



# CONTENTS

RED SHIFT	Maureen Porter	3
WALKING ON GLASS - THE BSFA COLUMN		4
Minutes of the AGM 30/8/87		4
New & Rejoined Members, Changes of Address, Left		4
NEWS	Paul Kincaid, Stan Nicholls, et al	5
COMPETITION CORNER		
Elizabeth Sourbut		11
HUGO AWARDS BREAKDOWN 1987 - Paul Kincaid		12
MEDIA REVIEWS		14
Media Previews - Robert Matthews		14
Shock Around The Clock - Colin Bird		14
Superman IV - John Peetenby		15
Star Cops - Patrick Lee		15
THE PERIODIC TABLE		16
Worldcon Bidding		16
Convention Roundup		16
FIRE AND HEMLOCK		18
News and Listings - Maureen Porter		18
Fanzine Revs - Chuck Connor		19
MEMBERS' NOTICEBOARD		19
WRITE BACK - The Letters Page		21
SOAPBOX - Pat Gardner		24
ARTWORK		
Cover	Stephen Manderson	
p. 3	David Griffiths	
p. 3	Jim Barker	
p. 9	Teresa Neilsen Hayden	
p. 10	Matt Brooker	
p. 13	Richard McLaren	
p. 17	Matt Brooker	
p. 21	Neil Allan	

Copyright: ©BSFA Ltd 1987. Individual copyrights are the property of the authors and editors.

Please note that any opinions expressed are those of the individual authors and not necessarily those of the editor or the BSFA.

ISSN: 0307 3335

Printed by: PDC Copyprint  
11 Jeffries Passage  
Guildford  
Surrey  
GU1 4AF

Typesetting & production by Paul Kincaid and Maureen Porter.

BSFA MEMBERSHIP costs £10 per annum and is available from:

Membership Secretary: Membership renewals:

Joanne Raine Keith Freeman  
33 Thornville Road 269 Wykeham Road  
Hartlepool Reading  
Cleveland Berkshire  
TS26 8EW RG6 1PL

MATRIX Contributing Editors

CLUBS

NEWS

Ron Gemmell Paul Kincaid  
79 Mansfield Close 114 Guildhall Street  
Birchwood Folkestone  
Warrington Kent  
Cheshire CT20 1ES  
WA3 6RN

BSFA CO-ORDINATOR

Paul Kincaid  
114 Guildhall Street  
Folkestone  
Kent  
CT20 1ES

MATRIX EDITOR

FOCUS EDITOR

Maureen Porter Paul Grunwell  
114 Guildhall Street 218 Rainsford Road  
Folkestone Chelmsford  
Kent Essex  
CT20 1ES CM1 2PD

(0303 52939)

(0245 350889)

PAPERBACK INFERNO  
EDITOR:

VECTOR EDITOR:

Andy Sawyer  
1 The Flaxyard  
Woodfall Lane  
Little Neston  
South Wirral  
L64 4BT  
(051 336 3355)

David V Barrett  
23 Oakfield Road  
Croydon  
Surrey  
CR0 2UD  
(01-688-6081)





# Red Shift

So that was the Worldcon - interesting.

Now the dust has started to settle, fandom is beginning to emerge once again, and it's surprisingly intact considering the dire prognostications of a total collapse of activity for the next eighteen months whilst we all recover. Don't know about anyone else but I have deadlines to meet.

Worldcon - well, what can I say about it? Any experience of a con that size has to be intensely personal, and I have to confess that because of my work in the Repro Room I actually saw little of the convention itself, beyond the dealers rooms. However, I got to meet a few more BSFA members, although I'm sorry I never made it to the AGM due to newsletter demands. It was good to match a few faces to names, even if, as I understand, one or two people found I was not what they expected. I can only hope the surprise was pleasant, and will try not to worry about the images that have been shattered. In the meantime, Worldcon reminiscences gratefully received for a bumper con report next time round.

I'm already receiving letters from new members of the BSFA, welcome aboard and I hope you enjoy your membership. I'll be doing my best to answer some of your questions in the next few issues but don't worry if the articles you want don't appear immediately.

Several people have written in to express the hope that I've recovered from my illnesses. Thank you very much, and I'm delighted to report that things are going much better these days, despite the non-co-operation of the NHS, an unpleasant run-in with the DHSS and the fact that my ex-employers don't understand the concept of 'truth'. I'm now a (very) part-time student doing a pre-degree course, with the earnest hope that this will lead on to a full-time degree course starting next year. Never fear, though, I shall continue editing Matrix, particularly now that I have more time to devote to developing its various departments.

My latest move has been to recruit a graphic designer to improve the look of Matrix and generally develop a coherent identity within its pages. Pasting-up is one thing, but design is not really my forte, so I am glad that the expertise of Michael R Gould is going to be at our disposal in future issues. I'm not sure yet quite what the timetable for changes is going to be, but keep an eye out for future improvements.

The Beeb autumn schedules see the latest series of Dr Who hit the screen. I'm still uncertain about my reaction to Sylvester McCoy - I mean, how can you take a man seriously when he holds the world record for stuffing ferrets down his trousers, and models his incarnation of the Doctor on Bud Flanagan. Who? I hear you cry. Quite. And that sorts out the oldesters, doesn't it?

Doubtless, some of you are already getting your pens sharpened for reviews of Dr Who. Jolly good. Please remember though to keep reviews concise and to the point. I don't like to upset people by bringing out the red felt-tip but some reviews

I've received of late might be mistaken for major theses and have been ruthlessly butchered. Try too, to keep it as reasonably objective, and assess the overall appeal of what you're reviewing as well as your own personal feelings. Likewise for con reps. I'm going to start being a little more ruthless with these, especially as I've had one or two which consisted more or less of nothing more than lists of names the attendee met. And please, if you love your editor, no more reviews of The Fly. I've got two or three on ice and it's been reviewed twice already. No more, though it's interesting to see just how popular this film is. Yes, media, there's something else which needs some attention.

Anyway, I'm going to keep this (relatively) short, because there's a lot to pack into this issue, as ever, but just one thing I think you all ought to see, and forgive me for blowing my own trumpet. This was culled from the fiftieth (and final? - please god, no) issue of Ansible - and no, it has nothing to do with the fiver I slipped Dave, honest.

"Where does one go for regular, frequent British SF news? The boring old BSFA is worth a look, now that Maureen Porter has vastly expanded the news pages of Matrix: ..."

'Nuff said, providing you read the names Paul Kincaid and Stan Nicholls for Maureen Porter. I just crack the whip, and panic a bit.

Your deadline for the next issue is (and I'm printing this double size, bold, for all those people who said that it wasn't there last time - it was, as usual, at the bottom of the editorial, just like this one):

**FRIDAY 13th NOVEMBER 1987**

No, I don't believe that either. Keep the material, the letters, everything rolling, and hope we all survive!



# WALKING ON GLASS

## The BSFA Column

### Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the BSFA

The AGM was held in the Bedford Hotel, Brighton on 30 August 1987. The meeting commenced at 11.00 am with Paul Kincaid in the chair.

Item 1: Minutes of the previous meeting were passed as read. Proposed: Nicholas Mahoney. Seconded: Nick Trant.

Item 2: Paul Kincaid delivered the Chairman's Report for the previous year. He reported generally that it had been a good year for the organisation. Administratively we were beginning to reorganise, with a new Membership Secretary who was doing a god job of actively seeking members, and a new Treasurer. Thanks were expressed to John Fairley who had stepped in at short notice to take over the role of Treasurer when Phil Knight had to step down, and had kept things ticking over until we found a new Treasurer in the person of Brett Cockrell. In general membership of the organisation is increasing, and it is hoped this trend will continue. The BSFA is also beginning to be recognised as a source of information on science fiction, and Paul Kincaid reported requests for information from such bodies as the BBC. He also announced that the BSFA is hoping to extend its interests with projects such as the book publishing idea that has been mentioned in previous issues of *Matrix*. The Chairman's Report was accepted; proposed: Nicholas Mahoney, seconded: K.V.Bailey.

Item 3: Brett Cockrell delivered the Treasurer's report. He pointed out that as the auditor to the BSFA was also Treasurer of the Worldcon, audited accounts were not yet available. However, the unaudited accounts for the last three years had now been prepared and delivered to the auditor, and the accounts for 1986/7 were nearing completion, so that the BSFA's financial basis should be back on a formal footing shortly. He was able to announce that the BSFA is in a secure financial position, with ample funds in the account to cover two mailings, which has always been the aim of the organisation. The Treasurer's Report was accepted; proposed Nicholas Mahoney, seconded Martyn Taylor.

Item 4: Phil Knight and Sandy Brown both stepped

down from the Council of the BSFA. Two other members of the Council retired by rotation and offered themselves for re-election: Arthur C. Clarke and Paul Kincaid. Clarke was proposed by Brian Magorrian, seconded by Marcus Rowland and passed nem. con. Kincaid was proposed by Roy Gray, seconded by John Duffield and passed nem. con.

Two others were co-opted onto the Council during the previous year and offered themselves for ratification. Joanne Raine was proposed by Brett Cockrell, seconded by Ed. James and passed nem. con. Brett Cockrell was proposed by Nicholas Mahoney, seconded by Marcus Rowland and passed nem. con.

Item 5: John Steward FCA was reappointed as auditor to the BSFA. Proposed Nicholas Mahoney, seconded Martyn Taylor, passed nem. con.

Item 6: Under any other business the editors of the various magazines submitted reports. David Barrett reported on the continued development of *Vector*, and paid thanks to those who were helping in the production of the magazine. Andy Sawyer reported on the shift to professional litho printing of *Paperback Inferno*. Paul Kincaid, deputising for Maureen Porter who was unavoidably detained elsewhere in the Convention, reported on *Matrix*. All three announced that they felt the standard of the magazines was improving, and this feeling was endorsed by the meeting. Paul Kincaid then apologised for the absence of *Focus* in the previous mailing. He had understood that the magazine was to be prepared for the mailing, and only discovered at the last minute from the printer that no *Focus* had been delivered. He had tried on a number of occasions to telephone Paul Grumwell, the editor, but had been unable to get through to learn the explanation. There then followed a discussion of the coverage of the media in the BSFA, which then became a discussion of whether it was possible to prepare a general introduction to science fiction for new members along with a list of recommended books. This discussion reached no conclusion by the time the meeting was closed at 12.00 midday.

\*\*\*\*\*

Greg Pickersgill has taken on the back issues of BSFA publications. Any requests for back issues should be directed to him at 7a Lawrence Road, Ealing, London.

\*\*\*\*\*

We are now scouting possible locations for a revival of the old London meetings. Look out in future issues for further information on this.

\*\*\*\*\*

### New & Rejoined Members

M4304 Aug 88 Lee Fox 7 Roall Lane, Kellington,  
nr Goolle, N Humber-side, DN14 0NY  
M4299 Aug 88 Edmund R F Hewson 5a Fairborne Rd,  
Tottenham, Lond, N17 6TP  
U4311 Aug 88 Jyrki Ijas  
U4303 May 88 Andrew M Johnson  
M2916 Aug 88 Adrian R Last 8 Mill Hill Rd,  
Rorwich, Norfolk. NR2 3DF  
04301 Dec 88 Alexander Medvedkovich Romanijks  
18, 11182 Zemon, Yugoslavia  
U4305 Aug 88 Robert Pay  
U4310 Aug 88 Queens University of Belfast SF & F  
Society  
U4309 Aug 88 Juha Salminen  
U4308 Aug 88 Pekka Supinen  
U4307 Aug 88 USS Drake - Plymouth SF Club  
M4306 Aug 88 Gavin J Whitehead 36 Meadowside  
Rd, Pangburne, Reading, RG8 7NH  
Martin Wilson 69 The Crescent,  
Ravensthorpe, Dewsbury, W43 3BE  
M4302 Aug 88

### CHANGES OF ADDRESS

(the new address is the one given)

(3620) David Boyce 4a Dene Park, Harrogate,  
N Yorks, HG1 4DW  
(4119) Keith Brooke 84 Eade Rd, Norwich  
Norfolk, NR3 3EJ  
(1224) Richard Cowper 3 Clifton Hill, Brighton,  
Sussex, BN1 3HL  
(4055) Nicholas D Haines 4 The Towers, Soberton,  
Hants, SO3 1FS  
(4127) John W R 66 Seahill Rd, Holywood,  
Henderson BT18 0DW, N Ireland  
(3920) Jon May 361 Sydenham Rd, Croydon, London,  
CRO2EH

LRFT

Sean Friend

# NEWS

Compiled by Paul Kincaid and Stan Nicholls (with a little help from *Locus* and other sources)

## AWARDS

The 1987 Hugo Awards were presented at the World Science Fiction Convention, Conspiracy 87, in Brighton on Sunday 30 August. The winners were as follows, (for a complete breakdown of the voting see centre pages):

NOVEL  
*Speaker for the Dead* - Orson Scott Card

NOVELLA  
*'Gilgamesh in the Outback'* - Robert Silverberg

NOVELETTE  
*'Permafrost'* - Roger Zelazny

SHORT STORY  
*'Tangents'* - Greg Bear

NON FICTION  
*Trillion Year Spree* - Brian Aldiss with David Wingrove

DRAMATIC PRESENTATION  
*Aliens*

PROFESSIONAL ARTIST  
Jim Burns

PROFESSIONAL EDITOR  
Terry Carr

SEMIPROZINE  
*Locus* - Ed. Charles M. Brown

FAN WRITER  
David Langford

FAN ARTIST  
Brad Foster

FANZINE  
*Ansible* - Ed. David Langford

JOHN V. CAMPBELL AWARD  
Karen Joy Fowler

\*\*\*\*\*

At the same ceremony a number of other awards were presented. The only two our correspondent remembered to make a note of were the Nebula Grand Master Award for Arthur C. Clarke, which was collected on his behalf by his brother Fred Clarke; and the First Fandom Award, which went to Bea Mahaffey, whose obituary appeared in *Matrix* 70.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Japanese Setun Awards, their equivalent of the Hugo, were presented at the Japanese National Convention on 9 August.

BEST FOREIGN NOVEL: *Neuromancer* - William Gibson

BEST FOREIGN SHORT STORY: *'Press Enter .'* - John Varley

\*\*\*\*\*

The John V. Campbell Memorial Award (different thing from the John V. Campbell Award announced above), and the new Theodore Sturgeon Award for a short story, were presented at the University of

- HUGO WINNERS / WORLD FANTASY AWARD NOMINEES
- BEST SF OF ALL TIME?
- CLIVE BARKER TAKES FILM COMPANY TO COURT
- KEROSINA: 1988 BOOKS
- DR WHO FILM RIGHTS SOLD

Kansas, 18-19 July.

The Campbell Award was selected by a panel of judges consisting of our own Tom Shippey and Kingsley Amis, plus Sam Lundwall, Walter Meyers, Algis Budrys, Elizabeth Anne Hull and James Gunn. Winner and runners up were:

*A Door into Ocean* - Joan Slonczewski (just published by THE WOMEN'S PRESS)  
*This is the Way the World Ends* - James Morrow  
*Speaker for the Dead* - Orson Scott Card

The inaugural Sturgeon Award was selected by a panel of judges consisting of our own Ian Watson, plus Orson Scott Card, Maia Cowan, Charles de Lint, James Patrick Kelly, Dean Wesley Smith, Tandy Sturgeon, Tim Sullivan, Amy Thomson, Gloria Vall and Jane Yolen. Winner and runners up were:

*'Surviving'* - Judith Moffett  
tie for second place between:  
*'Elephant'* - Susan Falwick  
*'The Grave Angels'* - Richard Kearns  
Honourable mentions:  
*'Pretty Boy Crossover'* - Pat Cadigan  
*'The Lions are Asleep this Night'* - Howard Waldrop

\*\*\*\*\*

The Pilgrim Award for lifetime contribution to SF scholarship was presented to Gary K. Wolfe by the Science Fiction Research Association.

\*\*\*\*\*

The 1986 Caspars, the Canadian SF and Fantasy Awards, were presented at the Canadian National Convention, Convention 7, on 13 June. The winners were:

BEST WORK IN ENGLISH: *The Wandering Fire* - Guy Gavriel Kay  
BEST WORK IN FRENCH: *'La Carte du Tendre'* - Elisabeth Vonarburg  
FAN ACHIEVEMENT: Elisabeth Vonarburg

\*\*\*\*\*

The Davis Readers Awards for the two Davis SF magazines, *Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine* and *Analogue Science Fiction Science Fact*, were presented in New York on 17 June. The winners were:

ISAC ASIMOV'S SF MAGAZINE  
BEST SHORT STORY: *'Robot Dreams'* - Isaac Asimov  
BEST NOVELETTE: *'Prisoner of Chillon'* - James Patrick Kelly  
BEST NOVELLA: *'Spice Pogrom'* - Connie Willis

ANALOG  
BEST COVER ART: Tom Kidd (for *Marooned in Realtime* - Vernor Vinge)  
BEST SCIENCE FACT: *'The Long Stern Case: A Speculative Exercise'* - Rick Cook  
BEST SHORT STORY: *'Phreak Encounter'* - Roger Macbride Allen  
BEST NOVELLA: *'Eifelheim'* - Michael Flynn

\*\*\*\*\*

*Locus* has published its Best All-Time Awards, based on a readers' poll and the first time they have done this since 1975, though the results show very little change in the intervening years. Significantly only two novels published since 1980 appear in the top 45 SF novels - *Timescape* by

Gregory Benford (1980) at 38, and *Downbelow Station* by C.J. Cherryh (1981) at 41. It's little better with the Fantasy novels, with *The Shadow of the Torturer* by Gene Wolfe (1980) at 4, *Little, Big* by John Crowley (1981) at 10 and *Lord Valentine's Castle* by Robert Silverberg (1980) at 25.

The top 5 in each category were as follows:

#### BEST ALL-TIME SF NOVEL

1. *Dune* - Frank Herbert (1965)
2. *The Left Hand of Darkness* - Ursula LeGuin (1969)
3. *Childhood's End* - Arthur C. Clarke (1953)
4. *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress* - Robert Heinlein (1966)
5. *Stranger in a Strange Land* - Robert Heinlein (1961)

#### BEST ALL-TIME FANTASY NOVEL

1. *The Lord of the Rings* - J.R.R. Tolkien (1954)
2. *The Hobbit* - J.R.R. Tolkien (1937)
3. *A Wizard of Earthsea* - Ursula LeGuin (1968)
4. *The Shadow of the Torturer* - Gene Wolfe (1980)
5. *The Last Unicorn* - Peter S. Beagle (1968)

#### BEST ALL-TIME SF NOVELIST

1. Robert A. Heinlein
2. Frank Herbert
3. Arthur C. Clarke
4. Ursula LeGuin
5. Isaac Asimov

#### BEST ALL-TIME FANTASY NOVELIST

1. J.R.R. Tolkien
2. Ursula LeGuin
3. Anne McCaffrey
4. Peter S. Beagle
5. Gene Wolfe

#### COMBINED ALL-TIME BEST NOVELIST

1. J.R.R. Tolkien
2. Robert A. Heinlein
3. Frank Herbert
4. Ursula LeGuin
5. Arthur C. Clarke

\*\*\*\*\*

The nominations for the 1987 World Fantasy Award have been announced. They are:

#### BEST NOVEL

- Talking Man* - Terry Bisson  
*The Pet* - Charles L. Grant  
*It* - Stephen King  
*Strangers* - Dean R. Koontz  
*The Tricksters* - Margaret Mahy  
*Perfume* - Patrick Suskind  
*Soldier of the Mist* - Gene Wolfe

#### BEST NOVELLA

- 'The Hellbound Heart' - Clive Barker  
 'Hatrack River' - Orson Scott Card  
 'Night Moves' - Tim Powers  
 'The Night Seasons' - J.N. Williamson  
 'Chance' - Connie Willis

#### BEST SHORT STORY

- 'The Brains of Rats' - Michael Blumlein  
 'They're Coming for You' - Les Daniels  
 'The End of the Whole Mess' - Stephen King  
 'Tight Little Stitches in a Dead Man's Back' - Joe R. Lansdale  
 'The Rise and Fall of Father Alex' - Amyas Naegele  
 'Red Light' - David J. Schow  
 'The Boy who Planted Manes' - Nancy Springer  
 'Pain' - Whitley Streiber

#### BEST ANTHOLOGY/COLLECTION

- Cutting Edge* - Dennis Etchison Ed.  
*Dreams of Dark and Light* - Tanith Lee  
*Night Visions 3* - George R.R. Martin Ed.  
*Liavek: The Players of Luck* - Will Shetterly and Emma Bull Eds.  
*Tales of the Quintana Roo* - James Tiptree Jr

*Black Wine* - Douglas E. Winter Ed.  
*Merlin's Bookie* - Jane Yolen

#### SPECIAL AWARD - PROFESSIONAL

Donald M. Grant  
 David G. Hartwell  
 The Editors of *Interzone*  
 Jack Sullivan  
 Terri Windling  
 Jane Yolen

#### SPECIAL AWARD - NON-PROFESSIONAL

Jeff Conner  
 W. Paul Ganley  
 Steven Jones and David Sutton  
 David B. Silva

#### BEST ARTIST

Chris Van Allsburg  
 Steve Gervais  
 Robert Gould  
 J.K. Potter

The winners will be chosen by a panel of judges, which this year consists of: John M. Ford, Paul Hazel, Tappen King, Michael McDowell and Melissa Singer.

\*\*\*\*\*

Finalists for the Libertarian Futurist Society's 1987 Prometheus Award are:

*Circuit* - Melinda Snodgrass  
*A Door into Ocean* - Joan Slonczewski  
*The Crystal Empire* - L. Neil Smith  
*The Handmaid's Tale* - Margaret Atwood  
*Marooned in Realtime* - Vernor Vinge

\*\*\*\*\*

The nominees for the 1987 Booker Prize have been announced. No obvious science fiction interest this year, though the Ackroyd is of related interest. The full list in alphabetical order of author is:

*Antibills of the Savannah* - Chinua Achebe,  
*Chatterton* - Peter Ackroyd, *Circles of Deceit* - Nina Bayden, *Moon Tiger* - Penelope Lively, *The Book and the Brotherhood* - Iris Murdoch, *The Colour of Blood* - Brian Moore

The Booker always arouses as much interest for what is left out as for what is included, but this year the judges seem to have left out an extraordinary number of good books. Tom Manichler of CAPE has claimed that the new limits on submissions from publishers (three books rather than six) has kept up to 20 worthy books from even being considered. One must, indeed, wonder at the omission of excellent new books by J.G. Ballard, William Boyd, Bruce Chatwin, William Golding, Ian McEwan and others.

#### PEOPLE

Clive Barker had to go to court to prevent a film production company, Green Man Productions, from making any further films of his stories. They originally bought options on five of his stories, but only filmed two, *Underworld* (also released as *Transmutations*) and *Rawhead Rex*. Neither was particularly good, and the second at least has never been released in this country. Earlier this year, Green Man let their option lapse, to Barker's relief, but it finally took an injunction to force them to relinquish their claim to the stories.

Meanwhile Barker's directorial debut, *Hellraiser*, was premiered just before the Worldcon to mixed reviews, and he is currently at work on *Hellraiser II* and *Harry D'Amour*; while his second novel, *Weaveworld* is about to be published.

\*\*\*\*\*

Christopher Priest made the news recently in the aftermath of the Hungerford massacre. Priest, who lives in nearby Pewsey, Wiltshire, wrote to V.H. Smith protesting at its policy of stocking gun and survivalist magazines.

Part of his letter to managing director Malcolm Field and chairman Simon Hornby stated: "I can't help wondering if senior management at V.H. Smith is aware of the content of these magazines and if the company is satisfied that it should go on selling them?" He added, "My opinion is that these magazines are pornographic in the pure sense of the word. They are written to arouse response and to encourage participation. The overall message throughout the editorial and in the advertisements is that killing is morally justified when performed by 'experts'."

V.H. Smith replied that if they did not sell them, other newsgroups would, and that in the past the company had been criticised for censorship. Following Priest's letter, the magazines in the Marlborough branch were moved to a top shelf alongside soft-core porn magazines. Smith's apparently have no intention of taking the titles off sale, but have promised to review their policy on the range they carry.

Alan Giles, head of Smith's book division, told Priest that there was a strong demand for such publications in the Marlborough area, with several army camps nearby, many hunting and shooting enthusiasts, and the Devizes Gun Club - the largest in South East England - where gunman Michael Ryan was a member.

Meanwhile, the Hungerford killings provoked a spate of self-censorship by the BBC and ITV. The BBC banned its 21 August screening of *Black Christmas* - about a psychopath who sets out to murder a group of college girls - and replaced it with an old Dick Emery comedy. Another film, *Body Contact*, due to be shown on 20 September, was also withdrawn, and the BBC has announced it has no plans to show again *Rambo: First Blood*. A spokesman said, "When there has been any major tragedy we look at our schedules to see if there is anything which is not appropriate." For its part, ITV cancelled a showing of *Nevada Smith*, which features a gunman avenging the murder of his family.

Despite the lack of any evidence that killer Michael Ryan had seen violent films before his murder spree, Mrs Mary Whitehouse remains convinced of their harmful effects. Commenting the day after the killings, she stated, "It is sickening that it has taken a tragedy of this magnitude to bring the BBC to the point where it has finally accepted the power of television to affect how people behave."

Inspired by his work ghosting the memoirs of a rock climber, M. John Harrison is finally nearing the end of his mainstream novel about the sport, *Climbers*. Harrison is also planning to go on and co-author another non-fiction book on the subject.

Iain Banks seems to have been inspired by Harrison's example when he attempted to climb from one balcony to another outside the Metropole Hotel during Conspiracy. Unfortunately this escapade coincided with the arrival of police following a genuine robbery in which convention committee members Paul Oldroyd and Chris Donaldson had their room broken into and money and jewellery to the value of £1,000 stolen. Reports that Banks was led away proclaiming: "It was me, guv. I done it." are said to be exaggerated.

A collection for Oldroyd and Donaldson, organised by Rog Peyton, raised over £500.

Doris Lessing has turned *The Marriage Between Zones Three, Four and Five*, the third volume in her *Canopus in Argos* series, into an opera with music by Philip Glass. Meanwhile, despite the interruption of her *Jane Somers* novels, *The Good Terrorist*, her book on Afghanistan and her newly published collection of essays, the *Canopus in Argos* sequence is far from over. She is currently planning the sixth book in the sequence. Before then, the New Year sees the publication of a novella about what happens when an ordinary family gives birth to a goblin.

Hugo winner David Wingrove, who assisted Brian Aldiss in the writing of *Trillion Year Spree*, has finally sold his first piece of fiction. It appeared in *Women's Own* under the name Sara Jackson.

A correction to our note in *Matrix 70* that Samuel R. Delany's *The Splendour and Misery of Bodies, of Cities* had finally been delivered for publication in America. It turns out that the forthcoming book is a new collection of Severn stories, *The Bridge of Lost Desire*. The second part of his diptych, which began with *Stars in my Pocket like Grains of Sand*, promised for a couple of years now, has actually been "stalled on page 161 for several months", according to Patrick Nielsen Hayden quoted in *Ansible*. But that was the source of the error in the first place.

Meanwhile Delany is apparently pushing to have the three existing Severn books published as one volume. If it happened it would be an immense book.

And here in Britain GRAFTON have bought the UK rights to the three books, which will be appearing in paperback late next year.

*Ansible's* editor, Dave Langford, reports that the follow-up to *Earthdome* is to be *Guts!*, co-authored by the same team of Langford and John Grant (Paul Barnett). It is said to send up every naff aspect of horror novels, and will be coming out from GRAFTON who should know better.

BSFA member Nicholas Emmett has just published his first novel, *The Cave* (Wolfhound Press, Dublin, £3.95). Emmett, who spends his time between Eire and Norway, has had over 50 short stories published, some of them SF. His previous appearances include a story in *New Worlds 10*.

A little mystery surrounds the latest novel by American writer Whitley Streiber, *Cat Magic* was published in America as by Jonathan Barry with Whitley Streiber, but there were persistent rumours that Barry was in fact Streiber himself. Now the GRAFTON hardcover only has Streiber's name on the cover.

Streiber, incidentally, is the author of *Communion*, the supposedly true account of a visitation by aliens in a UFO. Curiously the book does not mention anywhere that Streiber writes science fiction.

The annual Milford SF Writers Conference has had to be cancelled for this year. Too many writers rendered too poor by the recent Worldcon. It is hoped that the week-long workshop will be back to normal next year.

\*\*\*\*\*

Douglas Adams joined Terry Jones, Michael Palin, Rik Mayall, the Spitting Image puppet of Mrs Thatcher, and a host of other media personalities for a public reading from *Spycatcher* at the Conway Hall in London on 10 August.

All agreed that the book was a bore, and its author Peter Wright 'odious', but Terry Jones put the event into perspective when he said, "I do not think any of us are reading this because it's a great work of art, or even at all interesting. The only interest is that the only way of publishing it in this land of free speech is by reading it like this."

The event, one of many planned, was organised by the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom. Everyone was a little disappointed that no arrests were made.

\*\*\*\*\*

The real Mrs Thatcher, however, is about to appear in print singing the praises of the *Beano* and *Daddy*.

The two legendary D.C. THOMSON comics are fifty years old this year and the Prime Minister has contributed a brief introduction to a book celebrating the anniversary. "These must be among the world's most famous and most loved comics," she gushes. "Over the years they have given enjoyment to countless numbers of children, and the characters in their pages - such as Desperate Dan and Minnie the Mink - have become household names. I very much hope both the comics will continue to delight boys and girls for another fifty years."

But the PM's support for these characters may lead to a rift with her long-time admirer and ally Mary Whitehouse. Mrs Whitehouse thinks *Beano* and *Daddy* harm young minds. She recently said, "(They) tend to give the impression that violence is all a big joke, that you can hit somebody on the head very hard and the next time you see them they are walking around as if nothing had happened. ... I'm always concerned when violence is turned into entertainment, especially when the audience is young and impressionable."

To some extent her view is supported by two consultant child psychiatrists, Dr Kay MacLachlan of Cambridge University and Dr Carol Sheldrick of the Maudsley Hospital, London, who say that in certain circumstances comics like *Beano* and *Daddy* could contribute to behavioural problems. Dr Sheldrick says there is particular danger when a character with whom children are likely to identify is depicted as behaving violently.

A bemused Ewan Kerr, editor of the *Beano*, does not believe his comic goes over the top in terms of violence. "We take a very responsible attitude to our readers," he says. "Spankings, for example, are now banned."

#### OBITUARIES

Lorne Greene, American TV actor best known for his part in the long running Western series *Bonanza*, who left that to star in the unsuccessful SF series *Battlestar Galactica*. He was 72.

\*\*\*\*\*

Quinn Martin, American TV producer, died of a heart attack, aged 63. He was most noted for fast moving crime and adventure series, often with a

quest element as in his most famous production, *The Fugitive*, and the SF thriller, *The Invaders*.

\*\*\*\*\*

Richard Marquand, British TV and film director, died on 5 September at the early age of 49. In television his work included *The Search for the Nile*, which established his reputation and enabled him to move into the cinema where his first film was a low budget horror yarn, *The Legacy*. His ability as a storyteller, and in the handling of action sequences, led to him being invited by George Lucas to direct the third Star Wars movie, *Return of the Jedi*. His most recent film is *Hearts of Fire* starring Bob Dylan and due to be released in this country shortly.

#### PUBLISHING

KEROSINA have announced their schedule for the coming year. In November they are to publish the first hardcover edition of *Valis* by Philip K. Dick, which will feature a specially written Afterword by Kim Stanley Robinson. The special edition of the book will be accompanied by *Cosmogony* and *Cosmology*, 15,000 words of non-fiction by Philip K. Dick.

Their tentative plans for 1988 include an increase to four books. Around Easter they will publish *The Days of March* by John Brunner, a novel about CND in the early 60's which coincides with the 25th anniversary of that organisation. That will be followed about a month later by *Scudder's Game*, a new SF novel by D.G. Compton. In the summer there will be a substantial short story collection by Gene Wolfe provisionally titled *Park Roads and Fainter Tracks*. Finally, in November, there will be a new book by Keith Roberts.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Weird Tales*, the almost legendary magazine that was born in 1923 and ceased publication in 1954, is to be revived. There have been brief attempts to revive it before, by Sam Moskowitz in the 70s and by Lin Carter and Brian Forbes in the 80s. This time, however, it looks likely the revival will go ahead since they already have almost enough subscribers to reach their break-even point. George Scithers, former editor of *Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine* and *Amazing Stories*, will be in the hot seat.

The first issue - dated Spring 1988 but due to be available at the 1987 World Fantasy Convention in Tennessee - will include five stories by Gene Wolfe, plus other stories by Tanith Lee, Keith Taylor, Ramsey Campbell, Darrell Schweitzer, Lloyd Arthur Hebbach, Chet Williamson, T.E.D. Klein and F. Paul Wilson.

During 1988 the magazine will be quarterly, moving to bi-monthly and monthly as circulation builds. British agent for *Weird Tales* is former *Matrix* editor Dave Hodson.

\*\*\*\*\*

To coincide with the launch of the magazine, the publishers, TERMINUS PUBLISHING CO., are also launching *Weird Tales Library*. The first two hardbacks will be *The Devil's Auction* - Robert Weinburg and *The White Isle* - Darrell Schweitzer.

\*\*\*\*\*

Meanwhile, as one magazine is reborn, another dies. Hugo nominated *Semiprozine*, *Fantasy Review* edited by Robert Collins has folded, just a year after it was bought by the MECKLER CORPORATION. In its place there is to be a new *SF and Fantasy Review Annual*, 600-700 page book edited by Collins and published by MECKLER.

MECKLER are also promising a bibliography of Frank



Herbert, called *Dune Master*, which is due out in America later this year.

\*\*\*\*\*

The publishing merry-go-round continues, with news that WEIDENFELD AND NICOLSON has bought J.M.DENT, publisher of children's books and some excellent literary fantasies, particularly by European writers. WEIDENFELD apparently made the move to acquire DENT's paperback imprint and children's book list, since the hardback publisher had long-standing ambitions in both these directions. The take-over does not appear to have been as friendly as it might have been, with stories of long-time DENT employees being fired and considerable resentment among those remaining.

\*\*\*\*\*

VIRGIN is acquiring control of W.H.ALLEN, a publisher which has put out a lot of science fiction, notably the *Dr Who* novels and STAR paperbacks. Last October the VIRGIN VISION publishing business was sold to W.H.ALLEN in a deal which gave VIRGIN 23.5% of the company, which VIRGIN has now built upon to take control of the whole company.

\*\*\*\*\*

And now the latest news is that Rupert Murdoch has bought a 15% stake in PEARSON.

The PEARSON Group includes VIKING, PENGUIN, LONGMAN and NEW AMERICAN LIBRARY, while Murdoch already has a 42% interest in COLLINS as well as having recently taken over HARPER AND ROW. Murdoch has said that he does not intend increasing his holding in an attempt to take over the PEARSON Group, at least for the next 12 months. However, he is said to be interested in exploring the possibility of joint book publishing ventures.

And hard on the heels of that revelation comes news that Murdoch also has a stake in REED INTERNATIONAL, who recently took over Paul Hamlyn's OCTOPUS group.

\*\*\*\*\*

THE WOMEN'S PRESS have revealed that their plans for 1988 include the second Jane Saint novel from Josephine Saxton. Josephine Saxton, meanwhile, reveals that the novel is far from finished, delayed, among other things, by the problems of moving house.

\*\*\*\*\*

THE WOMEN'S PRESS are also the second British publisher to make an offer for *Artificial Things*, the first short story collection by John W. Campbell award winner Karen Joy Fowler. Unfortunately her American publisher BANTAM holds all the rights and they have so far proved curiously reluctant to release them. Maybe they are planning to bring out a British edition of their own through BANTAM UK eventually, though as yet there is no sign of it.

\*\*\*\*\*

GRAMADA have bought the new book by Lucius Shepard, *Life During Wartime*. It will be published in hardback next year.

\*\*\*\*\*

ARKHAM HOUSE are to do a J.G.Ballard short story collection with illustrations by J.K.Potter.

\*\*\*\*\*

GOLLANCZ have changed their familiar yellow jacket for a new design in yellow and white with a red line looping around the title. Their list this

autumn is one of their fullest, including *The Wooden Spaceships*, the second part of Bob Shaw's trilogy begun with the BSFA Award winner, *The Ragged Astronauts*. Also forthcoming this autumn are the new Discworld novel by Terry Pratchett, *Mort*, the final Heechee novel by Frederik Pohl, *The Annals of the Heechee*, and the first volumes in two new trilogies, *Dawn* by Octavia Butler and *Great Sky River* by Gregory Benford, not to mention the last of Terry Carr's *Best SF of the Year* anthologies.

Looking ahead to next year, they are already promising *Nona Lisa Overdrive* by William Gibson, delayed from this summer, and *The Sky Lords* by John Broenman, both now due in January.

Meanwhile numbers 17 - 20 in the Gollancz Classic SF series will be *Babel-17* - Samuel R. Delany, *Gladiator-At-Law* - Frederik Pohl and C.W.Kornbluth, *Bring the Jubilee* - Ward Moore and *Beasts* - John Crowley.

from *Miscellaneous Curiosities of Ancient History*, 112 p, 97



The inhabitants, lacking reliable sources of information, became prey to chronic alarm and superstition.

#### NEW & FORTHCOMING BOOKS

ARROW: *Dr Bloodmoney* - Philip K. Dick, *The Ganyemede Takeover* - Philip K. Dick & Ray Nelson, *Redwall* - Brian Jacques, *Night's Master* - Tanith Lee, *Stalking the Unicorn* - Mike Resnick, *Welcome, Chaos* - Kate Wilhelm.

BANTAM: *Tea with the Black Dragon* - R.A.MacAvoy, *Chernobyl* - Frederik Pohl.

CAPE: *The Medusa Frequency* - Russell Hoban.

CENTURY: *Bones of the Moon* - Jonathan Carroll, *Starhammer* - Christopher Rowley.

COLLINS: *Weaveworld* - Clive Barker.

CORGI: *Merilka's Story & The Coelura* - Anne McCaffrey, *The Golden Horn* - Judith Barr.

CORONET: *Downtime* - Peter Fox.

FUTURA: *Sector General* - James White.

GOLLANCZ: *Agypt* - John Crowley, *Ancient Light* - Mary Gentle, *Tool of the Trade* - Joe Haldeman, *The Wave and the Flame* - Marjorie Bradley Kellogg & William Russow, *Tuf Voyaging* - George R.R. Martin, *The Urth of the New Sun* - Gene Wolfe, *Earthwind* - Robert Holdstock, *Medusa's Children* - Bob Shaw, *Vizardry and Wild Romance* - Michael Moorcock.

GRAFTON: *The Preserving Machine* - Philip K. Dick, *A Darkness at Sethanon* - Raymond E. Feist, *Winter in Eden* - Harry Harrison, *Lovecraft's Book* - Richard Lupoff, *The Chronicles of Corum* - Michael Moorcock, *Less Than Human* - Charles Platt,

*Nature's End* - Whitley Streiber & James Kunetka,  
*The Book of Silence* - Lawrence Watt-Evans.

HEADLINE: *Watchers* - Dean R. Koontz, *The Folk of the Air* - Peter S. Beagle, *New York by Knight* - Esther Priesner, *The Power* - Ian Watson.

HODDER: *Misery* - Stephen King.

KEROSINA: *Cracken at Critical* - Brian Aldiss.

MACMILLAN: *Sphere* - Michael Crichton, *Spadair Street* - Iain Banks.

METHUEN: *Rite of Passage* - Alexei Panshin.

NEL: *The Cybernetic Samurai* - Victor Milan, *The Jade Demons Quartet* - Robert E. Vardeman.

PAPER TIGER: *The Second Earth: The Pentateuch Retold* - Patrick Woodroffe.

PENGUIN: *O-Zone* - Paul Theroux, *Perfume* - Patrick Süskind.

PICADOR: *Staring at the Sun* - Julian Barnes.

ROBINSON: *The Haunting of Hill House and We have Always Lived in the Castle* - Shirley Jackson, *I am Legend* - Richard Matheson.

SPHERE: *The Forever Man* - Gordon R. Dickson, *Conan the Valorous* - John Maddox Roberts, *Death Trance* - Graham Masterton.

UNWIN: *Mirage* - Louise Cooper, *The Hour of the Thin Ox* - Colin Greenland, *The Witches of Wenshar* - Barbara Hamby, *Swordpoint* - Ellen Kuehnert, *The Lays of Beleriand* - J.R.R. Tolkien.

#### MEDIA

TVS has made a documentary about the Worldcon which will be networked in the *The Human Factor* documentary series on Sunday afternoons. No date has yet been set for transmission, but it will probably be in November.

\*\*\*\*\*

Frederik Pohl's new non-SF novel, *Chernobyl*, just published by BANTAM UK, is apparently going to be turned into a TV mini-series filmed in Moscow and made by Larry Schiller who was responsible for the dreadful *Peter the Great*.

\*\*\*\*\*

Despite William Gibson being half way through the script of *Aliens III*, and the promise of new special effects for the aliens, there are now rumours that Ripley (Sigourney Weaver) will not appear in the new film.

\*\*\*\*\*

The BBC has finally announced that it will be buying *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, though it doesn't plan to show them before October 1988 at the earliest.

The series, which is being premiered in America over the weekend of 3-4 October, is set 78 years after the original series. The captain of the 'Enterprise' is Jean-Luc Picard, played by Patrick Stewart, probably better known as a classical actor and star of the Royal Shakespeare Company. Among his crew two of the most interesting characters are the helmsmen, Lt. Geordi La Forge, played by LeVar (Roots) Burton, is blind, and Lt Data, played by Brent Spiner, is an android.

\*\*\*\*\*

The BBC meanwhile is to start a new six part documentary series. It will go out at 11pm on BBC1

starting on 11 October. Set in the year 2000, it looks back at the effects of Information Technology on our lives. Subjects covered include futuristic warfare, and the effects of computers on the arts.

\*\*\*\*\*

It now looks likely that Steve Gallagher's recent novel, *Valley of Lights*, is to be filmed on location in Phoenix, Arizona.

\*\*\*\*\*

A company called Coast to Coast has bought the film rights to *Dr Who* from the BBC for a reported fee of around £50,000. Coast to Coast, who are also negotiating to secure Ron Grainer's theme music, intend making a new feature-length movie based on the show. The present Doctor, Sylvester McCoy, will not be involved, and the producers are looking for a suitable actor to take on the part.

*Dr Who* last appeared on the big screen in the 60's, with two films starring Peter Cushing.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sylvester Stallone and members of his family swept the board at this year's Golden Raspberry Award ceremony held in Hollywood. The awards, devised as an antidote to the excesses of the Oscars, are organised by a group of Tinseltown film critics. Stallone was voted Worst Director for *Rocky IV*, Worst Actor and Worst Writer (*Cobra*). Rambo easily secured the top prize for Worst Overall Picture. Sly's brother, Frank Stallone, was judged a clear winner in the Worst Song category for his *Rocky IV* soundtrack; and estranged wife Brigitte Nielsen scooped both Worst Supporting Actress and Worst Newcomer for her efforts in *Cobra*. For some unexplained reason no members of the Stallone clan were present at the function.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

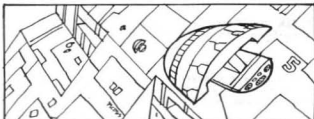
The Russian government newspaper *Izvestia* has criticised Soviet scientists for failing to protect the remains of a 40,000 year old giant mammoth sighted last Autumn by Siberian hunters. A fragment of the tusk was carbon-dated at 42,000 years old. Two attempts by scientists to find the mammoth, spotted partially buried in the tundra by a reindeer hunter, were unsuccessful, and they put off a third expedition until October, despite being advised that the mammoth would suffer decomposition by that time.

\*\*\*\*\*

Also in October what is claimed to be the most expensive and best organised attempt to solve the mystery of the Loch Ness monster gets underway. Advanced sonar and computer analysis equipment, backed up by sophisticated cameras, will systematically record every object in the 23-mile long loch, animate or no.

\*\*\*\*\*

A series of mysterious disappearances in a marshy area of the Marne department of North Eastern France has led to speculation about a new 'Bernsuda Triangle'. In August French police began an investigation into the fate of a 21-year-old soldier, the eighth young man in seven years to vanish without trace in the vicinity.



From next year, Soviet cosmonauts could be eating three-star gourmet meals in space. The meals - including duck in artichokes, rabbit and prunes, and pigeon with dates - have been developed by two French chefs from Toulouse. The food is intended for 1988 flight when French scientist will join three Russians on a 38-day trip aboard the Mir space station.

Meanwhile a factory involved in producing the food has been given permission to market it to the general public from October.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Natural History Museum in London is hitting back at Sir Fred Hoyle and his supporters over allegations that *Archaeopteryx* - the claimed missing link between reptiles and birds - is actually a crude fake. In an exhibition, 'The Feathers Fly', which opened on 18 August, the keeper of palaeontology Dr Robin Cocks and his staff strongly refuted Sir Fred's theory.

The theory - that genuine dinosaur bones were mixed with a bundle of modern feathers and pressed into limestone flags with cement - rests on hairline cracks running through the fossil which Hoyle claims are due to cement deteriorating. The museum has photographed these cracks under ultraviolet light, and enlarged the pictures to

show they were full of ancient crystalline deposits, and therefore could not be due to 19th century layers of cement.

\*\*\*\*\*

Artificial Intelligence expert Hans Moravec, director of the Robotics Institute at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, says that computer technology is advancing so swiftly there is nothing we can do to prevent a future world run by super intelligent robots. Unless we take on the role ourselves ...

Moravec believes that within the next 50 years scientists will be able to transfer the contents of a human mind into a powerful computer program, and in the process make the recipient virtually immortal. After a fashion. He cites Max Headroom as a pointer: 'Max Headroom is to the future what Flash Gordon was to space travel. There was a lot of fantasy, but it was more real than a lot of people care to credit it for.'

He predicts that by the year 2010, assuming the growth rate of the past 80 years continues, the best machines will be a thousand times faster than they are today and almost equivalent to the human mind in speed and capacity. He postulates robots equal in capacity to humans by 2030. 'What will you have by 2040?' he asks.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### COMPETITION CORNER

By Elizabeth Sourbut

OK, so BSFA members are above watching TV SF (you don't know what you're missing...) Or maybe 24 questions were just too many. Well, don't panic. This time there is only one question, and you can have as many goes at answering it as you like. And next time the competition will be (loosely) based on books again - so watch this space.

Those who did enter made a pretty good crack at it. They were Richard Lewis (20w); Ray Smith (22w); Nick Cheesman (30w); John Fairley (36w); JUNE Laverick (40w); P J Ellis (44); and, way out in the lead, a new BSFA member, Jeff Haughton, with 52 points. Congratulations, Jeff, and welcome to the BSFA. A £5 book token is on its way to you.

The complete answers were:

1. Time And Relative Dimensions In Space
2. Davros
3. The Sea Devils; broadcast in 1972.
4. William Hartnell, Patrick Troughton, Jon Pertwee, Tom Baker, Peter Davison, Colin Baker, and Richard Hurndall (who played the first Doctor in *The Five Doctors* after William Hartnell's death). A point for Peter Cushing or Sylvester McCoy
5. Blake, Jenna, Vila, Avon, Gan, Cally, Zen.
6. Project Avalon, series one, episode nine.
7. Jacqueline Pearce
8. *Pressure Point*, series 2, episode 9. The crew are escaping from a decoy computer complex through underground tunnels. Travis throws a grenade which brings part of the roof down, and Gan is squashed.
9. Moonbase Alpha
10. Dr Helena Russell
11. She can turn herself into useful plot devices through molecular transformation.
12. A coslock
13. Grace Lee Whitney
14. *A Taste of Armageddon* He'd refused to obey a direct order from Ambassador Fox whilst having the conn. He therefore faced a court-martial.
15. *Shore Leave* and *Amok Time*
16. Deck 5. Bathroom to bathroom, it's a discreet stroll across a little-used access corridor.
17. Number six
18. Patrick McGoonan
19. Large white balloons, nicknamed Rovers
20. Marlan Ellison. It was a computer programmed with the entire human race.
21. 49

22. Rod Serling. "There is a fifth dimension beyond that which is known to man. It is a dimension as vast as space and as timeless as infinity. It is the middle ground between light and shadow; between science and superstition; between the pit of man's fears and the summit of his knowledge. It is an area we call ... the Twilight Zone." Yeah, he said that every episode.

23. Elliot was *The Time Element*. First episode aired was *There is everybody?*

24. Any of: *Thunderbirds*; *Fireball XL5*; *Captain Scarlet*; *Supercar*; *Stringray*; *Joe 90*; *Terrahawks*; and quite possibly one or two others.

The best answer to what happens when they are all combined came from June Laverick: *Star Trek* the Motionless Picture Thanks for entering, all of you. I had great fun reading the other scenarios (too long to print here). If your points don't add up, that's because I threw in a few bonuses.

#### MATRIX 72 Puzzle

An old school friend, Peopgiza Mwanamke, is a journalist. I saw her last week for the first time in a couple of years, and she told me about her new job. From out of several million candidates from all over the known galaxy she has managed to land the position of assistant sub-editor with the prestigious fax service, *The News of the Galaxy*. Currently, she's working on the Alternate Universe Review which comes out each Friday. Her job is to collect headlines. The most sensational attention-grabbing headlines possible. Then she sends out the reporters to find the story to match it. Because, in an infinite number of universes anything that can happen will happen, they always turn up an appropriate story eventually.

There's a lot to cover, and Peopgiza does so much overtime she can't even make the York SF Group meetings twice a month. So I thought I'd ask you to help. What I want you to do is to dream up the headline(s) you'd most like to see in tomorrow's fax in the universe of your choice. The winner will, of course, receive the usual £5 book token (valid in this universe only). Send as many entries as you wish, but bear in mind that the winner is more likely to come from one or two really good efforts than from the cumulative effect of dozens.

Send you entries, by the next mailing deadline please, to: Elizabeth Sourbut, 31 Barfield Road, Muncaster, York, YO3 9AW.





# MEDIA REVIEWS

## MEDIA PREVIEWS by Robert Matthews

A look ahead at science fiction, fantasy and horror films that should be in the cinema between September and the New Year.

**Making Mr Right** This new film by Susan (Desperately Seeking Susan) Seidelman is a science fiction comedy about an android and how he goes wrong. John (The Killing Fields) Halkovich plays dual roles as inventor Dr Jeff Peters and his creation, Ulysses, an android designed for extended space voyages. He is programmed to have no idea of love or friendship and therefore wouldn't feel the isolation and loneliness that a human astronaut would. However, Ulysses goes wrong and falls in love with Frankie Stone (Anne Magnuson), who has been hired to promote Ulysses to the American public.

**Harry and the Hendersons** This fantasy comedy stars John (2010) Lithgow and Melinda (Close Encounters) Dillon who, with their two children, run over a Bigfoot while on a camping holiday. They decide to bring him back to show the world, but find out that the Bigfoot is not dead. The Bigfoot is played by Kevin Peter Hall, who also plays the monster in the next film.

**Predator** This film is a mixture of science fiction, horror and war. It stars Arnold (Conan) Schwarzenegger as part of a military team on a rescue mission in Central America. One by one, the team members are murdered in a bloody fashion by an unseen killer, who turns out to be an alien monster that kills for sport.

**Inner Space** This is Joe Dante's latest film and borrows a bit from films like *Fantastic Voyage* and *Incredible Shrinking Man*. It stars Martin (Three Amigos) Short as a harassed supermarket clerk who becomes unwittingly involved in a top secret scientific experiment when a miniaturised exploration vehicle piloted by Dennis (Enemy Mine) Quaid is accidentally injected into his bloodstream. It is a light-hearted comedy.

**Spaceballs** This is Mel Brooks' spoof on science fiction in general and *Star Wars* in particular. It stars Rick (Little Shop of Horrors) Moran as Dark Helmet, Bill (Ruthless People) Pullman as Lone Starr and John (Splash) Candy as Barf the Murr - a half-man, half-dog (he's his own best friend). As well as writing and directing it, Mel Brooks, as usual, also has a couple of roles to play - Yogurt, a pointy-eared mystic, and President Shroob, the corrupt leader of Planet Spaceball.

**The Witches of Eastwick** This is an adaptation of John Updike's bestselling novel and is difficult to categorise into any genre. It is directed by George (Mad Max) Miller and stars Jack Nicholson as the Devil who seduces three witches - Cher, Susan Sarandon and Michelle (Ladyhawke) Pfeiffer - in a small New England town.

**Robocop** Peter (Buckaroo Banzai) Veller stars in this futuristic thriller about a cop called Murphy who is murdered and turned into Robocop, a half-human and half-machine cyborg, by an all powerful corporation that not only controls the police but also finances the crime that makes the robotic cops necessary. Nancy Allen stars as his wife, Ann, who tells him who he once was.

**Gor** Urbano Barberini stars as college professor Earl Cabot who is transported to Gor, a mysterious planet filled with women in chains, men with swords and other semi-sadomasochistic fantasy

trappings. Klaus (Nosferatu) Kinski and Paul (Dune) Smith co-star. If this film wasn't bad enough, its sequel, *Outlaw of Gor*, was filmed at the same time!

**Near Dark** This is a delicate mix of romance and adventure with a touch of the supernatural written by Kathryn Bigelow and Eric (The Hitcher) Red. It stars three people who also appeared in *Aliens* together, Lance ('Bishop') Hendrickson, Jenette ('Vasquez') Goldstein and Bill ('Hudson') Paxton, as a family of nocturnal nomads.

**Masters of the Universe** This \$20 million film is based on the popular characters created by Mattel Toys. It stars Dolph (Rocky IV) Lundgren as He-Man, Frank (Dracula) Langella as Skeletor and Jon (Hill Street Blues) Cypher as Man-at-Arms. In the world of Eternia the Sorceress (Christina Pickles) is captured by Skeletor and his assistant Evil Lyn (Meg Foster). The only thing that can save the Sorceress is the power of the Cosmic Key. However, the key has disappeared into a time warp. He-Man and company follow the key to present day Earth where the adventure continues.

**Robojax** Stuart (Re-animator) Gordon directs this futuristic fantasy set 100 years after a nuclear war. In this world trained athletes (robojacks) control giant robots that battle each other to the death to determine the fate of nations.

**SHOCK AROUND THE CLOCK** - 1-2 August, The Scala.

reviewed by Colin Bird

WHAT KIND OF PERSON I ASKED MYSELF, WOULD spend eighteen hours watching pure exploitation films. I found the answer at an event called the Shock Xpress Exploitation Film Festival. For those who came out of the cult closet many years before *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, this misrepresented genre offers a chance to celebrate low culture as Art. It seems ironic that exploitation films feed on alleged 'opiates-for-the-masses', namely sex and violence, yet appeal only to a select band of assorted drop-outs.

It's fair to say that Shock Around the Clock failed as a showcase for trash but succeeded in showing a uniform programme of soon-to-be-released horror movies. The event shows signs of becoming annual, and I would hope that the chance is taken to dig out some more obscure stuff in future years. But what we had was some very enjoyable films and a good atmosphere as the audience got into the spirit of the event.

For starters, we had Larry Cohen's new movie, *Return to Salem's Lot*. A reasonable enough effort to revamp Stephen King's tale of rural neck-biters. Michael Moriarty plays the hero who encounters a community of modern vampires who rarely drink human blood any more because of AIDS! King's directorial debut, *Maximum Overdrive*, was to have been shown next but was unavailable, probably due to its failure at the US box-office. Instead, we had a film called *Salvation* by Beth B. An interesting movie about fundamental preachers.

A group of yuppies are stranded on a remote island and meet a mysterious family led by Rod Steiger. Sound familiar? It's the plot of a black comedy called *American Gothic* which delves into the realms of the perfect all-American family. Except this family hides a dark secret, hence the title, and the body count begins. A well directed movie which could well develop a cult following because of its macabre humour.

The highlight of the event was easily Clive Barker's directorial debut with a film based on his novella 'The Hellbound Heart', the film being *Hellraiser*. The labyrinthine plot concerns an ancient puzzle which, when solved, acts as the gateway into a dimension of untold pleasure and

pain. When Frank Stone enters this world he is unprepared for the vicious torture that he must undergo. Managing to escape into the real world, in hideous skeletal form, he needs a supply of fresh corpses to regain his human form. Intertwined with this tale is a story of obsessive love and betrayal. Some of the imagery is genuinely startling and the make-up FX are imaginative. Barker admitted afterwards that he like his horror mean and that is what he has achieved with *Hellraiser*.

Things went slightly downhill from here. We saw *The Stepfather* directed by Joseph Ruben (Dreamscape) and scripted by Donald Westlake. An ineptly handled film with pretension of being a Psycho for the eighties. The sleaziest film on show was *Street Trash* which is already available on video but was shown here in its uncensored version. Well recommended to gore fans with a sense of humour.

The second best film was *A Nightmare on Elm Street pt 3: Dream Warriors*, a welcome return to form for the razor fingered Freddy Krueger. It seems amazing to hear that this film has taken a lot of flak because of alleged reports from the States that it has encouraged teenagers to top themselves. It's an innocuous return to the hallucinogenic territory of the first film with many inventive effect sequences.

We headed towards dawn with a couple of awful low-budget efforts *Witchboard* and *The Lamp*. These two will probably turn up on video only, a fate which they both richly deserve. The final offering was a turkey from 1958 called *She Demons*, but it was too much for me and I lurched out into the daylight and headed for the station, my mind full of images of pain, torture and death. My morning coffee and sandwich cost £1.60 - now, that's what I call exploitation!

**SUPERMAN IV - The Quest For Peace** - Golan & Globus, 1987, directed by Sidney J Furie.

reviewed by John Feetenby

IT'S FUNNY ISN'T IT? IN 1978 PEOPLE STOOD IN the queue for *Superman* wearing flares and shirts with hang-glider collars. Three years later, the same people saw the sequel with roller skates on their feet and book-sized personal stereos on their belts. In 1983 *Superman III* attracted millions wearing Pacman deely-boppers. But however much we deride the dress sense of our earlier incarnations it never occurs to us to laugh at the guy in the blue nylon and clashing red trunks. No, he is presented as a figure of authority, someone definitionally 'correct', and however unacceptable this unquestioning belief in the character has been in the past, suddenly, in *Superman IV* it's sinister.

I've no compunction about blowing the plot as there's precious little to divulge. Supie personally enforces world-wide disarmament and then sees this situation exploited, not by a national power, but by Lex Luthor (Gene Hackman) and his tame super-villain, Nuclear Man (a character explained with awesome scientific naïveté). Battle ensues, Supie wins, and then inexplicably he salutes the Stars and Stripes and turns American chauvinist. The world is apparently re-armed and towared the end of the picture *Superman* is asked where this leaves the planet. "Where it's always been," he replies, "On the edge; good fighting evil." I lost the next line under the massed sucking-in of breaths in the cinema. Technically, it's an ambiguous piece of dialogue, but contextually there is only one interpretation. In 90 minutes Supie has changed from global idealist to trenchant nationalist (sickeningly the only piece of character development in the entire series) and this transformation was held up as a paradigm. Arguably it's only realistic, but it comes as brutal cynicism to me who have been wooed into the cinema by the film's supremely

idealistic title. It's unnecessary too. Optimism would fit with equal credibility into the framework of a fantasy film.

It is a crashing disappointment in these strong-arm days of *He-Man* and *Thundercats* to have a character who has been arbitrarily gifted with super-powers actually thinking about his actions and responsibilities but still coming up with the 'strongest is best' philosophy.

Even beyond this, secondary faults abound. Random swipes at tabloid journalists clutter the story without serving a purpose, an appalling subplot about two women, one in love with Superman, one in love with Clark Kent, is played for laughs and left unresolved, and in the special effects sequences, heavy matte lines make poor old Christopher Reeve look like a refugee from a Ready Brek advert.

Perhaps in a few years time I'll look back and mock my straight leg jeans and boxer shorts, but I'll probably find it much funnier that I spent £2.50 on *The Quest for Peace*.

**STAR COPS** - devised by Chris Boucher, produced by Evgeny Gridneff, BBC 2, 6 July - 31 August, 1987

reviewed by Patrick Lee

*Star Cops* features Nathan Spring, a man born in 1960, living in the year 2027. Space shuttle flights are now routine, several permanently manned space stations are in Earth orbit, and operational bases have been established on the Moon and on Mars. Meanwhile, the streets of London are still not safe - nothing new.

Nathan Spring (played by David Calder) is an unorthodox policeman who reluctantly becomes Commander of the International Space Police Force, nicknamed 'Star Cops' by the Press. There follows, among other things, a murder in space, sabotage, espionage, a rather vague hijack, and the kidnap of what looked like a test-tube baby. The first two episodes were promising, each featuring two cases to solve, but starting with the third episode, the series was slightly spoiled by someone injecting humour as if in panic.

David Calder gave a good performance, portraying Nathan Spring as a bad tempered, impatient thinker, who occasionally ends arguments by offering his opponent a drink. David Theroux - Nathan's number two (Erick Ray Evans) - was obviously not American, while Linda Newton just about made it as the Australian Star Cop, Pal Kenzy. Overall, the international aspect of the programme, illustrated by also having a Japanese Star Cop (Sayo Inaba) and a Russian moonbase co-ordinator (Jonathan Adams) was rather defeated by the fact that there were too many Britons around.

The theme music, a song by Justin Hayward, didn't impress some people, although I thought it improved with subsequent hearings. It seemed to reflect the loss of Nathan's girlfriend (Gennie Nevinston) but as she was killed in the second episode it soon became inappropriate.

About 50% of the visual effects were fine, although the rest were simply old-fashioned. The zero-gravity effects were a good idea, though being television, they weren't as good as in 2001 or 2010. I was a little confused as to what the common weapon should be, as there were not only bullets and lasers being used, but also *Blade Runner*-style police blasters, for some reason coloured green.

At a time when tv science fiction is uncommon, *Star Cops* does make a brave and fair attempt to fill the hole left by *Blakes 7*, though it could have been better, and more could have been made of each fifty-five minute episode. Chris Boucher's attempt to create a realistic space opera has been generally successful, though a few rough edges need smoothing down.

# The Periodic Table

## CONVENTION BIDDING

On the bidding front, the hot news is, of course, that the Holland in 1990 Worldcon bid has actually succeeded, despite being up against the formidable opposition of Los Angeles. The only problem so far foreseen is that the bidding for this zone in 1993 will of course come up in 1990, and it's possible that the Americans will lose out again. I'm hoping to have a small article about how Worldcon bidding works for next time around, particularly as you are likely to hear accusations of fixes and conspiracies being thrown around, though quite why the Americans are surprised by a strong local vote is completely beyond me. For my own part, I'm delighted that the hard work put in by the Holland team has paid off, and I guess it's time to open up another building society account and start saving.

So, we're talking about COMFICION - the 48th World Science Fiction Convention, to be held at the Netherlands Congress Center, from 23rd to 27th August, 1990, in The Hague, Holland.

Guests of Honour include Joe Haldeman, Wolfgang Jeschke and Harry Harrison, and the Fan Guest of Honour will be Andrew Porter, editor of SF Chronicle (and categorically no relation).

Membership rates until December 1st 1987 are as follows:

Attending	£28.00	\$45.00
Supporting	£16.00	\$25.00
Conversion	£ 8.00	\$15.00
Children under 14	£ 6.00	\$10.00

I understand that those of us who paid an arm and leg to vote for Holland are automatically in possession of a supporting membership, so things could be quite cheap if we get a move on.

Contact address: Worldcon 1990, PO Box 95370 - 2509 CJ, The Hague, Holland

\*\*\*\*\*

Worldcon bids have been announced for 1991, 1992, and 1994. There is as yet no bid for 1993, and believe this or not, and I'm way beyond the stage where things like this seem odd any more, people were waiting to see whether LA won 1990, and if, in case they didn't, they would put up for 1993, the next year that the Worldcon would be held in their zone (rough summary, the US is divided into zones and there is the rest of the world). The assumption seems to be, according to the unnamed source I was speaking to, that if LA put up a bid, they will win so it's pointless running a US bid against them. As yet, we still don't know whether LA will transfer its bid to 1993, mainly as they have apparently gone home to put this to the electorate, or whatever one does in American fan groups.

I'm not going to bother, at this stage, summarising what all these bids have to offer, just list them with contact addresses.

For 1991 we have a Sydney bid (GPO Box 4435, Sydney 2001, Australia), and also a bid for Chicago (no address at present). There is rumoured to be another bid from a US city but as is ever the way, rumours fly, much less the information. The interesting thing about this is another unconfirmed rumour suggesting that Chicago has in fact managed to persuade other US bids to drop out.

1992 sees two US bids, Magicon in Orlando, Florida, rumoured to be riding on the Disneyland ticket, (Magicon, PO Box 5904, Orlando, FL 32855 - presupposing membership \$5) and Discon III, a bid

from Washington DC (Discon III, PO Box 2745, College Park, MD 20740-2745, USA)

1994 gives us an unprecedented 7 bids, although this is anticipated to decrease quite dramatically nearer the time. Well documented bids include Perth in 94 aka Swancon the Worldcon (I still prefer Castlemaine). (PO Box 287, Nedlands, Western Australia - presupposing membership \$2.50). There is also a definite bid from Milwaukee, Brewcon (oh come on, what made Milwaukee famous). (Brewcon, PO Box 669, Cudahy, WI 53110-0669, USA and presupposing is \$3.00).

There are rumours of a bid from Berlin, though at Worldcon it seemed to be very much a one-man effort, so the rest of Berlin fandom may have a nasty shock coming, a rumour of another US bid (damned elusive these American bids), 2 Canadian bids, possibly Toronto and Winnipeg, which may say a lot about Canadian fandom (though it is possible that they will eventually run a joint ticket, and I for one hope so, this is as ludicrous as, say two UK bids in one year), plus a verified bid from Yugoslavia. Mercifully, that's all.

\*\*\*\*\*

There is, surprise, surprise, still only one bid for Eastercon 1990, namely Contravention.

## COMMITTEE

Chris Donaldson  
Jan Huxley  
Paul Kincaid  
Christie Pearson

John Fairley  
Rob Jackson  
Paul Oldroyd  
Maureen Porter

Information from 35 Buller Road, London N17. Pre-supporting membership is £1.

\*\*\*\*\*

Doubtless you are all disappointed not to have mounds of thrilling reports about the Worldcon in this issue, but never fear, there will be a bumper con report next time, once the dust has settled and we've all had time to remember what we did. I've received some reports already, but if you would like to add your thoughts on the Worldcon, please feel free to submit them asap.

\*\*\*\*\*

Details of the 1985 Mancoron are to be had from Richard Walkerdine, 13 Offley Road, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 2AZ

\*\*\*\*\*

## CONVENTION ROUNDUP

Monumental cockups all round last time as I carefully corrected all the entries in the con listing, pressed the wrong button, and ended up with an older version of the con listing. God, I hate word processors. However, this is lovingly corrected up to date. Apologies, particularly to Nicon, Congregate, and Pollycon for omission, old info or whatever.

Having lovingly corrected it up to date, I'm appalled to discover, for the first time I can remember, that there are conventions clashing. Okay, in the US they do this all the time, but over here, given the size of the country plus the lack of an infinite number of people to attend these conventions, it's only reasonable that people give a little more thought to when they schedule their conventions. It has in the past been understood that cons don't schedule against Novacon, which has, after all, been going for 17 years, on the first weekend of November, hardly something you forget about. Nicon, being off the mainland, doesn't represent such a problem, as there will be many Irish fans who can't or wouldn't want to make the trip over, but I do feel that the Hatfield Polytechnic people should have thought a little harder about what they were doing. Despite a current feeling that students



only want to go to student conventions and can't afford to go to others, I think they would be surprised to discover just how many do go to the other conventions, and that it is quite possible to go cheaply.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### 1987 CONVENTIONS

**NICON II** - 30 October - 1 November, Belfast  
 Guests: Bob Shaw, Chris Boyce, John Flynn, Joy Hibbert  
 Membership: £2 supporting, £5)  
 Info: Tommy Ferguson, 60 Melrose St, Belfast 9, Northern Ireland.

#### COMSCON - 11th Eurocon 1987

29 October - 1 November, Montpellier, in conjunction with the French National SF convention  
 Guests include David Brin, John Brunner, Keith Roberts, Kim Stanley Robinson, Gene Wolfe, Jacques Barbert, Philip Caza, Jean-Pierre Hubert, Michel Jeury & Joselle Wintrebert, Renato Pestriniero, Adrian Rogoz, Wotjek Siudmark  
 Membership: Supporting 80FF, Attending 150FF until 1st September, then 120FF and 200FF, cheques to be made out to Science-Fictions  
 Contact: Gilles Murat, 112 Avenue de Toulouse, 34070 Montpellier, France

#### WORLD FANTASYCON '87

29 October - 1 November, Hyatt Regency, Nashville, TN, USA  
 Guests: Piers Anthony, Frank Kelly Freas  
 Membership: Attending \$50, supporting \$25  
 Info: World Fantasycon '87, Box 22817, Nashville, TN 37202, USA

#### NOVACON 17 - The Brum Group's 17th Annual Convention

30 October - 1 November, Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham  
 Guest: Iain M Banks  
 Membership: £10 until 29 October, £12 on the door, cheques made payable to 'Novacon 17'  
 Room rates £20.50 single, £16.50 per person double/twin room.  
 Info: Mick Evans, 7 Grove Avenue, Acoccks Green, Birmingham, B27 7UY  
 PLEASE NOTE THAT MEMBERSHIP IS LIMITED TO 350. And it is now filling up fast, all those people needing a post-conspiracy can fix.

#### MEGROWINCON - 9th Shoestringcon

30 October - 1 November, Hatfield Polytechnic  
 Membership: Attending £5 Students, Unwaged, OAPE £4.00  
 Contact: PSIFA, c/o Students Union, Hatfield Polytechnic, PO Box 109, College Lane, Hatfield, Herts, AL10 9AB

#### 1988 CONVENTIONS

##### LUCON

26-28 February, Leeds University  
 Guest: Bob Shaw  
 Membership: Attending £6 supporting £3  
 Contact: c/o Leeds University Union SF Soc  
 LSL 10H

##### POLLYCON '88 - UK National SF Convention (I think they mean Eastercon)

1 - 4 April, 1988, Adelphi hotel, Liverpool  
 Guests: Gordon R Dickson, Gwyneth Jones, Len Wein, Greg Pickersgill  
 Membership: Attending £18 Supporting £12  
 Contact: Pollycon '88, 104 Pretoria Rd, Patchway, Bristol, BS12 5FZ

##### CONGREGATE

10-12 June, 1988, Peterborough Moat House Hotel  
 G.O.H - Terry Pratchett, Bob Shaw  
 Membership: Supporting £5, Attending £11.00.  
 Cheque payable to Congregate 88  
 Info: Chris Ayres, 67 Ayres Drive, Stanground, Peterborough.

##### ALBACON '88

29 July - 1 August 1988, Central Hotel, Glasgow.  
 Guest: C J Cherryh  
 Membership: Attending £10, Supporting £5  
 Info: Albacoon '88, Mark Meenan, Burnawn, Stirling Road, Dumbarton, G82 2PJ

##### MYTHCON XIX - Mythopoeic Society Conference

29 July - 1 August, Berkeley, Ca, USA.  
 Guests: Ursula Le Guin, Brian Attebery  
 Membership: £20  
 Info: Mythcon XIX, 90 El Camino Real, Berkeley, CA 94705, USA

##### CONINE

5-7 August, Oxford Polytechnic  
 Guest: Terry Pratchett  
 Membership: supporting £4, attending £9  
 Contact: c/o Ivan Towison, New College, Oxford, OX1 3BN

##### HUNGAROCON - The 1988 Eurocon

10-14 August, 1988, Budapest.  
 Info: Hungarian SF Society, Eurocon Committee, Budapest, Hungary, H-1078

##### WINCON - Unicorn 9

19-21 August, King Alfred's College, Winchester  
 Guests: Patrick Tilley, Michael de Larrabeiti  
 Membership: Attending £8 Supporting £4  
 Contact: Wincon, 11 Rutland St, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 5JG

##### NOLACON II - The 46th Worldcon

1 - 5 September, New Orleans, LA  
 Guests: Donald A Wollheim, Roger Sims  
 Membership: £19 supporting until 14/7/88 Attending £38 until 31/12/87, thereafter £45 until 14/7/88.  
 Info: UK Agent, Linda Pickersgill, 7a Lawrence Rd, South Ealing, London, W5 4XJ. Linda is also trying to make some group travel arrangements so contact her for further details.

##### 1989 CONVENTIONS

##### CONTRIVANCE - 1989 British SF Convention (I think they mean Eastercon)

Easter 1989 (ludicrous as this may seem, there is no date on the FR or the info sheet) Jersey  
 Guests: Anne McCaffrey, M John Harrison  
 Membership: Attending £15 Supporting £8  
 Contact: 63 Drake Rd, Chessington, Surrey

##### NORRASCAN III - The 47th Worldcon

31 August - 4 September 1989, Boston, MA.  
 Guests: Andre Norton, Betty & Ian Ballantine, The Stranger Club  
 Info: UK Agent, Colin Fine, 28 Abbey Rd, Cambridge, CB5 8HQ



# Fire & Hemlock

## The Fanzine Column

First of all, an apology to Rosemary Pardoe for misprinting her address in the entry for Ghosts and Scholars. The correct address is:

Flat 1, 36 Hamilton Street, Chester, CH2 3JQ

\* \* \* \* \*

News of new magazines or magazines newly available over here.

I've had a letter from Christopher James, with a sample copy of his new magazine, The Scanner, designed to fill the gap between fanzines and prozines, though quite how one fills a gap between some of the straightforward per and genzines which talk about everything under the sun and something like Interzone, which is a fiction magazine does escape me. Perusing the intro however suggests that they are talking about amateur fictionzines, of which I thought there were already plenty, and to a high standard. Clearly Christopher perceives a gap. Send for a sample copy and sub details to Christopher James, 4 Dover Road, East Cowes, Isle of Wight

Dave Hodson is handling subs and distribution for Weird Tales, which is about to be re-incarnated. From 1988 it will be quarterly, moving on later to bimonthly and monthly publication. According to the flyer it will be returning to the old pulp size, with the original headings and logos redrawn.

All subs will be sent direct from the US.

6 issues surface post £20.25

12 issues surface post £39.00

6 issues airmail £42.00

no 12 issues airmail rates as yet.

Sample copy of #1 available from Dave for £2.75. He also gives a trade discount of 35% on the £2.75 price if the order is for five copies of a single issue.

Dave is also handling subs and distribution for Mystery Scene, which does for mystery, horror and western what we try to do for sf.

1 yr sub (8 issues) £22.80, sample copy £2.95. Trade discount of 35% on £2.75 cover price if order for more than five copies of a single issue.

All these prices include postage and packing.

Contact Dave at 104 Debden, Gloucester Road, Tottenham, London N17 6LN

\* \* \* \* \*

BACK IN TIME #6 Eckhard D Marwitz, Postfach 1524, D-2070 Ahrensburg, West Germany. Perzine, for the usual.

BLATANT #16 - Avedon Carol, 144 Plashet Grove, East Ham, London E6 1AB. Perzine, the usual

BOTTLED LIGHTNING #1 - er, by me, at the editorial address, the usual. Quite personal perzine, ish #1 o/p but show of interest will secure a copy of #2, available circa Novacon.

COLLECTORS ITEM #1 - Ray Thompson, 6 Dene Terrace, Vinlinton, Tyne & Wear, NE21 5QH - perzine, availability unspecified - try asking nicely.

HAT THAT DUCK #2 - Ron Gemmell, 79 Mansfield Close, Birchwood, Warrington, Cheshire, WA3 6RN - genzine available for the usual.

FRAST OF FRIENDS - Pekka Supinen, Ulvilante 29/5 D 442, SF-00350 Helsinki, Finland. loc or trade. Tells you everything you need to know about science fiction in Finland.

FLICK THE BOBBY - Harry Bond, 6 Elizabeth Avenue, Bagshot, Surrey, GU19 5HX - idiosyncratic and mildly entertaining perzine, and I might even forgive Harry for not including me in the conrep.

GARDEN OF ENTROPIC DELIGHTS - Mike Gould, 10 Braybrook, Orton Goldhay, Peterborough, Cambs, PE2 0SH - mostly perzine, available for the usual.

GROSS ENCOUNTERS #13 - Alan Dorey, 7 Conway Close, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, Beds, LU5 5SB. Perzine available for the usual?

I-94 - Spike Parsons, PO Box 533, Madison, WI 53701, USA/Luke McGuff, PO Box 3680, Minneapolis, MN 55403, USA. Try the usual? Double handed perzine.

LAST DEADLOSS VISIONS - Chris Priest, 78 High St, Pewsey, Wiltshire, SN9 5AQ. Available for £2, details the extraordinary saga of Ellison's The Last Deadloss Visions, still about to finished any minute now since the middle 70's. Essential reading.

LIP SHOWS TEETH - Hazel Ashworth, 16 Rockville Drive, Embay, Skipton, N Yorks, genzine available for the usual.

LUSTS AND LOCUSTS - Roelof Goudriaan, Noordwal 2, 2513 EA Den Haag, The Netherlands. Perzine, available?

MADMAN SPECIAL - Hans Juergen Mader, PO Box 5126, D-6642 Mettlach, W Grmany/Eckhard Marwitz, PO Box 1524, D-2070 Ahrensburg, W Germany. Unique, worth getting. See Chuck's review.

MAVERICK - Jennifer Glover, 116 Aviary Place, Leeds, LS12 2NP. Genzine with gaming leanings, available for all the usual things

NOWHERE FAST #2 - Harry Bond, 6 Elizabeth Avenue, Bagshot, Surrey. Available for the usual or 50p.

OBSCURED BY CORFLU #1 - Johan Schimanski, 108450 Kongsia study, B-0864 GELD 8, Norway. Perzine with variable printing quality and illegible illos cut direct onto stencil, but looks interesting.

PRUNEZINE #1 - 49 Rugby Rd, Brighton, Sussex, BN1 6EB, Four issues a year at least, for £1.50, cheques made payable to PZ magazine. Described as the ultimate multi-media convention magazine, though it is only 4 pages. Mixture of bits and pieces with no clear direction.

SIX SHOOTER - Jeanne Gonnell, PO Box 1443, Madison, W 53701-1443, USA/Linda Pickersgill, 74 Lawrence Rd, South Ealing, London, W5 4XJ/Pam Wells, 24a Beech Rd, Bowes Park, London, N11 2DA. Genzine available for the usual, trade (zines to all three contributors please) or £1 for TAFP.

STILL LIFE 4W - Simon Unsley, 21 The Village Street, Leeds, LS4 2PR. Available at Conspiracy and sporadically elsewhere if any left. Ask nicely?

SWEDISH ISSUES - ed Ahrvind Engholm, Renstiernas Gata 29, S-116 31 Stockholm, Sweden. Price 70p plus 30p postage. Anthology of Swedish fanwriting, in English translation

THIS NEVER HAPPENS #9 - Christina Lake, 47 Vessex Avenue, Horfield, Bristol BS7 0DH/Lillian Edwards, 1 Braehad Rd, Thorntonhall, Glasgow, G74 5AQ. Genzine available for the usual.

TIGER #24, #25 - Marc Ortlieb, PO Box 215, Forest Hill, Vic. 3131, Australia. Perzine available for the usual.

YHOS #40 - Art Widner, 231 Courtney Lane, Orinda, CA 94563, USA. Enamelled perzine with genuine leanings.

\* FICTIONZINES \*

DREAM MAGAZINE #13 - ed Trevor Jones, 1 Ravenshoe, Godmanchester, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE18 8DE. £1 per issue, 1 year sub (6 issues) for £5.

NEW MOON QUARTERLY #2 - same address as above £1 for 1 issue, £4 for 1 year (4 issues).

\* MISC \*

A FANDOM SAMPLER ed. Gill Taylor, 49 Chestnut Avenue, Buckhurst Hill, Essex, G9 6EH/Chris O'Shea 11, 12 Stannard Rd, Dalston, London E8 1DE. Available for £1 in stamps. Hard to explain really, but a guide to fandom's wonderful diversity.

\*\*\*\*\*

Meanwhile, if you recall, we left Chuck Connor poised to assess the Australian fanzine scene, so without further ado, over to Chuck ...

\*\*\*\*\*

AUSTRALIA

There's now a lot of activity on the Oz front, with a lot of friction coming to the fore. One of the new generation of Ozines is *The Space Vastrel* (PO Box 428, Richmond, Victoria 3121, Australia - trade/usual) ran a couple of interesting issues of late. Issue 5 was done as a kind of Ace Double, and contained the bulk of reaction to several spoofines that the co-editors produced in reaction to either some bad reviews and/or a feeling that the goods didn't come up to the reputation that *The National* had been given. This culminates in a letter from Joseph Nicholas, in fine old form, slagging down the *Vastrel* because they had a poke at some of his friends. Trouble is, despite his disclaimer, the impression is such that I'm left wondering just why he left himself so bloody open. I have to run this quote, mainly as it concerns you, as part of British SF fandom: "The awful truth, one which you (*Vastrel* Editors) had better learn fast if you wish to have any significant international impact, is that throughout Britain and North America, Australian fanzines are derided by everyone as boring and uninteresting - so boring and uninteresting, in fact, that their recipients can't even be bothered to write letters of dismissal to their editors. Indeed, one fan we know throws away unopened the Australasian zines he receives." No names, no packdrill, eh?

That aside, there's a lot of RAT action in TSW 5, be it Lyn McConchie (CATS, RATS and GOING BATS), Craig Hilton (IN ALL INNOCENCE - an excellently written piece of grossness), Ian Nichols' GRAPESHOT column takes you into TASTE, and the fanzine reviews, called THE MAIL REVIEW (and headed by a well-scanned (i.e. electrostencilled) leather gay) where fanzines are rated on a peniscle, ranging from 'Fully Erect' to 'Totally Limp'. TSW 6 has Ian Nichols in thought provoking mood, as is Dave Lockett's OF CLOWNS AND DUCKS AND CRITICISM, and Julian Warner comes in with a MUSICAL EPISTLE, the high points of this issue. No real reaction from the Brits on TSW's mailing list, but I expect that will come in TSW 7, so I still don't know who this lone Britfan is that throws Ozines away unopened.

Ron Clarke's *THE MENTOR* (6 Bellevue Road, Faulconbridge, New South Wales 2776, Australia - Trade/Usual/AS\$2.00) has been running for years and still remains a bit of an enigma to the Ozine pubbing world. There's also a bit of bitching from others about Ron's printing gear (good quality, table-top litho, photocopied plates, with etchwork for the artwork, coloured headings and the like)

and the fact that TM hasn't changed style for quite some time. The other comments normally thrown around when maligning TM is that it tries to include as wide a selection of things as possible, but does so at the expense of detail and, at times, at the expense of the writing itself. Still, I like the mix of material in TM and would recommend #60 for the Buck Coulson piece, THE YANKEE PRIVATEER, Helen Sargeant's THE SCAVENGER, Sue Burstzynski's report of KINKON 11 (she apparently won a prize for the 'most sexist see-through costume'), The trouble is that you also buy such things as John J Alderson's look at 'Society', enough to induce terminal narcolepsy - but that's The Mentor, you get the rough with the smooth. TM #61 sees a little change with the time schedule being put on to quarterly and the page count is down to just under 30pp. But, within that limitation, Ron still packs the stuff in. This time going for a computerised dot matrix face and columns as well. High point of this issue is the Malcolm English portfolio of artwork, including the cover, though with a lot of half-tones involved, I suspect some of the details have been lost. Also excellent piece from Van Elk on his most recent job, that of checking the incoming mail (incoming to Australia, that is) for 'subversive material'. Amusingly informative.

Also in the Curate's Egg stakes comes the Burns/Veddall produced *THYME* newzine (European agent, Joseph Nicholas, 22 Denbigh St, Fimlipo, London SW1V 2ER - £5 for ten issues). I've been given a mass of these over the years, and despite what can only be called 'variable print quality' *THYME* seems to be packed with a mixture of news and gossip that seems about the right informal and (barring feuds) friendly mish-mash to make it welcoming to the newcomer, while at the same time being comfortable for the more 'elderly' fan. Whether or not this is representative of the Australian Fandom, I'm not sure, mainly as it looks like Ozines are getting a bit of a shake-up here and there. Give it a try if you feel like getting into wider streams of interest.

Onto a couple of zines from the same person, Irwin Hirsch, the zines in question being *LARRIKIN* and *SIKANDER* (2/416 Dandenong Rd, Caulfield North, Victoria 3161, Australia - *Sikander* - trade/usual/AS\$2, half of which goes to GUFF, *Larrikin* - usual/trade, with copy of your zine also going to Perry Middlemiss Box 2706X, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, Australia). *LARRIKIN* comes out monthly, with mailing by UK agent Team Wells, and seems to demand a fast reaction time to previous issues (otherwise you get knocked off the mailing list). In other words, you take an active part in it or you take no part in it - which is quite the right attitude to zine production. You cannot run a fanzine on so much dead wood, no matter how soft-hearted or an easy touch you might be. Having said that, I have to agree in part with Steve Green's comments in *HOLLIER THAN THOU* #25 "The problem with fanzins like *LARRIKIN* ... is that they're so fucking boring. They've got nothing to say and they take forever saying it". Not that *LARRIKIN* takes forever not saying what it hasn't got to say, but the fact that it sometimes comes across as if it's saying what it wants to say but in a monotone. This doesn't happen all the time, but I would like to see something more akin to life in its few pages more often than, say, once every two or three issues. The trouble may lie in the frequency of the thing - making it bi-monthly would, perhaps, make the heart grow fonder of it - but I cannot see why this can be helped up as being one of the best zines from the land of Oz for some time.

*SIKANDER*, on the other hand, is a far meatier, more stable zine, and issue 13 keeps up the attitude of control and friendliness that even I, a no-Ozian, can sit in the midst and enjoy. Material from Perry Middlemiss, and Mark Loney, manage to upstage an old hand such as Iral, and give SIK a less 'critical' feel than previous

Despite what you might think, there are not that many zines produced in Europe that come in the English language (and why should we expect someone to write in a 'foreign' language when they have one of their own, I just don't know), but some do, and one of the most regular has been Roelof Goudriaan & Lynne Ann Morse's **SHARDS OF BABEL** (\$10 or European currency equivalent for 12 issues from Noordwal 2, 2513 EA Den Haag, The Netherlands) which is about as complete a newswine as is possible, especially when covering as much of Europe as possible. Little Britinfo/news here, but that is because such stuff is covered by **ANSIBLE** and the like, but where else would you

find news of Poland, Japan, Malaysia, Czechoslovakia, Argentina, Finland, Russia and Italy. SOB has been hit with a little bit of trouble, mainly in the form of lost deadlines and a hint of irregularity (they were trying for a 6-weekly deadline), but this is well worth supporting. Very little information appears outside of a country's borders, but here is one place where everything seems to meet up and be exchanged.

One other Eurozone received recently written in English, is **MADMAR #3** (Hans Juerген mader, Postfach 5126, D-6642 Mettlach 5, W Germany and Eckhard D Marwitz, Postfach 1524, D-2070 Ahrensburg, W Germany - trade/usual) which has one of the best atmospheres I have ever come across. There's a need for contact with the UK, and vice versa, and the way the response to **MADMAR #2** has come, it seems that Brit fandom has reacted to it with vigour. The zine is 'sort of split' between the pair of them, though their writing styles are quite different, there are few obvious joins in the whole production. I was also impressed with the production and quality of the English - which is certainly a lot better than quite a few Britfens. They're looking for contact, and are well worth the effort to write to.

*PLATEAU STORIES* by Dave Langford. A collection of Dave's writings.

Each of these publications costs £2

**EMBRYONIC JOURNEY** comp. Graham James. A collection representing fan writing over the last fifty years. Price \$1

All the above items are available from the ubiquitous Greg Pickersgill, address as above. Cheques should be made payable to Conspiracy, and there is a flat rate of 50p postage per order, no matter how many or how few items you order.

Aldiss - Barefoot in the Head, Ballard - The Venus  
Hunters, Bester - The Dark Side of the Earth,  
Delany - The Einstein Intersection, Pohl - Expert  
Dreamer, Sheckley - Same to You Doubled, Turner - A  
Double Shadow, Vance - The Mirror of  $\infty$ , Zelazny -  
Isle of the Dead

Also wanted - New Writings in Science Fiction,  
nos. 2,6,8,9,10,12,14-24

\* Free to a good home - Herbert: The Dosadi Experiment \*

Contact: Mike Lowndes, Cedar Shingles, Abbey Rd,  
Knaresborough, N Yorks. HG5 8HX

P.S. Is there a science fiction club in or around Milton Keynes? Please let Mike know as he is moving there in October (and let Ron Gemmell know for the records).

I am interested in the Venturer Twelve series of books by Dan Morgan and John Kippax, but so far have only the first one: *A Thunder of Stars*. If Anyone has any others, please contact:

Robert Matthews, 19 Court Barton, Weston,  
Portland, Dorset DT5 2HJ.

Writers and budding writers. Let me word process your manuscripts. Spelling checker available and copy can be saved to disc if required. Discounts for SF. Ring R A Burgess on 061 790 3643

AUGURIES SF & Fantasy Quarterly magazine, ed Nik Morton - now available from 48 Anglesey Road, Alverstoke, Gosport, Hants, PO12 2EQ. Issue 8 out in late October.

## Members' Noticeboard

[illegible]

OMNI SF/fact magazine full set (?). \$50 for well over 100 magazines (& nine years of buying at over \$250. Contact J Jagla, 92 Fir Tree Estate, Thurgoland, Sheffield, S30 7BG

Science Fiction Movies by Philip Strick/Hb; Horror and Fantasy in the Cinema by Tom Hutchinson/Hb; Omni's Screen Flights & Screen Fantasies by Danny Peary/Hb; The Science Fiction Handbook by L. Sprague de Camp/Hb

For further details, prices etc. contact James  
Parker, 18 King Williams St, Old Town, Swindon,  
Wilts, SN1 3LB

**NOW READ ON** - A Collection of Recent British  
Fanwriting ed. Rob Hansen

*THE STORY SO FAR: A Brief History of British Fandom 1931 -1987* by Rob Hansen

## WRITE BACK

More letters this time, though I fear that one or two may have wandered into alternative files what with all the upheavals. Please don't think I'm deliberately suppressing your comments if you are not mentioned. By the way, the prize letter seems to have slipped by the board over the summer, but it will be back as from next issue, so first letter to me, from someone who hasn't graced the column in the last five issues, gets a freebie book or two. Deadline for the next letter column is

**FRIDAY 13th NOVEMBER 1987**

In the last issue of *Vector*, David Barrett suggested that the issues raised by Mark McConn should be discussed in *Matrix* rather than in *Vector*, something I have agreed to, consequently the next few letters are devoted to the subject. I think, that I should make my own personal feelings clear on the matter as I am not going to supply any other editorial comment.

Like Dave, I feel that SF should be involved with the real world, and I have always encouraged people to air their opinions on anything they wish through the medium of the letters page and through the Soapbox column. But we are not, never have been, nor would I wish to see us become a political organisation. That is not our purpose, our purpose is to foster an interest in science fiction in all its diverse forms. It is not to comment as a body on any political regime in this world, and that includes Britain, America and South Africa. Individual members may do so as they wish, even within the pages of BSFA magazines, but not with the backing of BSFA as an organisation.

For my own part, whilst I heartily condemn the practice of racial discrimination in any shape or form, I still have grave misgivings as to whether a cultural boycott of South Africa can be as effective and as mighty a weapon as the ANC seem to imagine. Okay, so Steve Van Zandt asks people not to play *Sun City*, which hits South Africa right where it hurts, in purse and prestige, but I cannot believe that turfing out perhaps half a dozen people from among our membership is going to make as significant a contribution, particularly as it is impossible to gauge the political bias of individual South African members. By all means, debate the issue, and if it is really the wish of the majority of the membership that we do have nothing to do with South Africa, I will abide by it, but shall frankly feel obliged to think very hard about remaining in the association. This is not why I am involved with BSFA, and not why I am involved with fandom. Call me naive, but I still cherish the hope that the only way to work is through discussion and promulgation of opinions, not through boycotts and refusals to communicate.

I shall start by reprinting Mark McConn's original letter, and Dave Barrett's response.

**Mark McConn**  
Derry, N Ireland

WHILE READING THROUGH THE LIST OF MEMBERS IN the June mailing I noticed that some members of the BSFA are from South Africa ... The question is important: should you allow membership for people living in the BSFA? Personally, I don't think so. The ANC, recognised worldwide as the legitimate voice of the majority of South Africans, has asked for a total boycott of that country.

Does the BSFA consider itself above such a request? Unlike many publications, it has almost complete control over where its magazines can be read. You can simply return membership fees and stop mailings. Are you going to do so? Don't come up with the argument that through your writings you hope to persuade white South Africans to oppose apartheid. The very act of allowing South Africans to purchase your magazines gives them the feeling that basically they are living in a normal state.

One way to stop SF descending into (remaining?) a "trainspotter's" hobby is to involve itself in today's issues. The best science fiction is "the best" because it involves itself with the real world. Here's your chance to do likewise. I would really like to hear what other members' thoughts are on the subject.

I agree that SF should be involved with the real world - hence this particular issue of *Vector* (concerned with feminism and SF). So far as I know, the BSFA as a whole has never had such a policy as you suggest; my personal feeling is that we shouldn't. What is the BSFA? Nearly 1000 people who enjoy SF. That's the common thread among members, rather than a particular political stance. While I'm asking for us individually to take what ever stance we believe in, I don't think this is the function of the BSFA as a body. I'd particularly like to hear the views of those members who live in S Africa and of non-white members ...



**Andy Mills**  
74 Hardy Street, Hull, N Humber-side, HU5 2PJ

MARK MCCONN HAS RAISED AN IMPORTANT ISSUE, and one which I feel the BSFA ought to address. I agree both with Mark's sentiments and with your statement that the BSFA has no particular political stance; however as you also said, the Association is made up of individuals who can decide on the policies it should adopt. Why don't we act on your suggestion and have a full-blown debate on the boycott issue in *Matrix* followed by a poll of the membership sometime in 1988?

**Alasdair Montgomery**  
North East London Polytechnic, Barking Precinct  
Library, Longridge Rd, Dagenham, Essex, RM6 2AS

IT IS POSSIBLE TO ARGUE THAT THE BSFA SHOULD continue to accept members from South Africa, but the reason you offer in V139 is hardly sufficient. Many scientific, professional and academic organisations have adopted a policy of exclusion: refusing papers for journal publication; refusing conference delegates; refusing to send visiting lecturers. Even the relatively staid and conservative Library Association, with its commitment to the free flow of information, has come to the conclusion that some restrictions are necessary because there is demonstrably no freedom of access to information in South Africa. (This is true elsewhere, of course, but one step at a time.)

Reliable information on conditions in South Africa is very hard to obtain, and it is difficult for people in the UK to determine the right course of action. We would obviously want to ensure that any sanctions on our part would not further disadvantage the very people whose struggle for freedom we are trying to support. The most sensible approach is to seek guidance from those directly involved, and in this case the ANC should be consulted.

Contrary to Mark McConn's letter (also V139), the ANC has modified its request for a cultural boycott. Speaking in London in May this year, Oliver Tambo spoke of: "the alternative structures that our people have created through struggle and sacrifice, the genuine representatives of those masses in all fields of human endeavour. Not only

should these not be boycotted, but more, they should be supported, encouraged and treated as the democratic counterparts within South Africa of similar institutions and organisations internationally. Thus the world community should act together with them to isolate apartheid South Africa and to bring into being a democratic society in our country". (Reported in *The Guardian*, May 29th, 1987)

I fully support Mark McConn's suggestion that the BSFA should consider its policy in this regard - in either *Vector* or *Matrix*. You say you are keen for members individually to take whatever stance they believe in. For some, this would include avoiding shops which sell South African produce and, more pertinently, withdrawing from organisations with an unacceptable membership policy. But there are no easy options. If you think there are, take a look at the South African connections of the major British publishers.

Terry Broome  
101 Malham Drive, Lakeside Park, Lincoln, LN6 0XD

I AGREE WITH YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD SOUTH AFRICAN MEMBERS. It is supposed to be one of those symbols which bridge nations, unite peoples. It is not a political body - at least in the sense of it being only one-sided, it isn't. The BSFA appeals to individuals of many countries. That does not mean it supports their governments so why does Mark McConn think it does? In not recognising any one political party it remains independent of them. Mark's letter struck me as being racist, for although there are South African members, it does not necessarily mean they're in accord with their system of government (just as I am not with the Conservative power in Britain.)

David Boyce  
4a Dene Park, Harrogate, N Yorks, HG1 4JY

WE DON'T KNOW IF THESE SOUTH AFRICAN MEMBERS are supporters or opponents of the government there. If they are in fact opponents, trapped in a regime they have no wish to see continue, why should we make their misery worse by depriving them of the opportunity to pursue their interest in SF? If these members are government supporters then surely SF with its radical ideas and diversity of societies presented, is one factor which might lead them to change their views. I would suggest that such influence are more likely to induce change than direct attacks.

Kev McVeigh  
37 Firs Rd, Milnthorpe, Cumbria, LA7 7QF

BOYCOTTS HAVE THEIR ORIGINS IN MEDIEVAL sieges, they rarely worked then, they have no chance now! As for the ANC being recognised as "the legitimate voice of the majority of South Africans", tell me this, why do so many experts believe that the ANC don't want Mandela free because of his propaganda value and that if he does get out they will kill him as a martyr? Why did the ANC representative I spoke to publicly refuse to give assurances that white South Africans would not be victimised after Black Majority rule comes? Blacks can be racist too!

Martyn Taylor  
Flat 2, 17 Hutchinson Sq, Douglas, Isle of Man

THERE IS PROBABLY NO MORE URGENT REQUIREMENT in the world today than the establishment of a free and just society in South Africa (although why stop there, such a society here wouldn't go amiss ...) I think, however, that he misunderstands the call for a cultural boycott. As I write this (18/5/87) I've just watched a tv show of a Hugh Masakela gig in London, and he's a South African. Should I boycott him? I can't believe that's what Oliver Tambo wants. Similarly, I can't believe the ostracism of individuals is what the ANC wants, either. They want the ostracism on an official level - no truck with with anyone or

anything with the slightest claim to represent 'South Africa' - whether it's a South African Breweries cricket team or a BOSSman from the embassy. If Balhazsar Voerster studying at Witwatersrand wants to join the BSFA then let him. If the Witwatersrand University Science Fiction Society wants to join, that's different.

I wonder whether Mark realises just how racist his suggestion is. He implies the only South Africans who might wish to join the BSFA must be white. The chances are he is right, but how is the membership secretary to know which application is from a white and must therefore be consigned to outer darkness and which is from a non-white and must therefore be welcomed with open arms? Are we to accept an application on behalf of Nelson Mandela, say, but not Helen Suzman? Or accept a Steve Biko but not a Gaster Buthelez? I also wonder how many South Africans Mark knows personally. I can think of half a dozen of my acquaintance, and while one makes me long for the carefree liberalism of Reichsmarshal Goering, none of the others have exhibited the sort of closed minds of which Mark accuses them, each and every one.

David A Symes  
3 Hannington Rd, Boscombe, Bournemouth, BH7 6JT

PERHAPS, DEFENSIVELY, I SHOULD FIRST DECLARE myself. I am against any political (or otherwise) system that oppresses anybody, anyway, and anyhow. But accepting reality as it seems to be, we live in a big bad world owned by the brutal faction.

Then, how do we stand if a non-white S.A. citizen requires membership. And tongue in cheek (perhaps) it would be realistic of the BSFA to refuse entry to all persons from the Irish island (especially the north) on the grounds (with a considerable amount of available evidence) of extreme religious prejudice and oppression.

Where does the line get drawn, will we refuse membership to someone because they only read ten SF books a year while true devotees read a hundred. To oppress, to discriminate against someone, something, is by degree the same, no matter what it's about.

Still on controversy, though something a little less world-shattering, the disagreement between Paul Kincaid and Ken Lake on Becon 87 has brought forth this comment from

Tom A Jones  
14 Haywood, Haversham Park, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 4WG

I'M NOT A CONGOER BUT ALWAYS LIKE READING THE reports. So the exchange between Ken Lake and Paul Kincaid was interesting, demonstrating that one's view of a con (or any event, perhaps) is so subjective it is not possible to make an objective statement. I experienced this myself at the second Novacon I went to, for some reason I was in an anti-social mood and only the strong programming saved it from being a disaster for me, the other people I knew there loved it. The whole of life is subjective. What we believe is happening is filtered by our personal model of the world (which changes as the very events it is interpreting affect it). Those of us who agree on the main points are okay, those who don't tend to get locked away.

Kev McVeigh

KEN LAKE'S COMMENTS ON JERSEYCON DESERVE AN answer. I'll be sleeping anywhere I can in Brighton because that is the only way I can afford the Worldcon. I can hitch down there (what's 300 miles in the rain?) I'd have to pay to get to Jersey. If I can avoid it I'd rather not pay because I'd buy a few good books or records, (or even meals) for the money. As for "computers-and-

cons-and-cigarettes-and-booze-in-excess" Ken  
sounds very much like Edwina Currie with that  
line, he ought to try being poor for a while.

I must confess I am getting a little tired of  
the assumption that those of us who are  
complaining are frittering away our money on  
god knows what. I live frugally, fandom is  
rapidly becoming my one luxury, and it's  
something I will try hard not to give up.  
Inevitably, there will come a time when I  
can't afford it, despite drinking moderately,  
owning a 'cheap' Amstrad, being semi-  
vegetarian for economic reasons, and not  
smoking. Contrivance brings me closer.

Kevin McVeigh's comments about Trekkies  
inevitably drew some comment

Martin Wilson  
69 The Crescent, Ravensthorpe, Dewsbury, WF13 3BB

I HAVE ALWAYS LIKED BOTH ("serious" SF and  
"media" sf), the best of both that is. The quality  
of most media SF is considerably lower than most  
of literary SF, even those works which are based  
on excellent SF books almost always fall short of  
the original. ... I much prefer books to films and  
TV. This is only my preference however and most of  
my friends in fandom take the opposite view.  
Unlike the 'Trekkies' that Kevin McVeigh has  
encountered, they do also read SF books. I have  
never met any media fans in my admittedly limited  
experience who did not like reading SF, neither  
have I met any 'Bookies' who did not like at least  
a few SF films. It seems to me that the  
differences between the two sections of fandom are  
greatly exaggerated and are often a product of  
snobbery on the part of SF fans, or inverted  
snobbery on the part of media fans.

Julian R Bills  
3 Roseville Gardens, Codsall, Nr Wolverhampton,  
WV8 1AZ

BY KEVIN McVEIGH'S DEFINITION THE 'TREKKIES' I  
know are not Real Trekkies: they read Farmer,  
Morcorck and Dick, among many others. Their chief  
failure is common to all new fans, they have not  
read sufficiently or wide enough to be able to  
distinguish the good from the bad. Media SF fans  
are inevitably nostalgia based, the worst excess  
of escapism. The written SF field can be equally  
bad, there are people who believe Asimov is all  
the science fiction there is, and are stuck in a  
perpetual Golden Age.

Julian, well known as the most disillusioned 20 year  
old in the Association, which sure doesn't give much  
hope for those of us pushing 30, and must be causing  
our esteemed Co-ordinator (39 and grey-haired) grave  
concern, has drawn a fair response

Keith Brooke  
64 Eade Rd, Norwich, NR3 3BJ

WITH THE QUALITY OF WORK BEING PRODUCED BY  
writers such as William Gibson, Kim Stanley  
Robinson, Bruce Sterling and Lucius Shepard I can  
only think that it is a problem peculiar to Julian  
Bills that he can only find one good book a year -  
there is certainly no lack of good SF about,  
although admittedly it can be hard to find among  
the fantasy epics.

R A Burgess  
15 Paragon Dr, Worsley, Manchester

IN MY JULIAN A BILLS IS COMPLAINING ABOUT  
the lack of a really good book. From his letter it  
would seem that in the main he buys new and at  
today's prices, which is enough to disillusion  
anyone at any age. Surely at 20 he cannot have  
read all existing SF. I suggest he goes round the  
jumble sales. I once picked up 25 books for £2.  
Admittedly some were rubbish but quite a number  
were passable, and just one or two very good. What

is more, they introduced me to authors I had not  
previously considered.

Another thing I recommend is buying mail order  
secondhand. It's quite possible to pick up some very  
recent stuff at very reasonable prices.

Phil Gardner's Soapbox article has drawn these  
observations

Alan Langdale  
19 Williams Close, Rowner, Gosport, Hants

JUST A QUICK COMMENT ON PAT GARDNER'S  
Soapbox. You took the words right out of my mouth.  
Pat Gardner for next President.

Phil Nicholls  
19 Kendall Avenue, Copnor, Portsmouth, PO3 5AX

WHAT PROMPTS ME TO WRITE ARE THOSE LETTERS  
and Soapbox pieces from people who choose not to  
take an active role in the BSFA. In my six years  
in the BSFA the question of why so few members are  
active has arisen time and again, but rarely have  
the 'inactives' written in to stick up for  
themselves. Good for you, Pat Gardner and John  
Feetenby et al. Once a member has paid his or her  
subscription s/he should have the right to be a  
non-contributing consumer.

However, I have a feeling the average  
'inactive' fan is put off contributing by two  
things. Firstly, Kevin McVeigh's point that "someone  
will already have said what I want to say", and  
secondly, that it all seems one big club of which  
the 'inactive' cannot be a part. After all, the  
reviews seem to be written by the same in-group -  
and by golly, the Matrix editor lives with the  
BSFA Co-ordinator! (Can't help it, honest! - Ed.)  
It does seem that every BSFA contributor knows  
every other contributor, leaving the 'inactive'  
feeling very alone.

So perhaps the 'inactives' should be reminded  
that it ain't so. You can - and will - get into  
print, regardless of who you do or do know. I  
speak from experience, my words have found their  
way into three of the four BSFA magazines, and yet  
I have never met a single other BSFA member.  
Unlike Pat Gardner I've never even attended a con,  
or indulged in a single remotely fannish activity.  
So, 'inactives', while I defend your absolute  
right not to contribute, please be sure your  
inactivity isn't for the wrong reasons.

Okay so what else have we left?

James Parker  
18 King William St, Old Town, Swindon, SN1 3LB

LYNNE BISPHAM'S RESPONSE TO MY REMARKS  
regarding Star Wars was most interesting, the key  
section being 'It was designed for a very youthful  
audience, and I'm afraid that complex ethical  
judgements don't feature very highly in the  
requirements of the average cinema-going ten-year-  
old.' This is part of the problem, of course.  
Movies like Star Wars are targeted at  
impressionable young audiences; this is where the  
brain-washing begins. Old lies are perpetuated -  
that good and evil are absolute forces within the  
world; that violence and war is a natural state of  
affairs; that conflict is exciting, glamorous etc.  
The concept of any kind of cosmic moral force,  
whether for good or evil is an essentially fascist  
idea. Not a good role-model for the young ...

I ALSO HEARD FROM: Jennie White who said that she  
particularly enjoyed Terry Pratchett's Alien  
Christmas, George McFadyen in Kirkwall in Orkney, who  
finds the book publishing news helpful, Roger Franck  
who has an interesting idea for book classification  
which I will tell you more about next time, and  
Patrick Lee who would like to know if anyone can tell  
him about Malpertuis, shown recently on Channel 4 but  
strangely absent from reference books.

# SOAPBOX

## DEFEATING THE SF STEREOTYPE

by Rabbit

WE PROBABLY ALL REALISE THAT MOST OF THE WORLD writes off SF as unimportant and uninteresting. We've all, at one time or another, had to defend SF as a worthwhile genre, if not the most worthwhile of modern fiction, and SF fandom as a legitimate interest and subculture. This popular denigration has, over the years, been formalised into a stereotype of SF readers, fans and writers. We're all aware of this stereotype, one needed only to pick up a copy of the *Brighton Evening Argus* at the Worldcon to see its power and ugliness. And, as Chris Priest has pointed out, like most stereotyped groups, the SF community has ended up in a Ghetto.

The literary consequence of this is that authors are labelled either as being inside or outside of the ghetto and then packaged and sold to their respective audiences. But SF readers and writers have developed a kind of Ghetto pride which shows in an acceptance of the barriers and glorification of the culture within the walls.

The first limitation of the Ghetto mentality is the arbitrary decisions about what gets labelled "SF" (do all of J G Ballard's novels deserve this?) and what get labelled as "mainstream" (Borges' stories and *Brave New World* are more genuinely speculative than 80% of the Hugo nominees) - it brings to mind the South African government's labelling of the Japanese as "white" and the Chinese as "coloured". But the worst of it is that not only do the "outsiders" follow the proscriptions and ignore the SF works, but many SF fans follow them too, and won't read Borges, or even Lessing, because they're "not" SF writers.

The second limitation is that SF comes up with its own version of the stereotype in order to justify the existence of the Ghetto walls (consider how the Jewish leaders of the Warsaw Ghetto applauded their apartheid because it maintained the "purity" of their culture inside). There are rules for what is acceptable hard science fiction, for what is acceptable high fantasy, etc. and those writers who break them are less or unlikely to be published. So innovation and the full exploration of non-realistic fiction is discouraged and the image of SF as lacking literary merits is perpetuated.

Doris Lessing, in her Guest of Honour speech at Brighton, pointed out that fantastic writing has been the main form of fiction for millennia and only in the last three hundred years has realistic fiction come to dominate writing and boxed away non-realistic/mythic/SF fiction as aberrant, whereas it is really the mainstream of human communication in temporary eclipse.

Yet what has happened is that most SF imitates realistic fiction rather than experimenting with

the infinite possibilities of being non-realistic. So we get the hard-boiled detective moved into the 21st century, the historical novel set in a world with two moons and no vowels in anyone's names, and, worse yet, fine examples of fantastic writing, like epic poetry, reduced to quasi-realism and then published as "fantasy" (remember Tolkien made no claim of improving the Norse myths on which he based *Ilford of the Kings*, he merely brought it out in a form more accessible to our rigid reading habits). So much SF puts the same importance on plot that mainstream writing does, and often neglects the emotional distortions, the non-logical coherence of myth and dreams, and the host of other methods of exploring our experience and future without realism.

The potential SF world is vast and realism is only a small sub-division, a self-created ghetto within it, yet the actual SF world is a ghetto within this ghetto and thus so limited that it is not so much the books themselves we find inspiring as the potential they imply.

The whys and wherefores of the popular/media image of SF fans are less clear. All we are readers of a particular genre and members of a subculture. Now there are stereotypes of other genre readers: the bored housewife and her Romances; the would-be tough guy and his Westerns, but they have nothing of the vividness and strength of the "sci-fi" image in the media. But what is strangest is that reading Romances and Westerns is "normal" but reading SF is "weird". Even horror is acceptable! Were Romances and Westerns once weird? All this has been explained to me as a carry-over from the pulp adolescent image of the 30's, but it seems too much to perpetuate such nonsense without implicit support from the community. Above all, if SF has this weird image, you would think it would extend to films, right? But no, going to see *Star Wars* even three or four times is normal, but picking up a copy of Heinlein is suspect. Some would say "but it's only SF fans that they portray as bizarre". Maybe, but why?

Consider for a moment what should be parallel subcultures: SF, music and politics. All have professionals, dedicated fans, 'zine scenes (though the politicians call them "journals"), and even conventions (after all, what else is the Reading Festival?). Yet music and politics are "normal" preoccupations, whereas SF is "abnormal". Is wearing a medieval costume or futuristic uniform any stranger than wearing a blue mohawk and chains? But one is seen as "legitimate self-expression in the face of an alienated urban culture" and the other is "nutty". The only reason can be that in music and politics there is a continuum from the extreme to the mainstream (Punk to New Wave to Power Pop to Top Forty or Revolutionary Communists to Socialists to Social Democrats to Tories) where SF exists in a Ghetto whose walls (maintained from within and without) break the continuum which would allow us to be seen as the far end of a normal range.