

# Matrix 60

August/September 1985.

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THE NEWSPAPER OF

**bfa** The British Science Fiction Association

## Antares I

ANTARES I is the title of the joint BSFA / Cassandra Writers Workshop fiction anthology to appear in the December mailing. Bernard Smith informs me that the Cassandra half of the anthology is very nearly complete; BSFA submissions will be accepted up to the last day of October. Full details of how to submit stories appear on page 6.

Cassandra have just issued STARWINE, a collection of SF poetry. Twenty-eight pages in length and featuring some very good illustrations by Simon Ings, it is a quite handsomely produced, if slimline, volume.

STARWINE is available for 75p (inclusive of p&p) from Steve Bowkett, 8 Harrod Drive, Market Harborough, Leicestershire, LE16 7EH. A full review will appear in MATRIX 61.

To the left of this piece is an ad for IMAGINE, a book in aid of Live Aid. After the marvelous collections at Albacon and Beccon let's all spare a fiver and help save a few lives...

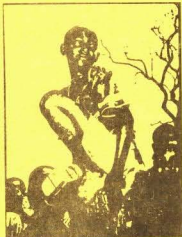
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## imagine

A book for Band Aid by David Bailey  
Preface by William Golding



FACTSHEETFACTSHEETFACTSHEETFACT

### NOW AVAILABLE !

Ten BSFA sheets providing up to date bibliographic information on Science Fiction authors:-

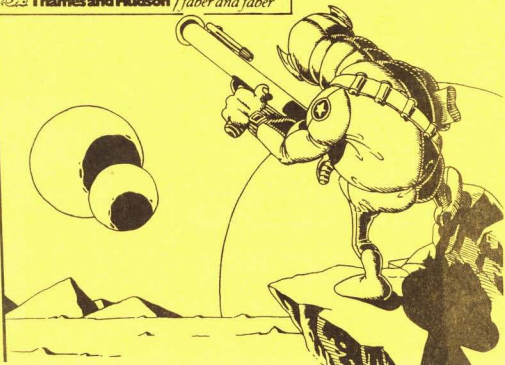
1. PHILIP K. DICK
2. ROBERT A. HEINLEIN
3. C. J. CHERRYH
4. HARRY HARRISON
5. BRIAN W. ALDISS
6. JOHN BRUNNER
7. BOB SHAW
8. H. P. LOVECRAFT
9. J. G. BALLARD
10. MICHAEL MOORCOCK

Suggestions for further authors to be included in the series welcome.

Available free with S.A.E. from the Information Officer:-

MIKE MOIR  
7 The Thicket  
Whitenap  
Remsey  
Hants

FACTSHEETFACTSHEETFACTSHEETFACT





# NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS

- \* This years spate of annual best of SF anthologies have just been released in the US and below is a checklist of this years releases and their contents:

## TERRY CARR'S BEST SCIENCE FICTION OF THE YEAR # 14. Edited by Terry Carr, published by for.

"Press Enter" - John Varley  
 "Blued Moon" - Connie Willis  
 "Summer Solstice" - Charles L. Harness  
 "Morning Child" - Gardner Dozois  
 "The Aliens Who Knew, I Mean, Everything" - George Alec Effinger  
 "A Day in the Skin" - Tanith Lee  
 "Instructions" - Bob Leman  
 "The Lucky Strike" - Kim Stanley Robinson  
 "Green Hearts" - Lee Montgomery  
 "Bloodchild" - Octavia E. Butler  
 "Trojan Horse" - Michael Swanwick  
 "Fears" - Pamela Sargent  
 "Trinity" - Nancy Kress

## THE YEAR'S BEST SCIENCE FICTION, SECOND ANNUAL COLLECTION. Edited by Gardner Dozois, published by Bluejay.

"Salvador" - Lucius Shepard  
 "Promises to Keep" - Jack McDevitt  
 "Bloodchild" - Octavia E. Butler  
 "Blued Moon" - Connie Willis  
 "A Message to the King of Broddingnag" - Richard Cooper  
 "The Affair" - Robert Silverberg  
 "PRESS ENTER" - John Varley  
 "New Rose Hotel" - William Gibson  
 "The Map" - Gene Wolfe  
 "Interlocking Pieces" - Molly Gloss  
 "Trojan Horse" - Michael Swanwick  
 "Bad Medicine" - Jack Dann  
 "At the Embassy Club" - Elizabeth A. Lynn  
 "Pursuit of Excellence" - Rena Yount  
 "The Kindly Isle" - Fred Pohl  
 "Rock On" - Pat Cadigan  
 "Sunken Gardens" - Bruce Sterling  
 "Trinity" - Nancy Kress  
 "The Trouble with the Cotton People" - Ursula K. Le Guin  
 "Twilight Time" - Lewis Shiner  
 "Black Coral" - Lucius Shepard  
 "Friend" - James Patrick Kelly & John Kessel  
 "Foreign Skins" - Tanith Lee  
 "Company in the Wings" - R. A. Lafferty  
 "A Cabin on the Coast" - Gene Wolfe  
 "The Lucky Strike" - Kim Stanley Robinson

## THE YEAR'S BEST HORROR STORIES: SERIES XIII. Edited by Karl Edward Wagner, published by DAW.

"Mrs. Todd's Shortcut" - Stephen King  
 "Are You Afraid of the Dark?" - Charles L. Grant  
 "Catch Your Death" - John Gordon  
 "Dinner Party" - Gardner Dozois  
 "Tiger in the Snow" - Daniel Wynn Barber  
 "Watch the Birdie" - Ramsey Campbell  
 "Coming Soon to a Theatre near You" - David J. Schow  
 "Hands with Long Fingers" - Leslie Halliwell  
 "Weird Tales" - Fred Chappell  
 "The Wardrobe" - Jonathan Fensh  
 "Angst for the Memories" - Vincent McHardy  
 "The Thing in the Bedroom" - Dave Langford  
 "Borderland" - John Brizzolara  
 "The Scarecrow" - Roger Johnson  
 "The End of the World" - James B. Hemesath  
 "Never Grow Up" - John Gordon  
 "Deadlights" - Charles Wagner  
 "Talking in the Dark" - Dennis Etchison

## THE SCIENCE FICTION YEARBOOK.

Edited by Jerry Pournelle, Jim Baen & Terry Carr, published by Baen.

"New Rose Hotel" - William Gibson  
 "Me and My Shadow" - Michael Resnick  
 "Me/Days" - Gregory Benford  
 "Silicon Muse" - Hilbert Schenck  
 "The Dominus Demonstration" - Charles Sheffield  
 "The Crystal Spheres" - David Brin  
 "A Day in the Life of a Classics Professor" - Stan Dryer  
 "The Picture Man" - John Dalmass  
 "The Weigher" - Eric Vinicoff & Marcia Martin  
 "Demon Lover" - M. Sargent Mackay  
 "Tourist Trade" - Robert Silverberg

## THE YEAR'S BEST FANTASY STORIES 11. Edited by Arthur W. Saha, published by DAW.

"Draco, Draco" - Tanith Lee  
 "The Harvest Child" - Steve Rasnic Tem  
 "Love Among the Xoids" - John Sladek  
 "Stone Skin" - John Morresey  
 "Unmistakeably the Finest" - Scott Bradfield  
 "The Fox Wife" - Jane Yolen  
 "Golden Apples of the Sun" - Dozois, Dann  
 "My Rose and My Glove" - Harvey Jacobs  
 "Strange Shadows" - Clark Ashton Smith  
 "A Little Two-Chair Barber Shop on Phillips Street" - Donald R. Burleson  
 "Taking Heart" - Stephen Burns  
 "The Storm" - David Morrell  
 "A Cabin on the Coast" - Gene Wolfe

## THE 1985 ANNUAL WORLD'S BEST SF. Edited by Donald A. Wollheim, published by DAW.

"The Picture Man" - John Dalmass  
 "Cash Crop" - Connie Willis  
 "We Remember Babylon" - Ian Watson  
 "What Makes Us Human" - Stephen R. Donaldson  
 "Salvador" - Lucius Shepard  
 "PRESS ENTER" - John Varley  
 "The Aliens Who Knew, I Mean, Everything" - George Alec Effinger  
 "Bloodchild" - Octavia E. Butler  
 "The Coming of the Goonga" - Gary W. Shockley  
 "Medra" - Tanith Lee

- \* The 20<sup>th</sup> annual Nebula Awards went to: William Gibson's NEUROMANCER for best novel, John Varley's PRESS ENTER for best novella, Octavia E. Butler's BLOODCHILD for best novelette, and Gardner Dozois's MORNING CHILD for best short story.
- \* Yet more awards, this time the 1985 LOCUS awards went to: Larry Niven's THE INTEGRAL TREES for best SF novel, Heinlein's JOB: A COMEDY OF JUSTICE for best fantasy novel, Kim Stanley Robinson's THE WILD SHORE for best first novel, Harlan Ellison's SLEEPLESS NIGHTS IN THE PROCRUSTEAN BED for best non-fiction/reference book, Varley's PRESS ENTER for best novella, Butler's BLOODCHILD for best novelette, Lucius Shepard's SALVADOR for best short story, Fritz Leiber's GHOST LIGHT for best collection, LIGHT YEARS AND DARK (ed: Michael Bishop) for best anthology, Michael Whelan for best artist, LOCUS for best magazine and Ballantine/Del Rey for best publisher.
- \* Gardner Dozois is the new editor of ISAAC ASIMOV'S SF MAGAZINE and we also have news of three NEW US SF magazines: STARDATE was originally a Star Trek/Dr. Who games magazine but it has been taken over by a new publisher who intends to turn it into a general SF magazine, NIGHT CRY was originally a digest size reprint vehicle for TWILIGHT ZONE magazine, but is now being turned into an original publication outlet, and lastly L. RON HUBBARD'S THE STARGAZER magazine debuts this September under the editorship of Terry Carr.
- \* A quick note for Chris Priest completists; the US version of THE GLAMOUR is a re-written version of the original British release.



## NEW UK PAPERBACKS.

## AUGUST 1985.

ARROW: Marion Zimmer Bradley - Thendara House (overlook) £2.75.  
 CENTURY: David Gaskell - The King Beyond the Gate £2.95, Legend (rpt) £2.95.  
 CORGI: Sheri S. Tepper - The Truth Game (omnibus edition) £4.95.  
 BANTAM: David Brin - Startide Rising £2.50.  
 CORNELL: Mary Stewart - The Gabriel Hounds £2.50.  
 FUTURA: (Major SF promotion) Larry Niven - The Integral Trees £1.95, Tales of Known Space (rpt) £2.50, Protector (rpt) £1.95, Dream Park (with Steven Barnes/rpt) £2.95, Robert McKinley - The Blue Sword £2.50, Gregory Benford - Across the Sea of Suns £2.95, In the Ocean of Night (rpt) £2.50, John Varley - Deason £2.95, Wizard (rpt) £2.50, Titan (rpt) £2.50, Tanith Lee - Anackire £2.95, The Storm Lord (rpt) £2.50, The Birthgrave (rpt) £2.95, Alan Dean Foster - The Moment of the Magician (Spelllinger 4) £2.50, The Day of the Dissonance (rpt) £2.50, The Hour of the Gate (rpt) £2.50, Jane Gaskell - Atlan (rpt) £2.50, The Dragon (rpt) £1.95, The Serpent (rpt) £2.50, Jerry Yuleman - Elleander Morning £2.50, Frederick Pohl - Heesche Rendezvous £2.50, Gateway (rpt) £2.50, Beyond the Blue Event Horizon (rpt) £2.50, Paul O'Williams - The Breaking of Northwall £2.50.  
 GRANADA: J. G. Ballard - Empire of the Sun £2.50, The Atrocity Exhibition (rpt) £2.50, The Unlimited Dream Company (rpt) £2.50, Philip K. Dick - The Cosmic Puppets £1.95, Brian Aldiss - Frankenstein Unbound (new ed.) £1.95, Enemies of the System (rpt) £1.95, Ramsey Campbell - Incarnate £2.50, The Nameless £1.95, Christopher Evans - In Limbo £2.50, Ian Watson - Book of the River £1.95, Michael Shae-Niffit - The Lean £2.50.  
 METHUEN: C. J. Cherryh - Voyager in Night £1.95, Peter Tremayne - Ravens of Destiny £1.95.  
 HAMLYN: David Gerrold - Star Hunt £1.95.  
 NEL: James Herbert - Domain £2.50, Leigh Brackett - The Ginger Star (Skeith 1) £1.95, Fred Pohl - Midas World £2.25, Jack Shackleford - The Source £2.50.  
 PENGUIN: Richard Adams - Maia £4.95, Allan Eyles - The World of Oz: An Historical Expedition Over the Rainbow (non-fic) £4.95, Robert Holdstock - The Emerald Forest (film tie-in) £2.50, Mary Shelley - Frankenstein (new ed.) £2.95.  
 SPHERE: (SF promotion) Gordon Dickson - The Sinal Encyclopedia £3.95, Barry Harrison - A Stainless Steel Rat is Born £1.95, Spider Robinson - Mindkiller £2.25.  
 UNICORN: Barbara Hambly - The Armies of Daylight (Darvath 3) £2.50, Mary Mackay - The Last Warrior Queen £2.95.

## SEPTEMBER 1985.

STAR: Vonda McIntyre - The Bride (film tie-in) £1.95, TARGET: Donald Cotton - Dr. Who: The Mythmakers £1.50, Kurt Singer (ed) - The Fourth Target Book of Horror £1.60.  
 METHUEN: Orson Scott Card - Ender's Game £2.95, UNICORN: Cherry Wilder - A Princess of the Chameleon £2.95.  
 METHUEN: Clifford Simak - Enchanted Pilgrimage £1.95, Where the Evil Dwells £2.50, Cornelius Frederick Forester - The Fourth Protocol £3.95, Karen Wynd Fonstad - The Atlas of Pern £5.95.  
 PENGUIN: Stephen King & Peter Straub - The Talisman £3.95, John Updike - The Witches of Eastwick £2.50.  
 NEL: Thomas Block - Airship Nine £2.50.  
 BANTAM: R. A. Macavoy - Raphael £1.95.  
 SPHERE: Brian Cullen - What Niall Saw £1.25.  
 GRANADA: Harry Harrison - Skyfall £1.95.  
 ARROW: Gene Wolfe - The Book of Days £1.95.

## OCTOBER 1985.

METHUEN: Barrington Bayley - Rod of Light £2.50.  
 FUTURA: Paul O. Williams - The Ends of the Circle £1.95, Jane Gaskell - The City £1.95.

## NOVEMBER 1985.

METHUEN: Clifford Simak - Time and Again £1.95.  
 All Flesh is Grass £1.95, Roger Zelazny - Lord of Light £1.95.

UNICORN: Barbara Hambly - The Ladies of Mandrighyn £2.50, Graham Dunstan Martin - The Soul Master £2.95, Karel Capek - War with the Neutro (trans by Ewald Osers) £2.95.  
 CENTURY: M. A. R. Barker - The Man of Gold £2.95, Poul Anderson - The Corridors of Time £2.95.

- \* Hardback fiction on the way includes: MERCHANTS' WAR - Frederik Pohl (£8.95), FREE LIVE FREE - Gene Wolfe (£9.95) and FOOTBALL - Larry Niven & Jerry Pournelle (£9.95); all August publications from Gollancz.  
 BREEDING GROUND - Shaun Hutson (October, £9.95) and THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA - a new edition of the horror classic by Gaston Leroux (November, £9.95); both published by W H Unwin.
- \* Mike Butterworth is (unfortunately) supposed to be working on the third HAWKLODS book, and Mike Moorcock is at work on a new ETERNAL CHAMPION romance. Meanwhile in the US, William Gibson's COUNT ZERO and THE LOG OF THE MUSTANG SALLY are to be published by Arbor House in hardback as opposed to the originally planned Ace paperbacks. Gollancz have already acquired the rights for the UK.
- \* Recently received: CANADIAN WOMAN STUDIES/LES CHAMBERS DE LA FEMME - special issue on "the future". Includes articles on women and SF, Ursula K. LeGuin, utopian fiction and alternatives in housing (the neighbourhood of the future?). To get a copy, send \$5.00 (canadian) + \$2.00 (p&p) to: CWS/cf, 204F Founders College, York University, 4700 Keele St., Downsview, Ontario M3J 1P3, Canada and state specifically that you want the future issue (full review next issue).
- \* COLONY EARTH is a new, British sci-fi (sic) magazine from Elmcrest publishing (who they?). The special pre-launch issue is available for £1.25 from Wags House, 78 Queens Road, Bristol BS8 1KQ and sounds a must for fans of UFOlogy.
- \* Entry forms and rules are now available for the 1985 National Fantasy Fan Federation Amateur Short Story Contest from Donald Franssen, 6543 Babcock Avenue, North Hollywood, CA 91606, USA.
- \* Amazing Stories is a new half-hour long television series in the US. Directors involved include Steven Spielberg, Clint Eastwood, Martin Scorsese, Peter (Witness) Weir, Peter (2010) Hyams, Richard (Superman) Donner, and George (Mad Max) Miller.
- \* V has definitely been cancelled in the US, although there is hope (fear?) of a television movie to tie up loose plot threads.
- \* All of the original Star Trek episodes have now been released on VHS video cassettes.
- \* One of the most interesting films on current release in the US is LIFEFORCE, based upon the Colin Wilson novel THE SPACE VAMPIRES. It is directed by that master of the gore movie Tobe Hooper and stars Steve Railsback.
- \* Dave Reader, ex-editor of the now defunct Halls Of Horror, has just released the first issue of Shock Xpress. Priced at 45p and published by Stephen Jones and Dave Sutton (of Fantasy Tales fame), it is available for 65p inclusive of p&p from 26 Walford Road, London SE5 8DQ.
- \* The August issue of the games magazine IMAGINE is a Bob Shaw special and contains a previously unavailable story entitled EXECUTIONERS MOON. Available from general newsgagents for £1.00.
- \* Lots of gore movies just out: APRIL FOOL'S DAY, BLOODCUCKERS and HELLHOLE (a horrific comedy also appears in the shape of TRANSYLVANIA 6-5000).

## THOUGHTS OF THE CHAIRMAN NOW

First of all, let me make my apologies for not appearing in the last issue of Matrix. Now whilst this would no doubt have delighted many people, I know it did upset my Real fans out there. Trouble was, I had to get Vector typed and produced, in amongst everything else I have to do, so regrettably something had to give. However, I am now back, and have a vast accumulation of news to pass on to you.

### ANTHOLOGY

This is coming along very well, now. By the time you read this, I will have had a preliminary meeting with Bernard Smith of Cassandra down in Northampton where many of the smaller (but nonetheless important) details will have been ironed out. I'm pleased to say that I've already been sent some submissions by BSFA members, including one as a virtual re-write of a story that has already appeared in Cassandra. You've still got plenty of time to get the submissions into me - as you know, some stories will be culled from the existing issues of Cassandra, whilst the rest will be new submissions from the BSFA members - and full details can be found printed boldly after this column. The publication date is December (for despatch with the December mailing), and all members will receive a copy. Additional copies will be available at a price to be decided and announced in the near future. So, you've until SEPTEMBER 30th, so get writing and let me have your submissions soonest!

### FOCUS

The more studios among you will have read in last issue's Stop Press that Focus didn't make it to the mailing session - this was because it arrived too late to be printed, but is included in this mailing. Many apologies for this to all concerned.

### VECTOR

At last some good news about Vector, which has been produced for the last two mailings under very difficult conditions - Dave Barrett has been living in a hotel, Paul Kincaid has been trying to get publishers to send him the books for review, and for the want of someone to type and produce the issues, I've had to step in and, as a result, the production has not been at all that we wanted. Thank you all for living with us on this temporary basis. However, onto that good news - we have now got a typist (Ann Morris, welcome!), and a designer (Hussein Mohammed, also welcome!). All of this means that from this issue of Vector onwards, we should be able to return it to its status of being THE BSFA critical journal. Both Dave Barrett and Paul Kincaid have put in a determined and enthusiastic effort, so let's see you all out there fully supporting it.

### PRINTING

In the last Matrix, Tom Jones wrote in asking about our policy with regards to printing BSFA magazines. Quite understandably, he was concerned that we might be over-stretching our resources by using a professional printer. The method we used for recent issues was based on two assumptions:

- 1) It was going to cost a large amount of money to repair our litho machine, and that in the interim until a new machine could be bought, this was a valid alternative, and
- 2) That advertising revenue would be procured to offset the higher costs involved.

Well, we've been throwing around the figures, and it now appears that to continue on this basis may not leave us much in terms of contingency supplies.

Fortunately, our litho-machine is now in a better state of health (and Focus and Matrix have both been printed on it in this mailing), and we are trying to negotiate a deal regarding printing Vector, but increasing the advertising content as a result of the appointment of a new Business Manager (see below under BSFA POSTS) should help offset the higher costs. Do not fear, though, if it looks like we are going to be pushed for adequate cash-flow, we will certainly revert to all 'in-house' printing. The aim, though, is to try and take Vector a little more up-market and use it more as a promotional tool with which we can secure increased sales and attract a larger number of new members. All of this takes time and careful planning. We will not rush into anything without ensuring that the figurework is right.

### MEMBERSHIPS

Over the last few months, new memberships have been fairly static - certainly not slowly increasing as we would like. Now, much of our long-term planning is based on a slowly increasing net membership level, an increase gained by advert-swapping, posters, convention displays and so forth, rather than massive expenditure on advertising the BSFA. Usually, this works quite well, and by far the greatest source of new members has been from the various ad. swaps we've arranged with one or two paperback publishers. The more of this we can organise, the better. So, if anyone has any contacts, or any way, why not let me know? Also, if every member can do their utmost to try and attract new members to the BSFA, then that will give us the chance to improve and amplify the service we give you. So, although we can't offer you a free digital watch for every new member you can persuade to join (!), we can assure you that in the long term, the quality of the magazines and the things we are able to do will be much better. So, let's make a determined effort to GO OUT AND GET MORE MEMBERS.

### BSFA POSTS

- 1) **Company Secretary and Treasurer**  
We have now got ourselves a candidate for Company Secretary and Treasurer - Phil Knight. Phil has been a member, on and off, of the BSFA for many years now, and at one time was the Chairman of the Leeds University SF Group. Now an accountant for a computer firm, finances are no stranger to him. A decision will be made at the Committee Meeting to be held during the August mailing session. In the future, in order to improve our administration, the idea has been suggested of a 'Cashier' to deal with the routine day-to-day finances - like paying expenses, sending invoices and so forth - thus leaving the Treasurer to deal with financial forecasting and budget control, and the various returns etc that we have to make to Companies House.
- 2) **Business Manager**  
Fingers crossed, we may soon have a Business Manager who will be finding ads to swell our coffers, sending out Vector to bookshops etc. Again, a decision will hopefully be made at the up-coming Committee meeting in August.

Right - just before I go, a quick word about the bibliography I've written about myself - in response to a suggestion from Dave Hodson many moons ago, and popular demand - I hope you find it 'interesting'. It's the first of a series to tell you more about who we are, and as an extra guide, in the next issue of Matrix, I'll include a full list of all the BSFA officials and helpers.

Very Best

Alan Dorey

## BSFA FICTION ANTHOLOGY NUMBER 1

1985

REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Maximum word length - 7,500
- 2) No payment for contributions
- 3) Copyright will remain with the contributor
- 4) Submissions must be typed, double-spaced on one side of A4 paper only
- 5) Each sheet must be headed with the story title
- 6) Contributions cannot be returned unless return postage is enclosed
- 7) Neither the BSFA nor Cassandra are liable for any loss or damage to manuscripts, however caused. Every reasonable care will, however, be taken with submissions.
- 8) Contributions must not have been published elsewhere (except Cassandra)
- 9) Subject matter is entirely open, although some vague SF/Fantasy theme must be obvious
- 10) Plays, poetry and prose pieces are equally acceptable
- 11) Pseudonyms are acceptable, although we must have a note of your real name accompanying any submission
- 12) Submissions must reach Alan Dorey by September 30th 1985, for December 1985 publication
- 13) Submissions to be forwarded to:  
ALAN DOREY, Fiction Anthology  
22 Summerfield Drive  
Middleton  
Lancs  
M24 2NV

ALAN DOREY: This is Your Profile

Born: Woking, Surrey, 10th February 1958

Education: Grammar School (11 'O' levels, 3 'A's Leeds University (BA Hons, Geography)

Occupation: Life Assurance Office Manager, Manchester Branch, U.K. Provident

Family: Married to Rochelle, one daughter, Amanda - aged 3

Car: Austin Princess (when it's running)

Joined BSFA: 1977 (after resisting for some time)

Chairman: April 1979 to date

Fansines Edited: Gross Encounters, Black Hole, Sirius, Stories from the Deadsons, etc

Conventions helped run: Yorcon I, II, III, Season '84

Honours (!): Nova Award 1978, Fan Guest of Honour at Union 2

Authors: J G Ballard, Christopher Priest, John Sladek, Philip Dick, Tom Disch, Geoff Ryman, M John Harrison, John Arlott

Films: Dr Strangelove, Dark Star, Oh What a Lovely War!, Billy Liar, Kaling Comedies, Boulting Brothers Comedies

TV Shows: Cheers, What the Papers Say, Did you See?, Film on Four, Spitting Image, Channel Four News, Cricket, Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends

Food: Mexican, Lasagne, Mushrooms in Garlic

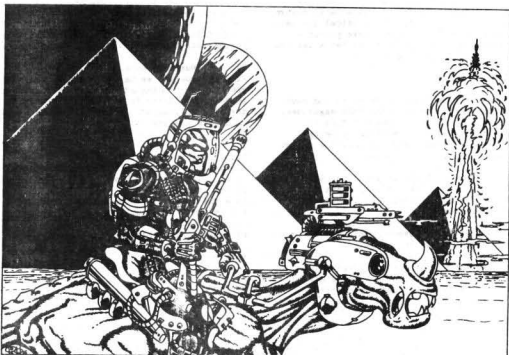
Hobbies: Writing, Travel, Railway History, Collecting anything, Soccer, Cricket

Dislikes: People who walk slowly down escalators

Likes: People who walk quickly down escalators

Ambition: To host the John Peel Show for a month!

Actors & Actresses: Michael Hordern, Peter Sellers, Jack Lemmon, Harry Dean Stanton, Jennifer Agutter, Shirley Maclaine, Meryl Streep



## THE FINAL BALLOT FOR THE 1985 BSFA AWARDS:

## DETAILS OF VOTES

MIKE NOIR, AWARDS ADMINISTRATOR

This article is really for people who like statistics as well as SF. The winners of the 1985 awards were announced two mailings ago, since then a number of people have asked about the details of the voting. In the last mailing I presented the details of the first ballot, here are the details of the final ballot.

Before starting, some explanation of the scoring system is necessary. The voting for the final ballot is added up using a simple points system: 6 points for a first place, 5 for a second and so on to 1 for a sixth place. "No Award" is treated just like any other nominee until the final result, then, if it has most votes no award is given. If two nominees receive the same number of votes then they are discriminated between by choosing which has the most first places, or second places etc. until a separation is achieved.

This year 146 votes were accepted, 63 (43%) postal and 83 at Eastercon. One vote was disqualified as it was not signed and had no other method of identification.

Even though each of the four winners won by a considerable amount, I was interested to see how the awards would have gone if an alternative scoring method was used. The major alternative system is the way the Hugo Awards are scored, (I think it is called the single transferable vote method). In the four categories this method makes no difference to the results.

The tables below show the analysis of votes for the four award categories. Reading from right to left it shows for each nominee: its placing in the final ballot, Author/abbreviated title, Number of 1st place votes and so on to 6th place votes. Total vote score, Percentage of votes received by post and placing in the first ballot.

The postal votes are deliberately separated because they are from a different population: it is mostly non Convention going BSFA members as opposed to Convention goers. I think it is interesting to note when these two groups' votes are significantly different. When the two groups are voting in a similar way the Postal column should be in the 35-50% range.

NOVEL	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	Total	Postal	1st Ballot
1st Holdstock	43	24	14	8	8	1	459	42%	1st
2nd Priest	25	19	24	15	3	1	381	48%	2nd
3rd Ballard	24	16	11	12	4	4	316	50%	3rd
4th Carter	12	20	22	10	10	-	310	37%	4th
5th Gibson	17	17	13	12	15	1	306	41%	4th
6th No Award	11	1	5	5	6	17	135	31%	-
Votes Cast	132						Total Points	1917	

The separation of 3rd, 4th and 5th places was very small and took three re-counts to establish the placings.

Here we can look for evidence of objections to the nomination of Ballard's "Empire of the Sun". About 10% less people voted for "Empire" than any other novel, and it received more 6th places than any other nominee.

Three voters marked on their ballots saying that it was "not SF" (one saying the Priest, the Carter and "Timothy Archer" were not either). However the majority of voters seemed happy to treat it as "another novel". The postal voters did seem to have liked "Empire" more and, possibly a connected fact, the convention goers favoured "No Award".

SHORT	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	Total	Postal	1st Ballot
1st Ryan	61	14	13	5	2	-	507	41%	1st
2nd Ballard	21	25	17	8	6	1	365	52%	3rd
3rd Kilworth	18	23	14	16	2	2	333	58%	2nd
4th Bradfield	4	13	17	16	10	-	225	50%	4th
5th Shepard	8	11	8	6	12	1	178	40%	5th
6th No Award	15	5	2	5	-	16	154	44%	-
Votes Cast	127						Total Points	1762	

Geoff Ryan had a resounding victory in this category. Oddly the postal voters generally voted more in this category, this is particularly true for the Kilworth story.

MEDIA	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	Total	Postal	1st Ballot
1st Company	43	32	9	4	2	-	472	37%	1st
2nd T.Archer	42	8	8	4	13	-	362	33%	2nd
3rd 1984	18	22	26	9	4	1	352	45%	5th
4th Dune	17	23	19	8	6	2	331	44%	2nd
5th Trek III	7	9	14	14	5	4	199	45%	4th
6th No Award	8	5	7	11	4	11	153	38%	-
Votes Cast	135						Total Points	1869	

There is no surprise that Timothy Archer was more popular with convention goers as it was shown at Eastercon and has only ever been shown at conventions, it appears to have suffered from having a more limited audience than the other nominees. There seems to be quite a high 'no award' vote in this category but looking at the ballot it seems only to indicate voters tended to like one set of nominees and actively dislike another.

ARTIST	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	Total	Postal	1st Ballot
1st Burns	25	21	10	3	2	-	308	42%	1st
2nd Pennington	18	10	6	6	6	-	212	47%	4th
3rd White	14	11	8	7	5	-	202	46%	2nd
4th Miller	18	5	5	6	11	1	194	57%	4th
5th Jones	6	9	10	11	4	-	162	49%	3rd
6th No Award	16	-	3	1	1	14	127	24%	-
Votes Cast	97						Total Points	1205	

This category seems to be out of favour with voters especially with the convention goers. The no award vote implies quite a strong dislike for the category only 55% of voters voted for any of the nominees. I believe all nominees have been short listed before and perhaps this category needs a change. At present I intend leaving the awards the same for 1986 but perhaps we should change for 1987 if the trend continues.

The total numbers of votes, 146 for the final ballot and 67 in the first ballot seem low. However they are about the same as the Hugo voting of little over 10 years ago. It is up to you to make it more.



## unconventional!

### CAMCON 85/UNICON 6.

13th - 15th September 1985 at the New College Hall, Cambridge.  
Guest of Honour: John Christopher.  
Membership: £7.00 attending, £4.00 supporting.  
Room rates: £16.10 per person per night, inclusive of breakfast and VAT.  
Registrations should be sent to Neil Taylor, c/o Perspective Designs Ltd., 9 Pembroke Street, Cambridge, CB2 3QT.

### FANTASYCON X.

8th - 8th September 1985 at the Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham.  
Guest of Honour: Robert Holdstock.  
Master of Ceremonies: Charles L. Grant.  
Membership: £9.00 attending (£8.00 for BFS members), £1.50 supporting.  
Room rates: £17.00 per person per night, inclusive of breakfast and VAT.  
Registrations should be sent to Fantasycon X, 15 Stanley Road, Morden, Surrey.

### MEGI CON II.

7th - 9th February 1986 at the Strathallan Hotel, Birmingham.  
Membership: £9.00.  
Room rates: £17.50 per person per night inclusive of bath, tea & coffee facilities in room, voucher for either full English breakfast or snack lunch, and VAT.  
Registrations should be sent to Pam Wells, 24a Beech Road, Bounds Green, London, N11 2DA.  
Correspondence: Linda Pickersgill, 7a Lawrence Road, London, W5 4JJ.

### ALBA CON III.

The 37th British Annual Science Fiction Convention/Eastercon 86.  
28th - 31st March 1986 at the Central Hotel, Glasgow.  
Membership: £9.00 before March 1st 1986, £12.00 thereafter.  
Room rates: Triple room - £12.00 per person per night, Twin/double with bath - £16.00 p.p.p.n., Twin/double without bath - £12.50 p.p.p.n., Single with bath - £16.50 p.p.p.n., Single without bath - £15.00 p.p.p.n.  
All rates are inclusive of full Scottish breakfast and VAT.  
Registrations should be sent to Albacon III, c/o Vince Docherty, 20 Hillington Gardens, Glasgow, G52 1PR.

## Albacon 86

### WHERE'S THE FUN?..

What can I say about Albacon '85? In many ways I'd prefer to say nothing and consign it to that dark place in my memory reserved for disappointing experiences, but I promised Dave a report for M&A III and must dredge it to the forefront of my mind. I write this report to fulfil a promise, not to slag off a convention. But, to report my feelings honestly, I have to say that not only did I not enjoy Albacon, I also thought it was a bad convention.

I can pinpoint many reasons for its 'badness'. Firstly, the atmosphere was all wrong. It's not saying this just because I knew very few people there; that such I'd expected in advance. I can understand a cohesive atmosphere even if it's not a part of it: one can see the community and observe its interactions even as an outsider. That is how I perceived general fandom before I became involved; the atmosphere was easily identifiable. But, at Albacon I couldn't see a sense of community at all; no cohesion, merely an amorphous mass of individuals passively sapping what was laid out before them by the con organisers. Accepting that premise, it shouldn't be too difficult to go to and do likewise. Take the convention as an individual and deal with what it offers you on that basis. Forget interaction for one weekend. Sure, but to do that you need an exciting and stimulating programme.

One of the things I'd been led to believe about Albacons is that the programming is always well organised and interesting. But I found the

list of items offered almost without exception looked uninspiring, repetitive and uninteresting. The only exceptions I can single out were those involving Harlan Ellison: a true professional, a great performer and a bundle of charisma. But I've never known a con committee work a guest so hard. Harlan must have been involved in about three items a day, and I'm sure that if I'd seen each and every one of them even his charismatic presence would have irritated me by the end. Take Ellison out of the programme and the rest would have been about as inspiring as watching paint dry. Where was the fun? Where was the excitement? Where was the inspiration?

To me the obvious thing to do when to do when you're involved in something you are finding tedious is to lighten things up. I tried. I really hoped to hit the peaks of desperate fun on Sunday night by helping to organise a disco. The Central Hotel is an ideal place to organise a disco: there are lots of function rooms, and a disco in one of these would not be likely to disturb those people who'd rather not have their convention spoiled by the intrusion of music. So we set up the disco in the room next to one of the bars. We put up posters inviting people to come along. We played a variety of good dance music. Less than twenty people showed up. It became clear to me that I couldn't understand what people get out of Albacon. The one thing I look for more than anything is fun: that desperate last night sensation of wanting to be with people and talk and dance and SHARE the con with them. When the disco failed I felt totally beaten: unsure of what to do next I slunk off to bed - defeated.

There were some good moments over the weekend. Sunday afternoon at Loch Lomond, a break from the tedium of the convention. Going up to someone's room for a cup of tea and a smoke: a break from the amorphous mass in favour of a small and private community. Missing breakfast and sharing pancakes in a nearby restaurant, smoking and laughing with friends and forgetting the alienness back in the hotel. But I think it's fair to say that the brief periods of enjoyment I managed to salvage from the weekend were all nothing whatsoever to do with the organisation of the convention.

So, how does this bode for next year's Eastercon? I remain optimistic: I've heard from a number of sources that Albacons are normally better experiences than this one, and I'm not prepared to write Eastercon off just because Albacon '85 didn't work for me. The hotel has a good layout, and with more inspiring programme items a convention there could be very successful indeed. My advice, for what it's worth, is to put such more thought and effort into the fan room (a complete washout this time), and to try involving the convention members as such as possible. From past experience, a convention is much more enjoyable if you feel a part of it, rather than being set apart by it.

I don't want to feel negative, but I don't believe any effort was made by the committee to make me feel otherwise. When Dave asked me to write this report, a couple of weeks before the convention, I hoped to write a favourable piece. I'm sorry that I can't. But I think there is so much good-time potential that wasn't realised on this occasion, and I fully intend to go to another Albacon to see whether it can reach the heights to which it clearly has the potential to reach.

Pam Wells.

\*\*\* The members noticeboard is a free advertising service for all BSFA members who wish to sell, exchange or buy items or information, make contacts, publicise fanish ventures, etc. Just send your advertisement to the editor via the editorial address.

WANTED...decent recordings of SPACE FORCE, series 2 episode 6 (stereo if possible) to borrow for copying. Phil Nichols, 19 Kendal Avenue, Copnor, Portsmouth, Hants, PO3 5AX.

# MEDIA REVIEWS

SPACE FORCE BBC RADIO 2, May-June 1995  
Reviewed by Phil Nichols

While the first series of *Space Force* teetered dangerously between antiquated style and futuristic content in its story of a 2001-like encounter beyond Jupiter between highly advanced, silver-suited aliens and four average Britons, the second series turns firmly toward the past in both style and content; for in series 2, the aliens are Ancient Egyptians, sailing between the stars in sun-boats.

Charles Chilton's writings have always been eccentric, and *Space Force* shows that his eccentricities have not diminished with advancing age. The first series' evident pre-occupation with astronomical detail is, in series 2, replaced by a fascination for Egyptology. In brief, the story relates the adventures of *Space Force* after two of its members, Lauderic and Chipper, discover live Ancient Egyptians inside a pyramid; subsequently, *Space Force*'s latest mission is interrupted by stowaways, and our four heroes find their lives threatened when they are told that, as servants of the Martian/Egyptian king, they must die when he dies.

In this post-Von Daniken age, even fictional speculation on the extraterrestrial origin of past civilisations tends to be laughable, and quite frankly the story Chilton chooses to frame his historical researches is, well, far-fetched. If SF is the literature of ideas, then we should find this series a masterpiece, for it is jam-packed with ideas - some silly, some not so silly. So what has gone wrong? How can a benevolently didactic old buffer like Chilton create such dull, childish material?

Firstly, Chilton does not act alone, for he is - today - but a writer. Partner in crime for both series is Paul Mayhew Archer, producer, who, for starters, has made the programme less lavish this time around. For example, while series 1 apparently had original music, series 2 makes blatant use of pre-existing recordings, most obviously the Jerry Goldsmith score from *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*.

Secondly, Chilton persists in his use of excessive narration, and his tendency to limit characterisation to variations of the "(gasp) What?!" syndrome. Some examples:

SAXON: They're not staying in freighter number  
Chipper: they're coming over here.  
Chipper: (Gasp) What?!!  
(from episode 2)  
ALIEN: You may take off your helmet  
MAGNUS: (Gasp) What?!!  
(from episode 3)  
SAXON: ...the nearest planet we can land on...  
is 13 years away.  
MAGNUS: No, not 13 years; 13 days  
SAXON: (Gasp) What?!!  
(from episode 5)  
LAUDERIC: Hello, Magnus - Lauderic calling  
MAGNUS: Hello, Lauderic, what is it?  
LAUDERIC: Trouble  
CHIPPER: What do you mean?  
LAUDERIC: They're not here  
CHIPPER: (Gasp) Eh?!!  
MAGNUS: (Gasp) What?!!  
(from episode 2)

This paucity of imagination extends, too, to Chilton's concept of alienness. "Don't worry - they're humanoid", remarks Magnus on seeing the aliens, as if outward appearance were the determinant of ethical behaviour.

Finally - and this may be nit-picking, but it symbolises for me the insufficiency of good ideas

poorly thought out - Chilton makes minor scientific errors. An astronomical example: the hero, Saxon Berry, is momentarily confused when - due to alien trickery - the Martian sky looks wrong. He says that what he sees is "not the Martian sky; the constellations are those we see on Earth!" But even a moment's thought - especially for an amateur astronomer, which Chilton is reported to be - reveals that the distance between Earth and Mars is so small compared to the distance to even the nearest stars that the constellations would appear exactly the same on Mars as they do on Earth.

Chilton has ideas in abundance, but his failure to sufficiently think them through leads to errors, not so much of fact, but of application. He has singularly failed to move with the times, and in his attempts to recapture the spirit of the defunct *Journey into Space* has merely preserved its ineptitudes. No doubt feelings of nostalgia at the BBC were behind this series concept, but even that institution has shown an ambivalence towards the way the series has developed. Series 1 received an unusual 8 pm stereo broadcast, and got the cover of *Radio Times*; series 2 arrived virtually unannounced and went out in mono only - except for an FM/stereo repeat at 3.30, Thursday mornings. Amen.

DOCTOR WHO - 22nd Season (5/1/1995 - 30/3/1995)

Produced by John Nathan-Turner  
Reviewed by Christopher Ogden

It is the best of programmes, it is the worst of programmes, to paraphrase some obscure hack. Any way, 'Doctor Who' tends to present a mixture of the pretty-god-damn-awful and the excellent, but on balance it's been a good showing this year.

The season opened with 'Attack of the Cybermen'; a story for long-term followers of the series which could be considered as a sequel to the first Cybermen story 'The Tenth Planet', William Hartnell's last story before 'The Three Doctors'. In the former story the planet Mondas, the original home of the Cybermen, was destroyed when it absorbed too much energy from our own planet. In 'Attack' the cybermen are using a stolen timeship, time travel being a discovery they never made, to try and effect a change in history and thus bring about their victory in the former encounter. The Doctor is somewhat alarmed about this, not least because such an action would be against the Laws of Time (which seem to have been mentioned an awful lot recently).

'The Tenth Planet' is not the only element of the show's history to be invoked in this story. The discovery of the Cybermen lurking in the sewers is a throwback to the Patrick Ffrench story 'The Invasion', whilst the return visit to the planet Telos and the partial Cyberisation of people is a continuation of the story 'Tomb of the Cybermen'. And could anyone have failed to notice where the TARDIS first landed when it arrived on Earth?

On the subject of the TARDIS, it was interesting to see the Chameleon Circuit in use, a move possibly calculated to put the wiliest up those who may have been distressed at the recent rumours of the TARDIS losing its customary form. (I must admit that I was glad to see the Police Box reappear. Not that I ever had any real doubts, you understand...)

'Attack of the Cybermen' lacked much of the atmosphere of the last Cybermen story, the excellent 'Earthshock', but was, nevertheless, a promising opening to the season. The new aliens, the Cryons, were well portrayed, even if they did look rather reminiscent of the Semotites. This story contained my favourite line from the whole season, delivered by Brian Glover,

"Next year? That's nearly now!"

'Vengeance on Varos' was perhaps the most satirical story since Robert Holmes' 'The Sunmakers'. Varos is a repressed society whose secondary export is Video Nasties, which are actually recordings of the

tormenting - sorry, repression - of various of the inhabitants. Needless to say, the Doctor becomes the star of one of these films. As to how the Doctor comes to be there; he is searching for a sample of the planet's primary export, Zyton-7 ore, thus utilising a plot device which has been in use since the first Dalek story.

Martin Jarvis's governor was a weak, if not pathetic character, who survived more through luck than anything else. As the Doctor left, this governor instigated a new era of freedom, but after so long without it, and now with no videos to watch, what were the population going to do?

Helping the proceedings along was a delightfully evil alien called Sil who was not unlike a junior version of Jabba the Hutt. Overall, one of the better shows of the season.

By contrast, 'Mark of the Rani' was a somewhat flawed story. The Rani is a renegade Time-Lord (sorry, Time-Lady) who has set herself up at a nineteenth-century coalmine where she is extracting a chemical from the miners' brains. This is the chemical which allows people to sleep and without it they tend to become aggressive. Not that the Rani cares much about that; she just wants the chemical to take back to the planet she rules. The Master is also on the scene, out to sabotage a forthcoming conference of leading scientists and engineers, and reckons he can direct the miners' aggressive tendencies, thus getting them to do his dirty work for him.

When the Doctor arrives he decides to sabotage the schemes of both the Master and the Rani, so they enter into an uneasy alliance to defeat him. With a little help from the locals the Doctor succeeds in sending the two renegades to what seems to be a certain death. Of course this is what usually happens to the Master, but when he returns next time, will he still be in collusion with the Rani?

Incidentally, there was no explanation of how the Master survived his ordeal in 'Planet of Fire'. After all, it did look pretty final. Still, you can probably think of half-a-dozen explanations yourself.

Personally, I found the most negative aspect of this story to be the instant transmogrification of people into trees, a fate which nearly befell both the Doctor and Peri. In fact, transmogrification is a threat of which Peri seems to have had more than her fair share recently.

Oh yes, Peri. After a full year of Peri what do we have? Well, she seems to be a rather headstrong young lady, but a touch more sympathetic than her immediate predecessor, Tegan. She is not the best companion to have accompanied the Doctor, though she is far better than that brat Adric, and her sheer good looks make up for any failings that she may have.

Next come the 'biggie's' 'The Two Doctors', written by Robert Holmes, writer of many fine DW scripts including Peter Davison's swansong of last year, 'The Caves of Androsani'.

The story centered around an attempt at constructing a time-machine by Chesham, an 'augmented Androgyn' - played by Jacqueline Pearce, Servan from 'Blake's Seven' - who is in league with another of Holmes' past creations, the Sontarans, portrayed this time around with a kind of ironic humour similar to that with which the Klingons were treated in 'Star Trek III'. As with all the best collaborating villains, Chesham and the Sontarans try to double-cross each other and thus both come to a sticky end.

Personally, I found this story to be more satisfying than 'The Five Doctors'. The trouble with the latter was that it tried - out of necessity - to give each Doctor, with companion(s), something to do and as a result presented a somewhat weak and contrived story. 'The Two Doctors' presented a credible

story into which the two Doctors and companions fitted neatly. John Stratton's performance as the gourmet Shockeye was suitably over-the-top and enjoyable in a darkly humorous manner. Unfortunately the make-up department could do little to disguise the obvious ageing of Patrick Troughton and Fraser Hines but that was a minor detraction.

More serious was an apparent lapse in continuity. The second Doctor got involved in the story on an errand for the Time-Lords. He was visiting a research station - officially in an unofficial capacity - to try to prevent research into time-travel. The Time-Lords even went as far as giving him a remote-control unit for the TARDIS. Yet in the past it has been asserted that the Time-Lords were unaware of the Doctor's location until he contacted them at the end of 'The War Games', Patrick Troughton's last (regular) story. Is the show at error here or am I? Did the Time-Lords contact the Doctor covertly from time-to-time before he returned to Gallifrey? It would be nice to know the answer; or at least, hear some interesting theories!

Of course, such errors - if it is such - are almost certain to appear in a series that has run as long as this one. A similar error seemed to creep into 'The Five Doctors' where Troughton's Doctor obviously knew what was to become of Jamie and Zoe after his trial. He spoke of the fate of his companions as if the events were in the past. Perhaps the third Doctor told him during 'The Three Doctors'?

Assuming that there is an error here, I suppose that it could be ignored for the sake of a good story - which this was - but it is slightly irritating. Jon Pertwee's Doctor was often sent on missions by his masters before being granted his freedom, so perhaps it would have been more appropriate to play him opposite Colin Baker - imagine the personality clash! - but it seems that this story was written at the request of Messrs Troughton and Hines, who so enjoyed 'The Five Doctors' that they felt that they would like to do another one. (to be continued next issue....)

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#### DOING THE ROUNDS

Mark Green

This section of *Matrix* is intended to present an overview of films currently 'doing the rounds'. Reviews should be of one paragraph only. Inclusion here does not preclude a detailed review in a later issue. Bear these movies in mind for the BSFA Award.

**Morons from Outer Space** - Three months after its release this film refuses to go away. 'Morons' was born out of the ashes of 'Not the Nine O'Clock News' and proves there is no way that a ten minute sketch can be stretched to fill 90 minutes.

**Repro Man** - This is a marvellously chaotic movie, but with the anarchy controlled by perfect internal logic. The plot is infinitesimal but the images which are hung on the framework thus obtained are wonderful. Watch this movie become a cult.

**Goulies** is the first of the 'Gremlin' clones. It is watchable - just - and has a certain, naive charm, but in essence is transient and meaningless.

**Transcend** - Bloody awful. If you're caught in a cinema with this film you'll be able to feel your brain rot with boredom. 'If I thought it was a joke', lamented my girlfriend - if only it was. Even the images fresh from 'Blade Runner' and any futuristic comic book fail to raise the movie above the dire.

**Starman** - John Carpenter's attempt at creating an adult ET. It works, but only on a superficial level. The excellent acting prevents the film sliding into over-sentimentality, a threat constantly lurking beneath the surface. As you would expect from Carpenter, the movie is well made with a fast moving, finely structured plot. Well worth seeing.



## The Comic Review

### GOING UNDERGROUND...

An occasional look at the underground comics scene by Mark Greenner.

Comics have always been treated with a degree of contempt by the artistic establishment. They provided, therefore, an accessible medium for radical young artists, with their constant cynical questioning of the basic principles on which our society is built, with a potentially large and saleable audience. By building upon the foundations set by EC Comics (of whom more can be learnt in Martin Barker's excellent book *A HAUNT OF FEARS* - Pluto Press, ISBN 0-86104-751-6), the underground was born.

Underground comics were a result of the socio-political forces which were prevalent in the late sixties. Their function was to inspire thought in the mind of the reader and thus act as a catalyst for change, even if it was just in the readers' attitudes. However, the underground comics should not be dismissed as an out-moded relic of the sixties; they are still a vitriolic and thought-provoking artform. They still have things to say about contemporary society and perhaps it is for this reason more than any other that they are going through a renaissance.

The best known exponent of 'comix' is Robert Crumb, whose *ZAP* comic was released in 1968. Most of the issues are still in print. *HAPO*, the first issue, is disappointing because, in retrospect, it does not like up to the high standards Crumb set himself. However, it's an optimistic production unlike his latest project - *DESPAIR*. If there is a more disheartening way of throwing the disillusionment which followed the sixties into a sharp relief than by comparing *ZAP* with *DESPAIR* I've yet to see it. *WIERDO* is Crumb's other current project and has been quite successful despite its high price tag and its variable quality. *WIERDO 4* is definitely worth getting as it contains a classic underground comic strip - *I REMEMBER THE SIXTIES*.

*SLOW DEATH* is a theme comic, the underlying premise throughout its long run has been a con-

cern with the ways in which man is destroying his home planet. Often an issue will have a specific theme - issue 8 was published in support of Greenpeace. The stories are exquisite in execution and stunning in power. P.O.E should distribute free copies.

*FANATOR* is a horror comic which is particularly gruesome. Issue 3 was published in 1972 and clearly shows the potential of a young Richard Corben. His art is devastating; clean, crisp and beautifully coloured. The stories are weak, but this doesn't really matter as it is the visual aspect of *FANATOR* which makes it much sought after by collectors.

*IMAGINE*, *STAR\*REACH* and *ANDROMEDA* straddle the gap between the overground and underground comic worlds. Of these three SF comics, *STAR\*REACH* is the best. The stories are excellent and, in many cases, would make the transition to standard prose very easily. Indeed, one of *STAR\*REACH*'s main contributors, Howard Chaykin, had his latest project - *AMERICAN FLAGG* - nominated for the short story Nebula award this year no less than three times ('Solidarity: For Now' from AF 4 - 6; 'Southern Comfort' from AF 7 - 9 and 'State of the Union' from AF 10 - 12). The artwork is being professional in execution and complementing the stories perfectly, lacks that certain 'something' which would make it great. Notwithstanding these comments, *STAR\*REACH* is worth getting.

*IMAGINE* does not quite reach the standards of *STAR\*REACH*, although it tries hard. Some of the artwork is abysmal and the story lines quite often lack a degree of internal logic, but *IMAGINE* can be an enjoyable read.

I feel unable to comment upon *ANDROMEDA*, having only seen one issue (No. 6). This issue drew exclusively on the stories of Alan Dean Foster and, although the artwork was competent, it lacked sparkle. The stories were best forgotten.

I hope I've whetted your appetite for underground comics. In the next column Dave Hodson will be having a look at the Canadian 'ground level' comic *CEREBUS THE AARDVARK* and the latest venture by the Hernandez brothers (of *LOVE & ROCKETS* and *HEAVY METAL* fame) - *MISTER X*. In the column after that I shall examine the development of *THE FREAK BROTHERS* from *MAVERICKS* to *SUPERSTARS*.

All of the comics mentioned above are available from: Knockabout Comics, Unit 6A, 10 Acklam Road, London, W10 and also some branches of Virgin Records and, of course, Forbidden Planet.

### UPCOMING COMICS CONVENTIONS.

#### The UK Comic Art Convention.

September 21st/22nd at the University of London Union, Malet Street, London, WCL.

Membership: £7.50.

Accommodation: £12.00 - Saturday night only.

Guests: Steve Bissette, Bill Sienkiewicz, Marv Wolfman, Dave Sim, Brian Bolland, Alan Davis, Garry Leach, Alan Moore, Kevin O'Neill, John Bolton, Dave Gibbons, David Lloyd, Steve Moore, Ron Smith, Eddie Campbell, Ian Gibson, Mike McMahon, Paul Wemyr, John Wagner. Contact: UKCAC85, 100 Sydney Road, Hornsey, London, N8 0EX.

London Comic Mart: October 12th at the Central Hall, Westminster.

#### Manchester Comic, SF & Fantasy Film Fair:

September 14th, November 18th at the Piccadilly Plaza Exhibition Hall, York Street, Manchester.

Leeds Comic Mart: September 21st, October 26th, November 30th at the Griffin Hotel, Boar Lane, Leeds.

London Comicbook Marketplace: September 8th, November 3rd at the Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, London, NW1.

- The US colour edition of Warrior's *MARVELMAN* is now available in the UK under the title *MIRACLEMEN* due to hassles with Marvel Comics.

# FANZINE REVIEWS

PLEASE SEND YOUR FANZINES FOR REVIEW TO:

GEORGE BARNETT  
49 YORK ROAD  
ALDERSHOT  
HANTS  
GU11 3JQ

Welcome to my first column for MATRIX. I must start by congratulating my predecessor, Sue Thomason, for the excellent job she has done on this column, and hope I can prove a worthy successor.

Unfortunately the fanzines have not exactly been flooding in since Dave announced my appointment, but thank you for those I have received, which have been given my full attention.

I feel my job in this column is to give you some idea whether each fanzine reviewed would be of some interest to you - to help you decide if they are worth sending away for. Of course my personal tastes are bound to colour my judgements somewhat, but I will try to be as objective as possible.

Those labelled "USUAL" are generally available for contributions (i.e. articles, artwork, etc.), LoC (letter of comment), trade (fanzine exchange) or a couple of 2nd class stamps.

## ONOMA 3

MAY 1985. A5. 60pgs. USUAL

G.A.BRYANT, RUE JEAN PAULY, 121, B-4300, ANS, BELGIUM.

Fear not, despite its origin, ONOMA is entirely in English. It contains a rich variety of articles, reviews, fiction, poetry, LoCs and artwork.



ONOMA



ISSN 0773-2058

The two pieces of fiction were short and painless, one much better than the other. The articles were varied in subject matter but all too short. "SF in Czechoslovakia" was a fascinating overview citing a lot of unfamiliar names - just one I had heard of. Did you know the word 'robot' was invented by Capek, from the word 'robota' meaning 'corvée' or 'servitude'?

Other articles included: "The Mars Geoscience/Climatology Observer", an all too brief summary of U.S. missions to Mars from an employee of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory; "Gestures", a very amusing piece on the different interpretations across Europe of a couple of very common human gestures, and "English As She Is Spoken", a whimsical brief on the misuse of English outside of Britain.

The highlight of the fanzine was Andy Darlington's informative interview with author Phillip E. High. The whole zine is nicely illustrated although the artwork is somewhat marred by the greyness of the printing (perhaps I was sent a poor copy).

Overall I would recommend ONOMA, which offers entertainment as well as factual extracts, but I feel it would be greatly improved if the editor selected less items and urged the contributors to go into them in more detail.

## SPUZZ 1

JUNE 1985. A4. 4pgs. USUAL

CHRIS DEAN/LARRY OGDEN, 49 EMPSON RD, KEIGHLY, WEST YORKSHIRE.

A couple of members of the Keighly S.F. Group have put this together, primarily as a lazy way to make up for numerous LoCs they have promised to people.

The result is a trivial, smutty, but very humorous 20 minute reads containing in-jokes that you can share. I look forward to future issues.

It consists of Chris and Larry taking turns to write a paragraph of nonsense with interruptions from another member, Tommy Earp.

## INTERSTELLA 9

SPRING 1985. A4. 42pgs. 75p.

PETER PINTO, 45 BLADES STREET, LANCASTER, LA1 1TS.

This multicoloured collection of duplicated sheets of paper stinks. I mean the paper gave off an unpleasant dank and musty odour, so I had to spray some Glade Dry (guess who I work for) over it before continuing.

My other gripe, a problem acknowledged by the editor, is the numerous typos, poor reproduction and general presentation, resulting in an unnecessarily arduous read.

The content, however, is excellent for a fan of S.F. There are highly informative sections on forthcoming U.K. S.F. and Fantasy paperbacks; bibliographic notes on the Ballantine Adult Fantasy Series and a short bibliography on Michael Coney.

The fanzine doubles as a mail order business featuring lists of new and secondhand S.F. and Fantasy paperbacks for sale, which Peter makes more interesting and useful by adding micro-reviews and recommendations against many of the items for sale. He does likewise with the forthcoming books section mentioned above.

Finally, a lettercol completes this fanzine, which would probably be worth its price if the production was substantially improved.

## WALLBANGER 11



JUNE 1985. A4. 40pgs. USUAL

EVE HARVEY, 43 HARROW ROAD, CARSHALTON, SURREY.

This is what I consider to be the very traditional style of fandom fanzine. Don't expect to find very much related to S.F., for it consists of a collection of ramblings and articles, all extremely well written, about anything and everything, cleverly linked together by the editor.

Although reading these 39 pages of uninterrupted text sometimes seems a little bit like eavesdropping (what's Eve dropping?), it's all most interesting. Eve certainly knows some weird people - I can't

Imagine why anyone should want to try to carbonate Scotch, and I'm surprised Arthur has still got a toilet considering what he throws down it.

To get the most out of this sort of fanzine you need to get involved in it, and you do that by sending in your own contributions.

## PSYCHEDELIC FRUIT JUICE 2

APRIL 1985. A4. 28pgs. 65p.

SIMON BOSTOCK, 18 GALLOWES INN CLOSE, ILKESTON, DERBYSHIRE, DE7 4BU.

This fanzine could well be titled "The Secret Diary of Simon Bostock, aged 18", or even more aptly, "The Growing Pains of Simon Bostock". The bulk of it consists of his daily writings - what he did mixed in with his 'profound' thoughts of the day.

I was pretty bored with it all at first. Not knowing Simon I found his detailed descriptions of life in Ilkeston rather tedious, but I soldiered on, and because he is so very candid about everything, before long I felt I knew him quite intimately, and suddenly I was hooked. That is, except for his dreams. There is nothing I find more boring than listening to people telling me what they dreamt the night before, and Simon devotes an awful lot of space to this.

Dreams apart, however, it was fascinating to see his life and personality unfold. Most of the time he is either bored or in a fit of depression, having no luck in his love life or job searching, so he seeks relief by writing everything down and then publishing it. I could never open myself out to the world like this.



The odd exciting event, like being attacked by skinheads or being exposed in the local rag as an illicit drugs promoter maintains the interest. It's just like Corporation Street.

I truly believe that a few more issues like this would have the makings of a good book, once all the rubbish had been edited out.

The zine ends with a lettercol which is just as interesting as the preceding monologue, where he is attacked for items in his previous issue in which he apparently revealed, in explicit detail, his love affair with Jasmine, and unashamedly made his opinions clear on drugs (with details on how to grow your own dope).



## CRYSTAL SHIP 9

OCT 1984. A5. 56pgs. USUAL

JOHN D. OWEN, 4 HIGHFIELD CLOSE, NEWPORT PAGNELL, BUCKS, MK16 9AZ.

This fanzine has already built up a fine reputation for itself as being of a very high standard, so I wouldn't dare to criticise it. This is just as well as I gather from the lettercol that the editor is a little sensitive to adverse reviews.

I would be too if I produced a fanzine of this quality. John D. has achieved the right balance of intelligent, in-depth articles, superb illos, a lengthy lettercol with the odd humorous diversion to break up the serious bits. It's all very professionally designed and a pleasure to read.

If you can persuade John D. to send you a copy, I recommend you do so.

## SQUAT ON MY GRUNT 3

APRIL 1985. A4. 36pgs. USUAL

OWEN WHITEOAK, TOP FLAT (LEFT), 112 POLWORTH, ENDINBURGH, EH11 1LH.

Actually only 18 pages are "SQUAT", the other 18 being four old FRANK'S APA cut-outs that Owen felt were worthy of reprinting, stapled into the main zine.

Except for the lettercol (8pgs), this whole unillustrated set of articles/essays are written by the editor. It's very much for fans of fads rather than S.F., the subjects ranging from "Herrings" to "Two Sides of A4". Much of it is autobiographical notes from the recent past, which makes interesting reading, because the author writes well, making even the most dull subjects fairly readable.

The lettercol concentrates on S.F. conventions, particularly the desirability of multiple programming.

What I initially believed was going to be a fairly heavy going read turned out to be a very enjoyable one.

## FOSSILISED THOUGHTS 3

MAY 1985. A5. 24pgs. USUAL.

STEPHEN DAVIES, 87 HOLLAND PINES, GREAT HOLLAND, BRACKNELL, BERKS.

Like "Squat on My Grunt", all items bar the lettercol were penned by the editor. The production is excellent - quality printing; text justified by an I.C.T. word processor, and a cover illo produced using an Apple Macintosh. A real hi-tech effort.

In this clean, easy-to-read format, with a fairly limited page count, Stephen could fill it with utter crap and it would still be no great hardship to scan through.

## FOSSILISED THOUGHTS 3



Terran Cultural Impression

it. He didn't though, and I found the contents very acceptable, from the more lengthy Yorcor Report to the briefer pieces on "Hugs", "Foodies", a modern opera reviewed and a critique on "Driff's Guide to all the Seconchand and Antiquarian Bookshops in Britain".

The fanzine finishes with a list of fanzines received, and a ludicrously short lettercol. I enjoyed the Fossilised Thoughts of Stephen Davies and look forward to more of the same.



## AN APA A DAY

### OR WAS THAT REALLY WHAT WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED ?

#### What the hell is an apa?

It is an interesting characteristic of belonging to an apa that anyone you mention them to at random will almost certainly not know what you are talking about. I myself when I first became a fan had only the haziest idea of what they were, though I gathered that being in an apa was akin to having bad breath or chronic dermatitis. They were not well thought of. Since then there has been a veritable explosion of apas and they have become very popular though not necessarily less mysterious. So let's start from basics. The letters A.P.A. stand for Amateur Press Association or Amateur Publishing Association. No-one seems quite sure which, but it doesn't seem to matter as neither actually helps much in explaining what an apa is. In fact, I only mention the initials because even when you've explained in full technicolour detail all about apas, and the person you're talking to has understood, and maybe even joined one, they're quite likely suddenly to say in a rather hurt voice: "But you still haven't told me what A.P.A. stands for!" So, I've told you, right?

#### But what does it all mean?

On to the more difficult bit, what precisely is this beast they call an apa. Well, there are a variety of theories (most of them propounded by members of Frank's, the world's first exclusively meta-apa), ranging in scope from the simplicity of a conversation in print or a penfriend club to such fanciful metaphors as laasars or asylums. But these are all post-facto interpretations. An apa is first of all a format. Before the apa can be born there must be a set of rules, an administrator and a group of interested people (or soft toys, or martians or whatever minority group happens to be forming the apa). The interested people, whom I shall henceforth call the members, send their contributions to the administrator in quantities and frequencies determined by the rules, and the administrator collects them all together and sends out a copy of each contribution to all the members, if they're lucky all bound together with a nice cover on the front, and if the administrator's lucky, just loose in the envelope in no particular order! (Bound or not bound is the subject of a major ideological dispute in British apa fandom and an opinion on the matter should only be ventured with extreme care.)

#### What should I write?

The most difficult part in joining an apa is knowing what to write about. You look at the contributions in the sample copy you've begged from the administrator and come to the conclusion they've all known one another since time immemorial. What's more, they're all talking to each other in code! "Marge" one says, "Give them away as soon as possible, but if they don't understand, try telling them Dave's a homicidal maniac." Or, "Gerry" says another, "don't do it, we'd miss you!" These cryptic lines are what's known as mailing comments and are a response to something written by other members in the previous issue. They can vary in length and informativeness from the simple "I liked your last piece" to a full scale essay sparked off by something someone else said. If they are very cryptic, the chances are it will not be just the person who doesn't understand them, but the rest of the apa too. I've received some comments which have sent me scurrying off to find my last mailing to work out what on earth I could have said to justify the obscure reply.

Naturally, the mailing comments are only part of the contribution. The rest can be almost anything. There's no need for it to be connected to science fiction, or to fandom even, and in most cases it

isn't. The writer talks about what concerns him or her, things he feels strongly about and wishes to communicate, pet ideas, experiences, people, sunsets almost anything. The contribution can be a page of art, though it's rare for a person to contribute only art. It can be fiction, but the same applies. People get uneasy sending out personal communication to individuals who never say anything about themselves in return, or at least don't acknowledge that you're talking to them. But the one thing you learn after being in an apa a while is that there isn't an exclusive right way (whatever people may say) and what doesn't appeal to one person, another may rave about. In the end, the best contributions come from people pleasing themselves and getting down to what they want to do.

#### Why bother?

People join apas for many reasons, for the social life, the ready-made peer group, the prospect of something interesting in the mail once a month, to pass the time or just because it seems the right thing to do. Apas are a useful intermediate stage between observing fandom and taking up one's pen (or typewriter, I should say) and joining in. For anyone wishing to get more involved in the writing side of fandom they are a fairly painless way of taking the first step. Logistically and financially speaking it's much easier to contribute a couple of pages a month to an apa than put out a whole fanzine, and it's less soul-destroying than trying to contribute to someone else's fanzine, as there's no editorial control and you can inflict whatever you like on members, though you have to be prepared to accept the consequences (ranging from total indifference to victimisation as the tide of 'apa opinion' suddenly sees all the members quite independently criticising one poor soul without meaning it). Then there's the deadlines which mean you have to finally get down to it and start writing instead of leaving those stunning ideas to go stale and mouldy in your head.

Apas though are more than just a first step into fanzine fandom, they are a different and in many ways more enjoyable form of communication. The build-up of interactions between members of the group and the frequency of the mailings makes for a more intimate and spontaneous kind of writing, which I for one find compulsively readable. On a bad day, the format has the faults of its virtues, and a contribution may be just a rushed scrappy piece of writing about what the family did at the weekend or whatever, but it is rare to find a whole edition of an apa without something to recommend it.

No, the main danger, I would say, is that apa writing can be addictive. When those two-sided contributions grow to ten sides you know you're in trouble! But if you're looking for an engrossing pastime and a chance to express yourself, if you wish to live dangerously by ripping off photocopying from your place of employment or run up huge bills at the local copy shop, if finally you can't resist the challenge of meeting deadlines, then apas could be the thing for you!

#### Which apa?

**THE WOMEN'S PERIODICAL** Women only. This was the first and many say the most successful of the current batch of British apas. The emphasis is on communication, but nonetheless the recent mailings have covered a wide range of topics from art and politics to childbirth. The strength of the apa is perhaps in the diversity of its membership and the feeling that it is a social as well as an epistolary entity.

#### Copy count:

#### Deadlines:

Every 6 weeks (members must contribute to 6 out of 9 mailings)

#### Cost:

£3 for 9 issues

#### Membership:

There's a small waiting list, but places are likely to be available soon

#### Administrator:

Maureen Porter, 28 Asquith Rd, Rose Hill, Oxford, OX4 4RH

**FRANK'S APA** The most cerebral of the British apas, renowned in its heyday for mind-expanding ideas and weird discussions. It's currently undergoing a crisis of confidence, but there's still plenty going on and it's well worth joining, especially if you fancy making an impression on a few big names in fandom!

Copy count: 77  
 Deadlines: Every month (members must contribute to every other issue)  
 Cost: \$8 per year  
 Memberships: Places available  
 Administrators: Alan Dorey, 22 Summerfield Drive, Middleton, Lancs, M24 2WV

**THE ORGANISATION** This formerly Birmingham based apa is going through a dynamic phase at the moment and has recently recruited members from all round the country. Could this be anything to do with the Organisation's notorious hit squad? Recent mailings have featured discussions on films, records and animal rights

Copy count: 20  
 Frequency: Monthly (members must contribute to one in three mailings)  
 Cost: About \$4 per year  
 Memberships: Preparing to start a waiting list  
 Administrators: Monica Pearson, 32 Dishy House, Colts Grove, Kingshurst, Birmingham B37 6JH

**PAPA** Men only. I can't say much about this one as I haven't read any of the mailings. It's rumoured to be full of men who only want to talk about computers, then agonise over why they are still virgins at 27, never thinking that the former is the cause of the latter! Still, there is a steady core of enthusiastic members. The apa is centrally copied and would look good on any coffee table.

Copy count: 30  
 Frequency: Every 2 months (must contribute to 4 out of 6)  
 Cost: Members contribute to individual fund covering photocopying costs and postage  
 Memberships: Places available  
 Administrators: Malcolm Davies, 79 Dando Crescent, Kidbrooke, London SE3 9PZ

**SLAPA** This currently defunct apa may shortly be revived. It began as a genial low-commitment apa in line with laid-back Surrey Linxwrist philosophy, and rapidly developed a surrealist approach which culminated in the then administrator, Brian Smith sequestrating issue no.12, which has not appeared to this day! Colin Fine is attempting to put out an issue 13 and all inquiries about a possible future to the apa should be addressed to his at 205 Coltham's Lane, Cambridge, CB1 4HY

**GET STUFFED** Soft toys only. This apa was begun as a joke, but proved so popular that it is into its second year. Although criticised by some as 'funny animal fandom' or 'too cute', it has yielded some amusing writing from unusual viewpoints plus interesting graphics and one TAVF candidate. Not to be missed.

Copy count: 20  
 Frequency: Once every three months  
 Cost: \$1 per year, or 25p per copy  
 Memberships: It is run as a drop-in apa, meaning any toy can contribute whenever it likes, and will get a copy of the issue it appeared in.  
 Administrators: Raffles, c/o Christina Lake, 235 Ifley Rd, Oxford, OX4 1BQ

CHRISTINA LAKE

## INKY FINGERS

John Harvey

For some time now I've thought that Matrix should have a regular column devoted to the arcane arts of fanzine production. By that I mean the nitty gritty of getting ink onto lots of pieces of paper to form pretty little patterns which, when viewed by the human eye can actually be interpreted as letters, numbers and even words!

There has always been plenty of space in Matrix filled with discussion on the success or otherwise of fanzine editors in their efforts to make the words hang together as sentences and even convey ideas to the reader. But if you cannot get the characters onto the page in the first place all this is of academic interest. So a certain amount of effort devoted to the basics could well be of value to those of you interested in this aspect of fandom.

A simple "how-to-do-it" column which just features step by step instructions about operating a duplicator is obviously of very limited appeal and would very rapidly run out of fresh material. This column is based on the concept that there is a lot more to the "reproductive" arts than simply cranking a Gestetner handle. Its objective is to pass on some of the tricks of the trade which will help fanzine editors get more out of their efforts and maybe even encourage some into more adventurous printing methods. Nobody ever tried silk screen printing a fanzine cover? Also I hope those who've got ideas, experience and even dire warnings will write in so that they can be passed on to all.

For this first column I thought I'd start to introduce the principal methods of fanzine production used today. Before I do, however, I'd like to recommend an excellent book which covers the mechanics of printing far better than I can. So those of you who regularly ask "offset what?" and "who is this Gestetner bloke anyway?" are yourself with this and you too can be an expert. The Alternative Printing Handbook by Chris Treweek and Jonathan Zeitlyn with the Islington Bus Company, Published by Penguin Books at £5.95.

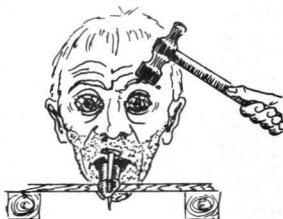
There are three main methods commonly used by editors of fanzines - photocopying, stencil duplicating and litho. Each has its advantages and disadvantages and in future columns I'll be looking at them in turn but now a quick overview for this introduction.

**Photocopying** Once upon a time this was considered a very 'unfanzish' way of 'pubbing your ish'. Lately, with more widespread use and the availability of much improved equipment, it has become more accepted. Cost is the main drawback - 5p or more per side for a 200 copy run of a 50 page fanzine adds up to a very expensive hobby (£500 to be exact!). So, unless you have more a conservative size of fanzine in mind and a small mailing list or access to an office copier and an understanding boss, this method should be approached with caution. In its favour is the relative ease of printing; pictures can be simply added to the pages, as can fancy headings and even photographs. The copy can be typed and then pasted up to form the final page in any layout that you like.

**Stencil Duplicating** For many this is the way to produce a fanzine. A time honoured technique used by fans since the world began and for good reason. It's cheap, versatile, fairly easy to use and, since you operate the machine yourself, the finished item is "all your own work". The results are inferior to other techniques but with care can look very good and artwork, headings, even multi-coloured pages can be done. There are a few skills to be learnt and of course you either have to lay out money for a secondhand machine or find some way of getting access to one.

**Litho** This method is becoming more widely used as costs come down. It provides by far the best results but at the highest cost. Also, with few machines around in fandom, the editor loses control over the finished product by having to use professional printers.

(Next issue: Photocopying - in depth)



## Nail em down...

Sharon M Hall  
45 Broad Oak Drive  
Brinsley  
Notts, NG16 5DW.

The BSFA has of late,  
and by a certain  
necessity, become  
introspective. On  
that we're agreed. I

joined toward the end of the nuclear arms debate (debate?) and I did wonder if I'd joined CND by mistake. But at least it made me think, if not write in.

In this latest, however, I have decided to join the fray (though we're all probably getting fed up of this too).

Roy Hill echoed my own thoughts when he said that we'd have a greater appreciation of why people left if we knew why they'd joined in the first place (because of an interest in/love of SF, I imagine). Some, like Roy and myself, are disappointed initially. For others the disappointment remains. Perhaps a re-naming to the BSFA (not what you're thinking, but the British Fandom Association) would prevent some of the confusion.

Though I do not endorse Miss Hender's comments wholesale, I do agree that the major part of the sines is devoted to fandom/reviews/the writing of SF. I do not consider this a failing. She is not, she says, active in SF fandom (though I would dispute that to be active you have to go to the booze ups...er...conventions), she just reads the stuff (don't we all?). That said, she isn't interested in the reviews unless they merely give a synopsis of the story; and already has access to the news and info from other sources. Clearly the BSFA has little to offer her, and she is doing the right thing by not renewing her membership. We all make mistakes, so what's the fuss about? Unless...given that the ad's for the BSFA are not exactly misleading (I joined through one and I'm staying)...is the BSFA so concerned with achieving/keeping higher membership numbers that it is willing to change? And, if so, into what? And where does that leave those of us who - but for minor considerations - like the BSFA as it is?

For myself, I hope that the present problems will eventually sort themselves out (alright, that those who work within the BSFA will sort them out), and that the mailings will continue to get fatter and better. Each of the sines provides something different, and each member no doubt has his/her own favourite. It would seem, thank goodness, that the idea of joining all into a mega-sine has been abandoned.

On Orbitier - come on, Dorothy. I'm sure that the majority of the BSFA membership don't see your ad's for Orbitier as whinning - but your letter in MATRIX 59 was. Keep up the ad's, Orbitier is worth it, and how else do newcomers get to know about it? The flyers are not exactly informative.

Those of us with experience of voluntary work (i.e. unpaid), and/or a reasonable imagination, can appreciate the problems of the BSFA editors, committee et al. My own experience is that there are those who are willing to work/support/contribute - those who sit back - and those who sit back and criticise, without being willing to work themselves. That said, we do pay for membership, and even if the money doesn't end up in anyone's pocket, we still have a right to deserve value for money. So, what do you get for your hard earned pennies? The mailings are the obvious, tangible answer - but there is more to it than that. Contact is the word that comes to mind...with others who share your enthusiasms rather than looking at you strangely and muttering 'kids stuff', and other obscenities, under their breath. You get to belong to an organisation that's fun, informative, and thought provoking - and which allows you to say what you think (otherwise the recent spate of letters would never have seen print). The BSFA is not a slick 'pogroup' type fan club - its members are not merely consumers, but participants. That is its strength, not its weakness. Let's keep it that way.

Joseph Nicholas  
22 Denbigh Street  
Pimlico  
London, SW1V 2ER.

"The chance that the view expressed by any given member or group of members, no matter

how senior, is universally valid or even worthy of serious discussion, is minimal." Thus sayeth Ken Lake, in point 6 of his lengthy list of proposed guidelines for the editing of BSFA publications - itself part of a longer letter devoted to promulgating just the sort of thing that his point 6 expressly refutes. One expects MATRIX correspondents to shoot themselves in the foot every once in a while, but not quite so spectacularly...

Although in truth I rather like Ken's point 13: "there should be automatic change in every single postholder at regular intervals - I would suggest annually, and would also suggest that this be done by a poll of the members who would be sent brief resumes...of all the prospective appointees for all the posts." Yes, yes! The Maoist doctrine of continuous revolution, Trotsky's dictatorship of the proletariat, made flesh at last! The suggestion may indeed emanate from someone who appears to read The Daily Telegraph as a matter of course, but, um...

Grossly unfair summary of Ken Lake's points, you may say. To which I reply: yes, but some of them are rather daft. For example, he contends (point 14) that spelling mistakes are inexcusable and that their perpetrators should be removed from office forthwith; but what about the occasional typing errors that slip through even with the most stringent proofreading? (And how does he propose to distinguish such errors from other mistakes - a spelling tribunal, with expert witnesses called for the prosecution and the defence, perhaps?) As another example (point 14 again): he suggests that all contributors should be given details of the magazines' formats so that they can produce camera-ready copy every time - which (a) ignores the need to leave space for headings, illustrations, adverts, etc., and (b) reduces the editor to the role of a mere paste-up functionary (although I believe that this is precisely the approach that contributors to the SFWA Forum have to adopt - presumably because the editors are too busy hacking out their latest over-acclaimed space operettas to do any copy-typing - with the inevitable result that the magazine habitually looks a right fucking mess).

Buried somewhere in Ken's rhetoric, however, are the germs of one or two good ideas - in particular the suggestion that the BSFA's elected officers should be held to some extent responsible for their actions (or inactions, such as Tom Taylor's). I realise, of course, that it's rather hypocritical of me to advance such an argument now I'm safely out of the line of fire, but for what it's worth the six years I spent

editing Paperback Inferno did at times seem rather directionless - apart from the basic (and obvious) principles that the magazine exists to review new paperback SF and is published bi-monthly, there was nothing else I could rely upon but my own instincts. On one hand, this gave me a great degree of editorial freedom; but on the other meant that I was operating in a policy vacuum, with little idea of the overall context into which the magazine fits and the constituencies it's supposed to address - and no idea at all of the policies which the BSFA as a whole purportedly pursues. Promoting SF, yes; but how, and for what reasons? These are questions that have never been properly answered (or perhaps even asked at all), and until they are the policy vacuum will persist; so the BSFA's officers should perhaps bend their best attentions towards them without delay. The said officers were, after all, elected to their posts, albeit to discharge particular functions rather than formulate grand strategies for the year 2000 and beyond; but how can they adequately discharge these functions if they have no overall policy to guide them?

Cue here for some future grab for power by a group that has yet to come into being, perhaps. And why not? Six years after the bloodless coup that projected me and (among others) Alan Dorey to power, it's probably time for some other bunch of clever bastards to get up there and make with the convincing-sounding rhetoric; for we are old and tired and the torch gutters in our hands, etc., etc.. Kick us all out, and as crushingly as possible! Prepare to install new cadres throughout the savagran! Mobilise for victory at the 1986 AGM!

Adrian Chandler      The latest mailing  
158 Hillmorton Road      (VECTOR 126 & MATRIX 60)  
Rugby, Warwick CU22 5AL.      is one of the best I

have received in two years as a member of the BSFA. The reasons for my enthusiasm are twofold: firstly, interesting and typographically well laid out articles; secondly, an articulate set of letters which seem to explain some of failings of the BSFA.

Roy Hill managed to sum up these problems in his marvellously succinct letter. My first mailing was also a disappointment, compounded by the ppospus nonsense in the letters columns. Unfortunately this ppospositus was also spread in liberal amounts throughout the articles and book/film reviews. I eventually received the impression that many of the contributors in print and those that selected them were frustrated authors, all trying to produce something of literary merit and scornful of anything else. This must be why there was so much fuss about 'Empire of the Sun' - not SF, but it nearly won the Booker Prize, didn't it? Is this also why there is no news about comics and games anymore? Are these genres considered ar too juvenile? It seems to have been overlooked that an opportunity to attract more people into the BSFA has been missed.

My point is that many people are taking things too damned seriously, and are failing to make allowances for those who don't meet their criteria. Good ideas, even those that are poorly expressed, should be welcomed. Surely the BSFA is here to encourage all aspects of science fiction, not just a vehicle to further a minority's literary ambitions.

John A. Connor  
Sildan House  
Chediston Road  
Wiselett  
Near Halesworth  
Suffolk, IP19 0NF.

MATRIX 59 arrived in the post yesterday, which rather surprised me somewhat as I haven't been a member of the BSFA for years, and I know that my younger

brother, Chuck Connor, left under a cloud of anger several years ago. It was passed on to me because of some of the comments that have been expressed in your letter pages with regard to amateur fiction and its publication in, namely, the BSFA's own FOCUS magazine.

Now, as far as I know, my own piece of writing appeared in the last, or latest (?), issue (titled CAUGHT BEING IN LOVE). I say as far as I know mainly as I have not seen a copy, nor have I been sent a contributors copy, which, as far as I can tell with most small press concerns, is the normal practice. If contributors are required to buy a copy for their files then can you please let me know to keep my files up to date.

But, my reason for writing this letter is that on reading the comments in the letters section I was surprised to read that editoresse, Sue Thomason, was "disappointed with both the quantity and the quality of the fiction submissions received so far..." The surprise is generated in that when I first submitted CAUGHT BEING IN LOVE, I automatically withdrew it from possible circulation in both America and Canada, thus removing any possibility of duplication and the like. It was also submitted with the following possibilities firmly in mind; that it would be rejected, or that it would be returned with requests for changes/re-writes and possible blue pencilling. Such was not the case, and if it had not been for a letter from Dorothy Davies then I would not have known of it's acceptance or right, and to this day still don't know in what state the MS was finally printed up. For all I know it could well have been cut by 2-3,000 words, which would not make it a pretty sight at all. If the quality of my work was not to the required standard then why was it not rejected (thus freeing it for submission elsewhere) or some guidelines sent to me as to restructuring and/or re-writing? As it is I lost inclusion in the next issue of GARGOYLE magazine (of Washington DC) by withdrawing the piece, and then to find it does not come up to standard is a little annoying.

In this light, the closing comment from Margaret Hall is a little confusing: "In the meantime, why not submit a story to FOCUS?" I did, madam, and it appears that I am now losing out all round.

Tom A. Jones  
39 Ripplesmere  
Bracknell  
Berks RG12 3QA.

Good to see more news and media pieces. Good to see the Bob Shaw piece reprinted from 'Ron's Raygun', not

because it was one of his best pieces - it wasn't, but because there are many fine articles worth reprinting, particularly as the majority of members won't have seen them.

Now the bad things. The lack of any Chairman's report is inexcusable. If Alan Dorey doesn't have an hour to produce a report then one must ask whether he has enough free time to be Chairman.

Indeed, lack of information about the BSFA's affairs seems to be the order of the day. I don't recall having seen the minutes of the AGM or the treasurer's report. These documents, particularly the treasurer's report, may have helped to answer my questions about the Association's litho equipment.

I detect a degree of apathy from some committee members, particularly the longer serving ones. I have always felt there is some merit to limiting the period of time a person can do a job and can be a continuous committee member. Committees go through these periods, sometimes with disastrous results (the BSFA did collapse for several years), the persistent, irritant questioners can help to overcome these. I look back to my own Chairmanship and, whilst I felt that some of the critics were pains in the ass, in retrospect I realise they stopped us becoming complacent.

\*\*\* The AGM notes appeared in the April mailing of MATRIX. As for your queries in the last issue of MATRIX: see the next couple of letters and Alan's chairman's piece earlier on in this issue.

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So it's official at last the BSFA award doesn't have to go to a work of science fiction. Rather than come up with a piece of nonsense like this, would it not have been more honest - and dignified - to admit to an error of judgement? All this does is open the floodgates to God knows what being nominated and give the impression that some of the people 'near the top' are ashamed of science fiction or being associated with it. Well as a silly season has been declared, I may as well start the ball rolling. I possess an excellent manual on first aid for dogs which really is overdue for some kind of recognition....

Whilst on the subject of that award, my thanks are also due to Martyn Taylor for producing a letter that gave me the biggest laugh in ages. It's a little known fact that Mills and Boon have been churning out science fiction for years and marketing it as pulp romance as a clever ploy to avoid the stigma of the SF label. It was such a well-kept secret that even the AUTHORS didn't know it was SF. Thank God Martyn wasn't serious (tell us it was a joke, please...)

Margaret Hall asks why the 'present outlet' for fiction is being ignored. Could it be that the amount of effort and interest by writers is directly proportional to the willingness of the BSFA to print fiction? If a miserly handful of pages per year were allocated to book and media reviews, I wonder how many people would take the trouble. I, too, hope that plenty of people support the proposed anthology as it does seem, at last, like the sort of genuine commitment that has been needed for so long. I know there are a number of talented writers in the BSFA - I correspond with them and frequently publish their work - and am confident that they are prepared to put in the effort to make the anthology a success as long as they can see the BSFA making the same effort. However, the silence from the BSFA about the details of this (along with the non-appearance of the last FOCUS) are hardly an encouragement.....

24506156 Pte B. Gunn  
HQ Coy, 1st. Battalion  
of the Black Watch,  
(Royal Highland  
Regiment), Ritchie Camp,  
Kirknewton, Midlothian,  
EH27 8DB

Out of sheer boredom one Saturday afternoon I compiled a Fog Index Chart for Matrix 59 (see below). After reading a number of LoCs on the "comic book" format of Matrix, resolved to see for myself the educational qualifications/age group suitable for this publication.

Perhaps a definition of the Fog Index is required if one is to understand the chart: "The Fog Index combines two object tests, word length and sentence length, to assess the minimum age and educational level for which a text is suitable."

To use the index the following steps are carried out:  
a. Take a passage of 100 words length. Start at the beginning and finishing at the end of a sentence (if possible).  
b. Count the number of sentences in the passage.  
c. Divide the number of words by the number of sentences to get the average sentence length.  
d. Count the number of long words (i.e. of three or more syllables discounting capitalised and combined words), also words lengthened by the addition of -ed, -es, etc.  
e. Add the average sentence length and the number of long words together.  
f. Multiply this figure by 0.4 to get the Fog Index.

The following is a rough scale showing equivalent standards for a particular Index number:

- a. 10: Readers around 15 years old.
- b. 11-13: Sixth form in British schools.
- c. 14-16: University educated.
- d. 16-17: Heavy stuff.
- e. 18+: MURDER material.

This is not an exhaustive survey (I would do one on request) and the figures are rather sketchy. I think it serves as a rough guide though. Any comments? I would be pleased to hear them.

Page Piece No.	Fog Index (Beginning)	F.I. (Middle)	F.I. (End)	Ave
2 Editorial	13	18	12.9	14.33
3 Noticeboard		14.2	10.06	12.4
4-6 Awards	12.24	11.86	9.13	11.07
7 Clubs	10	10.6	8.4	9.66
8 Non Profiles	15.2		10.2	12.7
9 Fanzine Review	11.1	15.06	8.8	11.65
10 Fanzine Review	14.4	11.28	12.24	12.64
13 Media Reviews	13.6	12.4	12.24	12.75
14 Media Reviews	15.4	14	15.84	15.08

Average maintained throughout MATRIX59: 12.47

#### Comments:

- The figures would seem to suggest that the minimum educational level required would be a person with O level or equivalent, age group of around 16-20.
- Some of the high Fog Index numbers are achieved not by intelligent writing, but by simply over-long sentences (in some cases 50 words).
- Still, breaking the chart down we find that the Editorial rates quite high (sentences I'm afraid). Clubs seems to be the most easily understood; Media Reviews borders on the higher educated while the remainder chugs along nicely in the 11-12 range.
- You can only publish the best of what you get and can't expect to please everyone. Personally, I think MATRIX is fine - it is on the letter page that the juvenility is displayed if anywhere.

\*\*\* Thanks for your positive comments on Matrix and for doing an objective analysis of its contents. Having said that back in 1975, the American psychologist HOFFMANN and VYHONSKY conducted readability tests on introductory psychology textbooks (see AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGIST vol 30, pp 790-792). Then in 1976, another US psychologist reviewed their findings (M.E. ESON - "A Critique of Hoffman and Vyhonsky's evaluation of introductory educational psychological textbooks" AP vol31, pp 256-257) and, in summing up, said: "The use of these methods has probably caused more harm than good, in that insignificant features of the material, albeit objectively measured, are given higher priority than other far more important qualities."

So you pay your money and you take your choice. If anybody in London is interested in this all the relevant textbooks are available for study at the Swiss Cottage Library, although I wouldn't recommend trying to photocopy them. Not because they don't allow you to there but because the psychology library is on the first floor and the photocopyers are on the ground floor. There are no lifts and a long walk inbetween, the books are bloody heavy too.....

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Carnelton  
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Before I get on to the matter of the BSFA printing there are a few points I'd like to make. Bernard Smith talks of the

straight away let me say that in my opinion there was no foul-up over Tangent. Further he should realise that the majority of the committee of that time have now moved on, with the possible exception of Sandy Brown I am the only one still active in the running of the BSFA, so trying to use it as a stick to beat the current committee is rather unreasonable.

Tom Jones was the Chairman at the time and I feel he handled the situation very well. At that time Tangent was being produced for distribution only to members who specifically asked for it, everybody was entitled to it (at no extra cost) and every new member got a copy with their first mailing but to continue to receive it you had to request it. This was not done to discourage members from getting Tangent but simply to save money. Generally it was considered pointless and wasteful of limited funds to send a magazine to members who didn't want it, wouldn't read it and probably discard it unopened. If my memory serves me correctly it was only sent to about 30% of the membership, a fair measure of its popularity.

When the editor, Ian Garbutt, asked to improve the production by using Litho printing he was told this was not possible for money reasons - it was considered unfair

to spend more membership money on a magazine the majority were not interested in. Ian's response to this was to offer to pay any extra cost's himself, which on first sight appears quite reasonable but, when you think about it, it could be said that the BSFA was subsidising a fanzine for a member. What was to stop any other member quite reasonably asking for money for their own fanzine? A dangerous precedent indeed. Ian was not happy to continue with Tangent on the same basis so he resigned (not very gracefully) and as no other editor was available Tangent was laid to rest.

Those as far as I remember the facts, Tom will no doubt point out any errors but I believe them to be substantially correct. They do not constitute a "foul-up" and I would suggest that Bernard refrains from using this sort of throw away line in future especially when it's apparent that he's not fully aware of the facts.

Also I cannot agree with Bernard that this year's BSFA Award controversy over the nomination of "Empire of the Sun" brought the award to "the level of a farce". Far from it, it's just this sort of discussion and interest in the award that shows that it is an alive and important event. If nobody gave a damn about what was nominated or what won then there wouldn't be much point in having a BSFA Award.

Now onto the main purpose of this letter which is to provide a few answers to Tom Jones' questions on the printing of BSFA periodicals.

Firstly the existing equipment has not ceased to work, it's just been rather poorly recently. The BSFA has had the litho machine for five years now and really it must be considered to be coming to the end of its useful life. It was second hand when bought and obviously had only a limited lifespan. The purchase was made on the basis that the savings would very rapidly repay the investment. Which indeed they did and have done so many times over in the intervening time. The obvious course of action is to buy a new machine as soon as possible.

Over the five years that we have had the litho machine it has frequently been serviced by a tame engineer from the manufacture. Lots of parts have had to be replaced including the drive motor, ink rollers, various bearings and other minor bits. So I would say, "yes it has been adequately maintained".

There is no simple answer to the question of how much a commercial printer would cost. It depends on who you use and how much they print. How long is a piece of string? Generally the membership will have to trust the committee to choose an economical printing service.

The simple answer to the relative costs of commercial vs. BSFA printing is that it costs about twice as much to get it done by a professional. This answer requires qualification by saying that the saving comes from the fact that I give my time to the BSFA for free and this element is where the cost lies. It takes me about one hour to print each page of a BSFA magazine, provided that the machine behaves itself and does not get temperamental that is. So you can see there is quite a large time investment involved in each mailing, over 40 man hrs.

What guarantee of reliability do we have from a commercial printer? Only that if they want to go on getting our business then they have to come through with the goods when we want them. I doubt if written guarantee is a practical proposition, I know I wouldn't be willing to give one.

After five years of bending over a hot litho machine in a cold garage I'm getting rather tired of it and would like to reduce the time I have to spend on this chore. Thus when the various editors of Vector and Matrix expressed a desire to have A3 folded to A4 format magazines I was only too pleased to go along with the idea, provided of course we could afford it.

So if I'm getting tired of printing why don't we get another volunteer to do it? A simple sounding solution and one I would warmly welcome. But who will do it? They must have house space for a litho machine and plate maker, be able to obtain litho supplies (plates, ink, chemicals, etc.), be able to buy large quantities of paper, be willing to learn the arcane arts of printing with a litho machine and finally be able to transport the finished product to the bi-monthly mailing session without fail. If there is anybody out there who meets

with these requirements please come forward at once.

Since the litho machine is about due for replacement and the A3 folded to A4 format is in favour why don't we get a machine large enough to print this size of paper? I investigated this some months ago and in order to adequately equip ourselves it would cost slightly more than the BSFA's annual income to do, not to mention the much greater space requirements for whoever houses the machinery. Sadly this is not a very practical proposition, unless anybody out there knows better.

As you can see printing the regular mailings is not a simple task and before I finish I'd like to throw in one final thought. By my printing the magazines I have enabled the finances of the BSFA to be kept artificially low, in effect I have been providing the Association with a considerable income over the last few years via the savings made. This has been reflected in the membership rate which have been kept as low as possible over the last few years. If Ken Lake thinks this is a "hefty sum" then he's no idea of the cost of things in the '80s, inflating the £5 membership fee of 1980 by the Retail Price Index to December 1984 gives a rate of £3. What do you, the membership, think a fair fee would be? At a recent London meeting this question was put to the assembled throng and between £10 and £12 per year was generally considered reasonable. And now Eve, as temporary Treasurer, would like her say....

I want to respond to Tom Jones' last letter - a point-by-point like John did, but in general terms. The BSFA having its own printing equipment is a very sensible idea - it's cheaper, allows control over quality etc, just as Tom implies. The problem is, however, that it is fatal for any organisation to be solely dependent on one person for its financial survival, and that's the situation with the BSFA printing until we are large enough to have full-time printers employed by us. The equipment is too large to be easily transportable, therefore a long-term commitment is required from the printer. Over the past few years the finances have been too dependent on the commitment of someone like John and I should like to see us try to make the Association viable on its own. That way while we have someone willing to do the most unglamorous and unenjoyable of all the BSFA's job we can put the money saved to one side for special projects that otherwise couldn't be afforded, but if unforeseen circumstances there is no-one available, the BSFA isn't bankrupted.

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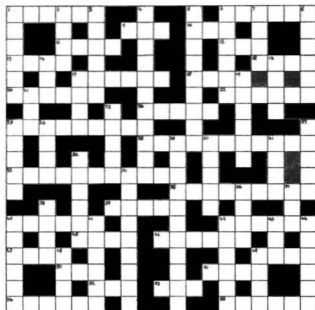
The LoCs were interesting; I particularly liked the way Ken Lake ended his verbose meanderings by publicly proclaiming he was all south and no trousers.

Tom Jones annoyed me as well. The BSFA press has broken down because it is in a garage and not a printroom. There is a difference and it makes a difference to maintenance. Maintenance? HAH! A standard maintenance contract for an A4 offset press is between £5000 & £12000 per year plus parts. No contract and labour costs £40 for the 1st hour and £25-£30 thereafter plus parts and this includes a discount for buying the franchise. \*\*\* And seeing as Paul works for the printer that did the last MATRIX & VECTOR he should know.

WAMP: PHILIP NICHOLS, who on the whole agrees with all of Ken Lake's points; STEVE HUBBARD, who disagrees with Ken across the board; RUTH WILDER, who agrees with Ken & also finds the book reviews in Vector & PI extremely useful; DOROTHY DAVIES, who had ago back at Bernard Smith but wasn't very convincing about it; JEAN THOMPSON, who has a fixation with the word "usual" and complained that we were keeping the details of the pub seat to ourselves - you obviously don't read MATRIX very closely as full details were on page 2 of M59; SUE THOMPSON, who didn't like the artwork in the last issue; TERRY BROWNE, who tells us that his fanzine RRP can be obtained from 45 Hykeham Rd., Lincoln LN6 8AA, and still didn't send me a copy, and thinks that MATRIX should carry news of the latest technological advances a la OMNI. Thanks to everyone for taking the time and I look forward to hearing from you next time round....

# Billion Year Crossword

No.3, August '85  
Simon Walker &  
Chris Carne.



ACROSS

DOWN

1. Female arachnid inhabiting Girith Ungol. (6)
4. Non-digital magazine. (6)
9. Binary digit. (3)
10. Goes in a pen. (3)
11. The Despairer. (4)
12. Blake's and Farmer's were red. (3)
13. Fantasyepic for knowledge. (4)
15. Centre of population on Peru. (4)
17. The British SF writer (6)
18. It's story didn't have one. (4)
20. Doc, precursor of Indiana Jones. (6)
22. This Fredric Brown story had one. (6)
24. In Eric Frank Russell's story this was diabolical. (5)
25. Foreteller of planets to the galaxy's elite. (9)
28. A very traditional castle. (11)
31. Covenant's sidekick. (11)
35. Heaklinitic adventurer. (9)
37. This Eric was George. (5)
40. Subway with a strange twist. (6)
42. An author better than anyone else! (6)
45. Van Vost novel. (4)
46. Beautiful youth beloved of Venus. (6)
47. Winged goddess of victory. (4)
48. Stout English writer! (4)
50. Initial creator of World's greatest detective. (1,1,1)
51. Astral beer. (4)
52. One is changed for a long time. (7)
53. Interplanetary communications system. (1,1,1)
54. Mordred robot by 41 down. (3-3)
55. - of the sun. (6)

1. Silverberg devoted a Book to these. (6)
2. Marvin's least favourite subject. (4)
3. Progenitor of planet of the apes. (6)
4. Pohl's golden epidemic. (5,6)
5. 10<sup>7</sup> years. (9)
6. Early producer of SF films. (1,5)
7. In time, Covenant became it's keystone. (6)
8. Tolkien country. (6)
14. SFepic for any planetary day. (3)
16. Brother of Elwe. (4)
17. Femme fatale in Book of the New Sun. (4)
19. It all ends up as heat. (6)
21. Alias. (1,1,1)
23. Star Trek token black/sex interest. (5)
25. Editor of F&SF 58-62. (5)
26. Protagonist of Aldiss's ultimate Earth. (4)
27. Pseudonym of Philip Klass. (1,4)
29. Chronicalised the early red planet settlers. (3,8)
30. Novel by 42 across. (5)
31. Electronics genius of 3's. (4)
32. Plutulent Greek god! (6)
34. Would you send this laggar one? (9)
36. Capella's were golden. (4)
37. The best in American paper-backs? (3)
38. Dick novel. (4)
40. Square computer of Herbert's universe. (6)
41. Creator of 34 across! (6)
42. 19th C. Journalist and fantasy writer. (6)
43. Anderson tried to reduce this to nothing. (3)
44. The Strange Playfellow. (6)
48. Where Mordor lies. (4)
49. Given's device will tickle your mind. (6)

## COMPETITION CORNER

Elizabeth Sourbut

Hello! Is anybody out there? Why does nobody speak to me? There were exactly five entrants for my competition -- that's even less than Langford used to receive, and I'm much sicker to get to know than he is. Come on, I'm an unbiased judge; all you have to do is appeal to my sense of humour. So let's hear from you next time, please?

Entrants this time were: BRIAN ALDISS, IAN BARRINGTON, KEVIN McVEIGH, WILLIAM WALKER, and DAVE WOOD. Each sent several entries, very few of which adhered strictly to the rules, so I've stretched them a bit. Amongst my favourites were:

Barrington: "Friends, Vulcans, countrymen, lend me your ears; I come to raise Spock, not to bury him" (Julius Caesar/Star Trek)

McVeigh: "Is this a dagger which I see before me  
Its tip toward my throat? Come let me clutch thee  
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still  
Art thou not, Gollum Jabbar, sensible  
To feeling as to sight? Or art thou but  
A dagger of the mind, a false creation  
Proceeding from the spice-induced brain?" (Macbeth/Dune)

But the prize must go to Dave Wood for the cumulative effect of four of his entries, the two which made me laugh most being:

"Shylock insisted: 'My deed upon my head! I crave the penalty and forfeit of my bond.' E.Daneel placed two fingers carefully under one nipple and pushed in a definite pattern of pressure. His chest opened longitudinally. E.Daneel reached in and from a waiter of gleaming metal withdrew a thin, translucent sac, partly dissolved."

(Merchant of Venice/Caves of Steel)

and  
So soon was she along, as he was down,  
Each leaning on their elbows and their hips:  
Now doth she stroke his cheek, now doth he frown,  
Now gins to chide, but soon she stops his lips;  
And kissing speaks, with lustful language broken,  
'With all my heart I'm delighted, excited, I feel the old  
thrill of goosh-wow again.'

(Venus and Adonis S/Marion Bradley, in a backcover blurb extolling the virtues of Donaldson's epic 'Chronicles of Thomas Covenant the Unbeliever')

Dave will be receiving the coveted £5 book token for those entries.

If you think you could have done better than that, well here's your chance to prove it, in the

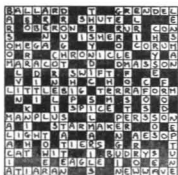
## Matrix 60 Competition

— SF or not SF? That is the question which these days is being levelled at book after book. Does it belong? Should I buy it for my SF library? Can I sneak it onto the BSFA Awards ballot form? At the other extrem, Chris Priest tries to extricate "The Glamour" from our sticky grasp, Kurt Vonnegut regularly renounces any link with the field, and SF purists pour scorn on best-seller disaster novels which borrow from our imagery and ignore our vision. The definitions are becoming blurred, and whenever I see confusion I love to add to it, so:

Your mission this month: To explore the boundaries of SF. Either take a so-called hard-core SF book and prove to me that it isn't really SF at all or take a mainstream novel ("Oliver Twist", "Jane Eyre", "Gollinger", or whatever) and bring it into the field.

Send me up to 200 words on a novel of your choice, explaining convincingly why it is/isn't SF by the next mailing deadline please, to: Elizabeth Sourbut, 10 Trenholme Drive, The Mount, York YO2 2DG

## Billion Year Crossword No 2



— Walker —