May) IN THE OCEAN OF NIGHT (Gregory Benford); OPHIUCHI HOTLINE (John Varley)

From NEL: (April) THE RESURRECTION MACHINE (pb. : Phil Smith);  
THE SHINING (pb. Stephen King) (May) NIGHT SHIFT (Stephen King);  
FLUKE (James Herbert) due in June, as is TRAVELLING TOWARDS  
EPSILON (Maxim Jakubowski);

From Pan: (April) DEATHBIRD STORIES (Harlan Ellison)

New/Forthcoming books from Hale: DANCER FROM ATLANTIS (Pou Anderson); CRUEL YEARS OF WINTER (Alan Barclay); TO KEEP THE SHIP (A Bertram Chandler); SPORK OF THE AYOR (Perry A Chapdelaine); THE MEASURED CAVERNS (James England); THE ENGENDERING (Stephen Goldin); THE OMEGA PROJECT (Brian Griffin); THE WAR MACHINES OF KALINTH (Gene Lecour); LEAP TO THE GALACTIC CORE (John Paton); SUNSHINE 43 (David G Penny); THE KING OF HELL (M D Pereira); A TWIST IN TIME (L P REEVES); STARGATE (Stephen Robinett); CHEYNEY'S ROBOT (William Thomas Webb); THE PLEASURE DOMES OF SIGMA 93 (Philip Welby); THE HOMOSAUR (David Wiltshire); and CHARLES FORT NEVER MENTIONED WOMBATS (Gene DeWeese & Robert Coulson) ((which surely must be in the running of the 'title of the years'!!))

From Futura (April) LUCIFER'S HAMMER (Larry Niven & Jerry Pournelle); (May) SWORD OF SHANNARA (Terry Brooks)

FROM ALLISON & BUSBY: THE KNIGHTS OF THE LIMITS (Barrington J Bayley)

From Faber: BELOVED SON (George Turner); THE LAST DISASTER (Hugh Walters); HAND OF OBERON (Roger Zelazny) A WIND FROM NOWHERE (Nicholas Stuart Grey)

From Hodder & Stoughton: JUPITER LAUGHS (Edmund Cooper); THE NIGHTMARE FACTOR (Thomas N Scottia & Frank M Robinson.

From Dobson: THE SHEEG (Judith Buffery); CIRQUE and UNIVERSE 7 (both by Terry Carr); DARKNESS IN MY SOUL (Dean R Koontz); Earthchild (Doris Piserchia) THE WORLD ASUNDER (Ian Wallace); THE WORLD'S BEST SF 3 (Donald Waltham).

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COSMOS has suspended publication of the fifth issue until they find out how well issue 3 has sold. First issue sold about 40,000 and second a little less: this was a marginal distribution figure for success.



Awards at 3rd World Fantasycon:

BEST NOVEL: DOCTOR RAT (William Kotzwinkle).  
Runners up: THE DOLL WHO ATE HIS MOTHER (Ramsey Campbell); THE DRAGON & THE GEORGE (Gordon R Dickson); THE SAILOR ON THE SEAS OF FATE (Michael Moorcock); THE ACTS OF KING ARTHUR & HIS NOBLE KNIGHTS (John Steinbeck); DARK CRUSADE (Karl Edward Wagner)

BEST SHORT FICTION: THERE'S A LONG, LONG TRAIL A-WINDING (Russell Kirk). Runners-up: THE COMPANION (Ramsey Campbell); DARK WINGS (Fritz Leiber); WHAT IS LIFE? (Robert Sheekley); TWO SUNS SETTING (Karl Edward Wagner)

BEST COLLECTION: FRIGHTS (ed. Kirby McCauley).  
Runners-up: LONG AFTER MIDNIGHT (Ray Bradbury); SUPERHORROR (ed. Ramsey Campbell); CINNABAR (Edward Bryant); THE HEIGHT OF THE SCREAM (Ramsey Campbell); FLASHING SWORDS no. 3 (ed. Lin Carter)

SPECIAL AWARDS - PRO : ALTERNATE WORLD RECORDINGS  
Runners up: ARKHAM HOUSE; BALLANTINE; DAW BOOKS; EDWARD L. FERNAN.

SPECIAL AWARD - NON PRO : WHISPERS (Stuart David Schiff). Runners-up: CHACAL (Arnie Fenner); MIDNIGHT SUN (Gary Heppenstad); JOHNATHAN BACON: NILS HARDIN; HARRY MORRIS.

BEST ARTIST: ROGER DEAN. Runners-up: GEORGE BARR; STEVE FABIAN; TIM KIRK; MICHAEL WHELAN.

LIFE ACHIEVEMENT: RAY BRADBURY. Runners-up: JORGE LUIS BORGES; L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP; FRANK BELKNAPP LONG; H. WARNER MUNN; E. HOFFMAN PRICE; MANLY WADSWELL.

The judges were Robert Bloch, David Drake, Harlan Ellison, Charles L. Grant, Robert Weinberg. The next Fantasycon will be Fort Worth, Texas.

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Jim Baen, now SF editor at Ace is scheduling a new bi-monthly SF mag, DESTINIES, for July 78

Long-time fan Tom Reamy, a recent Hugo winner with SAN DIEGO LIGHTFOOT SUE, died of a heart attack on Nov 4th 1977.

The 5th and last 'World of Tiers' book, THE LAVALITE WORLD, from P J Farmer is due out from Ace. Vol. 3 of the 'Riverworld' series, THE DARK DESIGN is published by Berkeley at \$2.95.

NBC have cancelled LOGAN'S RUN.

The GOTHIC FILM SOCIETY holds meetings at the Holborn Library Hall, London, showing a range of interesting/obscure films. All correspondence to Robin James, 75 Burns Ave, Feltham, Middx.

There is now a Science Fiction Poetry Association. Details from Suzette Elgin, P.O. Box 2012, Leucadia, CA 02024 USA.

The First Lancaster Festival of Literature, 'Writing 78', is April 26th to May 1st. Among the participants are Adrienne Mitchell, Anthony Burgess and Michael Moorcock. Films to be shown include CATCH 22, DON'T LOOK NOW, SLAUGHTERHOUSE 5. For further details send s.a.e. to the festival organiser, Michael Reynolds, St Leonard's House, Lancaster CA 1 1NN.

Five-day writers' workshops are held at LUMB BANK (owned by the poet Ted Hughes). There is to be a SCIENCE FICTION course from 22 June to 27 June, tutored by John Downie and John Sladek, guest novelist, Tom Disch. Course Fee is £35. Details of this and other courses from The Centre Director, Lumb Bank, Hebden Bridge, Wess Yorks. HX7 6DF.

Fred Hoyle and Chandra Wickramasinghe have proposed the idea that various epidemics (ie flu) might have been caused by an influx of cometary particles bringing in alien micro-organisms. Certain biological molecules/organisms might exist in solar orbit with cometary debris.

Carl Sagan had an article appearing in TV GUIDE in the US attacking the unrepresentative view of science TV gives, especially the inaccuracies in programmes such as SPACE 1999, mentioning the use of 'parsec' as a unit of speed instead of distance in STAR WARS. Sagan is working on a 13-part TV series called MAN AND THE COSMOS. Meanwhile his lectures on the Planets are being repeated at 6pm on Saturdays, BBC2, beginning April 8th.

Atticus Bookshop in Liverpool, which carries an excellent range of 'fringe' and 'underground' material, including SF, has moved to Hardiman St.

NEL's lead title for May is THE SPACE GODS REVEALED by Ronald Story, which sets out to debunk the theories of Erik von Daniken. Price 80p. Also published is John Brunner's THE STONE THAT NEVER CAME DOWN. (75p) Sakyo Komatsu's THE DEATH OF THE DRAGON tells of "the worst disaster of the history of the world" as "the crust of the Earth begins to shift..."

THE GREAT BEYOND ad 26000 is an insight into civilisation of the future under a 'one world government' of a spiritually emancipated king. £1.20 inc. postage from Torch Publishing Co. Ltd, 43 New Oxford St. London WC1A 1BH

The Screen Actors Guild has filed suit against Gene Roddenberry, demanding he stop showing the pilot and edited-out bloopers from STAR TREK in his travelling show without paying the actors involved.

The 85-ton Skylab - the largest man-made object in space - is in a decaying orbit and could plunge to Earth by next year.

Motor manufacturers are turning to microprocessors to provide motorists with digital read-outs of average speed, miles per gallon, petrol consumption, etc.

Spider Robinson has quit GALAXY and will review for DESTINIES (see above).



DAH 77

... AND NOW THE MEMBERS HAVE THEIR SAY ...

ALISON HUTTON, 23 Nowell Road, Rose Hill, Oxford,  
OX 4 4TA.

First, the abuse:- either you need another proof reader, or else you need someone else to type the final copy, because the spelling & syntax are sometimes astonishing! It's probably a fault in me, but I do find that a text full of mistakes distracts me from the content. ((I'm as unhappy about my scrappy typing as you are, but it's basically a question of speed. My MATRIX typing schedule goes something like this:- allow a backlog of material to build up so that there's a nice lot to do...look at it...panic! (How can I get THIS done by the mailing date?)... go upstairs, get typewriter and stencils...loose the material I was going to type...find it...settle down (phone rings)...settle down again, type three sentences and the door swings silently open and with a beatif-

ic smile my daughter enters and demands her midnight drink. So consequently when I get the chance I find myself bashing on regardless like Emerson, Lake and Palmer on speed. Which, I am the first to admit, is no excuse...) Second grouse is about Prozone Perusals, which I personally think a waste of space; however, I suppose some people enjoy them. (Do they?)

Having got that out of the way, I'd like to take up a few points made in letters in M16. First, Dave Cobbledick: Expletives vs. no expletives. He makes the valid point that an author is in full control of his/her writings, but then goes on to talk about "the use of such language, in a careless & thoughtless manner". I think the fact is that it isn't used in such a manner, that its use is deliberate & calculated. So much for literature; letters are generally supposed to be colloquial in style, & the style is idiosyncratic to the writer, who is free to express him/herself in any way. The editor may choose not to publish a letter which may



offend some readers, but to edit out expletives is to be guilty of misrepresentation. In conclusion, I have to say that I don't think Dave has any right to talk about "people with little brains & limited vocabulary" when he himself abuses the English language so sorely: - "I'm not against any form of language taking place in novels". Good grief! Go curl up with your classics, man - try Chaucer for beautiful use of the language as a whole, including expletives.

I can't imagine how anyone could find politics boring, even the "everyday aspects of Parliament" quoted by Ben Burr. Certainly politics need to be watched for decisions that affect one's life directly, but politics are also the original audience-participation sports, and it seems a pity to relegate them to the spectator-sport category.

Phil Stephensen-Payne seems to be unable to make up his mind about what he wants from an editor. First he wants to know more about "the real Andy Sawyer" and then he rejects the editor's choice of copy as "just what you want" (My underlining). Surely part of the function of an editor is to inject some of his/her personality into the publication. Different editors will have different ideas about what readers will want, & much can be learnt about an editor from what he/she chooses to print. (Omissions are even more revealing, but we don't know about those.) Otherwise, I agree with most of what Phil was saying - apart from the soggy flapjack. I like soggy flapjacks! (Never heard of Spider Robinson, though.)

Finally, I'd like to put in a plug for a recently opened bookshop in Oxford - "Rainbow's End, 19 Cowley Road. They have a good stock of SF, fantasy, comics, & SF art books; they also buy & sell second-hand SF books.

PHIL ROSENBLUM, Birton Bank, Wills Grove, Mill Hill, London.

In defence of expletives:

- 1) The overwhelming majority of people use them in everyday life. Dave - you're an exception.
- 2) Their function is to convey emotional intensity, and thus, evoke a response in the reader.
- 3) If someone's response is unfavourable, it does not qualify him to condemn other people's responses.
- 4) There is usually no analogous substitute for an expletive.

Richard Bancroft - you've got to be joking. You just have to be joking.

MATRIX 16: great. I'd like to see the Newshounds sticking their snouts into the US publications scene. MOONBASE ALPHA was hysterical. Wish I'd written it. Fallible Freeman is forever fresh (and refreshing).

ALIC HILLON, 13 Hugget Gardens, Top Valley, Nottingham.

When my friend introduced me as a member of BSFA I did not think I would have to read letters (p.29) where the word 'shit' is allowed to be published. Surely people with such low mentality are hardly fit to criticize or converse with anyone? It certainly is not a good recommendation (as a friend of mine commented). I felt ashamed. I very much doubt if I shall renew my subscription. Surely one can criticize without such words used - and certainly it is not a good advert for BSF.

It is not the first time, either. I read for pleasure, not to endure such disgusting comments - usually from people too young to know what it is all about anyway.

(( I see that the next letter in the pile to be typed, and also the most recent letter I've received mention this subject, so after that I'll pause for a while and interject some editorial pontifications. On your specific point, while I regret that your feelings have been hurt I feel I must point out (before others do) that people who swear are not necessarily of low mentality...))

SIMON R. GREEN, 37, St Laurence Rd., Bradford on Avon, Wilts.

The 1999 takeoff was quite good, hitting all the traditional Aunt Sallys, but failed to really get to grips with any of the real questions the series raised, such as "how much did they pay for the novocaine in Barbara Bain's face cream", and "Why did none of the suits have any flies?" Anyone making comments about the zips in the arms will be severely reprimanded.

Cyril Simsa's piece was hilarious (Ten Green Wimpies, indeed, ) and the Newshounds did their usual good stuff. Though I have to tell you that ANDROMEDA has definitely NOT folded. ((Sob - I know. See the beginning of the Newshounds section for the facts behind this embarrassing blunder...))

Maybe it's me, but I could do with some more serious art work from time to time, and I don't mean an occasional spaceship. Whatever happened to the sensuous Judy Watson, whose work used to appear in VECTOR, for example? ((I think that, in general, light cartoons and the like are the best form of artwork to suit the atmosphere of MATRIX, but if there are any serious artists out there who would like to prove me wrong - and I'm always open to persuasion (especially if its legal tender) (who said that?) - I'd be pleased to hear from you.))

I was amazed at Dave Cobblepick's tirade over the use of bad language and amused that he followed it up with the phrase "Oh Jeezus." I see, blasphemy's OK, but swearing isn't. If any of our members are so narrow-minded as to cancel membership because of a few four-letter words, then they shouldn't be reading SF in the first place. (Strong words, lad, tone it down.) (Screw you.) "Real people... are beneath such expletives when in control of a situation." Of course they are, that's the point of using the, to show emphasis in speech, and excitement, and a general momentary lack of control on the part of the character. I rarely swear myself, but this depends on the company I keep; I know one friend who insists on referring to me as charmingly foul-mouthed, simply because we've had some great times together, and when happy my language shades inevitably towards the blue. Big deal. Personally, MATRIX would have to change a lot before I found the language offensive, but then what do you expect from a man who calls his bike "Mothertrucker".

I find it interesting that Dave goes on to deplore the

argument over 2000AD, taking the view that excessive violence is to be encouraged in kids' comics. Hmm... I've always stood by the argument that familiarity breeds contempt, and if our kids get inured to the idea of violence, then they'll come to take it for granted. But like you say, Andy, this is one of those subjects where there are no answers, only opinions.

A few words in defence of Spider Robinson, winner of the John W. Campbell award, and Hugo nominee (I think). Certainly he was the most popular columnist Galaxy ever had. I've read his recent novel "Telepath" and loved every damn word. Marvellous first novel. His work's appearing in all the major SF prozines, Analog, Galaxy, Amazing, and I'm hunting down his work in the lesser zines as well.

DAVE COBBLEDICK, 245 Rosalind St, Ashington, Northumberland, NE 63 9AZ

I see Bill Little trying to goad me into breaking my word on the subject of...no, I shan't mention the word, but I have written to him on a personal basis; keep it out of MATRIX is what I say.

But, to this subject of foul (never mind the nice phrase of 'taboo words') and disgusting language. You say that by replacing certain letters one insults a person's intelligence? (Annoying as it is to you)...I say it defends dignity, both SF's and Fans'. I do agree with you that blatant use of foul language shows a lack of intelligence and I'm afraid to say that that is what has appeared in MATRIX.O.K. everyone swears (silly bugger and 'aww shit'), but then they are accepted words which even some puritans use, but the language which is used to describe sexual relationships in an obtrusive manner ((like the first of those expressions?)) is nothing short of disgusting. I agree entirely with David Strahan; use of these words in novels is O.K. ('cos you can fold the cover if it disturbs you), but, in his observation of Mr. Fraer, he is quite correct in saying that such use shows a lack of vocabulary on his - and anyone's - part.

Hmm, I put my foot in it there; so sorry about my outburst on the subject of SF being 'taught' in schools (though I did read somewhere that there were such; hundreds it mentioned... wish I knew where I read it...)

In your statement of presenting 'Alternatives' to children as far as the context of a comic is concerned (i.e. depicted violence), what would you suggest as Alternatives? Let's face it, we like violence. We sit and watch films which depict men and women with guts flying left and right, we enjoy wrestling, boxing, karate, we revel in the excitement of SF novels where fighting breaks out, or some form of violence

takes place. We are violent by nature and it excites us. IPC simply tap that factor and make a lot of money out of it with their comics. There is a discernable level where change will destroy that connection and sales will drop with the result of whatever comic concerned being discontinued. Naturally violence is more socially accepted than sexuality. In our little world we have been trained (mentally) to look after one's self and if that includes being violent then so be it. Sex, on the other hand, has been hidden, classed as shameful (in a mental sense) and so any divulgence of it to minors, or where minors will see it, is frowned upon; hence, it is less socially accepted than violence...as I said, what alternatives?

((What alternatives? Can't you think of any yourself, Dave; or must every problem be solved by a swift boot in the groin? Sure, Man is 'naturally' violent. But Man is also capable of co-operation and love. Violence is a means to an end and once it is seen as anything more than this we are on the road to all sorts of horrors. And even this means is strictly limited as violence tends to breed more violence. A great deal of fiction unfortunately suggests that brutality is somehow 'respectable'; put the boot in and everything's all right. We all know the tough cop who takes the law into his own hands; fine, but if he's allowed to stomp whoever he likes, why shouldn't I stomp anyone whom I disagree with? My disagreement with the IPC stable is that it focuses almost entirely on that sort of response. There was a lot wrong with the early Marvel comics, but at least they featured heroes who were to some extent real people - in that they may have indulged in a lot of violence but this did not solve their 'real' problems. Violence and action may be exciting spectacles but we THINK and FEEL as well; I hope for entertainment which extends emotional range, not limits it. End of sermon.))

I'd like to express my thanks to Andy Pratt, who has taken the time to write to me on the subject of TVSF. He has offered his help and contributed questions for the TVSF questionnaire. So, the first move has been made, who will follow it up? The end product will be sent to BBC/ITV and American TV companies with the hope of some attention (however small) being given to the actual people who watch TV.

I'd like to take Paul Fraser up on his point of 'Round the Clubs' being useless. Although I used to function as Liaison Officer by reference is in no way a biased one. Many members who join the BSFA live in areas where a local SF group exists, but few know about them. Also, some who do know may be shy and dubious as to whether they should join for fear of anything physically or mentally being required of them. RTC gives BSFA members information about these groups and lets them see how they operate and function; this helps, or so I believe, remove any doubts that exist. Besides that, many groups may be interested in others and, as local groups find out about and join the BSFA, this info is available for them. There is a communication breakdown between the BSFA to groups and group to group; this section is designed to eliminate this breakdown and create liaison to the benefit of all concerned.

Unfortunately I doubt if GB will ever support a prozine for any great length of time; the latest is 'Starburst', although it lies mainly in TVSF &F and happenings on the silver screen (I wonder how long it will last?). So, why can't we support a prozine? Well, very few people buy SF magazines for a number of reasons; 1) They can't afford to buy them, 2) they are boring, 3) They prefer fanzines. I think no. 3 can be



allotted as the main reason. There are literally hundreds of fanzines published in the UK and they; are all (well, 80% of them, in my opinion) far more comprehensive and interesting than any pro-zine. I enjoyed SF Monthly, but then that was only for the artwork and news; still, it wasn't selling and NEL just couldn't afford to keep it going. SF Digest lasted one issue and Vortex was so bad it amazed me that subsequent issues followed the first. Beside all of this, the American prozines are in full fling over here so anything we bring out takes second preference on a possible buyer's list.

Ben Burr may be interested in the editorial of my first zine (may as well get a plug for it); it deals with Heinlein, and the accusations made against him in a p....(won't say it) way.

The article on SF books in libraries was interesting and although I don't utilise my local library, I know that they have a large selection of SF in paperback. As Gordon Johnson said, they are covered with a plastic wallet and after repeated readings (I look at the ones my Pop brings home) they show little sign of wear and tear. Perhaps with a more varied selection SF will become a popular (more than it is now) subject to the people we regard as the media.

Although the 'Adventures of Moonbase Aleph' was slightly amusing, I didn't like the idea of double spacing between the conversation parts; seems like a useless waste of valuable space. ((Point taken: it was.)) I forgot that Prof. Bergman was a character of 1999. wonder what happened to him...?

So, sad to see the departure of Fallible Freeman; I obtained most of my zines through reading this column and I can only say I hope whoever takes over will present such concise and accurate information of the same standard we've come to expect.

Altogether I wasn't terribly impressed with M16; it seemed very loose and lacked the interesting 'pull' of previous issues. I think there are less serious and constructive articles and more tripe (in the form of 'Adam', 'Moonbase' and other such crap) appearing and the Loccol is still too short for my liking. ((Over a third of MATRIX is letters, I think the proportion is reasonable; what do other people think?)) Sorry Andy but I wasn't happy with the end result of your efforts (artwork is a bit shoddy too). Perhaps this is just a low spot in the rate of flow of contributions and next issue may be richer in content....I hope!

((And at this point your editor feels it time to but in and say 'Hang on to your braces, folks - I am now going to be serious!' The previous letters have all (thanks to my powers of Editorial Selection) dwelt on the subject of naughty words, and while more hackles may yet be raised on one side or another I feel we've now reached the point of repeating arguments. May I now raise a point of editorial policy. Your letter express your opinions,

presumably in the way (by and large) that you want those opinions expressed. I do not intend to 'censor' letters which use 'taboo words' to stress a point, but I would ask correspondants to MATRIX to think carefully before attacking each other in print in a way which may be judged offensive. We are, after all, in the BSFA for what we have in common - a love of SF - and differences of opinion between us, of which there are bound to be many, should be on a reasoned basis rather than one of personal abuse. Those expletives which end up deleted in Waregate tapes are words like any others. They can be used in a literal sense, or a metaphorical sense to make points where these points are given emphasis and colour because the expressions used are ordinarily taboo. But do BSFA members really hold others in such utter contempt as the use of some of these expressions seems to imply? I would be very sad to think so, and I hope that we can air our disagreements, as far as possible, without violence.

If you do feel like violent abuse, why not direct it here? Seriously, if you have any criticisms of MATRIX, don't hesitate to let me know. MATRIX is, after all, YOUR magazine, and much as I like the praise I get, criticism helps me try and improve. If nobody tells me they dislike a thing, I can't do anything about it (or even explain why I can't do anything about it!) If you don't like something don't compose fictions on the ancestry or sexual habits of the author - slag me for including it; I won't be hurt too much (it's a foul and scandalous rumour that the typos in MATRIX are due to the tears blinding my vision as I read letters of criticism), and don't worry, if I disagree with you I'll say so!))

((...AND NOW some disagreements well and truly aired from our very own...))

DAVID LEWIS, 8, Aldis Ave, Stowmarket, Suffolk.

Whats this, Lewis stalks the Loccol like the phantom of the opera. The BSFA boogie man will get you.

Still I was not belittled by the first mention. (Sorry Bill). Further to the politico debate I contend that they are in fact now a distinct class of people. Also they are intent on foisting on us dynastic succession on a scale not even attempted by royalty. No longer can the common man expect to rise to the level of MP in his fight for freedom for the individual. Now is the time for a radical rethink of how we allow our society to be run. Politics was OK for the last 300 years or so but now we need something completely different to meet the challenges of the new era. ((Such as??))

Keith being a little free with his advice on how to suck eggs, I see. A little manipulation of the 'crude turnover rate' of BSFA members will show whether his repeats of fanzines are justified. No I aint gonna do the calcs, Keith is way into stats he can get it on.

Now onto Dave Cobbledick, a name to conjure with, but I leave that to lesser mortals. It is my nature master hot-shot to shout when unjustly accused by those come lately into BSFA & Fandom. I have over the last few years provided fillos, logs, edited the illfated 77 yearbook, conducted the how many books poll (2 years we waited for it to be pubbed). Only to see them butchered & misused by the

economics worshippers of the committee who run the show. So I am amply justified in my criticisms, which pertain to the BSFA only, which for tour information is a minor, minor part of the SF scene and Fandom in general. I am & will continue to be loud in my comments when needed & equally loud in my praises when due. Don't show us how wet behind the ears you really are, Dave old son. I have been around for the last lustrum or so & seen the BSFA through thick & thin. I think on balance it is better now than it has ever been.

As we are looking at the local one big carp is this; of 13 vox pubbed 4 were from council members or officials. One or two of which were castigating other councillors/officials. By all means quarrel with each other but not in MATRIX, please. Phil Hyphenated pain in the arse take note. -ets have more from members.

MATRIX 16 was a good balanced issue with news & humour nicely mixed, a perfect foil for the more serious VECTOR. The rising star is of course Cyril Simsa, a young writer of rare wit. I cannot wait to see more from him. Don't be deflected from your course by those fuddy duddies who think SF must always be a serious business. The Breezybournes of this world never get well received by Fandom as a whole & are one of the reasons why Fandom belittles the BSFA so often. When people like you & me try hard to get it accepted. I will close now having vented my spleen...

BILL LITTLE, 183 John St., Bidduphm Stoke on Trent, Staffs.

Enjoyed ish 16 very much, Newshounds was quite good and complete this time round. I know it has been criticised in the past but it does help me to know what to look out for on the bookshelves, because I think most sellers are generally later in getting the books on display. Agreed with your views on 'Red Shift': an excellent production. It's that type of 'SF' (if I can call it that) that I prefer to see on telly. It's much more acceptable than Blake or Dr. Who, where, due to plot demands, the production staff generally overreach themselves and you find that the whole set wobbles when a door is closed, or the spaceships look like the toys they really are.

Your comments on the use of the members' noticeboard are relevant; it's nice to see what others are up to.

But as usual it is the lettercol that I find most interesting and lively. It's the measure of the magazine, and always comes out well. Someone always says something that's worth picking up and replying to, e.g. this thing about comics. It's been a good while since I was into comics (ah, those halcyon days spent in a seedy newsagents flicking for the finale to a 'continued next issue' story), though it didn't take me long to graduate to Marvel comics, the most intelligent

and reasoned stable. Their heroes had problems (Spidey's agonised adolescence; DD's tortuous, unspoken love-affair; Ben Grimm's long road to face up to his deformity; Captain America's inability to get used to the modern day and his guilt over Bucky's death), the plots were intelligent, and, surprise surprise, the villains, though often monstrously evil, were quite rational (Doc Doom, Galactus, Green Goblin). The violence presented within these mags was always...detached, somehow. It was hard to equate the violence depicted on the page (often superbly drawn) to everyday violence. Doc Doom's incredible technology pitted against the freakish powers of the FF, though undeniably violent, was somehow violence on a higher plane, completely believable within the context of the script, but in no way could it be related to the real world. Sheer escapism. Grand days, those. ((That is how I feel about the Marvel comics too; at their best, they were/are great stuff.))

I liked Paul Fraser's comments about the BSFA award. I, too would like to see it extended to other than novels.

Frankly, Phil S-P pissed me off. I wish he'd realise that probably most of the members prefer MATRIX to VECTOR. If it wasn't for the light atmosphere generated in M, I doubt very much whether I'd renew my subscription. Though Dave Wingrove seems to be achieving a somewhat lighter look, it is, more often than not, hard going. If it came to a choice between M and V, then give me M anytime. ((Ah, but I hope it doesn't! I'd be very unhappy to see one without the other. The two mags should complement one another and just because I try to keep on the lighter side in MATRIX doesn't mean I don't enjoy the kind of serious discussion Dave aims at in VECTOR.))

JAMES T PARKER, 18 King William St., Old Town, Swindon, Wilts SN1 3LB.

Regarding Dave Cobbledick and his mission in the cause of better TVSF. Rubbish! Sorry Dave, but your grasp of what motivates the TV establishment must be rather naive to say the least. Do you REALLY think that TV producers give a damn about SF and the unique perspectives it has to offer? Do they Hell! No, friend, the one thing that 'Star Trek', 'Logan's Run', 'Space 1999', 'UFO', and 'The Man From Atlantis' etc. have in common is the fact that they're all unadulterated trash.

Mass produced, assembly-line 'shows' modified with a few fancy bits of futuristic technology to make 'em distinguishable from other mass produced assembly-line 'shows' like 'McCloud', 'MacMillan and Wife' and 'Starsky and Hutch' etc. Worse still, everyone of these series is weighed down with the same brand of bland American Liberal-Democratic moral traditionalism that refuse to accept that moral conflicts cannot be resolved without genuinely radical upsurges, often of a violent nature. Two alien races trying to exterminate each other? Simple: our square-jawed, all-American hero (plus token Black) simply points out to them the error of their ways; tells them to stop their evil, destructive practices because we're all brothers in this wunnerful universe. If only conflicts were so easily resolved. No, Dave, TVSF is an insult to the intelligence; unlike GOOD SF, it never comes within a million years of dealing seriously, profoundly, with things like human irrationality, political conflict and Neo-Facism disguised as friendly benevolence... It also refuses to even deal with the possibility of the failure of the space-race to achieve anything. Its moral pronouncements are invariably banal, bereft



of wit and worldly experience.

Watch any example of TVSF and you'll see the truth of my, perhaps harsh, judgements. TVSF is like 90% of TV, it's just instantly forgettable; none of it really REACHES YOU as a human being. It's just highly coloured junk for bored, listless minds that don't want to think about anything at all. It's for kids, morons and people who think John Wayne represents the finest democratic values.

Forget your crusade, Dave. I know your heart's in the right place, man, but you're just banging your head against a brick wall. In two years time, when the 'Star Wars' thing has died down, I doubt whether you'll find any SF on TV at all. It'll be out of fashion, see, not commercial any more, *passee*. But then that's the kind of world we live in, innit? The media is only exploiting SF as a current fad; it's not at all interested in real, speculative fiction - because that deals with nasty things that mass audiences don't want to know about...Pollution, the economic rape of the Third World, the collapse of unjust social systems, racialism and too much hate everywhere...do I need to go on? Show me one SF show that deals with these topics - and doesn't pull its punches - and you've got my support, Dave, OK?

Meanwhile I'll stick with Vonnegut, Ballard and Ellison etc.

((A thought-provoking letter which I'm sure is going to generate response...Much art is undoubtedly designed to confirm people's prejudices and TV is no exception. It's unrealistic to expect answers but I wouldn't mind a few questions now and again; however I must admit that I feel that 'Star Trek', at least, (in a way which has been excessively over-rated by its makers and followers) did attempt to speculate.))

GWYNFIR JONES, 34 Bryn Gwynt, Amlwch Port, Anglesey, Gwynedd, North Wales.

When I received the BSFA March package I was three-fifths of the way through Heinlein's huge novel 'Time Enough For Love'.

I first discovered Heinlein some fifteen years ago. I was fourteen. I read 'The Day After Tomorrow' and 'The Man Who Sold The Moon' and at the time I thought it was pure genius. His short stories and novels bristling with gadgets and heavy dialogue - great!

On revisiting Heinlein over the last few weeks I wasn't quite so overawed. Not so many gadgets, plenty of dialogue and sex!

I think it's rather an understatement to remark that the modern Heinlein is obsessed by sex and the male-female relationship in his novels 'I Will Fear No Evil' and 'Time Enough For Love' and to a lesser extent in 'Glory Road'. Longevity is another of his pet formulas for a storyline.

I think that sex in the context of a SF novel is understandable and normal, but Heinlein saturates

both books especially with so much. I mean it's not in bad taste, it's just out of proportion and makes both novels just plain dull.

The central character in 'I Will Fear No Evil' must be the most ludicrous nymphomaniac of all time. She/he is either thinking, talking or planning some ultimate sexual exploit/experiment for 400 pages.

I read Steven Bridges' letter on the films 'Silent Running' and 'Dark Star'. I didn't share Steven's disappointment with 'Silent Running'. I thought the storyline was very original and the colour and special effects were very well handled. So it did cost a few pennies more than 'Dark Star' to make; why hold that against it? The external shots of the ship 'Dark Star' were unconvincing, low on detail and the shots were lacking in the illusion of depth. The ship itself was very unimpressive and reminded me of an aerodynamic electric iron without the handle. The colour wasn't too good either but the conversation the commander of the 'Dark Star' has with the rebellious talking bomb was very funny.

CYRIL SIMSA, 18 Muswell Ave, London N10 2EG.

You want to know my honest opinion on the policy of listing magazine contents? Stuff the things. The only cases in which such a policy is justified are those in which the magazine is:

- (a) generally unavailable in this country, OR
- (b) not obviously an SF/F - oriented magazine.

i.e. If you're listing UNEARTH or BANANAS or VOID or some other obscurish journal, then that's fine. But otherwise, if someone is interested in buying prozines they are either (a) going to have to buy them from a bookshop/newsstand, in which case they can look at the thing first, OR (b) order them by mail, but in that case the mail order catalogue should give some idea of contents. Listing ANALOGS/F&SFs/IASFMs etc., which are already listed in Ken Slater's Fantast catalogues, and elsewhere, is a waste of space (unless you are comprehensive about it, of course - but in that case you're producing a listing of prozine contents instead of MATRIX.

Apart from that, my initial reaction to M16 is - a good issue. Some interesting items. Also one painful one, viz. Phil; Stephensen-Payne's letter.

Phil seems to have taken upon himself the role of unofficial watchdog over BSFA affairs, which doesn't trouble me by and large (it's for our own good, after all, innit?). I've no doubt that he means what he says sincerely, and I dare say that he has made some useful suggestions in the past. However, his latest letter makes one of my own pieces the butt of his snide comments, and I feel that what he says about it consists of badly-informed hysterics. This in turn makes me wonder whether the letter makes any useful points at all after the paragraph beginning "My, my...", or whether he is in fact just having a go at things for the hell of it.

I was originally planning to let all fire and brimstone loose at Phil at this juncture, but I've desisted so as to preserve coherence. Look, Tom Jones ran a World's Worst SF Story contest. My entry was "Adam the Antigen." I agree that "Adam the Antigen" is flimsy, cliched, turgidly written, etc; it is crap. What do you expect from the World's Worst SF Story? Something meaningful? original? well-written? Tom

asked for the losiest story I could possibly write; I wrote it. The fact that Phil thought it appalling suggests that I succeeded.

I presume Phil speaks figuratively when he refers to "Adam the Antigen" as a Tangent reject, but the very statement implies that he thinks I (and other contributors) are fobbing MATRIX off with our second-best material. This is not so. "Adam the Antigen" was written in direct response to Tom's request, Tom was given first grabs, and he took the piece. With the exception of some fiction in TANGENT, (which consists of prozine rejects), all my contributions to BSFA fanzines are written especially for them. If I produce a fanzine article and it gets rejected on the grounds that it is not good enough I generally do not re-submit it elsewhere; I simply accept that I've made an error in judgement. Tom and Ian Garbutt have both rejected some of my submissions - and retrospectively I agree with them that the material was not of a high enough standard.

I cannot really be bothered to take personal offence at what Phil says about my work. If Phil thinks that I (and other contributors) are unaccomplished writers then that, I suppose, is fair enough. But I think he's forgetting that MATRIX is, after all, an amateur publication being produced in spare time. If I was a professional-calibre writer which seems to be what Phil is after, I'd be appearing on the whole in professional publications. But I'm not, and I give the BSFA the best critical and/or satirical work I have the time and capability to write at the present. Perhaps I'll improve with the practice I gain in the process and I'll start producing material which will meet Phil's stringent standards. (And perhaps I won't, in which case Phil and other critics will have been right that the BSFA encouraged mediocrity in my case - maybe not in others. But then everything can work two ways).

If you're feeling pissed off, Phil, it's no use ranting at a bunch of amateurs; it won't make them improve, though constructive criticism might.

I'll stop there. There's been too much serious discussion about a piece which I never meant too seriously in the first place.

Paul Fraser's letter also sticks out in my mind, since I seem to agree with almost all of it. Shorter length categories in the BSFA awards would be nice: Geis' "One Immortal Man" and Priest's "An Infinite Summer" should both have been award-nominees, but they don't stand a chance because they got published on the "wrong" side of the Atlantic. I am a bit dubious about the practicality, simply because the British market is so small that some years you might get awards given to the best novella out of two, etc. An award like that would be a dubious distinction, surely? And anyway, the BFS already gives such awards in fantasy, and so at least British fantasy stories do receive the attention they deserve. But it is an idea; I'd like to see such awards, if feasible.

Re British prozines, Paul is absolutely right in his criteria for the editor's policy, too; especially in the need for a strong-minded editor who will bounce lousy stories by Names. A lot of editors aren't; the American market is particularly plagued by this evil, possibly worst perpetrator being LASFM. The mag seems to be overflowing with Name authors, but with the exception of the occasional blockbuster, e.g. Poul Anderson's novella in issue no. 3, these Name contributions are predominately crud and eminently forgettable. In fact those shorts which are any good tend to be those by 'minor' and/or new authors, which are at the very least promising. It looks like a case of the Unknown who has to try harder in order to make the sale.

Last autumn I got very annoyed with an extremely short story with an unwieldy long title by a well-known writer; it was basically a science lecture (a boring one at that) done up in an incredible number of clichés. I wrote to the editor of the magazine in which it appeared, and I received a polite reply (much more polite than I deserved considering the tone of my original letter) to the effect that - okay, it wasn't exactly the ideal SF tale, but it was interesting, and after all it was by a LARGE NAME! (I am paraphrasing). Well, quite apart from the fact that it bored me sick, my reaction is - SO WHAT if it's by a large name? It's a lousy story.

Further correspondence elicited a comment to the effect that one cannot totally forget the good stories one has enjoyed from the same pen. I suppose that's true, but personally I would not extend my indulgence as far as allowing a writer to produce unadulterated SHIT. If the editor has two stories, both of which are competent but neither of which is outstanding, then I accept that the story by the better-known writer is of greater interest to the audience. But a piece of shit is a piece of shit, no matter who shat it. Period.

The editor in question does a lot for new writers so it's not really him I should be bitching about, but there is an awful lot of this sort of sycophantia all over the place and that is no way to run a prozine.

SF & ROCK MUSIC DEPT: Whilst all the BSFA's rock music experts go on and on about the subtle nuances of various progressive and/or heavy and/or dreary rock bands with SF leanings, nobody is saying anything about Punk Rock. So I'm going to say:

#### THE ADVERTS!

(Hi'ray!)

They are not strictly SF in the traditional sense, but they are reminiscent of the science fictional 'new wave' partly through the bleakness of their vision and partly through their use of the bizarre. "Garry Gilmore's Eyes" (the single that reached the charts) is pretty psychotic and obsessive, and features the executed murderer (Garry Gilmore)'s eyes popping up in a patient who's just had eye-surgery. Their new album "Crossing the Red Sea With The Adverts", contains several similarly outlandish tracks: "Bombsite Boy" might just as well be taking place in an after-the-bomb future as in the East End. "On Wheels" is a morbid piece about what it must be like to be trapped in a wheelchair, and is musically possibly their most inventive. "Drowning Man", "New Church", and others also have



strong helpings of the weird.

As I said, not trad SF. But they share the technique of synthesising the existent and the mundane to create the quirkily unique (to paraphrase Dave Wingrove in his VECTOR 84 editorial). In this, and in their non-conformist attitudes - on "Safety in Numbers" they even have a go at conformism within the punk rock new wave itself - if not in their occasional lack of musical polish, they remind me of the Jefferson Airplane.

((Three points: The contents listing was probably an unsuccessful experiment and I hope that what I have as a (partial) replacement is more useful. Secondly although you say "Adam" was accepted by Tom I decided that it should be published in MATRIX - just to set the record straight in case anyone sees the Heavy Hand of the former Editor guiding my every movement - do you, Mr Jones, Sir? Although, I think in both our opinions, there was no question as the story completely met the required criteria of embodying all those SF cliches we know and love so well. If it failed in this - could it have been...good? And thirdly, the Adverts are great.))

PAUL FRASER, 51, Ivanhoe Rd, Aberdeen AB1 7HA.

The cover was OK but there's still only one staple. Steev Higgins' story was even better than Cyril Simsa's. These people can be really atrocious when they try! I've enjoyed these last two so much that I'm quite looking forward to Kilgore Herowitz III. The quick skim that I gave to Gordon Johnson's article on libraries showed it to be quite reasonable. I'm afraid I didn't enjoy Cyril Simsa's account of last year's Eastercon. A more straight-forward account would have been preferred. (It would also let me know what to expect at this year's Eastercon!) I'm afraid I found Dave Cobbledick's "Opinion" completely pointless. Newshounds actually had some news in it! (Sorry Andy). I'm kind of glad the Fanzine bit's being dropped as I personally skimmed on the two pages, usually. Sorry if that sounds like a snide boot-in-the-groin, but it's just what I feel. "Philosophical kant" was almost impossible to recite but it was very amusing when I read it the first time.

Your reply to the idea of having an SF magazine was, well, quaint, to say the least. You wouldn't need more adverts than fiction before a prozine was viable. Take Vortex as an example: (these are some figures I got from Keith Seddon).

Editor/Publishing salary	500
Contributors' fees	1000
Typesetting	300
Design (Editor does it himself)	0
Printing:	
Paper (40,000 run)	2000
Plates	200
Printing	1000
Finishing	500

COST....£6,100.

Now, no doubt some of these figures are a bit off, but any advertising revenue would take care of that. To break even you would have to sell 24,000 copies at 50p. (Vortex distributors gave back 22.3p per copy (i.e.  $\frac{1}{2}$ ); if another distributor only gave 1/3 cover price back, then 30,000 at 60p.)

This is the point where Keith Seddon and I break company. These costings are for a B/W mag on ordinary paper. This is what I would put in my magazine:

60,000 words fiction (instead of 40 -45,000 as Vortex had)  
3p. B/W illoes (opposed to the numerous ones V. had).

A couple of nonfiction articles; say, a review and a feature

The rates you could pay out of that £1000 contributors' fees would be 1½p (3½) a word for fiction (1p (2½) for serials) and £50 a B/W illo and £100 a cover. These are relatively good rates in the field (not sure about the artwork) and so you'd be able to get the likes of Bishop, Roberts, Martin, Moorcock, Priest or whatever your tastes run to. I think that a well-run middle-roadish magazine (a mixture of Analog, Galaxy and F&SF) would be popular enough to get a 24,000 distribution at 50 - 60p a copy. All it needs is some publisher to wake up.

((Wow, you've really blinded me with figures, Paul...What can I say but I hope you're right? I can't argue with the figures you give as I've nothing of my own to come back with, but I think you underestimate the hassles in setting up a magazine. Even if you run it from your spare room you're going to end up with a sizable bill for incidentals such as postage, phone bills, etc. which I see you've not budgeted for...But I want you to be right....))

Now, off that diatribe and on to my next one - concerning D.Strahan. I was rather disappointed at his reply to my letter, to say the least. He seems to have got awfully hot under the collar, what with calling me various things; 'inflated ego', 'bit of a masochist', 'serious lack of ability and vocabulary' I'd just like to go through his letter piece by piece. The first part, where he says my attitude is: "Strahan gave (it) a bad review, who the hell does he think he is disagreeing with me?" is just an exceptionally warped piece of (dare I say it) shit. Here, he is guilty of reading between the lines, which he accuses me of doing, in the next paragraph. My attitude was actually somewhat different. I was annoyed (not 'angry') at his giving an utterly incompetent review, not a bad one. The fact that he didn't finish reading was one point that I was particularly sceptical about. I still maintain that you have to read the entire thing to be able to review it properly. Next paragraph he said that perhaps he never articulated one point too well. The reason he never finished the novelet was that he couldn't. Of another novelet, though, (Jennings!) he said "Had I the time I'd read it." So can he really blame me for thinking his review was a rush job?

Eventually, in his conclusion, he says the phrases I use in my letters, such as 'cocksuckers', 'piece of shit'... "show a serious lack of ability and vocabulary on his part." Norman Spinrad's BUG JACK BARRON overused one of the words of the English language to the point of tedium and Moorcock in a letter to Maya 13 used the first of the two examples above. What I am trying to say is that I use these words/phrases because they fit ((As Spinrad would say...?)) And anyway, in a masterstroke of hypocrisy, Strahan pulled his only remaining leg from under neath himself by saying that Steinbach's painting "had less detail than a turd."

((And now, let's start a new page with some deeply serious and closely-reasoned analysis...No, on second thoughts, let's hear from...))

JAMES CORLEY, 30, Empress Ave., Manor Park, London E12))

I'm returning this sample I found rattling around inside the new-style loose leaf MATRIX. It's no good to me. I see W.H. Smith's are doing a very tasteful line in Star Wars ring binders, you should put in a bulk order and solve the problem once and for all.

Very disturbing issue, full of arguments. I won't comment on the continuing Heinlein/fascist turmoil. The only answer to these pinko-liberal crypto-degenerates is to line them up against a wall and give them a message from a Chicago type-writer.

What's wrong with magazine reviews? David Strahan did a good job on The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction. I never get round to reading the magazines but I appreciate being told what's in them.

Paul Fraser's ideas on the BSFA Award verge on the sensible, except for the strange American notion of giving it a twee name. Eligibility should be year of first publication whatever the format. Some good pbs never come out in hb, and vice versa.

Next controversy:

Keep the stanzas of poetry in  
The standard's appalling, it's really a sin  
But after all they're doing their best  
And it's no worse than any of the rest  
of the junk you print, or should I say misprint,  
rather, in your eclectic funzine.

Don't let the bastards grind you down about the out-of-date news. Just change the title from 'News-hounds' to 'Archaeologists of the BSFA'. Perhaps it could be improved by imposing some sort of order on it, little subtitles like What Was On TV Last Month, What The BFI Were Showing 7 Weeks Ago, etc. No point in listing book titles covered elsewhere, except for SF That Escaped.

Liked the humour of the Steev Higgins and Cyril Simsa pieces.

Incidentally why didn't I appear in last issue's letter column? If I didn't send you a loc you could still have reprinted one of the old ones, the jokes don't change.

If, by some chance, and totally without coercion you just happen to buy my silence with a large drink at Skycon then I won't write an effing letter about the effing bad language controversy.

DAVID WINGROVE, 4, Holmside Court, Nightingale Lane Balham, London SW12 5JW.

A quick word on MATRIX 16. I didn't know Rodin

was a fan! Gosh, I'll have to re-evaluate my opinion of him. Was he serious? Anyway, the lettercol confused me because I hadn't read MATRIX 15 (owing to the fact that I only got a copy yesterday!) Some nice heavy philosophical/political content there, but Ben Burr ought to be very careful when arguing about the true nature of Anarchy. It is such an amorphous beast that you can say "I am an anarchist" and still be in total disagreement with another of your 'political conviction'. For the truth is that anarchism is a very personal philosophy that can not work unless on an individual basis. When it becomes social it perverts or metamorphoses. (Marx was an anarchist until he tried to impose his ideas, and then dogma took over and Communism was born, one of the political plagues of our time).

As to language, Dave Cobblehead should avoid any arguments on this score. I feel that there should be no censorship but self-censorship. You should know when and where it is right to let off steam, to talk naturally, to curb your tongue. Another form of anarchy, I guess. But, then, anarchy is rigid self-government, the only form that works all of the time. Mill was right when he said that all things are okay except when you hurt others by doing them. There are too many selfish bastards who use legality as an excuse for immorality, and the moral code always supercedes the legal, whatever the politicians might tell you. A bad law never lasts on the books: something they taught me in my law studies.

Enough, though. SF and the media: I loved STAR WARS and expected nothing but what I saw, a marvellously superficial and fun movie that could pave the way for marvellous meaningful films in future. And Blake's Seven, for all its faults is a vast improvement on what has gone before.

Phil's letter brought a wry smile from me. Yes, Chris has been sodding awkward and I, for one will find it hard to make any future reconciliation with him. In personal terms I had a hard three months trying to piece together an issue without artwork (thanks again Rob!), wondering when I could get back to litho, writing to all and sundry to get things moving for future issues, etc. etc. It could have been easy, but Chris' intransigence and fucking bloody-mindedness defeated all our efforts to get something together in time. We have a good year ahead of us to make the BSFA strong and vital again. It should be now but for Chris' evasions of our financial state. And I no longer accept (or am willing to) his excuses of illness. I had a hard three months, personally, trying to rebuild a relationship. Chris' impositions probably made that impossible. He isn't working, he's no longer a student and he isn't hospitalised, so what the hell has he been doing? I am no longer willing to keep quiet about it. It bugged us all up for a long time and we had to grin and bear it, and make lots and lots of excuses. The time is gone when we do that anymore. If Chris reads this I hope he has the guts to go into print and explain what he was up to. Enough. The whole business sickens me.

STEEV HIGGINS, 18, St Austell Ave, Tyldesley, Greater Manchester. M29 7FY.

Don't scrap the poetry, even though most of it is bad (including my own piece in M15). As for the prozine reviews, what is the point of a couple of subjective paragraphs on a



couple of stories, selected highlights, and passing the rest off with a single sentence. Equally the contents list says nothing of any use. Maybe the answer is to drop them altogether and have separate zine or maybe a supplement in which all the stories can be dealt with at sufficient length so that the prospective buyer can really make his own mind up.

I'm glad my maiden effort wasn't greeted with a barrage of hysteria, I'd have hated to see it go down under a hail of soul-destroying polemic.

The 500th anniversary of 'Tomorrow's world' was celebrated in the RADIO TIMES by an article by Chris Priest on the future of television. Not a lot of new stuff came up, mainly holography, ultra-miniaturisation etc. but his speculation on TV being beamed right into the brain, and what might happen if a demagogue got direct access to the population's minds, was very significant. When do we see the story, Chris? (or has there already been one?)

At last! Somebody who enjoyed 'Red Shift'. I think the problem was if you tried too hard to understand it you not

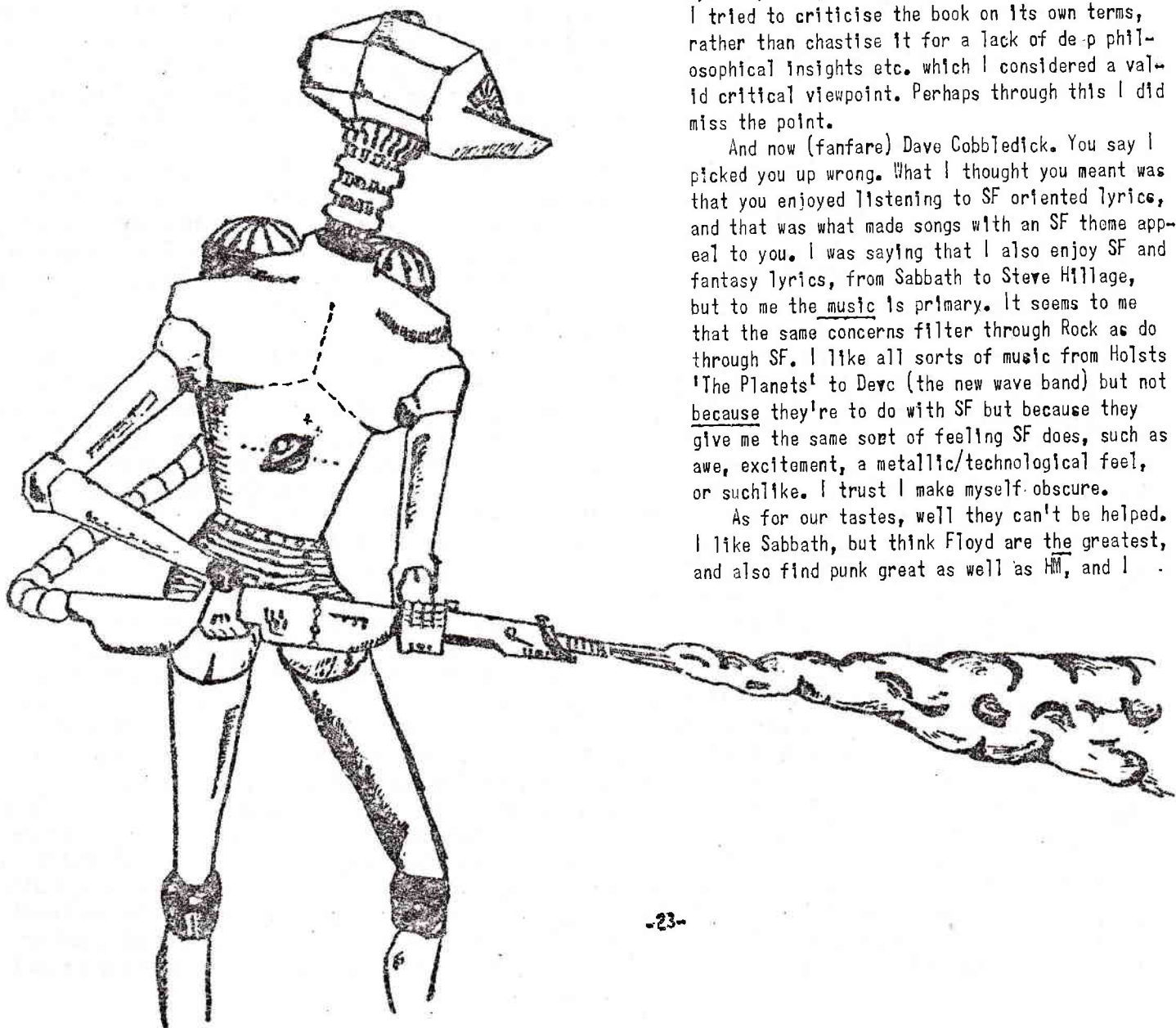
only took on an impossible task, but lost contact with the story, whereas if you simply accepted it, you not only did understand it, as far as you were meant to (the time switching etc, that is) but it swallowed you.

Now to my piece on the 'Space Beagle': to those who commented, thanks for taking it seriously, which is encouragement in itself. To Bill Little, I'm sorry. I did mention that the novel hangs together, but only in that the conclusion is a logical one to the whole novel, whereas it does so as an artistic whole. And the lie was given to this by my treating of the stories separately. This was how the piece wrote itself, i.e. how my thoughts emerged as I worked them out, and I was stupid enough not to criticise my own criticism.

As for writing about Nexialism, this raises another parallel with Asimov's 'Foundation Trilogy'. Was Asimov writing about Psychohistory, another imaginary science? Yea or nay, however, is irrelevant to the novel on the dissecting table. It seems to me a lot of the action is not concerned with Nexialism, but with telling a good story. That, though is my reading of it. In my piece I tried to criticise the book on its own terms, rather than chastise it for a lack of deep philosophical insights etc. which I considered a valid critical viewpoint. Perhaps through this I did miss the point.

And now (fanfare) Dave Cobbledick. You say I picked you up wrong. What I thought you meant was that you enjoyed listening to SF oriented lyrics, and that was what made songs with an SF theme appeal to you. I was saying that I also enjoy SF and fantasy lyrics, from Sabbath to Steve Hillage, but to me the music is primary. It seems to me that the same concerns filter through Rock as do through SF. I like all sorts of music from Holsts 'The Planets' to Devo (the new wave band) but not because they're to do with SF but because they give me the same sort of feeling SF does, such as awe, excitement, a metallic/technological feel, or suchlike. I trust I make myself obscure.

As for our tastes, well they can't be helped. I like Sabbath, but think Floyd are the greatest, and also find punk great as well as HM, and I



don't just stop there. I've heard 'War Pigs', by the way, and think it's an excellent track, not only for the way it puts over the feel of war, but also its own anger over and antipathy for it. But it's interesting to compare it with the Floyd track 'Corporal Clegg', which I think has the same feelings, but more refined, and effective.

On TVSF I'm right behind you. The questionnaire's a great idea. My own opinion is that as a minority interest SF should be on BBC2. I think we should have an SF 'Play of the Week', and since there is one coming up ('Stargazy On Zummerdown') I'll be interested to see it.

And now for something completely different. What gets me are those people who talk about 'entertainment' as if it was something opposed to what they no doubt consider artsy-fartsy junk, and fodder for intellectual snobs. I'm referring to Paul Fraser with his 'academe can go screw themselves'. Have they never realised that the whole point of art is to entertain by its artistry. Damn it, thinking is what makes being a human being so enjoyable, and yet some people want books to be a way to switch off!

PHIL STEPHENSEN-PAYNE, "Lindon", 1, Lewell Ave, Old Marston, Oxford)X3 ORL,

You have your own individuality, and MATRIX could do with a heavy injection thereof. MATRIX is not VECTOR I agree, and I would hate to make it so, but an informal, chatty members' magazine does not have to be, intrinsically, of lower quality than a critical one, and I think that at the moment, MATRIX is.

Which piece of atrocious grammar brings me to MATRIX 16, and thought/comments/views thereon. Congratulations on your seeing 'Red Shift' - I am most annoyed at having missed it (being without a television occasionally has drawbacks). Garner is an author who greatly impresses me, and I was particularly taken by 'Red Shift'. ((So was I - if you hadn't guessed! A brilliant novel, and the TV adaptation by and large did it justice.)) Did you see the TV production of 'The Owl Service' some years back? Also very good - probably because Garner himself was very involved in the production. ((As I think he was of 'Red Shift'.))

We will continue to disagree on the "Worst SF story" pieces - I thought "Moonbase Aleph" trivial. Not to mention that your liberal use of blank lines padded it to about twice its proper length. ((Others have also commented on this and through most of this issue I am not separating paragraphs except where the sense of the piece really calls for double spacing))

On the other hand, Gordon Johnson's article was fascinating, and just right. (Sadly indicative, perhaps, that it was a reprint). This is the stuff of which MATRIX should/could be made. Clear, concise, amateur articles on any matter of interest/relevance that comes

a member. Fill MATRIX with material of this quality, and even I will find it hard to complain. Even Cyril Simsa's Eastercon piece was fairly palatable (more so than a Burgess pie anyway) and for once the prospect seemed fair.

But then, to ruin it all, came Dave Cobbledick's piece. One reason I hate meeting people is that it is far more difficult to be rude to them thereafter, and having met Dave two days ago I am reluctant to be too harsh on his 'Opinion'. But, to be honest, I thought it a rambling, inchoate mess of irrelevancy - I don't think he really said anything in three columns let alone anything of relevance.

For issue after issue I've avoided :FFFFthrough lack of interest, and now that I've started reading him again, Keith gives up! A shame, he certainly is the best capsule fanzine reviewer I've seen around. Let's hope your 'replacements are good.

I would take issue with David Strahan on one point, viz "If you think a book is bad or boring you don't go on with it". Yes, unless you're going to review it. I agree that a large number of slipshod (& mainly non-fannish) reviewers do throw over a book partway and review it on what they've read, but that is pure laziness. OK if your review is along the lines of "I couldn't finish it, but of what I read...". but not if your review purports to be of the whole book. It is not necessary for a reviewer to like the books he reads, and I think David falls down on the point he accuses 'Mr Fraser' of, viz thinking that if he didn't like it it did not deserve a fair assessment. I have just read 'Slave-girl of Gor' for review, all 450 pages of it, and I was bored from the first page, but that didn't give me the right to give it up and review it on that. I know, as much as I could without reading it, that the book would be abysmally boring, but any reviewer has a duty both to the reader and the author to read every book carefully, just in case something changes. (And this does happen. Orbit published 7/8 abysmal "Space 1999" novels followed by Tubb's "Space 1999: Earthfall" which was really rather good - but there was no way of knowing that from the blurb/cover/first few pages.

Thinking of TVSF I recall something I forgot earlier, viz "The Hitch-hiker's guide to the galaxy", on Radio 4, 10.30 a.m. on Wednesdays. It is very hilarious and obviously written by someone who knows the subject well. It's spotted with lugubrious robots, improbability drives, chatty computers, and superb items such as a sperm whale striving for self-identity and world-conception during his plummet to the planet's surface from 300 miles up (where he had just materialised) accompanied by a bowl of petunias whose only thought during the fall was "Oh no, not again!" It's pieces like this that make one believe in the BBC!

I must say that I disagree with Dave C on the value of censoring MATRIX so as to not antagonise the over-forties. (You could always send them a free sachet of Phyllosan with every issue.) It is another of the wishy-washy please-everybody attitudes that has made MATRIX into the bland package it oftentimes is. Not that MATRIX should necessarily include swear-words, or exclude them, but that you should decide, as editor, what you want, and stick to it. Of all groups, SF fans should be the last worried about such antiquated notions as being offended by rude words. As for his "Real" people, of any standing... that is pure egocentred nonsense. Dave is offended by such words, that's his hang-up - trying to hide it behind pontifications on 'real' people is childish. I have no great fondness for using cunt or fuck in my letters - they are nearly appropriate - but nor do I



often use cant or fuge or many other vaild mono-syllabic words.

I don't see how Paul Fraser can support his th thesis that "The UK could support a regular mag. It could probably support three." That seems to be a completely personal opinion not based on any facts. Agreed that for such a project to succeed you need to be non-obscure/advertise heavily/ buy good material, but the combination of the last two (probably) makes the venture uneconomic. It appears that there are insufficient people in the UK who would buy such a magazine to make it pay its way.

It is very nice and idealistic to say that all the failures of recent years (New Worlds/New Writings/ Vortex/Other Worlds/Visions of Tomorrow/SF Monthly) were purely because of bad management, but I don't think that a reasonable assumption. Even in the US where the potential market is much higher, the magazines are in trouble. Your own point that "SF is far less of a minority interest than many topics which have thriving magazines devoted to them" is not. I think, immediately relevant. There are few, if any, thriving fiction magazines in the UK, which is the immediate comparison, and many other topics (e.g. stock-car racing) are more related to magazines (i.e. news of events and cars) than to books.

A series of stock-car racing novels would probably be a financial disaster. SF is, by its nature, more related to novels than magazines and so the books sell, and the magazines don't. ((You're right, Phil. I should have compared like with like; what I was intending to point out was that although when you walk into a newssagents you see lots of magazines, most of them are on specific topics which by their nature can command lots of advertising - hence are subsidied. SF, and indeed fiction in general, doesn't command this sort of mass advertising appeal.))

Seeing as Dave W (guardian of the BSFA Award) doesn't loc MATRIX ((well, he has, but not on this topic)), perhaps I'd better briefly comment on the matter. The BSFA Award is currently based on two assumptions:- (1) it should take the place of a physical award, & (2) it should be awarded by the members. (1) precludes awards for many topics, because with the BSFA spending its money on VECTOR/TANGENT/I MATRIX we have no cash left over and cannot afford more than one or two. (2) precludes awards to shorter lengths of fiction because most of the membership would have read few or any of the eligible stories. For the same reason the award currently goes to paperback not hardbacks. I don't necessarily think that the assumptions are the best, but they are the ones we work on at the moment, and from them the rest of our policy follows logically. If anyone thinks we should change our policy he is to declare it.

Which about finishes me on MATRIX for this time. Either it was a better issue or I was in a better mood.

((And now three sheets of blank paper...Wait a minute, its a letter from...))

ALISON LOWE, 146 Alexandra Road, Mutley Plain, Plymouth, Devon.))

I enjoyed 'Moonbase Aleph' and the library report by Gordon Johnson was also very good. I don't visit libraries as much as I used to, because I like to collect books now, rather than have to give them back, but when I was at school I used to haunt our local branch. Now I know the reason why there were never large amounts of SF available - I thought at the time it was just a discriminated against genre.

As to defining and explaining SF, well I don't know that it's such a good thing, all this wanting to wrap definitions around things, SF in particular. There are so many widely-differing styles and ideas and types under the heading 'SF' that to try and define it would be pretty impossible. Any definition is not going to be able to encompass all that SF is, so some is bound to be left out. I must say I've never read a satisfactory, in my opinion, definition of SF.

I certainly can't put my finger on the exact reason why I enjoy SF either. Most other kinds of fiction bore me, so I read little outside the SF field - I simply don't like other kinds of writing, but as to why I don't like them, but do like SF, I couldn't say. Maybe it's a good thing that I don't go into that too deeply - just as I don't agree with trying to restrict SF by defining it, I don't want to know the exact reason behind my enjoyment of SF. I have a feeling that if I can say "I enjoy SF because..." and give a long list of reasons, a lot of that enjoyment will have gone, I think this is probably a 'head-in-the-sand attitude to some extent, but I'd sooner just leave it that way, and enjoy it for its own sake.

Well, I see 'Blake's 7' has finished for the time being, leaving us with a 'Dr Who' style ending, to ensure we all watch the next series. I think it got better as it got on, especially the relationships between the crew. I hope they develop the situation between Blake and Avon, and, since the last episode ended with a prediction of the Liberator being blown up, maybe they'll develop the format a bit, away from the 'travelling through space having adventures' style. To give them credit, however, they do actually come into contact with the 'baddies' from time to time; it didn't deteriorate into a straightforward 'journey' type format which it could have easily done.

I expect you'll be getting plenty of reports on the Eastercon ((you're the first person to mention it! Although most of the letters arrived before Easter.)) - I actually got to go this year. It was my first Con, and as such I didn't really know what to expect. What I found was a good deal different in a lot of ways from what I'd expected. The thing that came over most strongly was the friendliness, the camaraderie among the members. I'd never been in such a large gathering of people who appreciate SF, and to be able to start talking to a complete stranger on the subject of SF was marvellous. All the things you've wanted to say about various books or fanzines that nobody else really understood everybody at the Con did understand, and were willing to talk with you about it, or argue with you, at least to communicate, which is more than most people normally would. I

enjoyed the Gon very much, despite the high prices of food and drink. The Heathrow certainly is a luxurious hotel, even if the management didn't appreciate the room parties. ((naughty, naughty)) The fancy dress ball will live in my mind forever; the sight of Brian Burgess nearly naked will haunt my dreams for months to come. ((Yes, well, not having attended Eastercon I have no idea what that refers to and I refuse to speculate!))

Did everyone see the 'Bionic Dog', then? And did we all enjoy it? At first I could hardly believe it - Oscar Goldman looking sincerely worried that "Maximillian was experiencing 'bionic withdrawal'!" I don't know how he reads his lines with a straight face, really I don't; they must pay him a lot or something...

KEITH WARWICK, 98 High St., Hemel Hempstead,  
Herts HP1 3AQ

I liked the letters which have become more interesting and stimulating. I have noticed a couple of anti-Warwick-Vortex-Fiasco jibes, which is good (what fun!) People should be using MATRIX as a genuine platform from which to publicly air their views about the genre and other people's views alike - which is what they are doing.

With the new surge of interest in SF being brought about by 'you know what' - that children's film about Hitler, Nazis and the French resistance set in the far-flung future - I think they call it 'Far Bores' or something. Yes, I do think it is entertainment - but hardly serious food for thought, surely?

The adventure yarn about Moonbase Aleph was a real bit of maniacal humour - and I thought it rather good. The last time I laughed as much was at one of Bob Shaw's speeches.

PAUL HARRIS, 8 Overgreen Drive, Kingshurst,  
Birmingham 37.

Adam the Antigen was fine, Breakapart was fair. I hope that you'll be very careful and not print too many pieces like this 'cos the thought of 450+ would-be-comics all sending in their little satirical efforts....

Very interesting and informative are the labels that can be applied to Gordon Johnson's article. Other 'insights' along the same lines would be very welcome. (See to it Andy - or else!)

Don't allow the mob from True Fandom to get their greedy little hands on yrll Simsa. And under no circumstances must you let him be exposed to their very desirable wares (booze, boobs red lurex cat suits, pant, pants). The BSFA can't afford to lose him. And if after all that it turns out that he has been a BNF for years and years then I think I'll kill myself...

I found the prozine reviews to be unstimulating but eminently preferable to the Contents lists which are, I believe worse than useless.

The last episode of 'Blake's 7' has just finished. The series certainly lived up to its initial promise. It remained hackneyed, cliched and embarrassing to watch. Never again will we see an episode end with a black-eyed baddie threatening to get Blake if it is the last thing that he ever does ...heh! heh! heh!

Pity that Keith Freeman's given up fanzine mentions (are we allowed to call them reviews?)(Not if you don't want Keith to Pay You A Visit)). I hope that someone with even better connections with wider fandom will provide a similar service for the BSFA; well for those members who need it; well, the ignorant, really; well, for me actually...

I think that political discussion is something that MATRIX is going to be stuck with for a long, long time. And politics is a damn sight worthier of discussion than all this rubbish about SF in education, and the various clowns who are burbling on and on about the so-called rights and wrongs of 'foul' language. (Education in general deserves a place, but why all this dragging of SF into every subject under the sun that we talk about.)

Bill Little: we all have our weird ideas about our weird political set-up; yours, if not weird, appear to be naive. If we stick to a very simple level it is obvious that we are not even a representative democracy due to the unfairness of our electoral system - and thanks to the machinations of the major parties we are not likely to see a system of proportional representation introduced in the near future. And civil servants or no civil servants, do you really think that any pressure group short of something the size of the TUC will persuade the Party leaders and Whips to do the honourable thing? You know damn well that the chances of major issues being influenced by voters or pressure groups are very slim. We possess a very small, very dubious amount of power every five years. And thanks to the media, the education system, etc. we don't even realise how that power is guided. We live in a society ruled by numerous oligarchies, and it will never change.

I'm more than a little ignorant when it comes to cons, but Dave Langford seems to make sense. Perhaps if, instead of putting our foot into it, the BSFA were to listen to those nasty, childish, fannish fans who have been running them for years.

Well done Dave Cobbledick for attacking Dave Lewis. How dare he have the nerve to knock peoples' ideals and aims. It is disgusting that he should even hint that anything is other than perfect with our great and wonderful BSFA. Dave Lewis: if you insist on writing daring, controversial material, be prepared to face the cretins who will deny you the right to do so. Cretins like Dave Cobbledick.

BEN BURR, 7 Egerton Drive, Greenwich, London SE10 8JS

After the mention of my upcoming fanzine in the last issue of MATRIX only two people have responded in any way. This shows how bloody apathetic the MATRIX readership is at the present. Near 500 people and only two could bother. Anyone who wants a copy had better write soon, as I'm setting a deadline on receipt of s.a.e.'s, and there will be no exceptions. (This does not apply to people I regard as friends, who'll get a copy anyway. So if you aren't a friend yet, write!)



Terry Nation is one of the most overrated (by the BBC) and worst writers doing TVSF. I've never really liked his scripts. The Daleks were original, but the stories weren't. His episodes of SURVIVORS were the least enjoyable, and now Blake's 7 confirms my opinion that he has an inability to think of anything new or different. Too many of the episodes were almost directly taken from STAR TREK and other TVSF programmes as well as assorted pieces of fiction. I suppose that the BBC were trying to capture the many STAR TREK fans around, and they've probably succeeded, unfortunately. We are bound to be in for another season of it later in the year.

To say that no true fan remains a true fan if he doesn't feel complacent after reading a new novel by his favourite (if he has a single favourite) SF writer is a bit limiting, and I can't agree completely with it. Occasionally I feel complacent after reading a good novel or shorter work, but after reading what I consider superb fiction I experience a feeling akin to complacency, but rather different in an important respect. The dictionary definition of the word complacency is that it is a tranquil pleasure; self satisfaction. I certainly feel satisfied, but not usually tranquil. I enjoy works that give me something to think about, that stimulate mental activity. After a great work I remain excited, active and in a kind of mental 'high' for some time.

The elderly are more resilient than Dave C seems to think. I showed his letter to several, average old people, and they found his letter more offensive to them than any swear words they could think of. Its condescending tone is insulting to all those above the age of 40.

RICHARD BANCROFT, 7 Woone Lane, Clitheroe, Lancs.

I see that virulent bug got a hold of you. Me too. Ugh! The invaders have nothing in common with that little bug...but somehow it looks as if the effect enhanced your editorship qualities.

Actor Gareth Thomas who portrays the space (anti) hero Blake is reported as saying "You merely have to suspend disbelief and play overgrown children. It is totally and truly Space Farce." Well, who are we to disagree with him? May the Farce be with you...

Into my possession has come A PICTORIAL HISTORY of SF from Captain Video to the Star Trek phenomenon and beyond. Main title - FANTASTIC TELEVISION.

This book must be the ultimate documentation of TVSF at the present time. You name the TV series and I'm sure you'll find it here. It includes Superman, The Outer Limits, Star Trek, The Rifleman, The Invaders, One Step Beyond and many more. Includes an index of SF films made exclusively for TV. Cartoon SF has a respectable mention with neat illustrations and British telefantasy is well documented. All TVSF series are indexed and explained

episode by episode - if you are keen on TVSF this book (LSP BOOKS LTD, written by Gary Gerani with Paul H Schulman) is for you.

I have based a quiz on my new knowledge of TVSF:

10 Burl Ives was the Man who wanted to WHAT forever?

2) Orson Welles' famous radio report of a Martian invasion was made into a TV documentary (1975) What was its title?

3) Who were the Gargoyles?

4) Who created the character of Bernard Quatermass?

Who was MR TERRIFIC? and CAPTAIN ZERO?

((I shall not reveal my score on that except to say I didn't get them ALL wrong. Honest.....))

KEITH M WARWICK, 98 High St, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP13AA

As I recently viewed STAR WARS, I would like to give my personal review of this much publicised film. The plot was pretty standard - it is really a kiddies film and without its excellent special effects, I'm sure it wouldn't have attracted its large adult audience. Full marks go to director George Lucas of keeping the film tight and consistently exciting, and even funny - such as the instance when Chewbacca was startled by a mechanical dog. The costume designers and make-up artists created the most startling and original alien creatures I have ever seen. The most memorable scene of the film for me will always be the intergalactic bar, where the heroes found themselves among the most decadent dregs of the milky way - Lucas directed it to a turn to create a stunning and thought-provoking vision of hell on another planet.

The bad points are usual and peculiar to this type of film, such as the goodies/main characters never getting wounded while all the time bolts were being fired at them from every direction. The baddies suffered intolerable losses! The climax of the film certainly suspends you above your seat. The screenplay was not quite as literate as Dr. Who - somebody has said that? - but again I would commend George Lucas for his Midas touch.

All that remains now is for us all to go and see CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND. I have heard, from a very reliable source, that although the film is probably the most visually impressive ever made, it lacked common sense, logic, and plot consistency. It could, I suppose be too easy for us to be taken in by the film's mysterious and sensational theme - just think of its subject matter. Again, the publicists have set about trying to precondition us through autosuggestion. One day we will get so imbued with all the publicity blurb that we will go to see a really rotten film and actually convince ourselves that it was the best thing on celluloid. Are films only to be judged by their sheer volume of first-class special effects in future? Anyway I won't be taken in by anything preposterous or phony, nor will I be prejudiced just because what'sisname said it was 'like that'. I do hope that CLOSE ENCOUNTERS turns out to be the ultimate word on the UFO subject and wait with eager anticipation for a chance to see it.

SANDY BROWN, 18 Gordon Terrace, Blantyre G72 9NA.

Wow! Another new sci-fi (ugh!) epic which plumbs the

depths that no scriptwriter has plumbed before!

My wrath is currently directed against BLAKE'S 7. I tried ten minutes of it; that was enough, and I would probably never have watched it again, but for my 4 year old daughter, who loves it and insists on watching. That's my reason, what's yours?

You may be assured that devotees are held in contempt by the perpetrators - how about this exchange in the lettercolumn of the RADIO TIMES? A correspondant writes that "Spacecraft that billow clouds of smoke all drifting upwards, men walking with great ease along a flexible tube, all this while in space! A little more time spent watching the moon takeoff and the walk in space by the Americans would have paid off in a little more realism." The producer replies that the men were walking along a specially treated strip, and that the spaceship was still in atmosphere "before the rockets operated to power the ship into space". - Magic gobbledegook which, I contend, shows contempt for the audience.

Another instance. A matter transmitter which requires a bracelet communicator to be worn by the transportee - presumably either a homing device, or part of the circuit. Blake has this, but his adversaries do not. One of the Seven loses her bracelet and consciousness, just before recall to the ship. She is found by the enemy, but the bracelet, lying in full view, is not. Can you imagine a murder mystery where the fingerprint-covered revolver is not noticed by the police?

SF has been, and still mainly is, a written entertainment. BLAKE'S 7 has all the outward trappings of SF, but misses the central ideas of SF. It is clearly labelled as SF, but is merely 'Boys Own' adventure transplanted into space.

I now turn to a TV show which plays down the trappings of SF, but perfectly grasps what SF is all about. I refer to IN THE LOOKING GLASS - also on BBC TV. The Nazca lines being made by a bulldozer; Atlantis existing to the present day, and at last being destroyed by a missile; studying the Earth at this moment through a super-telescope and, due to the distance, seeing only dinosaurs; a seedy, run-down hell. All these in the form of 'thirties musicals, with the characters breaking into song at the crucial moment; blatantly painted landscape, with the cast blatantly superimposed. This is not labelled as SF.

Now an example of the same two attitudes in a single programme - yet again BBC TV. "Read All About It", a paperback review show. A chooses for review Ursula LeGuin's THE WINDS TWELVE QUARTERS; B admits to disliking SF, and dismisses the book; C, an author and a book critic - for chrissake! - says she read the first two stories and couldn't finish the book. They then turn to Kinsley Amis' THE ALTERATION, which is not labelled SF, and

proceed to praise it.

It's not an uncommon attitude to assume that SF is 'kids stuff'; why should we expect the script hacks and programme controllers to be other than a typical cross-section of humanity?

TV in Britain dramatises as serials a large number of well-known books - THE FORSYTE SAGA; I, CLAUDIUS: THE PRIME OF MISS BEAN BRODIE; ANNA KARENINA several of the Lord Peter Wimsey novels. The same treatment of SF is conspicuous by its absence.

My only conclusion is that it's an insoluble problem: how can SF fans clear up non-fans' preconceptions about SF when, as soon as SF is mentioned, people switch off mental?

R I BARYCZ, 16 Musgrave Rd, New Cross Gate, London SE14 6PW.

Re Smith on BLAKE'S 7. It's not that Terry Nation is the only script writer of SF, he just looks like it because all the others fall over their own special effects. I have a suspicion that the BBC turns down the others for one simple reason: money. Special effects take a big slice of an SF programme & the fewer that are needed the better. I suggest Smith read Gerrold's book on STAR TREK and the hassle they had over Harlan Ellison's episode - the man wanted a chasm lined with 60 booming statues; what he got was a bit of rock with a hole in the middle, & as far as I know has been screaming about this shortchanging of his talents by Hollywood ever since. I suggest Smith study the BLAKE'S 7 shows when they are repeated & see just where the pennies were pinched. The Beeb lacks the money all right but it uses what it's got rather well & continues to believe that words are cheap & characters even cheaper still & it's the characters of BLAKE'S 7 that appeal, not the hardware. Nation can come up with good characters & given the choice between Nation not at his best and someone new the Beeb will go for Nation every time. Never mind the cliches, feel the characters. Love the clerihow. More! More!

NEWSOUNDS EXTRA....

New films: THE CRAZIES (dir. George A Romero) - experimental vaccine in a town's water supply causes berserk behaviour. HOLOCAUST 20002000 is a black magic tale set in a thermonuclear power plant; THE LAST DINOSAUR (dir. Alex Grasshof, Tom Kotani) stars a tyrannosaur found frozen in the ice-cap. (source, BFI Monthly film bulletin.

DAVID CARRADINE'S new film is DEATHSPORT. HARRISON FORD is working on FORCE 10 FROM NAVARONE, sequel to GUNS OF...

SILICON 3, August 25 -28 at Grosvenor Hotel, Newcastle upon Tyne. An 'informal' convention; for details contact Rob Jackson 71, King John St, Heaton, N'castle NE6 5XR.

NEWSOUNDS OF THE BSFA starred Paul Fraser, Phil Stephenson-Payne, Tom Jones, Cyril Sims, Geraint Day, Mary Long, Richard Bancroft, Roy Gray, Karass 35, and anyone else whose name isn't down on this hastily-scribbled envelope.

Ooops, there's some more space; right, here goes. A Minneapolis man recently lost his bid to change his name to 1069. The judge said using a number instead of a name would be 'an offense to basic dignity and inherently totalitarian. A Mother of 3 kids will make a space flight within two years (how many fathers of 3 have made spaceflights?0. A New York psychiatrist says STAR WARS is good for children....



BBBB	SSS	FFFFF	AAA	N	N	EEEE	W	W	SSS
B B	S	F	A A	NN	N	E	W	W	S
BBBB	SSS	FFFF	AAAAA	N N N		EEEE	W W W		SSS
B B	S S	F	A A	N NN		E	WW WW		S S
BBBB	SSS	F	A A	N N		EEEE	W W		SSS

This section of MATRIX was instituted to inform you about the plans of the Council and committee. I have tried to do that by presenting precis of the committee and Council minutes. I expected a reasonable response, comments, suggestions, criticisms, but, alas, I have been disappointed as the direct response to this column has been minimal. I do not believe you are apathetic, the energetic letter columns in the magazines prove me right so perhaps it is the way I have presented the information which is at fault.

Looking back at the columns I see I've told you either what the committee has already done or is on the point of doing and obviously there is little point on commenting on what is past history. So, from now on I shall try to keep you informed as things occur so that you can have an input at the earliest possible stage. I hope this does not lead to disaster as two things I told you about at an early stage, prospective adverts, both fell through! This is a point to note, receiving information at an early stage more of it is likely to be abandoned, be overtaken by events or collapse in ruins.

Perhaps it's worth reiterating the organisation (oh no they groan) - Council delegates the day to day administration of the Association to a Management Committee (henceforth known as the committee). The committee keep in touch by letter, telephone and a Round Robin. The Round Robin is a postal forum for the discussion of matters involving the BSFA, the present Round Robin, number five contains some 50 plus items - though a number of these are news items and points which have been decided. Usually on receipt of the Round Robin (which I originate) we have a committee meeting. These meetings take place in the London/Reading/Oxford area and they are attended by Tom Jones, Dave Wingrove, Phil Stephensen-Payne, Trev Briggs and Keith Freeman (Keith is not strictly a member of committee, not being on Council, but he is keeper of the computer, doyen of the duplicator and a fund of experience), other committee members don't attend because they live in the far North to the very far North. The five of us can usually make decisions on most of the points but there are certain areas where we feel unjustified in making a decision without the rest of the committee present.

Because of this we have decided to hold a committee meeting, in Liverpool hopefully in May/June at which all committee members will attend. The purpose of the meeting being to resolve all the sticky problems on which we don't agree. As you could expect there are many things we don't agree on, in particular the content, page count and necessity of the three publications; feelings run high on this. As our usual meetings take 6 to 8 hours we expect this one to take a whole day (if not more). I'll give you a blow by blow (perhaps literally) account of that when it's taken place.

Attached to this report are the minutes of the AGM, some ten pages, I've made it as detailed as possible so you can see not only what was discussed but get a general feel for the meeting. The AGM contains a report from the Council which mentions the major items of discussion at the Council meeting so I'll take this opportunity to mention some of the other points.

With the application of only mild torture Jim Barker has agreed to produce an eye catching A3 size poster which we can use to distribute to librarians and Dave Symes has agreed to distribute them,

after Keith has delved into the files to find out who amongst the membership belongs to that select band. Though we have some good adverts and posters which contain a pile of information none of them are eye-catching, we're thus looking to Jim for something which grabs the attention but isn't vulgar (can you hear me, Jim). Should anyone want one of these to display in his/her library, school, college, place of work (not your bedroom wall, please), write to Dave Symes.

The BSFA Award was discussed in particular the possibility of having another award for best media production which would cover TV, radio, theatre but excluding films as these were well catered for elsewhere.

Whilst on the Award we changed it to award for best paperback of the year because so few people get a chance to read the hardbacks. As one could expect this did not meet with universal approval and it has been suggested that we open it up so that any book which has its first paperback publication or hardback publication is eligible. This means some books get two bites at the cherry, first when they're published as a hardback and again a couple of years later when they appear in paperback, this is true but applies across the board. We'd like your views on that.

In fact we'd like your views on anything and everything within this BSFA News section and that includes the minutes. I know there are ten pages of minutes but I would ask you to read them as they are important and do effect you, the Any Other Business part is particularly worth reading as we had a good open discussion, which I've made appear more structured than it actually was for the sake of clarity. A lot of ideas were thrown up and discussed but no decision taken, and before taking a decision we'd like some guidance from you.

I'm particularly interested in how you think we should spend your money and what percentage of the total should be allocated to each item of expenditure (just a rough guide, nothing fancy). The meeting had a fair list of things it considered important but obviously we can't afford to do all of them at once you can help by telling us what you think the priorities should be (no need to restrict yourselves to the items the AGM discussed).

The accounts for the year are also enclosed (these are subject to audit) and it's worth studying them to see where your money has gone. I know Balance Sheets and Income & Expenditure Accounts cause a mental blackout in some people so I'll sum them up very simply; we made a loss of £350 which was paid for by funds in the current account brought forward from previous years. The largest item of expenditure was VECTOR and with the glossy lithoed format a mailing was costing more than we were getting in subscriptions. Committee had two choices - put up the subscriptions, again, or scrap litho and produce a duplicated VECTOR or produce fewer mailings a year. The committee decided on a duplicated VECTOR and strongly feels that was the right solution.

#### 1979 Eastercon

The BSFA again have a chance to work with a convention committee and we intend to do so to the mutual benefit of both. We in particular will be allowed to have the AGM when we want it, at present the Friday evening is running top of the list and we will have programme time allocated to us to use as we wish (in consultation with the ConCommittee, of course). So congratulations to Leeds on winning the bid we're sure it's going to be a good con.

BSFA AWARD WINNER THE JONAH KIT by Ian Watson - well done!  
(Full results in the AGM minutes)

Bye, Tom A. Jones



THE BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION LIMITED.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1977

Notes		1977		1976
	INCOME			
	Subscriptions	1901.65		1079
	Deposit Account Interest	8.57		20
	Magazine Chain Subscriptions	60.53		26
	Vector subscriptions & sales	854.31		325
	Year book adverts & sales	133.51		170
	Sundries	<u>32.44</u>		<u>2</u>
		2991.01		1622
	EXPENDITURE			
1	Cost of Vector	2740.51		1326
	Cost of Yearbook	-		198
	Magazine Chain Expenses	50.02		24
	BSFA Awards	36.50		-
2	Cost of Badges	10.81		6
	Advertising	238.94		-
	Administration Expenses			
	Postage	118.48		58
	Stationery	56.59		20
	Registrar of Companies	20.00		20
	Travelling	35.20		20
	Sundries	19.84	240.11	40 158
	Depreciation			
	Library	19.00		21
	Office Equipment	1.40	20.40	2 23
			<u>3337.29</u>	<u>1735</u>
			( 346.28)	( 113)
	Corporation tax on interest received at 42%		<u>3.58</u>	<u>9</u>
			( 349.86)	( 122)
	Corporation tax on interest received in prior years (42%)		<u>-</u>	<u>49</u>
	Excess of expenditure over income carried to Accumulated Fund Account		<u>( 349.86)</u>	<u>( 171)</u>

NOTES

1. Cost of VECTOR

Stocks at 1 January 1977	120.05	124
Expenditure (Nos. 79 to 84)	<u>2855.62</u>	<u>1322</u>
	2975.67	1446
Stocks at 31 December 1977	<u>235.16</u>	<u>120</u>
	2740.51	1326

2. Cost of Badges

Stocks at 1 January 1977	61.54	-
Expenditure	<u>-</u>	<u>68</u>
	61.54	68
Stocks as at 31 December 1977	<u>50.73</u>	<u>62</u>
	10.81	6

SUBJECT TO AUDIT

THE BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION LIMITED  
BALANCE SHEET      31 DECEMBER 1977

	1977	1976
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
Library at Cost	913.36	913
less; Depreciation to date	<u>745.36</u>	<u>726</u>
	168.00	187
Office Equipment at cost	67.21	67
less; Depreciation to date	<u>53.21</u>	<u>52</u>
	14.00	15
Award fund assets	<u>27.37</u>	<u>27</u>
	209.37	229
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Stocks of Vectors	235.16	120
Stocks of Badges	50.73	62
Cash at Bank	1039.92	331
Cash in Hand	20.00	2
	<u>1345.81</u>	<u>515</u>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Sundry Creditors	1268.99	103
Corporation Tax	3.60	9
	<u>1272.59</u>	<u>112</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
	<u>73.22</u>	<u>403</u>
	<u>282.59</u>	<u>632</u>
<b>REPRESENTED BY:</b>		
<b>MEMBERS INTERESTS</b>		
Accumulated Fund		
Balance at 1 January 1977	605.08	776
less: Excess of Expenditure		
over income for the year	<u>349.86</u>	<u>171</u>
	255.22	605
<b>Award funds</b>		
Dr. Weir Memorial Fund	15.00	15
British Fantasy Award	<u>12.37</u>	<u>12</u>
	27.37	27
	<u>282.59</u>	<u>632</u>

SUBJECT TO AUDIT



BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION LIMITED

ACTING COMPANY SECRETARY

D. E. Rogers (Mrs.)

REGISTERED OFFICE

69 Brumby Wood Lane,  
Scunthorpe,  
South Humberside.

Chairman of the Meeting Tom A. Jones

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the above Association held  
at the Heathrow Hotel, Heathrow Airport, London on Sunday  
27th March at 10 o'clock in the forenoon.

1. To confirm and accept the Minutes of the previous AGM

Thought the minutes had been circulated the meeting requested that they be read, this was done by the Chairman. Mrs. Doreen Rogers asked that the minutes be amended such that the name "D. Parker" be changed to "D. Rogers". The Chairman apologised for this error and the minutes were so amended.

Mrs. Rogers asked what had happened with regard to the short identifying name for the British Science Fiction Association Award. The Chairman said several suggestions had been put forward, which had all been mentioned in the BSFA's newsletter, MATRIX, but the Committee did not consider that any of these were suitable. The Chairman stressed that suggestions were still welcome.

A motion was then put that the minutes be accepted as correct,

Proposed: Ken Slater

Seconded: Dave Symes

Pass Nem Con

2. To receive and consider the balance sheet and accounts for the period 1st January 1977 to 31st December 1977 and to approve or otherwise.

The Chairman explained that the accounts were subject to audit and the auditor's report would be circulated to the membership when available. The Chairman said the Association's Treasurer, Mr. Chris Umpleby, would answer any questions about the accounts.

Mr. D. Symes asked if the loss shown would be recouped in this financial year. Mr. Umpleby explained the loss was due to expenditure on the Association's magazine VECTOR. This year the magazine was being duplicated rather than lithoed which was considerably cheaper and the Association should recoup a large amount, if not all, of the loss incurred.

Mr. Symes asked if VECTOR would return to litho printing, the Chairman replied that the Committee had no intention of doing so at this time.

Mr. K. Slater suggested that if litho was used again alternative, cheaper printers should be found. Mr. Wingrove (the newly appointed editor of VECTOR) replied that since taking over as editor he had found a printer who would do the job for about two thirds the cost.

The Chairman was asked why the typeface used had been so small and replied that this was due to Mr. C. Fowler (past editor) trying to squeeze as much material as possible into the journal. The Committee realised that this was disliked and there was no intention of ever returning to that print size.

Mr Slater asked if the stocks of VECTOR were valued at cost price, Mr. Umpleby said they were thus any sales of back issues brought in a profit.

Following this up Mr. Slater asked if any were being sold. The Chairman asked Mr. K. Freeman who dealt with back issues to reply. Mr. Freeman said the back issues sold at a slow but steady rate. Mr. Freeman further explained that Mr. C. Fowler had previously looked after this and after handing it over there had been a backlog of requests some a year old and he was slowly working his way through these.

Prices of back issues were discussed and Mr. Wingrove agreed to produce a separate price list. Mr. Slater agreed to put this into his Fantast (Medway) Limited catalogue. It was further agreed that a summary of each issue would be given on the price list.

Mr. Umpleby was asked about the cost of badges and said this was the difference in stock at cost price over the year, the income from badges sold being included in Sundries.

Mr. Umpleby was asked if the cost under the item VECTO included all other publishing costs and postage, he replied that it did though the major expense was VECTOR with postage coming second at about £150 per mailing. The Chairman explained that Mr. Fowler had administered the publishing part of the account and it was only possible to break down the expenditure to a certain level.

Mrs. Rogers asked if the year's subscriptions would cover the loss and the cost of this year's mailings. Mr. Umpleby said it would providing duplicated production was used. Mrs Rogers asked what the present membership was and Mr. Freeman replied it was about 500.

Mr. Gilbert said it had been usual in past years to bring out a mailing at the Easter Convention and this had saved some money in postage as some of the mailings could be distributed at the convention. The Chairman replied that this had not been possible with Easter being early this year.

There being no further questions a motion to approve the balance sheet and accounts subject to audit was proposed.

Proposed: D. Symes  
Seconded: K. Slater  
Passed Nem Con.

3. To receive and consider the report of the Council for the period mentioned and to approve or otherwise.

The Chairman said the Council had kept the membership informed during the year by means of the "BSFA News" section in MATRIX which contained summaries of the Council and Committee meeting minutes. The recent mailing had also contained a Vice-Chairman's Annual Report and with this in mind the following report would be short.

The Council had met on Friday 25th March 1978 at the Heathrow Hotel, London. The salient points discussed were:-

a) The lack of a permanent company secretary as Doreen Rogers could only continue with the job for a short time after the AGM. Council wished to express their gratitude to Mrs. Rogers for taking on this post at short notice when needed.

Mr. David Wingrove said that on a point of information since the Council meeting Mr. Kevin Smith, a Chartered Accountant, had offered to take on the post, subject to the agreement of his employers. The Chairman thanked Mr. Wingrove for this information and said he would contact



Mr. K. Smith to finalise the matter.

b) BSFA Award. The Chairman said this had been organised by Mr. Wingrove and Council wished to thank him for the work he had put in. The Chairman handed over to Mr. Wingrove to announce the results.

Mr. Wingrove said he had received 62 voting slips this being a better response than previous years. The results were;

1/	THE JONAH KIT	by Ian Watson
2/	HIGH RISE	by J. G. Ballard
3/	INFERNO	by Larry Niven & Jerry Pournelle
=4/	THE SPACE MACHINE	by Chris Priest
=4/	TRITON	by Samuel R. Delany

The Chairman said that all outstanding BSFA Awards had now been presented and Mr. Watson's would be delivered as soon as possible.

Mr. Freeman suggested the award could be made at Novacon at an official ceremony. The Chairman said he would approach Mr. Watson and the Novacon Committee to see if this could be arranged.

Mr. Slater asked if the Award could be presented at the Easter Convention in following years. The Chairman said though the award could be available inscribing could not be done in time. It was then suggested that the award could be made and the inscribing done later. The Chairman said Council would see if this could be arranged.

c) The BSFA's Council felt the BSFA should be again involved in conventions and after much discussion wished to announce their support for the 1979 Leeds bid, which they would help in any way.

The Co-Chairman of the Leeds bid said they welcomed the BSFA and wished to work with them.

Mr. Slater detailed the advantages of an organisation, such as the BSFA, organising a convention should the convention suffer a loss and the organisers be made bankrupt. The Chairman thanked him for the information but emphasised the BSFA had no intention of taking over the bid in any way. Mr. Antony Croghan pointed out that any course which could involve the bankrupting of the BSFA should not be entered lightly. The Chairman agreed with Mr. Croghan.

The Chairman said that concluded the report of the Council.

There being no further discussion a motion was put that the report of Council be accepted.

Proposed: K. Freeman  
Seconded: A. Croghan  
Passed Nem Con

#### 4. Nominations for the Council

The following Council members retire by rotation;

Bob Shaw  
Les Flood  
James White

and being eligible offer themselves for re-election.  
Each name was taken in turn for consideration.

Bob Shaw

Proposed; D. Symes  
Seconded; R. Gilbert  
Passed Nem Con

Les Flood

Proposed; K. Slater  
Seconded; D. Symes  
Passed Nem Con

Jim White

Proposed; C. Umpleby  
Seconded; K. Freeman  
Passed Nem Con

Due to the resignation of Mr. C. Fowler and Mr. D. Lewis two members were co-opted onto Council and thus offer themselves for election, Andy Sawyer and Chris Umpleby. Each name was taken in turn for consideration.

Andy Sawyer

Proposed; T. Briggs  
Seconded; D. Wingrove  
Passed Nem Con

Chris Umpleby

Proposed; K. Freeman  
Seconded; D. Symes  
Passed Nem Con

There are two further vacancies and the following nominations have been received, Dave Cobbledick and Trev Briggs. There were no further nominations from the floor thus each name was taken in turn for consideration.

Dave Cobbledick

Proposed; D. Symes  
Seconded; K. Freeman  
Passed Nem Con

Trev Briggs

Proposed; D. Wingrove  
Seconded; R. Gilbert  
Passed Nem Con

- 5a) To consider and if thought fit pass the following special resolution "That clause 32 of the Articles of Association of the Association be altered by the deletion of the word 'fifteen' and by the substitution of the word 'twenty-one'."

Mrs. Rogers read out the relevant clause which relates to the number of members on Council.

The Chairman said a similar motion had been put at the previous AGM but because of the complex nature of the ensuing discussion Council were not satisfied with its legality and wished to put the motion again.

Dr. Gilbert asked why Council wished to increase its size by six. The Chairman said they wished to have one man, one job as the BSPA had suffered in the past when one person had performed more than one job as his or her loss created a severe trauma. Council was made up of three parts, the Committee who did the day to day administration; past committee members to act as a stop-gap should any Committee member fall down on the job; well known personalities to give experienced guidance. As an organisation gets larger it requires more members to look after administration and the extra Council places were to provide a leeway to take on new Management Committee members if so needed.

There was no further discussion and the motion was put.

Proposed: K. Slater  
Seconded: D. Symes  
Passed Nem Con

- 5b) To consider and if thought fit pass the following special resolution "That in accordance with Clause 2 of the Articles of Association of the Association the Council may register such increase in the number of members of the Association as the Registrar of Companies will accept."



Mrs. Rogers read out the relevant clause which governs the number of members the Association may have. Mrs. Rogers said she thought such an increase might involve a small fee.

A discussion ensued as to what membership the Association should request. The Chairman said Council wished to start with a request for 2,000 but stressed that the number would be decided between the Company Secretary and the Registrar of Companies.

Following a question concerning the limited status of the Association Mrs. Rogers explained this was "Limited by Guarantee". She further explained that this meant if the BSFA went into the hands of the Receiver each member's liabilities were limited by the amount set out on the Membership Guarantee Form each member signed on joining, at present this was £1. The meeting thanked Mrs. Rogers for clarifying this point.

There being no further discussion the motion was put.

Proposed: R. Gilbert  
Seconded: A. Croghan  
Passed Nem Con

6. To confirm the appointment of Mr. John Steward as Auditor to the Council for the year.

The Chairman said Mr. Steward had signified his willingness to continue as Auditor to the Council. The motion was proposed by Mrs. D. Rogers and Seconded by Mr. D. Wingrove. The motion was passed unanimously and the meeting expressed its thanks to Mr. Steward for undertaking the job.

A further resolution was proposed that Mr. J. Steward be awarded an honorarium of £10.

Proposed: D. Rogers  
Seconded: K. Slater  
Passed Nem Con.

7. To transact any other business of the Association

7.1 Sales of Vector

A question was asked as to how many VECTORS were sold to non-members and what price was charged, also how many subscribers there were to the magazine.

Mr. Umpleby said the item on the Accounts under the Income label "Vector Subscription and Sales" comprised solely of income from non-members, the cover price being 75p. The Chairman said VECTOR was sold on a single issue basis in the UK through specialist SF shops and on a subscription basis outside the UK, there being some 40 subscribers, mainly in the USA.

At this point the room was required for the business meeting of the Easter convention, a motion was thus put that the AGM be temporarily suspended and reconvened at 2.00 in the afternoon,

Proposed: D. Symes  
Seconded: R. Gilbert  
Passed Nem Con

Minutes of the Reconvened AGM

7.2 The BSFA Award

Some discussion took place as to the importance of the Award. The Chairman explained that the award was important and obviously

regarded as such by publishers as the paperback versions of the past two years winners carried this information on their front covers.

There was a strong feeling amongst the meeting that the physical award should be substantial and of value, perhaps upto £50. Several ideas for the form of the award were put forward, including a special cast metal design and a specially made piece of ceramic (such as a presentation plate). The Chairman said the committee would look into this but would have to take the present state of finances into account. Some members expressed the feeling that the award was of such importance that it would be worth foregoing a mailing to pay for it. The Chairman replied that though the BSFA was under no legal obligation to produce 6 mailings a year as this was stressed in their advertising the Committee felt a moral obligation to so do.

A question was asked as to whether the mentions on book covers helped the BSFA, The Chairman replied that the book publishers were usually good enough to pass any letters of query onto the BSFA, though it was agreed it would be better if the BSFA was specifically mentioned.

A discussion ensued as to whether the award's name should include some mention of the word "Readers", such as "BSFA Readers Award", feelings were mixed on this but on the whole it was agreed the title should be left as it stands.

A short name was discussed and R. Gilbert suggested The Carnell, after the famous SF publisher, editor, and past Chairman of the BSFS. Keith Freeman said this had been suggested before but dropped as the BSFA had been informed some publisher's award was to be called The Carnell but as this had not happened he was completely in favour of the idea. A motion that the BSFA Award should be known by the short title of "The Carnell" was put

Proposed: R. Gilbert  
Seconded: D. Parker  
Passed Nem Con.

### 7.3 The Mailings

A wide ranging discussion took place on various aspects of the mailings.

It was suggested that the mailings contained too many separate bits and pieces, The Chairman pointed out that these in the main were either advertising fliers which brought in useful revenue or papers such as the agenda and BSFA Award voting slips which Council were legally bound to distribute. Committee pointed out that the more bits of paper there were the longer it took them to get a mailing together so they would do all in their power to keep the number of items to a minimum.

The mailings were criticised for being repetitious, in particular PAPERBACK PARLOUR reviewing the same books as VECTOR. Dave Wingrove said VECTOR would be carrying fewer paperback reviews restricting itself to those which had not appeared in hardback and to particularly important books, thus there would be much less overlap in future. Mr. Croghan pointed out that PAPERBACK PARLOUR was largely an information dissemination service and thus of importance and the BSFA should continue to distribute it, this was the general feeling of the meeting. In conclusion on this point the Chairman pointed out that PAPERBACK PARLOUR was not a BSFA publication but was produced by Mr. P Stephensen-Payne who allowed it to be distributed to the BSFA's members.

Mr. Croghan stated that he felt fandom should not intrude into the Association's publications, particularly VECTOR. The Chairman replied that he was astonished Mr. Croghan thought there was too much mention of fandom as the BSFA had been criticised for ignoring it. He then stressed that VECTOR was a science fiction journal and there should be no mention of fandom, a policy in force for several years.



Continuing the Chairman said MATRIX was a publication for and by the members and if they wished to discuss fandom then it was only right and proper they do so. Mr Croghan said that as the publications came in the same envelope he tended to treat them as the same publication. K. Freeman said he could understand this view and one solution would be to send VECTOR with one mailing and MATRIX with another, thus alternating them, though this would not suit people who only liked one of the magazines. Mr. Wingrove considered this impractical, particularly as VECTOR tried to produce reviews of current books, 4 months would be too long between issues. Generally the meeting disliked this idea.

There was some criticism of VECTOR under the editorship of Mr. Wingrove for being too "heavy". Mr. Wingrove explained that he had been very limited in choice of material for the first two issues and had had very little time to produce the first and at that time had received no material from Mr. Fowler. He had laid out his ideas in his first editorial and he hoped to achieve his aims soon. Mr. Croghan asked who set out the relative proportions of material in VECTOR, ie creative writing, information, correspondence. Mr. Wingrove said this was left to the editor as the quantity of each type of material available varied from issue to issue, but there were guidelines laid down by the committee. Mr. Croghan pointed out that librarians discounted the correspondence when they were judging whether or not to order a publication. The Chairman replied that when letters were left out correspondence to the editor stops, this had happened to both past editors, Mr. Fowler and Mr. Edwards, this was clearly undesirable as the editor must have feedback.

Mr. Wingrove pointed out that the membership consisted of many people with many tastes and the committee had to try to cater for them all they thus tried to make the mailings as varied as possible and it would be wrong to aim them at any one group, whether it be fans or librarians. The Chairman echoed this sentiment.

It was noted that with the use duplication the amount spent on mailings would be in the region of 50% of the expected income, the meeting agreed this was reasonable.

#### 7.4 Other publications

Mr. Slater said the British Fantasy Society produced little bibliographic booklets which sold quite well and asked if the BSFA was doing anything in this line. The Chairman replied that they were trying to produce bibliographic booklets, the first two devoted to Philip K. Dick and Arthur C. Clarke and it was hoped these would be available towards the middle of the year. Mr. Slater pointed out that any such bibliographies should be sent to Whittakers for recording and to THE BOOKSELLER where it might be mentioned. Mr. Croghan pointed out THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION RECORD ran a bibliography column every 3 months and copies should thus go there. The Chairman thanked Mr. Slater and Mr. Croghan for this information and said he would ensure this was done.

#### 7.5 Financial Priorities

The meeting discussed financial priorities at some length, it was generally agreed that repaying the BSFA's debts and producing the year's mailings were high priority. It was further agreed that providing a suitable BSFA Award should also be treated as a high priority.

Making the BSFA better known was regarded as important. The chairman said that some £200 had been spent in the previous year on advertising and an advert in Edmund Cooper's SLAVES OF HEAVEN had just appeared and was expected to produce good results, this had

cost £70, the committee also wished to spend a further £200 this year. The Chairman said choosing which periodicals to advertise in was somewhat hit and miss in that ones which could be expected to bring in a good response sometimes did poorly, for instance an ad in LOCUS had produced a poor response whilst Dave Wingrove's letter in GALAXY had been one of the best, from the point of view of new recruits, of the year.

The meeting endorsed the committees views on advertising and various members suggested that the following publications could be tried for advertising;

Library Association Record, Mr. Croghan said a box would cost £25,  
Books & Bookmen  
Starburst

The Chairman said he would ask Mr. Stephensen-Payne to investigate these.

The meeting also felt that the BSFA should try to push sales of VICTOR to academic institutions within the UK, committee said they would look into this.

A further high priority expense discussed was equipment with a secondhand IBM golfball typewriter being high on the list followed by an electric duplicator. Chairman said committee would look at this when they had sufficient capital but would take note of the meeting's feelings.

Mr. Croghan raised the question as to whether the BSFA should employ professional services and discussed various services, such as a chartered accountant, secretarial, etc. The Chairman said the BSFA was an amateur association and volunteer help was available and the one man, one job principle went some way to ensuring that no-one was overladdened, he accepted that this did occur but expected that anyone who felt overburdened would report this to the committee who could take appropriate steps. The Chairman said the Association would obviously consider using temporary paid help if a situation requiring it arose, such as the paperback ad producing thousands of enquiries, but in general he did not feel such help was needed, could be afforded or was practical. As an example Mr. Umpleby explained that the hourly rate charged by the company he worked for as a Chartered Accountant for his services was £20. Mr. Freeman pointed out that if any money dedicated to secretarial services was distributed between the various members of committee requiring those services they would pay for very little assistance and if the alternative of a central secretarial pool was used this would add further delay in answering correspondence, etc due to the delay in exchanging letters and posting things on to the secretary.

#### 7.6 Membership List

The meeting asked if the membership list could be produced more frequently by taking a reduced litho of a lineprinter listing. Mr. England explained why this would not be a good idea due to the poor quality of the usual lineprinter listing. The committee said they considered the annual listing with bi-monthly updates to be sufficient and anything else would involve more work which they did not consider justified.

In response to a question on geographic spread of the membership Mr Freeman replied that the listing program could produce a printout by geographic area if required.

#### 7.7 AGM

Mr. Croghan asked if the membership was concentrated in any one area, such as the South East and if it was would it not be better to hold the AGM in that area rather than the convention site. Mr Freeman said there was a concentration in the South East but not to a great degree and the membership as a percentage of population was probably



spread evenly. Mrs. Rogers said that when the AGM had been held outside the convention very few people had attended. The Chairman said that the BSFA received some criticism for being too London and the South orientated and moving the AGM with the convention helped to defeat this accusation. The meeting were in general agreement that the convention was the best place for the AGM.

#### 7.8 The Library

Mr. Croghan asked if his motion could be debated but the Chairman replied that it had been received too late though the point raised could be discussed.

Mr. Croghan suggested that the BSFA library should only be available to those who visited it and the books not loaned out by mail as books lost this way were irreplaceable. Mr. Freeman suggested that any particularly rare books could be microfilmed but Mr. Croghan considered that the book itself had an intrinsic worth. A discussion on this point took place but no conclusion was reached. Mr Wingrove pointed out that people joined the BSFA so they could use the library though accepted that with the greater availability of sf these days the library was little used. The Chairman amplified Mr. Wingrove's remarks and pointed out that the BSFA was not an academic institution as such nor was the library there solely for librarians and research students but for all the membership. The discussion ended on this point.

Mr Croghan pointed out as a point of information that the British Library was purchasing SF reference works for its lending division which were available through local libraries, but it was not interested in fiction. The committee thanked him for this very useful information.

#### 7.9 Information Section

Mr. Gilbert, who runs the section, said his stock of reference books was poor and he would like £30 to purchase new reference works particularly modern magazine indexes. Mr. G. Bishop said he had some BSFA reference books in his possession which he had brought to the convention to hand over but none of these were recent. The Chairman asked what type of information was requested and what call there was for it. Mr. Gilbert said there were two main types, one asking where a particular story was anthologised and the second describing a story and asking for title and author and where it could be found; discovering particular magazine publication was the difficult part of the task. It was pointed out that the services of other members were available and Mr. Gilbert said he often referred to Mr. Philip Stephensen-Payne whose knowledge was vast but sometimes felt he was taking up too much of Mr. Stephensen-Payne's time.

Mr. Wingrove suggested that there be a page in one of the magazines listing the queries and asking members to answer, the meeting considered this a good idea and the following motion was put; That Mr. Gilbert should have a "Notes and Queries" section in the magazines.

Proposed: G. England

Seconded: D. Rogers

Passed Nem Con

The Chairman pointed out to Mr. Gilbert that this would be required at a two monthly interval and Mr. Wingrove would discuss deadline dates with him.

A discussion ensued as to which magazine this should go in, the argument being that VECTOR is about sf and as this was sf it should go in there, alternatively MATRIX is the magazine for the members and these are members' queries thus it should go in there. A vote was taken as to which magazine the meeting felt the section should go in, the voting was:

VECTOR 10

MATRIX 9

The Chairman said the would note the feelings of the meeting. It was further agreed that if the response to this column was good the committee would purchase some reference material in consultation with Dr. Gilbert but if the response was poor then it would obviously not be worth purchasing such material. Dr. Gilbert agreed he would produce the column regularly and would keep the committee informed as to the progress of the Information Service.

Mr. Freeman pointed out that during this and previous discussions VECTOR appeared to have aquired the sub-title "critical journal" which was incorrect as it was not a critical journal and nor was it ever planned to be. The meeting supported this view emphasising that VECTOR was a journal about science fiction not just the critical aspects of it. The committee accepted this and the Chairman apologised for using the phrase. Mr. Wingrove pointed out that the journal dealt with science fiction in all its forms but Mr. Croghan expressed the view that science fiction was literature and this should be the aspect concentrated upon. The Chairman said that the Articles of Association specifically mentioned science fiction in all its forms not just the written word though this was obviously the dominant aspect.

#### 7.10 Council

There being no further items to discuss a motion to thank the Council for its work during the year and to close the meeting was proposed.

Proposed: R. Gilbert  
Seconded: G. England  
Passed Nem Con

Produced on behalf of the Council by Tom A. Jones, 11 April 1978

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#### NOTES

These minutes were produced from a tape of the AGM recorded by Gerald Bishop and I would like to thank him for so doing (certainly without the use of his directional microphone the second half of the proceedings would have been incomprehensible).

#### BSFA COUNCIL

Arthur C. Clarke  
Bob Shaw  
James White  
Les Flood  
Dave Kyle  
Dave Symes

Chairman

Tom A. Jones  
Phil Stephensen-Payne  
Trev Briggs  
Chris Umpleby  
Dave Cobbledick  
Ian Garbutt  
Andy Sawyer  
Dave Wingrove

Vice-Chairman  
Business Manager  
VECTOR Business Manager  
Treasurer  
Membership Secretary  
TANGENT Editor  
MATRIX Editor  
VECTOR Editor

Company Secretary to be ratified, Kevin Smith