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75p

THE · NEWSLETTER · OF · THE · BRITISH · SCIENCE · FICTION · ASSOCIATION



December/January 1988/89

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ART CREDITS

Cover	Colin P Wenham
p. 3	David Griffiths
p. 18	Richard McLaren

Any opinions expressed are those of individual authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of either the editor or the BSFA.

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ISSN: 0307 3335

Production by Maureen Porter and Paul Kincaid.

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

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MATRIX EDITOR

Maureen Porter
114 Guildhall Street
Folkestone
Kent
CT20 1ES

Tel: (0303 52939)

Contributing Editors

CLUBS

Keith Mitchell
3Fl, 43 Iona St
Edinburgh
EH6 8SP

COMPETITIONS

NEWS - Paul Kincaid, address below

BSFA CO-ORDINATOR

Paul Kincaid
114 Guildhall Street
Folkestone
Kent
CT20 1ES

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

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:

Joanne Raine
33 Thornville Road
Hartlepool
Cleveland
TS26 8EW

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS:

Keith Freeman
269 Wykeham Road
Reading
Berkshire
RG6 1PL

TREASURER

Brett Cockrell
40 Cyprus Road
Finchley
London
NW1 7BU

ADVERTISING

Dave Wood
1 Friary Close
Marine Hill
Clevedon
Avon

ADVERTISING RATES (for one insertion)

Cover (ifc, ibc, obc)	£25
Full page (rop)	£20
Half page	£15
Quarter page	£10

Rates for multiple insertions are negotiable. Distribution of loose flyers with BSFA mailings cost £20 per thousand sheets. Rates for booklets are negotiable. Requests for advertising and flyer distribution should be sent to Dave Wood.

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PAPERBACK INFERNO EDITOR:

Andy Sawyer
1 The Flaxyard
Woodfall Lane
Little Neston
South Wirral
L64 4BT

VECTOR EDITOR:

David V Barrett
23 Oakfield Road
Croydon
Surrey
CR0 2UD

(051 336 3355)

FOCUS EDITOR:

Liz Holliday
31 Shottesford
Wessex Gardens
London
W2

ORBITER CO-ORDINATOR

Sue Thomason
111 Albemarle Road
South Bank
York
YO2 8LEP

Red Shift

AS I WRITE THIS EDITORIAL, I'M STARING OUT OF MY STUDY window at the most beautiful late afternoon, winter sky. The sun is setting, the moon is already clearly visible, and it's so peaceful, so quiet. Hard to believe that it's only ten past four on a weekday afternoon. But, however attractive as a pastime staring out of the window might be, I really should be writing this editorial, and finishing the magazine in the next day or two. I'm easily distracted, when it comes to writing the editorial. Staring out of the window is infinitely preferable. I don't enjoy writing editorials at the best of times, and particularly not now.

It's getting around to that time of year when one takes stock of what's gone before, and tries to make a few resolutions about the year to come. I'm not a great believer in resolutions, to be honest. I think they were invented by a sadist, in a calculated attempt to burden the more sensitive among us with guilt as we attempt to keep up with hopelessly unrealistic, if commendably idealistic, goals. If I were to make a resolution, I'd, I'd ... I'd be very unwise. It's too risky to promise things without any guarantee of being able to deliver the goods. I could promise you photographs, for example, something I'd really like to do in the next year, or else say that I'm going to carry more news about this, that and something else, but if I can't follow through, I look pretty stupid, and you lot get understandably annoyed. The more I learn about editing, the more I realise that it's a matter of keeping my mouth shut.

Anyway, suffice it to say that I have some ideas for 1989. I'd be a dreadful editor if I didn't. But I am one person, producing a magazine with some help from a small band of very dedicated helpers, attempting to cater for a readership of somewhere just over a thousand people. I know very few of you personally, and I have very little idea of exactly what it is you want. I've said this several times over the two and a half years that I've been working on *Matrix*, and I think it still holds true. I'm more often aware of what you don't like than what you do like, but if I paid attention to everything you didn't like, I'd have disposed of the entire news column, con reviews, fanzine listings, oh and the letter column, ages ago. Oh dear, doesn't seem to be much of the magazine left, does there?

I'd like to start the New Year with a proper scheme of goals to be attained during 1989, a series of concrete plans. I can probably manage that on my own, or with some earnest consultation with the rest of the committee, but that tells me only what I and the committee would like. What would you like to see? What should I be considering for inclusion? Possible ideas, at this stage, include something of a more scientific nature, although I still refuse to turn this magazine into a fanciful equivalent of *New Scientist*, a regular crossword, a regular cartoon strip, more comics information, more information about gaming, things like that. But I'd like to know what you think, what you want. All sensible suggestions will be considered. Abuse will be filed in the appropriate receptacle. I keep a capacious one, right by the desk.

Equally important, I would appreciate a greater level of participation from members. The volume of letters is increasing again, thank goodness, but I'm strapped for Soapbox pieces, and I'd like to start running longer articles again. Now that we have published the accounts up to date (a necessary legal requirement, I might remind those who complained about it), there will be more space available. And now that the BSFA is financially secure once again, there's every chance that I shall be able to go back to a 24 page issue very soon. I'm going to try commissioning articles again, but I'd like to know what you'd like to hear about, and I'd really like to see members taking an active part in the newsletter as well. It is your magazine, your society after all.

Just to remind people who might be diffident about submitting work, I don't mind handwritten work, though it does make life easier if you double-space it, and print names. My ability to read very difficult handwriting ought to qualify me as a paleographer, but I'm not perfect. Also, if you send a covering letter with the review, article, whatever, make sure your name is on the submission, please. If you can type your work, so much the better, and if you are in a position to submit work on a 3" disc suitable for an Amstrad 8000, even better. I work in Locoscript, but ASCII files can be handed.

I've always been keen to involve members in the work of the magazine, but right now, we need to be looking to the future. I am not going to be editor of *Matrix* forever. That might come as a surprise to many of you, but despite the occasional comparison with Margaret Thatcher (which I don't find flattering) I'm not planning to run and run. I already occasionally toy with the idea of relinquishing the editorial hot seat and turning it over to someone else, mostly when I'm feeling depressed, but equally I feel that my task isn't yet done. I've a vision in my head, and I'd like to translate it onto paper, so I'm not planning to go yet. But cast your minds back to the way in which I arrived. One moment I wasn't editor, the next I was, and had it not been for the help I received from all over, I doubt I would have survived. I had the vision but not all of the necessary skills. I had production values, which have slipped mightily at times, but I've learned that improvements come gradually, not all at once, and that the vision takes a long time to translate into actuality. For my successor, I want the takeover to be a lot smoother. So, I'd like people to bear that in mind, when they are sitting around at Christmas, reading *Matrix*, and wondering whether they can fit in a quick letter before the N° showing of *Star Wars*. Please make the effort to make a contribution to the magazine.

So, a New Year's Resolution for everybody - to write one letter to *Matrix* during 1989. I've made my resolutions, but I'm not telling you what they are, beyond the fact that I'm hoping to buy my own drawing board (not on BSFA expenses) and the Letraset catalogue has been well-thumbed of late. And quite a few people will be receiving letters from me over Christmas, about this and that.

After those sombre thoughts, I'll end on an upbeat note or two. University is very nice, thank you. I'm currently studying Edgar Allan Poe, and Philip K Dick - this is quite true - inbetween writing essays, which is not easy at all. After two months of eating, sleeping, and studying, I've finally regained my grip on the rest of my life. I'm very sorry to those of you waiting for letters from me. It has not been easy, and I'm looking forward to my holiday, to catch up on everything.

The next deadline for submissions is:

FRIDAY 13th JANUARY 1989

which is probably tempting providence, but let's see what happens. Nothing else remains but to wish you all a merry Christmas and a very peaceful and happy New Year

Maurice Porter

WALKING ON GLASS

The BSFA Column

We are legally obliged to publish the accounts of the Association as approved by the Extraordinary General Meeting of 6 November 1988.

BSFA Accounts, 1987

Council Members' Report

Council Members

A.C. Clarke	President re-elected
P. Kincaid	Co-ordinator re-elected
P. Knight	Secretary resigned 9 February 1987
L. Flood	
B. Shaw	
J. White	
J.P. Harvey	resigned 30 November 1986
A. Brown	resigned 31 March 1987
M.J. Edwards	
D.R. Langford	
S. Ounsley	
S. Thomason	
A. Sawyer	
D.V. Barrett	
M. Moir	
M.S. Porter	re-elected
D. Wood	appointed 30 November 1986
J. Raine	appointed 5 April 1987
B. Cockrell	Secretary appointed 28 April 1987

The Council Members during the period ended 30 September 1987 were those listed above. A.C. Clarke, P. Kincaid and M.S. Porter retired by rotation and offered themselves for re-election. P. Knight, J.P. Harvey and A. Brown resigned.

Accounts

The Council Members submit the accounts for the year ended 30 September 1987. The excess of expenditure over income for the year was £2184, and is dealt with as shown in the Income and expenditure account.

Activities

The principle activities of the Association during the period were the promotion of science fiction and the publication and distribution of science fiction magazines.

Auditor

The auditor, F.J. Steward, FCA, has agreed to stand for re-election.

By order of the Council

Brett Cockrell
Secretary
40 Cyprus Road
Finchley
London
N3 3SE

Report of the Auditor to the Members of the British Science Fiction Association Limited

I have audited the financial statements of the above Association for the year ended 30th September 1987 as set out below. These statements have been prepared under the historical cost accounting convention.

I have been unable to verify the existence or value of certain of the tangible assets.

Subject to this, in my opinion the balance sheet and income and expenditure account, prepared under the accounting convention stated above, give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Association at 30th September 1987 and of the excess of expenditure over income for the year then ended, and comply with the relevant sections of the Companies Act, 1985.

(Signed) F.J. Steward
Chartered Accountant

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 30th September 1987

	Note	1987 £	1986 £
TURNOVER	2	8265	6952
COST OF SALES		6963	6582
GROSS PROFIT		1302	3365
Distribution costs		(2207)	(1951)
Administrative expenses		(301)	(475)
Interest receivable			
Bank Deposit	8	6	
Building Society Deposit	=	8	12

DEFICIT (SURPLUS) ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES BEFORE TAXATION AND EXTRAORDINARY ITEM 3 (1198) 951

Taxation on interest received	4	(2)	(2)
Extraordinary Item	5	(984)	=

RETAINED DEFICIT (SURPLUS) FOR THE YEAR (2184) 949

STATEMENT OF RETAINED SURPLUS

Balance at 30 September 1986	2206	1257
Deficit (Surplus) for the year	(2184)	949
Balance at 30th September 1987	22	2206

The attached notes form part of these accounts.

Balance Sheet as at 30th September 1987

	Note	30/9/87 £	30/9/86 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible Assets	6	92	522
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors			
Trade debtors		550	300
Cash at bank and in hand		1389	2121
CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year			
Trade creditors	164	104	
Other creditors:			
Corporation Tax	39	37	
Other	1029	9	
Accruals	200	1432	260
NET CURRENT LIABILITIES (ASSETS)		43	(1711)
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		49	2233
CAPITAL AND RESERVES			
Other reserves	7	27	27
Income and Expenditure Account		22	2206
		49	2233

Signed by:
P. Kincaid Director
B. Cockrell Director

Notes on the Accounts

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

a) The accounts are prepared according to the historical cost convention.

b) Depreciation is provided for on the cost of the library at one-tenth of the net book value each year. Due to the age and general condition of the office equipment it has been decided to provide sufficient depreciation in the current year to leave a nominal book value of £5.

2. TURNOVER consists of the following sources of income:

	1987	1986
	£	£
Subscriptions	7718	6359
Publications	364	514
Litho Service	-	6
Advertising	50	-
Magazine Chain	92	31
Badges	36	13
Other	5	29
	<u>8265</u>	<u>6952</u>

3. SURPLUS ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES is stated after charging:

	1987	1986
Depreciation on tangible assets		
Library	£7	£8
Office Equipment	£423	£107
Auditor's remuneration	£20	£20

4. TAXATION

Corporation Tax provided at 29% on Bank Deposit interest.

5. EXTRAORDINARY ITEM

The extraordinary item consists of legal and professional

expenses in connection with reinstatement of the company.

6. FIXED ASSETS

	Library	Office Equipment	Awards	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost at 1/10/86	913	1679	27	2619
DEPRECIATION At 1/10/86	846	1251	-	2097
Charge for year	7	423	-	430
At 30/9/86	853	1674	-	2527
NET BOOK VALUE At 30/9/86	67	428	27	522
At 30/9/87	60	5	27	92

7. OTHER RESERVES consist of:

	1987	1986
Award Funds:		
Doc Weir Memorial Fund	15	15
British Fantasy Award Fund	12	12
	<u>£27</u>	<u>£27</u>

THE LONDON MEETING

The October meeting gave the attendees a chance to show off their knowledge of science fiction with a quiz. Four teams of two were hastily assembled. It's remarkable how easy it is to find teams for a quiz, when the quiz was devised it was intended to feature just four people, but there were so many volunteers that we had to double the number of participants. The result? Well our quiz-setter Roger Robinson had the chance to answer questions rather than ask them for once, and ably assisted by Marcus Rowland proved too knowledgeable for anyone else to match. Though it must be said that Greg Pickersgill and Dave Hodson provided a worthy challenge in second place.

The London Meetings are now attracting a regular attendance of some 25-30 people, which is quite healthy. But for the last meeting of the year, in November, we decided to sound them out about their opinions on the meetings after six months or so. The result was a lively and fascinating discussion which went on a lot longer than anticipated and covered an awful lot of ground. No minutes were taken, but since a number of people asked if I would produce a detailed report on the discussion for *Matrix* I'll do the best I can from memory.

It's gratifying to learn that the London Meetings are popular with those who attend. Everyone felt they should continue in the same format, with one or two short programme items lasting 30 minutes to an hour providing the focus for the evening, but leaving plenty of time before and after for socialising.

There was criticism, though, at the lack of publicity for the events. People like to know in advance what is happening, and it is felt that this would attract more people. Dave Hodson said that *Forbidden Planet* would put up a poster, and David Barrett said he would be prepared to produce the poster. And it was also felt that if we can't leaflet the Wellington each month, we should at least get the information to *Small Mammal*. These were good ideas, but at this point we came up against the problem of organising the meetings.

When the London Meetings were revived it was intended that no-one currently active on the BSFA committee should have the responsibility for organising them. But that hasn't worked out. Though Robert Farago has now taken on the job of liaising with the pub and ensuring that we have the room sorted out on a regular basis, we have not found anyone to organise the programme for the meetings. Part of the problem, of course, is that the existing committee has the contacts with authors and publishers, and ordinary members of the BSFA do not feel competent to take on this task, which does often mean presuming on the friendship of professionals.

This led to a digression. The impression seems to be, someone suggested, that BSFA committee members come down from the sky fully formed. This isn't so, but it's easy to appreciate how that impression could be formed. It has become traditional for BSFA committees, for the lack of any obvious successor, to hang on in office too long, until the BSFA itself begins to be damaged and they are forced out of office by a new committee that has to start more or less from scratch building the whole thing up again. We don't want that to happen again. Greg Pickersgill, as a member for 20 years, pointed out that the organisation is better now than it has ever been

before. The current committee has worked hard to reach that position, and we don't want it to slip away again through inertia or tiredness on our part. David Barrett has already announced that he intends to step down as *Vector* editor in the near future, and we spent a long time discussing what would happen when he and other committee members who feel the same way had gone. We intend any change-over to be as smooth as possible, with the outgoing people staying on to show their successors the ropes over a period of time. But we still have the problem of finding those successors. Unless you come forward, there'll be nothing left when we go. And we're not going to stay forever.

Turning back to the main subject, the conversation had sparked off ideas from a lot of people and within a few minutes we found we had amassed a programme for the first three or four London meetings of next year, as well as creating a wealth of ideas for future meetings, and that makes things easier for all of us. So I want to thank everybody for a thoroughly stimulating and enjoyable evening, and maybe all those BSFA members in and around London who don't turn up will start to wonder what they're missing.

Paul Kincaid

TOMORROW AND TOMORROW AND TOMORROW AND TOMORROW

The London Meetings for the future are as follows:

December: No meeting, we're encouraging everyone to go to the Conspiracy SF Day instead.

January 19: David Langford reads from work in progress, another SF pastiche; and Maureen Porter talks about the new magazine she is editing, *The Gate*.

February 16: David V. Barrett leads a discussion on comics and graphic novels.

March 16: A panel discussion involving other fan groups.

Remember, the London Meeting is on the third Thursday of every month, starting around 7.30 pm, in the upstairs room at The Plough, Museum Street, London.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

Some of you may have noticed that we've changed our system of sending out subscription renewal notices. By the old method, in the mailing your subscription falls due you would receive the mailing and a renewal notice, and if you didn't renew, when the next mailing came around you would receive a renewal notice alone. We have streamlined this. By the new method you receive your first subscription renewal notice the mailing before your subscription is due. If you fail to renew, the next mailing also includes a renewal notice. But that is it, there are no Subs Overdue notices sent out.

Of course, if you pay by standing order, there's a saving of 50 pence, and you don't have to worry about any of this anyway.

NEWS

Compiled by Paul Kincaid (with a little help from Locus, SF Chronicle and other sources)

CONSPIRACY SF DAY

The Conspiracy 87 Bail-Out Fund, which is working to clear the debts of the 1987 British Worldcon and avoid bankruptcy, has organised a Science Fiction Day, backed by the Forbidden Planet and Andromeda bookshops. It is described as "A Saturday full of the top names in British Science Fiction." Those who have already agreed to take part in the event include Jim Burns, Robert Holdstock, Geoff Ryan, Brian Aldiss, M. John Harrison, Lisa Tuttle and Michael Moorcock.

The event takes place at Cafe Munchen, St Giles High Street, London on Saturday 17 December. The schedule of events is as follows:

11.30 Doors open
12.00 Auction
14.00 Signings
16.00 Auction
18.00 Readings
20.00 Party, Music, Drinking, Dancing, Raffle!

Tickets are £2 in advance or £4 at the door, and can be obtained from Forbidden Planet, Andromeda, or by mail from Conspiracy Fund, 7a Lawrence Road, South Ealing, London W5 4XJ (cheques payable to Conspiracy).

THE RICH GET RICHER

The latest trend in science fiction publishing appears to be to take popular short stories and novellas by famous authors, and get another famous author to add a sequel to it, or expand it to novel length. The result is a surefire bestseller because of the names attached to it, and a very healthy advance for the authors involved. But one must wonder if, considering that "Nightfall" by Isaac Asimov was such a classic story at that length, even if it is by Robert Silverberg.

Silverberg and Asimov have already received an advance of well over a million dollars for the novelisations of "Nightfall", "The Martian Way" and "The Ugly Little Boy", though the first of the books is not due to be delivered to the publishers before 1990 or 1991. In the meantime Silverberg is working on a sequel to his own novel *At Winter's End* and has already produced a sequel to C.L. Moore's "Vintage Season" in a similar deal. Asimov is at work on a novel called *Monsters* and is planning a sequel to *Prelude to Foundation* (The ramifications of this are mind-boggling - surely the "sequel" to *Prelude to Foundation* has to be the original *Foundation*!).

The same deal that has seen the Silverberg/Moore "collaboration" has several more sequels to famous originals lined up. These include: Leigh Brackett's "The Jewel of Ben" with sequel by Karen Haber; L. Sprague deCamp's "The Wheels of If" with sequel by Harry Turtledove; Henry Kuttner's "Clash by Night" with sequel by David Drake; and Roger Zelazny's "The Graveyard Book" with sequel by Walter Jon Williams. In each case the money will be split between the new writer and the original (or their estate), but the original writer will not have to contribute anything to the newly packaged book.

And yet another example of the same thing is *Against the Fall of Night* by Arthur C. Clarke which is to have a new sequel by Gregory Benford. Which is strange considering that Clarke himself has long since expanded *Against the Fall of Night* into a much better book, *The City and the Stars*. Nevertheless this new book has already earned Clarke and Benford an advance of \$150,000 each, though Clarke himself is bound by his contract with another publisher to do nothing on this new project.

These strange hybrid books are earning the sort of massive advances that used to be reserved for original work by top selling authors. But there seems to be little room for originality in these packages. Instead publishers seem to have found a way of playing safe not only with familiar authors but with familiar titles also. The combination is more than likely to be successful, but it must keep the authors involved away from producing original work of their own. And with these sorts of

- CONSPIRACY AT CHRISTMAS
- NEW LIFE FOR OLD STORIES
- WORLD / BRITISH FANTASY AWARD WINNERS
- WINGROVE SELLS 7 VOLUME NOVEL
- KATHY GALE MOVES TO PAN

sums involved one wonders if it will allow publishers to find room in their schedules, or their budgets, for such original work if it was produced.

(Paul Kincaid)

AWARDS

The World Fantasy Awards and the British Fantasy Awards were both presented at the World Fantasy Convention in London on 30 October 1988.

The winners of the World Fantasy Awards were:

BEST NOVEL: *Replay* - Ken Kesey
BEST NOVELLA: "Buffalo Gals Won't You Come Out Tonight" - Ursula K. LeGuin
BEST SHORT STORY: "Friend's Best Man" - Jonathan Carroll
BEST ANTHOLOGY: *The Architecture of Fear* - Kathryn Cramer & Peter Pautz (Eds) tied with *The Dark Descent* - David Hartwell (Ed)
BEST COLLECTION: *The Jaguar Hunter* - Lucius Shepard
BEST ARTIST: J.K. Potter
SPECIAL AWARD PROFESSIONAL: David Hartwell
SPECIAL AWARD NON-PROFESSIONAL: *The Horror Show* - David B. Silva tied with *American Fantasy* - Robert & Nancy Garcia
LIFE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD: Everett F. Bleiler

The winners of the British Fantasy Awards were:

AUGUST DERLETH AWARD FOR BEST NOVEL: *The Hungry Moon* - Ramsey Campbell
BEST SHORT STORY: "Leaks" - Steve Rennie
BEST SMALL PRESS: *Dagon* - Carl Ford
BEST FILM: *Hellraiser*
BEST ARTIST: J.K. Potter
ICARUS AWARD FOR MOST PROMISING NEWCOMER: Carl Ford

The 1987 John W. Campbell Memorial Award has been announced. The winner and runners up were:
Lincoln's Dreams - Connie Willis
The Sea and Summer - George Turner (winner of the Arthur C. Clarke Award)
The Unconquered Country - Geoff Ryan

The Campbell Award is chosen by a panel of SF writers and scholars. It was presented during the annual Campbell Conference at the University of Kansas.

Also announced at the Campbell Conference was the winner of the Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award for the best short story of the year. The winner and runners up were:

"Rachel in Love" - Pat Murphy
There was a tie for second place between:
"Buffalo Gals, Won't You Come Out Tonight" - Ursula K. LeGuin
and "The Evening and the Morning and the Night" - Octavia E. Butler.

The judges, who are associated with the journal *Short Form*, also gave honourable mention to "Dinosaurs" - Walter Jon Williams, "The Gift" - Pat Forde, and "Heroics" - James Patrick Kelly.

The annual Locus Readers' Awards have been announced. The winners were:

BEST SF NOVEL: *The Uplift War* - David Brin
BEST FANTASY NOVEL: *Seventh Son* - Orson Scott Card
BEST FIRST NOVEL: *War for the Oaks* - Emma Bull
BEST NON-FICTION: *Weichman* - Alan Moore & Dave Gibbons
BEST NOVELLA: "The Secret Sharer" - Robert Silverberg
BEST NOVELLETTE: "Rachel in Love" - Pat Murphy
BEST SHORT STORY: "Angel" - Pat Cadigan
BEST COLLECTION: *The Jaguar Hunter* - Lucius Shepard
BEST ANTHOLOGY: *The Year's Best Science Fiction, Fourth Annual Collection* - Gardner Dozois (Ed)
BEST ARTIST: Michael Whelan
BEST MAGAZINE: *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*
BEST PUBLISHER: Tor

It's worth noting that with the sword to *Watchmen*, the *Locus* Awards have fallen victim to the same problem which bedevilled the 1987 Hugos when *The Dark Knight Returns* had to be classified as an art book. The Hugos, as a result, were forced to create a new category, *Other Forms*, to cover things like graphic novels and comics in future.

At the same time *Locus* also polled its readers for the *Best All-Time Author* and the *Best '80s Author* although their definition of this last term was deliberately vague. The top five in each category were:

BEST ALL-TIME AUTHOR

Robert A. Heinlein
Isaac Asimov
Arthur C. Clarke
J.R.R. Tolkien
Philip K. Dick

Other than Clarke, 6 British authors made the top 50. They were H.G. Wells at 15, J.G. Ballard at 28, Brian W. Aldiss at 32, Michael Moorcock at 37, Olaf Stapledon at 39 and John Brunner at 48.

BEST '80s AUTHOR

David Brin
Orson Scott Card
Lucius Shepard
Gene Wolfe
William Gibson

The only British writers included on this list are Clive Barker at 27 and Tanthi Lee at 42.

Robert A. Heinlein has been posthumously awarded *NASA's Distinguished Public Service Medal*, the highest award the American Space Agency can give.

The shortlists for the *Prometheus Award* and the *Hall of Fame Award*, both given by the *Libertarian Futurist Society*, have been announced. They are:

PROMETHEUS AWARD

Circuit Breaker - Melinda Snodgrass
First Citizen - Thomas T. Thomas
The Jehovah Contract - Victor Koman
Way of the Pilgrim - Gordon R. Dickson
The Uplift War - David Brin

HALL OF FAME AWARD

Alongside Night - J. Neil Schulman
The Stars My Destination - Alfred Bester
The Dispossessed - Ursula K. LeGuin
This Perfect Day - Ira Levin
We - Yevgeny Zamyatin

The *Saturn Awards*, presented by the *Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films*, have been announced. The winners were:

BEST SF FILM: *Robocop*
BEST FANTASY FILM: *The Princess Bride*
BEST HORROR FILM: *The Lost Boys*
BEST DIRECTOR: Paul Verhoeven for *Robocop*
BEST WRITER: Edward Neumeier & Michael Miner for *Robocop*
BEST ACTOR: Jack Nicholson for *The Witches of Eastwick*
BEST ACTRESS: Jessica Tandy for *Batteries Not Included*
BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR: Richard Dawson for *The Running Man*
BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS: Anne Ramsey for *Throw Moosa from the Train*
BEST COSTUME: *The Princess Bride*
BEST MAKE UP: *Robocop*
BEST SPECIAL EFFECTS: *Robocop*
THE GEORGE PAL MEMORIAL AWARD: Larry Cohen for contributions to genre film-making
THE PRESIDENT'S AWARD: Richard Kaye & Mike Jittlov for *The Wizard of Speed and Time*
LIFE CAREER AWARD: Roger Corman

For possibly the first time in its history the *Booker Prize* went to the favourite, *Oscar and Lucinda* - Peter Carey.

Meanwhile one of the contenders for the *Booker*, *The Satanic Verses* - Salman Rushdie, a novel with strong fantasy overtones, has won the *Whitbread Prize* for best novel, and so has set itself up for the overall *Whitbread Prize*, which is the richest award in British fiction.

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PEOPLE

Former *Vector* Editor David Wingrove has sold seven novels to *NEW ENGLISH LIBRARY* for £125,000. Wingrove's original plan was for four books of half a million words each, and his agent submitted the first half of the first novel, and synopses of the other three. NEL and one other publisher bid for the sequence, and NEL won by suggesting that the four novels be split into seven, for which the total of £125,000 will be paid over a period of years. The first volume of the epic will probably appear next year in hardback.

Annette Kilworth has just taken a job working for the government in Hong Kong, which means that she and husband Garry Kilworth will be out of this country for the next three years.

Chris Morgan has announced the contents of *Dark Fancies*, the original anthology of psychological and supernatural horror stories that is to be published in hardback by *LEGEND* in April 1989, price £11.95.

The stories are: "The Will" - Brian Stableford, "Usurper" - Garry Kilworth, "Life Line" - Stephen Gallagher, "Charley" - A.L. Barker, "Candle Lies" - R.M. Lanning, "Three Tales from Weston Willow" - Ian Watson, "The Facts in the Case of Micky Valdon" - David Langford, "Shine For Me" - Freda Warrington, "Lifeliner" - Christopher Evans, "Dropping Ghylil" - John Brunner, "Don't Get Lost" - Tanthi Lee, "Archway" - Nicholas Royle, "Being an Angel" - Ramsey Campbell, "Interesting Times" - Chris Morgan, "Skin Deep" - Lisa Tuttle, "Three Degrees Over" - Brian Aldiss.

A quick update on the seemingly endless saga of *Arrows of Eros* edited by Alex Stewart. The book now has a firm publication date of August 1989.

Meanwhile *Zenith*, edited by David Gernett, has now been re-scheduled for May 1989, and will be published in time for *Mexico* where it is hoped to launch the book.

It looks like William Gibson will be providing the introduction to the second *Orbit Science Fiction Yearbook*. The best of the year collection will continue to be edited by David S. Gernett and will be published by *FUTURA* in the autumn of 1989.

Meanwhile, *FUTURA* have also secured the UK paperback rights for the next three books by Arthur C. Clarke. These include *Cradle* which has recently been published by *GOLLANCZ* in hardback, and *Race II*. Both have been written in collaboration with Gentry Lee. The third book will be *The Ghost from the Grand Banks*, a science fiction story about the Titanic, which, despite all that Clarke has been saying recently, will apparently not be written with Gentry Lee. *GOLLANCZ* have bought the hardback rights to this book for £1,000, a sum that Clarke insisted on so he wouldn't be tied down to having to write the book at any specific time.

Clarke, meanwhile, has had very welcome news about the medical problems that have been plaguing him in recent years. In 1986 he was informed that he was suffering *Asyptrophic lateral sclerosis*, the same condition that has crippled Dr Stephen Hawking, and it was thought he only had a few years to live. In July this year, however, at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in America, he was diagnosed as suffering the recently discovered *Post-Polio Syndrome* which is considerably less serious.

His illness hasn't affected his output, since Clarke now finds himself involved with 14 books, including three sequels to *Rendezvous with Rams* which are due at the rate of one a year until 1991, as well as the TV series *A Fall of Moondust*.

[Arthur C. Clarke]

During his talk at the *Kent Literature Festival* in Folkestone on 29 October, Iain M. Banks revealed that his most recent novel, *Player of Games* was first written before *The Wasp Factory*. He also revealed that at least two more of the science fiction novels he is planning in the near future will be revised versions of previously unpublished books from the same period, one dating from 1975, and the other from 1979, though he still intends to alternate his SF with mainstream novels.

He also announced that the film version of *The Wasp Factory* has fallen foul of contemporary mores, since Channel Four have refused funding for the film on the grounds that it may be too controversial. Should the necessary finances be raised, the film will not be based on a script by Banks himself, his early attempt at a script was rejected by the film makers.

Ian McDonald, the Belfast-based writer whose work, with the exception of one short story in the new *Other Edens II*, doesn't seem to see the light of day in Britain, has delivered a new novel, his second, to the American publisher BANTAM. It is called *Out on Blue Sky*.

Bob Shaw is working on a third *Orbitville* book, to be called *Orbitville Judgement*. He also has a new short story collection coming from GOLLANCZ to be called *Dark Night in Toyland*. The title story is one he has recently withdrawn from Harlan Ellison's *Last Dangerous Visions*.

Paul McAuley has sold his second novel, *After the Fall*, to DEL REY in America.

Christine Brooke-Rose, whose most recent book is the science fiction novel *Xorandor*, has been awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters by the University of East Anglia. Christine Brooke-Rose is professor of American literature at the University of Paris VIII.

Jane Yolen is going to be living in Edinburgh, where her husband is on sabbatical until 15 December.

OBITUARIES

Charles Addams, the cartoonist who created The Addams Family, died of a heart attack on 29 September 1988. He was 76.

His cartoons, the vast majority of which featured ghouls, monsters, demons, or activities such as the pouring of boiling oil over carol singers, have been appearing in the *New Yorker* since 1935. His sense of the macabre laced with a stringent black humour carried over into his daily life. He described himself as "a defrocked ghoul", and married his last wife in a cemetery for pets with the bride dressed in black. His wife later explained that he "thought it would be nice and cheerful". It was Addams who created one of the most famous cartoons to emerge from the *New Yorker*, in which a skunk's tracks pass either side of a tree, and leading art critics have praised his technical accomplishments. He told James Thurber that his ideas came from homicidal criminals who wrote to him from jail as if his cartoons depicted normal life. The family of ghouls who were a regular feature of his work became the basis for the popular TV series "The Addams Family", but Addams was scathing about this, complaining that his vision had been toned down, or up, for the TV audiences.

Geoffrey Household, the author, died on 4 October 1988, he was 87.

Household, born on 30 November 1900, led an almost archetypal life of action the Balkans, Spain, Latin America and the Middle East, before serving as a Lieutenant colonel in the Intelligence Corps during World War II. To the end of his life he maintained the upright bearing and clipped accent of one of his own terribly British heroes. He turned to writing late, first putting pen to paper to contribute to a children's encyclopedia and then writing radio plays during the Depression in America. His first novel, *The Third Hour*, was published in 1937, but it was with his second, *Rogue Male* (1939) that he achieved the success that overshadowed all his subsequent work. By the time of his death he had over 30 novels to his credit. The most famous of these, and the best, were action stories such as *Rogue Male*, *A Rough Shoot* and *Watcher in the Shadows* which celebrated the loner relying on his own resources. But he essayed a number of styles, including black magic in *The Sending* (1980), and science fiction in *Arrows of Desire* (1985).

John Householder, theatre and film producer turned author and actor, died on 31 October, aged 86. Before becoming an actor at the age of 70 (one of his later appearances was as a mad scientist in *The Bionic Woman*), he was best known for his close collaboration with Orson Welles. He was, with Welles, a co-founder of the Mercury Theatre Company, he co-scripted and produced *Citizen Kane*, and also collaborated with Welles on the famous radio broadcast of *The War of the Worlds* which convinced many Americans that Martians actually had invaded. His death was on the 50th anniversary of that broadcast.

Leonard N. Isaacson, a professor at Michigan State University and one of the founders of the Clarion workshops, died in a car accident in August 1988. He was 49.

Nell R. Jones, the short story writer, died on 15 February 1988, aged 79.

While his work hardly ranks with the greatest science fiction of the century, Jones was one of the mainstays

of the pulp era, and his work was to influence many in the generation of writers who came after him. His first story appeared in 1931 (it is thought to contain the first use of the word "astronaut"), and was soon followed by "The Jameson Satellite" which marked the beginning of his now enduring series. Though the Professor Jameson series ran from 1931 until 1951, such was its popularity that many of the stories were collected in Jones's only books, *The Planet of the Double Sun*, *The Sunless World*, *Space War*, *Twin Worlds* and *Doomsday on Aflit*, in 1967 and 1968. The benevolent aliens who revive Jameson's body and transplant his brain into a robot body, are credited by Isaac Asimov as being one of the influences on his own Robot stories. Two other series that Jones wrote, set in the 24th and 26th centuries respectively, are also significant because although they were pulp space opera the stories did all share a coherent "future history" backdrop. This is one of the first uses of such a device and was probably an influence upon later writers such as Robert Heinlein.

Jones was awarded a First Fandom award at this year's Worldcon, it was collected on his behalf by Jack Williamson.

Eric Larson, the film animator, died in Los Angeles on 30 October 1988 at the age of 83. Among his movie credits as an artist with Walt Disney were *Fantasia*, *Show White*, *One Hundred and One Dalmatians*, *The Jungle Book* and *Sleeping Beauty*.

Ruth Manning-Sanders, the teller of fairy stories and folk tales for children, died on 12 October 1988, aged 100.

Born in August 1888, she won a Shakespeare Scholarship to Manchester University but was forced to give up her studies through illness. She married the artist George Manning-Sanders, spent two seasons with a travelling circus, then settled in Cornwall to write. Her formidable output included several novels, a history of the English circus, and collections of stories for young children. But her fame rests on the retellings of legends, fairy tales and myths for children where her great story-telling skills assured her of a devoted and appreciative audience. The list seems endless: *A Book of Giants*, *Dragons*, *Of Dwarves*, *Witches*, *Spooks* and *Spectres*, *Ogres*, *Trolls*. The most recent, *A Book of Magic Horses*, was published earlier this year.

Mary Morris, the gifted actress whose long and distinguished career in film and on the stage included an appearance as No 2 in *The Prisoner*, died on 14 October 1988, aged 72.

PUBLISHING

Kathy Gale, who was the science fiction editor at NEL, moved to PAN at the beginning of October. There she will be responsible for building their entire genre list, including science fiction, fantasy, horror and crime. Although PAN does have a very reliable SF and fantasy authors on their list, they have virtually no horror and Gale admits that she is starting from scratch. However, PAN seem to be keen to build up a strong list and there is already talk of collaborating with one of the hardback publishers associated with PAN, or even of setting up their own hardback line. Gale reports that she is particularly looking for British authors, especially new authors, and hopes that the future list will have a considerable British representation.

Richard Evans, whose departure from the post of publishing director at MACDONALD/FUTURA was announced last issue, is now publisher of the SF and Fantasy list at HEADLINE. This is a part-time post, and the remainder of the time he will be working as a freelance editor.

SECKER & MARGBURG seems to be the most unsettled of the publishers involved in the recent take-over by OCTOPUS. The most recent change is the departure of editor David Godwin for CAPE, and many SECKER writers now seem to be leaving, or making unhappy noises. One of these is Michael Moorcock who has written to SECKER to complain that their latest changes are "greedy, stupid and short-sighted."

Rupert Murdoch has once again launched a bid to take over COLLINS, the publishing giant which includes GRAFTON and FONTANA. Murdoch already has a 25% stake in the company which dates from his previous takeover attempt in 1983. That attempt was frustrated when most of the major authors published by COLLINS, including Alastair MacLean, threatened to leave the company if Murdoch was successful. There is nothing to suggest that the same thing wouldn't happen again if Murdoch continues to push his bid.

When is an edition not an edition? Apparently when it's from a small press. GRAFTON have just published a paperback of *The Digging Leviathan* by James P. Blaylock which claims it as a "UK Paperback Original", with no mention anywhere of the hardback from MORRIGAN that was published in this country earlier this year.

The reborn *Fantasy Tales* has now appeared from ROBINSON. After 10 years as a semi-professional magazine, the now professional "Paperback Magazine of Fantasy and Terror" is a digest sized book of 104 pages priced 99p. The first issue includes new stories by Charles L. Grant, Lin Carter, Guy N. Smith, C. Bruce Hunter, J.M. Williamson, Chris Morgan, Durrell Schweitzer and David Riley, plus verse from Chris Naylor and Robert E. Howard.

Fantasy Tales will be published twice a year, and a subscription for 4 issues cost £3.60 from Subscription Dept., Robinson Publishing, 11 Shepherd House, Shepherd Street, London W1Y 7LD.

Submissions should be sent to the deputy editor, David A. Sutton, 194 Station Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham B14 7TE.

NEW AND FORTHCOMING BOOKS OCTOBER - DECEMBER

Robert AIGMAN *Cold Hand in Mine* (ROBINSON, pbk, £3.50) 8 classic supernatural stories. The Model (ROBINSON, pbk, £2.95) Rare, highly praised fantasy novel.

Marc ALEXANDER *Ancient Dreams* (HEADLINE, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of 1st part of *The Wells of Ythan*.

Poul & Karen ANDERSON *Gallicene* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn, Book 2 of *The King of Ya*.

Isaac ASIMOV *Fantastic Voyage II Destination Brain* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.99) Reprint (Grafton hbk 1987) of sequel to *Fantastic Voyage: The Moons of Jupiter* (LIGHTNING, pbk, £1.99) Reprint (1954) of juvenile *Lucky Starr and the Moons of Jupiter*.

Greg BEAR *Eve* (LEGEND, pbk, £3.50) reprint (Gollancz 1985).

E.F. BENSON *The Flint Knife* (EQUATION, pbk, £3.50) A collection of 15 "spook stories", all but three of which have never previously appeared in book form.

Michael BISHOP *Philip K. Dick is Dead, Alas* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of alternate history novel.

James P. BLAYLOCK *The Digging Leviathan* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK pbk (hbk from Morrigan).

Ben BOVA *Millennium* (METHUEN, hbk, £11.95) 1st UK edn of 2nd book in *The Kinsman Saga*.

William Zimzel BRADLEY *Ed Sword and Sorceress 3* (HEADLINE, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of orig. fantasy anthology.

Terry BROOKS *Wizard at Large* (FUTURA, pbk, £4.99) 1st UK edn, 3rd of the Magic Kingdom of Landover novels; *The Black Unicorn* (ORBIT, pbk, £2.99) reprint, 2nd of Landover novels.

A.M. BURRAGE *Warning Whispers* (EQUATION, pbk, £3.50) A collection of 17 "weird tales" by an unjustly neglected master of the ghost story.

F.M. BUSBY *Young Rissa* (ORBIT, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn, 1st volume of trilogy.

Octavia BUTLER *Adulthood Rites* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £11.95) 1st UK edn of part 2 of *Xenogenesis*.

R. CHETVYND-HAYES *The Haunted Grange* (KIMBER, hbk, £9.95) 1st edn of new novel about Clavering Grange.

Michael CONEY *Fang the Gnome* (ORBIT, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn, the 3rd volume in the Song of Earth series.

Storm CONSTANTINE *The Enchantments of Love and Hate* (ORBIT, pbk, £4.50) Reprint from 1988 hbk, 2nd book of *Wraiththru*.

Clare COOPER *Ashar of Qarius* (SPRINT, pbk, £3.50) 1st edn of sf novel for teenagers.

Louise COOPER *Inferno* (UNWIN, pbk, £3.50) 1st edn, Indigo Book 2.

Kathryn CRAMER & David G. HARTWELL Eds. *Christmas Ghosts* (ROBINSON, pbk, £5.95) 1st UK edn of collection of 17 ghost stories for Christmas.

Samuel R. DELANY *Tales of Nevryon* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of 1st part of *Nevryon* series (1979 in USA).

Philip K. DICK *Beyond Lies the Wub* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn of Vol 1 of the collected stories of Philip K. Dick.

Gordon R. DICKSON *Way of the Pilgrim* (SPHERE, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn.

William C. DIETZ *Imperial Bounty* (NEL, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of a San McDe novel.

Ru ENGLISH *In the Caves of Exile* (HEADLINE, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn, the 2nd Tale of Medao.

Rose ESTES *The Price of Power* (PENGUIN, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn, Vol 2 of the Mike Traylor, another role playing adventure.

Christopher EVANS & Robert HOLSTOCK Eds. *Other Edens II* (UNWIN, pbk, £3.95) 1st edn of 2nd in orig. anthology series.

Karen Wynn FONSTAD *The Atlas of the Dragonance World* (PENGUIN, pbk, £9.99) 1987 TSR 1st US edn overprinted by PENGUIN, large format.

Frederick S. FRANK *Gothic Fiction* (MCKEYER, hbk, £25) 1st UK edn of "A Master List of 20th Century Criticism and Research".

David S. GARRETT Ed. *The Orbit Science Fiction Yearbook* (ORBIT, pbk, £4.99) 1st edn of new Best of the Year anthology.

Stuart GORDON *The Hidden World* (ORBIT, pbk, £4.99) Reprint from 1986 hbk, 2nd book of the Watchers.

Andrew M. GREELEY *The Final Planet* (LEGEND, hbk, £11.95) 1st UK edn of new SF novel by priest/author of God Game.

John GREIBIN & Marcus CHOWN *Double Planet* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £10.95) 1st edn of SF novel by two noted science writers.

Barbara HANLEY *Immortal Blood* (UNWIN, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of horror novel.

Deborah Turner HARRIS *The Gantlet of Malice* (ORBIT, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn, Book 2 of the Mages of Garillon.

Harry HARRISON *Return to Eden* (GRAFTON, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn of the third volume in the West of Eden trilogy; *The Stainless Steel Rat's Revenge* (BANTAM, pbk, £2.99) Reprint (Faber, 1971) of early adventure in the series.

Tom HENIGHAN *The Well of Time* (FONTANA, pbk, £3.95) 1st UK edn of Viking fantasy.

Frank HERBERT & Bill RANSOM *The Ascension Factor* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn, last part of trilogy begun with *The Jesus Incident* and *The Lazarus Effect*, completed by Ransom after Herbert's death.

James HERBERT *The Fog* (NEL, hbk, £12.95) Reprint of 1975 novel with new introduction by the author.

Robert HOLSTOCK *Lavandysse* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £11.95, pbk, £5.99) 1st edn of the sequel to *Mythago Wood*.

Shaun HUTTON *Victims* (STAR, pbk, £2.99) Reprint of 1987 hbk horror novel.

Gwyneth JONES *Kairos* (UNWIN, hbk, £12.95) 1st edn.

Steven JONES & David SUTTON Eds. *The Best Horror from Fantasy Tales* (ROBINSON, hbk, £11.95) 1st edn reprint anthology inc. Barker, Campbell, Bloch, Leibov, & 16 others.

Marjorie Bradely KELLOGG with William B. ROSSON *Reign of Fire* (VGSF, pbk, £3.99) Reprint of the 2nd part of *Learn's Daughters*.

Garry KILWORTH *Abandonati* (UNWIN, hbk, £12.95) 1st edn.

Bernard KING *Death-Blinder* (NEL, pbk, £2.99) 1st edn of fantasy novel.

Stephen KING & f-stop FITZGERALD *Nightmares in the Sky* (VIKING, hbk, £15.95) 1st UK edn, King introduces atmospheric photographs of New York gargoyles by Fitzgerald.

Mary KIRKPATRICK *The Art of the Dragonance Saga* (PENGUIN, pbk, £5.99) 1st UK edn, large format.

Dean R. KOONTZ *Illus Phil Parks* Created by Christopher ZAVISA *Odikins* (HEADLINE, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn of "A Fable for all ages".

Nancy KRESS *An Alien Light* (LEGEND, hbk, £12.95, pbk, £6.95) 1st UK edn of new novel by award-winning short story writer.

Michael P. KUE-MCDOWELL *Odyssey* (ORBIT, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn, Isaac Asimov's Robot City 1, SF mysteries incorporating the Three Laws of Robotics.

Mercedes LACEY *Arrows of the Queen* (LEGEND, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of fantasy novel.

Daniel J.H. LEVACK & Mark WILLARD *Dune Master: A Frank Herbert Bibliography* (MCKEYER, hbk, £27.50) Detailed annotated bibliography that covers all Herbert's work up to early 1987.

Jack McDEVITT *The Hercules Text* (SPHERE, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of Philip K. Dick Award winner.

Phillip MANN *The Fall of the Families* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.99) Reprint (Gollancz 1987) of sequel to *Master of Paxxax*.

George R.R. MARTIN & Lisa TUTTLE *Windhaven* (VGSF, pbk, £3.99) Reprint (NEL, 1982) of novel about the flyers of stormsewer Windhaven.

Beth MEACHAM Ed. *Terry's Universe* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £11.95) 1st UK edn of original anthology in honour of Terry Carr.

Judith MOFFETT *Panterra* (NEL, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of 1st novel by Sturgeon Award winner.

Michael MOORCOCK *The Cornelius Chronicles 1* (FONTANA, pbk, £4.95) Omnibus reprint of *The Final Programme* and *A Cure for Cancer*; *The Cornelius Chronicles 2* (FONTANA, pbk, £4.95) Omnibus reprint of *The English Assassin* and *The Condition of Muzak*; *Count Brass* (GRAFTON, pbk, £2.50) reprint (Mayflower 1973) of 1st vol of *Chronicles of Count Brass*; *The Legend of Gresthorn* (GRAFTON, pbk, £2.50) reprint (1973) of 2nd vol of *Count Brass*; *The Quest for Tanelorn* (GRAFTON, pbk, £2.50) reprint (Mayflower 1975) of 3rd vol of *Count Brass*.

Any MYERS Ed. *The Fourth Book of After Midnight Stories* (KIMBER, hbk, £9.95) 1st edn of orig ghost story anthology.

E. NESBIT *In the Dark* (EQUATION, pbk, £3.50) 14 ghost stories from a writer better known for her children's fiction.

Kin NEWMAN *Nightmare Movies* (BLOOMSBURY, pbk, £12.95) Revised & updated edn of a critical history of horror movies since 1968.

Terry OAKES *Classic Tales of Horror* (SOUVENIR PRESS, hbk, £6.95) 1st UK edn of "a fiendish pull-the-tab pop-up book".

Clarence PAGET *The 29th Pan Book of Horror Stories* (PAN, pbk, £2.50) 1st edn of mostly original anthology.

Diana L. PAXSON *The White Raven* (NEL, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn of Arthurian fantasy.

Terry PRATCHETT *Wyrd Sisters* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £10.95) 1st edn of new Discworld novel; *Mort* (CORG, pbk, £2.99) Reprint (Gollancz, 1987) of 4th Discworld novel.

Paul PREUSS *Starfire* (SIMON & SCHUSTER, hbk, £11.95) 1st UK edn of book described as a cross between 2001 and The Right Stuff.

Jennifer ROBERTSON *Track of the White Wolf* (CORG, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn, Vol 4 of Chronicles of the Cheyenne.

Michael Scott ROMAN *The Hammer of the Sun* (ORBIT, pbk, £3.50) Reprint from 1987 hbk, volume 3 of Winter of the World.

Joel ROSENBERG *The Sword and the Chain* (GRAFTON, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of Book 2 of Guardians of the Flame.

Alan RYAN *Ed The Penguin Book of Vampire Stories* (PENGUIN, pbk, £4.95) 1st UK edn, 32 stories from Byron and Polidori to Campbell and Lee.

William SCHOLL *Stay Out of the Shower* (ROBINSON, pbk, £6.95) 1st UK edn of examination of "The Shocker Film Phenomenon".

George H. SCITHERS & **Darrell SCHWEITZER** *Tales from the Spaceport Bar* (NEL, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of reprint anthology.

Lucius SHEPARD *The Jaguar Hunter* (PALADIN, pbk, £5.95) 1st UK edn of short story collection.

Susan SHWARTZ *Ed Arabesques* (PAN, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of anthology based on The Arabian Nights.

Robert SILVERBERG *Ed Robert Silverberg's World's of Wonder* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £12.95, pbk, £4.99) 1st UK edn of anthology of classic SF stories annotated by Silverberg.

Cordwainer SMITH *The Instrumentality of Mankind* (VOGF, pbk, £3.50) VOGF Classic 28, 1st UK edn of collection by one of SF's most acclaimed writers.

David C. SMITH *H.G. Wells: Desperately Mortal* (YALE, pbk, £10.95) 1st UK appearance of definitive 1986 biography.

SPEDDING *The Streets of the City* (UNWIN, pbk, £3.95) 1st edn, Book 3 of A Walk in the Dark.

Brian STABLEFORD *The Empire of Fear* (SIMON & SCHUSTER, hbk, £11.95) 1st edn of epic alternative history about vampires.

Mary STANTON *The Heavenly Horse from the Outermost West* (NEL, hbk, £12.95, pbk, £6.95) 1st UK edn of fantasy about horses.

Peter STRAUS *Ed 20 Under 35* (SCSPTRE, pbk, £4.99) 1st edn anthology of original stories by young mainstream writers, includes new story by Iain Banks.

Whitley STREIBER *Transformation: The Breakthrough* (CENTURY, hbk, £10.95) 1st UK edn of his sequel to *Communion*.

Elizabeth Marshall THOMAS *Reindeer Moon* (FONTANA, pbk, £3.95) Reprint (Collins 1987) of prehistoric fantasy.

Patrick TILLIDY *Black River* (SPHERE, pbk, £3.50) 1st edn of Book 4 in The Antrak Wars.

James TIPTREE Jr *The Starry Rift* (SPHERE, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of Tiptree's final novel.

Harry TURKEDDOW *Swords of the Legion* (LEGEND, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of Book 4 of The Videoss Cycle.

Freda WARRINGTON *A Blackbird in Twilight* (NEL, pbk, £3.99) 1st edn of the 4th in the Blackbird sequence.

Ian WATSON *Evil Water* (GRAFTON, pbk, £2.99) Reprint of 1987 collection; *Meat* (HEADLINE, pbk, £2.99) 1st edn of horror novel.

Margaret WEIS & **Tracy HICKMAN** *Dragonlance Chronicles* (PENGUIN, pbk, £7.99) Over 1,000 pages, large format omnibus "Collector's Edition" of *Dragons of Autumn Twilight*, *Dragons of Winter Night* and *Dragons of Spring Dawning*.

Greg WILLIAMSON *Lowland Rider* (HEADLINE, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of horror novel.

Gene WOLFE *Storeys from the Old Hotel* (KEROSINA, hbk, £13.95, Collectors edn £40) 1st edn of new short story collection; *For Rosemary* (KEROSINA, pbk) 1st edn of poetry booklet.

Timothy ZAHN *Triplet* (LEGEND, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn.

Media News

Compiled by John Peters

The new version of the *Batman* myth that Tim Burton has started filming is to be a serious study of the Caped Crusader, and will not be a campy-up remake of the 60s movie. Despite the signing of Michael Heaton as *Batman*, it will not be like their previous collaboration, *Beetlejuice*. To prove this apparently, Keaton will wear a wig to cover his balding forehead. So know you know where the \$35m budget has gone. Of course, that money has also gone on a few incidentals, like a 5 block section of Gotham City, newly designed Batmobiles and Batcoppers and Jack Nicholson's salary. Somehow, with the people involved, I can't believe that this won't be as bizarre as *Beetlejuice*. Still with *Batman*, Sean Young was to play Vicki Vale, a reporter who follows *Batman* and discovers his secret identity, only now she won't. Miss Young broke her arm during rehearsals and has had to be replaced with former Bondgirl Kim Basinger.

There was once a movie called *Outer Heat*, it starred Mandy Patinkin and James Caan, and because another film with a similar title (*Dead Heat*) stiffed, they changed the title to *Alienation*. It didn't help. After a poor reception by American audiences, the producers junked Jerry Goldsmith's soundtrack, and have massively re-edited the film and re-launched it. Look for this one in the video shops rather than your local fleaip.

Trying to imagine Arnold Schwarzenegger and Danny DeVito in the same film is high impossible - yet that has happened recently in Ivan Reitman's new film *Brothers* (formerly *Twins*). The namechange came about because of David Cronenberg's own *Twins*, which itself has been changed to *DeadRingers*. So nobody profited from that change, just another example of Hollywood's folly. All I know about *Brothers* is that the mix and mismatch couple play identical twins (!) and that it is a comedy. But if Arnold Schwarzenegger's foray into comedy fails, he returns next year as *Sergeant Rock*, the well-known comic-book hero. And if that wasn't enough, Schwarzenegger is also due to work with Paul Verhoeven on *Total Recall*, a thriller set on Mars.

Abyss is James Cameron's follow-up to *Aliens*, and, it appears, will be a similar foray into the action-horror-monster style that we all now love. Pre-publicity claims that 'Abyss will be an epic underwater adventure of wonder and discovery', and that new (expensive) camera techniques will be used. Michael Blehn, Ed Harris and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio star alongside the world's largest underwater tanks which can hold over 75 million

gallons of water. What actually happens in the biggest bath in the world is a secret, but morale on the set must be on a high (or low - depending on your point of view) as a sign at the North Carolina studio reputedly reads 'Life's Abyss and then you die'.

One of life's erudite drinkers, Rutger Hauer, has been signed to make *Night Jigger*. Set in a post-apocalyptic Australia, he is a gladiator. Wes Craven has signed a similar deal to John Carpenter's with *Alive* Films - this will give him total control over what projects he makes, providing he keeps to a low budget. Meanwhile, John Carpenter has sold all rights to the Halloween name and Michael Meyer character to the original producer, so he has no involvement with the newly released (in America) *Halloween 4*, which again stars Donald Pleasence. Kathleen Turner anonymously voices the curvaceous Jessica in *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*. The first casualty of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, Denise Crosby, has signed on to make the film of Stephen King's *Pet Sematary*. The latest Chuck Norris epic is *America's Red Army - Delta Force II*. And two titles that defy anyone's imagination: *Lobster Man From Mars*, starring Tony Curtis; and *Piranha Women* and the *Avocado Jungle of Death*, which stars the dynamic duo of Adrienne Barbeau and Shannon Tweed.

And onto a score card of what sequels are coming up: *Hollow 4*, *Goonies 2*, *Heiraiser 2*, *Star Trek 4*; *Beetlejuice 2*, *Halloween 4*; *Chud 2*, *Cocon 2*; *The Fly 2*, *Nightmare on Elm Street 4*; *Indiana Jones 3*, *Psycho 4*; *House 3*, *Maniac 2*; *Toxic Avenger 2*, *Hills Have Eyes 3*; *Alligator 2*; *Sorority House Massacre 2*; *Saturday the 14th 2*, *Beastmaster 2*; *Boggy Creek 2*, *Sleepaway Camp 2*; *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, *Ghostbusters 2*; and lastly, *Gremlins 2*, *The Golem 2*.

And if that lot wasn't bad enough, try some of these new titles: *Dr Hackenstein*, *The Hunchback of UCLA*, *Beverly Hills Vampire*, *Damnation Express*, *The Lair of the White Worm*, *Misery*, *Communion*, *Slipstream*.

The third Indiana Jones film co-stars Sean Connery as Indie's father. Steven Spielberg is directing, and George Lucas producing. Denholm Elliott and John Rhys-Davies return from the first adventure. *The Last Crusade* follows on from the first film, and shooting is being done in Spain, Italy, Jordan, the USA and London. Due for a summer '89 release, expect a lot of hype next year.

Fly 2 is to be directed by Chris Wales, the sfx designer of the Cronenberg sequel. Eric Stolz, who starred in *Mask*, and was replaced by Michael J Fox in *Back to the Future*, will play Seth

Competition Corner

ANSWERS TO COMPETITION 77

1. Pierson's Puppeteers, Larry Niven's Known Space stories.
2. A Hoolooovoo is a superintelligent shade of the colour blue; The Hitch-hiker's Guide to the Galaxy, Douglas Adams.
3. Jommy Cross is a Sian; Sian, A.E. VanVogt.
4. A DBOG is an Earth human; Sector General novels, James White.
5. Winter Wind is the Pe-Elilian tutor; The Eye of the Queen, Phillip Mann.
6. Zat Arras was the Jed of Zodanga; The Gods of Mars, Edgar Rice Burroughs.

Valentine Michael Smith was the son of two members of the First Mars Expedition; Stranger in a Strange Land, Robert Heinlein

Ze Kraggash was "A gentleman from Mars" who exchanged bodies with Marvin Flynn; Mindswap, Robert Shekley

Tweel was a Martian form; A Martian Odyssey, Stanley Weinbaum.

The natives of Sigma Draconis III began life as active males and ended it as sedentary females. During the active male stage they built up credit in the form of the right to mate with the genetically best males when they became female. This led to overbreeding and eventual extinction. Total Eclipse, John Brunner.

8. Jimmie and pals; Starship Troopers, Robert Heinlein.
9. The ravenous bug-blatteer beast of Traal.
10. Steigen-Sterben was a four-armed alien; Star Smashers of the Galaxy Rangers, Harry Harrison.
11. Chocky; Chocky, John Wyndham.
12. The hross inhabited Malacandra; Out of the Silent Planet, C.S. Lewis

The sentient ocean lives on Solaris; Solaris, Stanislaw Lem.

There were only two entries for this competition, so no prizes, but thank you to Jyril Ijaz and P.T. Ross for entering. And on to our Competition last time.

SPACESHIPS

This competition generated a larger than usual response, people seemed to like the idea of drawing up a grid and plotting the answers on it. So maybe we'll do something similar in the near future. Anyway, 10 people entered. Honourable mentions should go to Peter Tennant, Stephen Ealey, and Malcolm Edwards. But even the night of Gollancz couldn't beat the clear winner, David Langford, who got just about the whole damn lot right. Ah well, it'll be harder next time. For the curious, the alien spacecraft should have been plotted as follows:

The answers were:

RAMJET 1:

- Dickson - Dorsal [DD]
- Ellison - Deathbird Stories [ED]
- Engdahl - Enchantress from the Stars [EE]
- Felice - Eclipse [FE]
- Foster - For Love of Mother-Not [FF]
- Gutteridge - Fratricide is a Gas [GF]
- Eglin - Grand Jubilee [EG]
- Farmer - Gods of Riverworld [FG]
- Drake - Hammer's Slammers [DH]
- Effinger - Heroics [EH]

RAMJET 2:

- Kuttner - Mutant [KM]
- Kilworth - Night of Kador [KN]
- Lymington - Night of the Big Heat [LN]
- Lewis - Out of the Silent Planet [LO]
- MacApp - Omha Abides [MO]
- Moorcock - Phoenix in Obsidian [MP]
- Niven - Neutron Star [NN]
- Norman - Outlaw of Gor [NO]
- Offutt - Messenger of Zhuvastou [OM]
- Orwell - Nineteen Eighty Four [ON]

FTL CRUISER 1:

- Simak - City [SC]
- Sturgeon - E Pluribus Unicorn [SE]
- Shekley - Dimension of Miracles [SD]
- Roberts - The Furies [RF]
- Tuttle - Familiar Spirit [TF]

FTL CRUISER 2:

- Gerrold - With a finger in my I [GW]
- Harrison - Tunnel Through the Deep [HT]
- Heinlein - Universe [HU]
- Harrison - Viriconium Nights [HV]
- Ing - Wild Country [IW]

STL CRUISER 1:

- Nowlan - Armageddon 2419AD [NA]
- Norton - Beastmaster [NB]

STL CRUISER 2:

- Anthony - Juxtaposition [AJ]
- Anderson - Knight of Ghosts and Shadows [AK]

STL CRUISER 3:

- Russell - Sinister Barrier [RS]
- Shaw - Ship of Strangers [SS]

STL CRUISER 4:

- VanVogt - Voyage of the Space Beagle [VV]
- Varley - Wizard [VW]

SCOUT SHIPS

- 1: Watson - Queenmagic, Kingmagic [WQ]
- 2: MacLeod - Xanthe and the Robots [MX]
- 3: Varley - In the Hall of the Martian Kings [VH]
- 4: George - Rad Alert [GR]
- 5: Holdstock - Lavondyss [HL]
- 6: Jones - Fire and Hemlock [JF]
- 7: Ballard - Terminal Beach [BT]
- 8: Zelazny - Sign of the Unicorn [ZS]
- 9: Tiptree - Warm Worlds and Otherwise [TW]
- 10: Priest - Inverted World [PI]

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MATRIX 79 COMPETITION

Hidden within this square are the surnames of 28 science fiction authors. They could run backwards or forwards, up or down, or diagonally. All you have to do is find them. Then send the list of names to the editorial address by the next deadline.

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

COMPETITIONS EDITOR WANTED

After noble service, Liz Sourbut has decided that she can tax our brains no further. I'd like to thank Liz for the work she has done over the last couple of years. If you fancy your skills as a deviser of fiendish competitions (well, not too fiendish), write to the editor outlining your ideas.

Media Reviews

BEETLEJUICE (15)

by Martin Tudor.

The director of *BEETLEJUICE*, Tim Burton described the film recently as "a comic version of *THE EXORCIST*, done from the dead people's point of view". (*The Guardian*, 18th August). But a more accurate description would be 'GHOSTBUSTERS in reverse'.

The story begins with Adam and Barbara Maitland (played by Alec Baldwin and Geena Davis) being killed in a bizarre car accident a short distance from their beloved home. They soon discover that in the afterlife they are bound to the house they loved so much and prepare to spend eternity pottering around their house and struggling to understand their 'Handbook for the Recently Deceased'. Unfortunately their (after)life is suddenly disrupted when their quaint New England home is bought by the pretentiously trendy Deetzes.

The Deetzes consist of neurotic sculptor Delia (Catherine O'Hara), her real estate executive husband Charles (played by Jeffrey Jones who you may have the misfortune to remember as The Dark Overlord from *HOWARD THE DUCK* and their death-obsessed Gothic daughter Lydia (Winona Ryder).

Under the dubious guidance of her appalling chic interior designer Otho, Delia proceeds to tear apart the quaint New England house, rebuilding it in a kind of 'trendy' pseudo-designer style - as the Maitlands watch helpless and horrified.

In a desperate attempt to rid themselves of the dreadful Deetzes, Adam and Barbara make some clumsy attempts to scare them off, which go unnoticed by everyone (except Lydia who befriends them). Eventually having exhausted the bizarre 'social security service' of the after-life, they reluctantly hire the self-proclaimed 'bio-exorcist' Beetlejuice.

Although an uneven film, which is never really hilarious nor particularly frightening, *BEETLEJUICE* is generally good fun, and might well develop a cult following.

THE RUNNING MAN

Directed by Paul Michael Glaser

Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Maria Conchita Alonso

Reviewed by Jon Moran and Robert Ziman-Bright

IT'S 2019 AND AMERICA IS CONTROLLED BY A RIGID POLICE state which suppresses all dissent. Lawbreakers have two choices: take hard labour or the chance to be *The Running Man*, the prey on a TV game show used to keep the masses happy.

When good-guy police officer, Ben Richards (Arnold Schwarzenegger) refuses to fire on unarmed food rioters, he's framed and thrown in the slammer, from which he escapes, only to be framed by his forced companion (Maria Conchita Alonso) as they try to leave the country. So Arnie, two fellow escapees and the girl end up on *The Running Man*, trying to keep ahead of the sadistic hunters on their trail, and - just a little implausibly - hoping to break into the airwaves to spread the subversive message of freedom.

Despite being adapted from the novel by Stephen King (writing as Richard Bachman), this bears little resemblance to a typical King project; this is comic book stuff, garishly coloured, fast moving and brutal. It's also Arnie's film, and he's at his usual best, disposing of the various psychopaths who the mindless audience send after him. Only the character of Damon Kilian, host of *The Running Man*, threatens to break Arnie's dominance. He's a true-to-life copy of TV gameshow hosts, both sides of the Atlantic, that is, plastic, slightly tacky, and oozing sincerity from every pore.

Suggestively directing this pot-pourri of rock stars, rock stars' sons and ex-stars is, appropriately, Paul Michael Glaser of *Starsky and Hutch* fame. The end-product is vicious and almost satirical, but if you've seen Arnie before, don't expect anything wildly original.

[Jon Moran]

LOS ANGELES IN 2019. SHORTAGES OF EVERYTHING have turned America into a police state. A police lieutenant (Arnold Schwarzenegger) is ordered to use his chopper to wipe out an unarmed crowd of food rioters. He refuses and is next seen, some months later, organising a prisonbreak from his death camp. Among his ex-prison buddies are some freedom fighters who want him to join the resistance, but Arnie just wants to go it alone and head for sunnier climes.

Of course, he gets caught and is tricked into "volunteering" for a gameshow, *The Running Man*, a cross between *The Price Is Right* and *Rollerball*. This game show, run by the justice department, is an attempt to keep the hungry masses amused, and to show what will happen if they get out of line. Criminals don't go on trial, they have to run for their lives, pursued by TV idol "stalkers", while people watch on giant billboard TVs, and place bets on which idol will kill the running man first. Hunted by these pros, armed with chain saws, razor sharp hockey sticks and flame throwers, our Arnie, aided by only a place of wire, flexing biceps, and some of the corniest over-liners since James Bond, proceeds to put them into permanent retirement. Not only that, the crowds begin to bet on him against the stalkers, he finds the secret transmitter which allows the underground to bean the truth about the corrupt system to the watching masses, goes back to get the baddie, and the girl in the end. What a man!

That's the plot, now is it worth going to see? If you like Arnie Schwarz, especially when he doesn't have excessive dialogue, i.e. more than two words together; like a good tongue-in-cheek action film; aren't too bothered by the sloppy ending and like a film where you can cheer with the rest of them (like Robocop), then you'll like this. I always judge a film by whether, at the end, it seemed to be too long, and whether I enjoyed it. It didn't and I did.

[Robert Ziman-Bright]

AMERICAN EAGLE written by Chris Amos

Directed by John Retallack for Phoenix Beam Theatre Company.

Reviewed by Michael R Gould

HERE'S SOMETHING REFRESHINGLY NEW IN THE THEATRE. *American Eagle* is either the story of latter 20th century America, told through super-hero comics, or the history of super-hero comics told via the history of America. You can take your pick as it encompasses both.

It starts in the offices of Miracle Comics as America is entering the Second World War. Times are changing, and comics need a new hero to reflect the modern America. The brainstorming session produces *American Eagle*, alter-ego all-American wimp, Bobby Brown. As the cast form themselves into a giant typewriter, we enter the comic and see Eagle's origin, entry into the war and battle with his arch enemy, 'The Scarlet Claw', culminating with both being put on ice for the duration of the communist witch-hunts. When he returns, times have changed, but *American Eagle* hasn't, leading him to blunder through the swinging 60s, Vietnam, Watergate, the Contra affair and terrorist outrages, using the same rules he used in the 40s.

Using minimal sets, costumes and lighting, and with only 6 actors to play 20 major and many other minor characters, the play moves at breakneck speed, contains audience participation and improvisation. It is very funny, and occasionally powerfully dramatic. Chris Amos's writing also manages to capture the mood of the comic by incorporating page-turners, adverts and patronising warnings such as those you might find in real comics. The story itself switches with ease between the fantasy world of the comic, the policy battles in the office and the real world outside.

The play is touring until at least February 1989, possibly longer. It's a must for comic fans, and should be of interest to anyone who likes an entertaining and thought-provoking evening. To find out if it's playing near you, ring Phoenix Beam on 01-735 7471.

WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT?

Reviewed by S D Rothman

THIS FILM IS SET IN A 1947 HOLLYWOOD, WHERE CARTOON characters ("toons") are living beings, inhabiting the adjacent Toontown. Bob Hoskins plays private eye, Eddie Valiant, who is hired by studio owner, R K Maroon, to investigate rumours of a relationship between Marvin Acme, owner of Toontown, and Jessica, wife of one of Maroon's stars, Roger Rabbit. Valiant's photographs of Jessica and Acme are shown to Roger Rabbit, and when Acme is found murdered, Roger is the obvious suspect. Because of Valiant's reputation for helping toons, and despite his role in the affair, Roger turns to Valiant for a hiding place, and for assistance in proving his innocence. Valiant agrees, initially because of his disgust at the summary justice that Judge Doom, who is responsible for Toontown, would mete out to Roger, but later because of his realisation that he was set-up to provide the apparent motive: the photos of Jessica and Acme.

continued overleaf

Local Fanomena

The Clubs Column

Compiled by Keith Mitchell

FANNISH LIFE IN LONDON IS BY NO MEANS CONFINED TO THE monthly Wellington and BSFA meetings. There are also a lot of smaller groups meeting in different districts of London, generally once or twice a month, in the weeks when there are no London-wide meetings. One of the more recently formed of these groups is about to stage what could be thought of as a fannish "roots revival".

They are about to move their meetings to the **White Horse** (formerly **White Hart**) in the city, one of the earliest venues British fandom has known. Driven from a nearby pub by that perennial band of pub SF meetings, an overland juke-box, Owen Whitehead and a few others intend to start meeting there on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of every month. It can be found in Fetter Lane, Holborn, near Chancery Lane tube. They generally meet from about 8.30 onwards, but it's probably a good idea to give Owen a call on 01-704 7029 to confirm before going.

London local groups are an area where I'm a bit short on information, so I would appreciate hearing from anyone else who goes along to gatherings like these.

A theme which has often popped up in correspondence I've received, is that of people asking for advice on, or volunteering suggestions for, starting up and publicising local groups. Rather than respond to these individually, I thought it might be worthwhile to give a few guidelines which could be of general help. A lot of it is probably common sense and quite obvious, but maybe I'll come up with something you hadn't thought of before.

The first rather obvious point is to make sure that no groups already exist in your area. I'm trying to help as much as I can here, but some groups can be less than easy to track down - try looking in all the places you would put publicity yourself, first.

Something which is quite important to think about is what sort of meetings you want - do you want a formal programme, or just a chat with some like-minded friends? The latter tends to be more common, simply because the effort of arranging speakers, events etc. on a regular basis can be quite difficult to sustain.

Venue and frequency should also be sorted out a bit before you start. Informal meetings are usually in a pub, but have also been known to take place in people's homes. Both have their pros and cons - since fans mainly like to chat, it pays not to have a pub which is too busy or noisy. Homes are peaceful and comfy, but can get too small, and can be daunting for newcomers.

For more formal meetings, function rooms can be booked from places like pubs, clubs, hotels and unions. You can do this for informal meetings too, but quite a lot of drink needs to be bought from the bar before your group will get out of paying for the room!

How often you meet is largely a matter of personal preference. Formal meetings are generally once a month. Twice a month, or weekly, however, work quite well for the less organised style of meeting. In general, when you want to attract newcomers, given weekdays in each month (e.g. 1st/3rd or 2nd/4th weeks), are easier to track down than "every fortnight".

The next step is publicity. Effort is best concentrated on bookshops and libraries, particularly those which specialise in SF or have SF departments. Most shops will happily let you put up posters, provided they are not big chains like W H Smith, who, even if you do agree to it, change their displays so often your poster will be lucky to last a couple of weeks.

Libraries are generally helpful with this sort of thing.

Based on the novel, *Who Censored Roger Rabbit?* the film is more than a hastily thrown together vehicle for a new technological gimmick. However, the inevitable happy ending is rather contrived, and undoubtedly the main interest is the combination of live action and animation. This is generally technically excellent, but of much greater appeal are the old jokes and clichés from vintage cartoons which are sprinkled throughout the film. By far the most enthusiastic audience reaction, when I saw the film, was to a familiar situation or character. Most famous cartoon characters are here: Mickey Mouse, Donald and Daffy Ducks (in a marvellous cabaret piano duet), Bugs Bunny, Droopy and most others you could name. Bob

and quite often will circulate material from their central branch to all the others for you if you give them enough. Posters are not, of course, the only way you can advertise your group - leaflets or handbills are also a good idea. One trick is bookmarks - these can be put into all the SF books in a library. The Chester group recently reported some success with this. However, beware of librarians who don't take kindly to bump in their books. When trying this, or any other publicity method, it's generally best to get permission first.

Another way to publicise your group is, of course, through circulating any fanzines or other publications you do. The most drastic method of pulling in new members is to have a regional convention, but given the effort involved and risk of failure, I don't recommend this unless you really know what you are letting yourself in for!

If the group you are trying to set up is at university, then life can be quite a bit easier. There will generally be a range of ready-supplied venues and publicity facilities, and a new intake of recruits every year. This can be readily tapped into during Freshers Week. A group with sufficient members also stands a chance of some funds from the Union, if it can get "official" status.

The disadvantages of groups at universities, colleges and polytechnics is the inevitably high turnover of faces. People rarely stay around for more than 3 or 4 years, which can lead to a lack of continuity. The groups of this type which seem to last the longest are those which allow membership from non- or ex-students, though this can sometimes be difficult if Union facilities.

I think that about rounds up this brief guide to starting a local group - if anyone has any suggestions or questions covering areas I've missed, then I'd be glad to hear from you.

Continuing the theme of university groups, I've still had a rather disappointing response from those, so don't have any sort of list to publish. I know the problem - I belong to the *Kent University Sci FI Society*, and they don't even bother to circulate information on forthcoming events to their own members. As to the whereabouts of the two thousand volume library... - MSP!

However, I did hear from Ian Brooks of the University of Manchester SF and Fantasy Society, **Warped**, who had quite a lot to say about the society's activities.

WARPED boasts a relatively large membership (over 100), of whom about half turn up regularly. Meetings happen every Monday in the Union, off Oxford Road, around 7.30 pm. They have a varied programme, including debates, quizzes, guest authors, videos, and costume pub crawls, and have arranged discount for members at a local specialist bookshop.

Membership is not just open to students, though you have to be a member, student or guest to get into the meetings. It costs £1.50 a year, and you can find out more from the Society president, Mark Slater, c/o the Students Union, University of Manchester, Oxford Rd, Manchester, or from Ian at 267 Heald Place, Manchester M14 5NJ, during term time. My thanks to Ian, and hopefully I'll have more to report next time.

John Peters tells me that the *Drake Science Fiction Association* is currently homeless, but meeting in temporary premises, so those interested in a meeting in Plymouth are asked to contact John on 0752 785853, or write to him at 299 Southway Drive, Southway, Plymouth, Devon PL6 6GN.

But apart from that, there has been no response to my appeals for information about media and other specialist groups. Please, if you belong to a *Blakes* 7, *Star Trek*, *Hitch Hikers* group or anything else which might be remotely of interest - any comics groups, or anything like that? - please let me know about yourselves, and take advantage of a little free publicity.

Hoskins does well to avoid being upstaged by his 2-D co-stars, mostly by underplaying his role, but aided by a script containing some superb one-liners and a measure of satire (which may, however, be aimed more at a US audience).

Roger Rabbit has been one of the top-grossing US films this summer, and judging by the reaction to it at Nolacon II, not to mention the proliferation of T-shirts and badges, it's on its way to becoming a cult movie. I think the response is justified. It's a fun film, with a good mix of adult and juvenile (meaning nostalgic) humour, and a fine first attempt at using a new movie form. Anyone who has ever laughed at the old cartoons will laugh at this, and so will many more.

The Periodic Table

1989 CONVENTIONS

CONTAGIBLE - 3-5 February, Chequers Hotel, Newbury. Membership: Attending £12 (but rising soon), supporting £5. Contact: 7a Mill Road, Cambridge, CB1 2AB. Hotel £20 ppn, no surcharge for singles. This includes continental breakfast. This is Britain's first convention devoted exclusively to film singing.

MICRODON 9 - 4-5 March, Exeter University. Guests: Dave Gibbons, Dave McKean. Membership £5. Contact: Richmond Hunt, 51 Dances Rd, Exeter, Devon, EX4 4LS

CONTRIVANCE - 1989 British SF Convention/Eastercon 24-27 March 1989, Jersey. Guests: Anne McCaffrey/M. John Harrison/Avedon Carol/Rob Hansen, surprise artist guest; Membership: Attending £18 Supporting £9; Contact: 63 Drake Rd, Chessington, Surrey

SOL III - 28 April-1 May, Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool. Guest: tba. Contact: 39 Dersingham Ave, Manor Park, London, E12 5GF. Trek con

ULTRAWORLD - 28-29 May, Unicorn Hotel, Bristol. Membership: One day - £8, two days - £15, supporting £4. One day/two day memberships increase by £1 after 1/1/89. Contact: Steve Brittain, 8 Springfield, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 1BB. Media con.

MEKICON III - 26-29 May, Albany Hotel, Nottingham. Membership: £15, cheques made payable to 'Mekicon 3'. Contact: Greg Pickersgill, 7a Lawrence Rd, South Ealing, London W5 4XJ. Literacy-based convention concentrating on science fiction.

ICONOCLASM (formerly Lucon II) - 16-18 June, Griffin Hotel, Leeds. Guests: Diane Duane, Peter Morwood. Membership: Attending £9, Supporting £4. Contact: Jenny Glover, 16 Avary Place, Armley, Leeds, LS12 2NF. General con.

CAROUSEL - 24-25 June, Holiday Inn, Cardiff. Membership: both days £15, one day £8, supporting £4. Contact: Carousell '89, 76 Thwaites Ave, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA14 1AN. Dr Who con.

INTERCON 89 - Norcon 8, 4-6 August, Oslo, Norway. Guests: Samuel R Delaney, Tor Age Bringsvaerd. Membership: £5 until 1/1/89, afterwards £10. Contact: UK Agent: Kev McVeigh, 37 Firs Rd, Milnthorpe, Cumbria, LA7 7GF. General con.

UNICON - Unicon, 1989, 11-13 August, Queens University Halls of Residence and Student Union, Belfast. Guests: Iain Banks, Terry Pratchett; Membership: Attending £6 until the end of the year, possibly longer, supporting membership £2. Cheques should be made payable to Nicon, and sent to Contact: Joe McElally, 106 Somerton Rd, Belfast, BT15 4DG

TYNESIDE INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE FICTION (sic) FESTIVAL - 9-15 August, Newcastle. Contact: Amanda Cable, 30 Wilkinson Court, Jarrold, Tyne and Wear, NE32 3NQ. A week-long festival with planned events.

HONEYCOMB - 25-28 August, Wiltshire Hotel, Swindon. Membership: Attending £18. Contact: Daniel Cohen, 48 Gurney Drive, East Finchley, London, N2. Media/Dr Who con

RECON - 25-28 August, Hilton National (formerly Dragonara Hotel), Leeds. Membership: Attending £20, day membership £5. Contact: Alec Lewis, 230 Dyas Ave, Great Barr, Birmingham, B42 1HS. Trek con, plus all night horror programme.

EUROCON, Republic of San Marino. Contact: Organising Committee, c/o Adolfo Morganti, Via Cappellini 14, 47037 Rimini, Italy.

NOREASCON III - The 47th Worldcon; 31 August - 4 September, Boston, MA; Guests: Andre Norton/Betty & Ian Ballantine/The Stranger Club; Contact: Colin Fine, 28 Abbey Rd, Cambridge, CB5 8HQ

PREFAB TROUT - 22-24 September, Swallow Hotel, Glasgow; Membership: £10 attending, £5 supporting. Guests: tba. Contact: Malcolm Reid, 55 Cedarwood Ave, Newton Mearns, Glasgow G77 5LP. General con.

NOVACON 19 - Annual Brum Group con, 27-30 October, Birmingham. Guests: tba. Membership: £10; Contact: Bernie Evans, 7 Grove Avenue, Acocks Green, Birmingham, B27 7UY. General con.

CONSCRIPTION 24-25 September, Birmingham

Reviewed by Valerie Housden

THIS WAS THE CONRUNNERS' CONVENTION, WHERE THE OLD HANDS could swap experiences, and the neos could learn how it is done. Born out of the Worldcon fiasco, and held in the wake of a highly successful Eastercon, Conscription was useful, informative and fun.

The two days were split into four main sessions, covering major areas of convention running: Organisation, Hotel, Programming and Operations. Each session had its own chairman; keynote speaker, speaking for about fifteen minutes; and facilitators, who chaired the discussion groups and reported back the plenary at the end of the session. As a facilitator in the final session, with the topic *How do you deal with contingencies on the day?* for discussion, I had to appoint someone as note-taker; agree a structure for discussion; ensure that we covered all the points; ensure that those who liked the sound of their own voices, did not monopolize the discussion; prevent verbal abuse/physical violence/murder; and report back to the convention in an articulate, confident and entertaining manner, using someone else's notes. This was hard work, not only because most of those in my group knew far more about the subject than I did, but also because I had not received my instructions before the convention so was working extempore.

Themes which emerged repeatedly included: the necessity of establishing and maintaining good communications with all concerned; maintaining enthusiasm; and having a vision - i.e. why are we, the committee, holding this particular convention? What do we hope to achieve? We all agreed that the Information Gopher, an innovation at Follycon, was an extremely useful ops function which will undoubtedly be used again at future cons.

Many of the problems discussed seemed to be peculiar to Eastercons and Worldcons - problems such as: must the programme always include a GQH speech/masquerade/banquet/film show? Is the Film Show part of the programme? Is the art show? Or breakfast? All of which was of little relevance to neo conrunners intending to run a convention for 150 or so punters, and who were more interested in the nitty gritty, like: How do I find out who to contact for tech ops/speakers or panelists on specialist subjects? Is there a checklist of useful information, such as who not to invite as GQH?

The evenings were completely unprogrammed, and more enjoyable for that. Experienced conrunners sat in the bar and talked about SF for a change. On Friday night, most people took part in a worldcon-running game - my team ended up with negative goodwill (a Conscription catchphrase), and negative people and finance points, and on Saturday night we adjourned to the Iconoclasm room party for filking, drinking, SF-related conversation and more filking.

Apart from the acknowledged problems with the hotel bar, the few criticisms raised at the business meeting centred around topics not covered by Conscription, such as tech ops, finance and the particular problems of running a small convention. Furthermore, the committee revealed that Conscription had made a respectable surplus, and thus they were able to give a token of gratitude, a bottle of wine, to all the keynote speakers, session chairmen and facilitators, and also to Barbara Mascetti, who had come to Birmingham to keep an eye on husband Hugh, and who ended up running the registration desk.

ARMADACON 23-25 September, Plymouth

Reviewed by Rob Matthews

ARMADACON WAS A FIRST ON TWO COUNTS. IT WAS THE FIRST convention ever organised by the Drake Science Fiction Association, and was also the first convention I'd attended. The Guests of Honour were Katherine Kurtz, Adrian Cole and the actor Brian Croucher.

The convention started on Saturday morning, after a highly disorganised registration period the previous night. The first speaker was Katherine Kurtz, who provided us with the early origins of her Deryn novels, and also gave hints of much more to come. After the book signing (guess who left all his at home), there was a panel with the local boy, Adrian Cole, entitled *Worldbuilding*, which I managed to miss - a shame as his *Omran Saga* shows lots of talent.

In the afternoon there was a panel with Brian Croucher, best known for the role of Travis in *Blake's 7*, but also a seasoned film and television actor. The panel was very amusing as Croucher came across as an Oliver Reed-type character, very brash, ebullient and self-assured. In the evening, the convention left the centre for a local pub and an enjoyable buffet. Afterwards, Katherine Kurtz gave a long reading from her forthcoming novel, *The Harrowing* of Gwynedd, the highlight of

the convention for me.

On Sunday, there was a joint question-and-answer session with Katherine Kurtz and Adrian Cole, followed by a charity auction, enthusiastically presided over by Brian Croucher, all profits going to the Plymouth Special Baby Care Unit. The closing ceremony was held mid-afternoon, and then followed by two small panels with Katherine Kurtz and Brian Croucher.

There was the usual television room, and feature films, and stalls selling books, comics and games. Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend, and hope that the Drake SF Association aren't put off organising another one sometime in the future.

NICON III - 16-19 September, Belfast

Reviewed by Gerard Raymond

THE REBIRTH OF SF FANDOM IN NORTHERN IRELAND HAS BEEN A painfully slow process. It has the unenviable task of living in the shadow of the Willis/Shaw/White/Hyphen reputation. This has been one of the third convention ever in Northern Ireland, and as yet, Irish fans remain ambivalent to the whole idea of conventions. Despite the tremendous efforts of the organising committee, notably Joe McNally and Tommy Ferguson (who reportedly collapsed from exhaustion on the second day), the turnout was poor.

Audience figures reached their nadir at the SF Call My Bluff panel, when one person left, and the panel called for a third of the audience to return. Although this did distract somewhat from the festivities, some events were highly enjoyable, including SF Call My Bluff. The same was not true of the first event of the evening, SF Charades. I, for one, could not hear the suggestions of the panel, which rather detracted from my enjoyment, a serious defect on the first night, when it was the only event of the evening.

Surprise, surprise - the con timetable went astray, causing some events to be postponed or cancelled on Saturday. First up was the Prisoner talk, given by Peter Dunn, which covered the origins and philosophical aspects of the series. The talk began with a voice from the back, echoing the first words spoken at the start of each episode. All rather dramatic, but wasted on the audience as they did not notice until it was nearly finished. After more shuffling of the timetable, the fanzine workshop went ahead, given by Tommy Ferguson. Again, this suffered from lack of numbers, and resulted in the production of a flyer (the least said about which, the better), with a pre-World War One duplicator.

Highlights of Saturday were the interviews with James White and Paul Campbell. The likeable James White discussed his early work and his past involvement with Irish fandom, most notably with Hyphen, and his desire to become an illustrator. The Paul Campbell interview was a fascinating insight into the downfall of Extrix, the early eighties SF magazine that was killed off by a lack of support from the two main UK distributors. From reading copies available at the con, it is interesting to note the contrast between it and the early Interzone. The new, mass market, Interzone, however, is strikingly similar in tone.

Sunday morning convened with the AGM of Queen's University SF Society, important as it discussed the arrangements for Unicorn X, to be held at Queens in 1989. On can only hope that attendance will significantly increase. The writers workshop followed, and again, audience participation was poor, but James White gave an interesting insight into his writing methods. The workshop failed in trying to cover too broad an area, including novel, short story and RPG scenario writing.

The Guest of Honour was Katherine Kurtz, who spoke on a variety of topics, including her endless trilogies, her work for the LAFD, and her move to a castle in Ireland. She even told us how she talked to her horse, to reassure it that she was only going on holiday and would be returning (I kid you not).

Other events included an SF quiz, an exceedingly humorous turkey buffet, which plumbed the depths of the worst in SF, and a showing of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, though it was slightly disappointing that no one turned up in costume. The closing ceremony was postponed when the organising committee asked for a discussion on what went wrong with the con; needless to say, it was a lengthy discussion. But all in all, given its shortcomings, it was still a rather enjoyable con.

MAVERICK #8 - Jenny Glover (16 Aviary Place, Armley, Leeds, LS12 2NP) [g/tu] A4 this time, rather than the customary A5, but still as interesting as ever.

MIMOSA #5 - Dick & Nicki Lynch (4207 Davis Lane, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37416, USA) [g/tu] A meaty looking zine.

Fire & Hemlock

AMENDAGNA #1 - Terry Frost, (GPO Box 1808, Sydney 2001, Australia) [7/tu] Looks highly idiosyncratic, beautiful Brad Foster cover.

BALLOONS OVER BRISTOL #2 - Christina Lake & Peter-Fred Thompson (47 Wessex Ave, Horfield, Bristol, BS7 0OE) [g/tu], packets of maitreses, strawberry daiquiris, donations to TAFF (SOP) Another stylish production from the Bristolian urban terrorists.

COLD TONNAGE BOOKS - Andy Richard (136 New Road, Bedford, Feltham, Middx, TW14 8HT) [7/7] This is a book catalogue with knobs on. Andy is seeking to promote discussion, and invites comments. As he pointed out, he's all for breaking down the barriers. Perhaps I ought to rethink my own catalogues.

CONRUNNER #9, #10 - Ian Sorenson (7 Woodside Walk, Hamilton, ML3 7HY - note new address!g/locs etc) As always, a must for those into conrunning. The cover of #9 is particularly striking.

CRITICAL WAVE #8 - Steve Green (33 Scott Road, Olton, Solihull, B92) [E3 for 6 issues] Not quite as indispensable as one might be led to believe, and the Brum duplicator jinx is showing on my copy, but certainly useful.

EFINKUKESIN #2 - Kev McVeigh, 37 Firs Rd, Milnthorpe, Cumbria, LA7 7GF) [g/tu] An improvement on issue 1 - margins, decent layout, though the reduced print is a little hard on the eyes. Contents look promising, too.

EMPTIES #10 - Martin Tudor (121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands) [g/tu] Mixture of letters and fanzine listings this time around, but always useful.

ETA #2 - Rob Hansen (144 Plashet Grove, East Ham, London, E5 1AB) [semi-p/tu] Notable for a sequence of postcards from Spike Parsons as she travelled cross-country from Wisconsin to New Orleans by car, with descriptions of the postcards from Rob.

EYEBALLS IN THE SKY #5 - Tony Berry (7 Causeway Mews, Robin Hood Way, Nottingham, NG2 1PT) [g/tu] Another fanzine emerging from obscurity. Tony joins Martin Tudor in getting sacked, and publishes a theme-zine about obsessions.

FACT SHEET FIVE #27 - Mike Gunderloy (6 Arizona Ave, Rensselaer, NY 12144, USA) [7/tu] Indispensable listing zine.

FLOKERS/FRAMES #2, #3 - John Peters (299 Southway Drive, Southway, Plymouth, Devon, PL6 6QN) [10p a copy] A small news/reviews zine. As John says, fanzines 'can be anything you want them to be. This is mine'. And FNF certainly has a distinctive, very pleasant editorial tone, as well as some nifty DTP layout.

FUCK THE TORIES #5 - Joseph Nicholas and Judith Hanna (22 Denbigh St, Plimlico, London, SW1 2ER) [g/tu] Must be something in the air. Another fanzine re-emerges, this one notable for a strong political bias.

KAMERA OSKURA #3 - Owen Whiteoak (Top Flat, 11 Morsell Rd, Highbury, London, N5 1XL) [g/tu] More of Owen's own inimitable view of life.

LAN'S LANTERN #26 - George 'Lan' Laskowski (55 Valley way, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013, USA) [g/tu] well genuine is hardly adequate to describe this mixture of fan articles and reviews. Worth seeing, I think.

LARKIN #18 - Perry Middeniess (GPO Box 2708X, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, Australia) and Irwin Hirsch (2/416 Dandenong Rd, Caulfield North, Victoria 3161, Australia) [p/tu] Anecdotal - helps to know the names, enjoyable when you do.

LIP #4 - Hazel Ashworth (16 Rockville Dr, Embay, Skipton, N Yorks, BD23 6NX) [g/tu] Nova Award-winning fanzine, including work from Nova Award-winning fanwriter, Michael Ashley, and ditto likewise artist, D West. Essential reading.

NOWHERE FAST #4 - Harry Bond & Elizabeth Ave, Bagshot, Surrey, GU19 5NX) [g/tu] Another zine which is looking better, though still relentlessly Fannish even if rather more readable than it once was. Not for those who feel alienated by Jargon.

NITZ #7 - Pat Wells (24a Beach Road, Boves Park, London, N11 2DA) [g/tu] And yet another zine back from the dead. Always thought-provoking, always a really good letter column, an object lesson on how to produce a good zine.

PULP #10 - John Harvey (8 The Orchard, Tonwell, Herts, SG11 1EP) [g/tu] Includes work from Dave Langford, Church Harris and a perceptive fanzine review from the ubiquitous Harry Bond.

SORENED UP LETTERS #4 - Alan J Sullivan (c/o 13 Weir Gardens, Rayleigh, Essex, SS6 7TH) [g/tu] Layout and repro has improved on this, [like] the same thing. More fanzine reviews - is this fanz review season or something? - not to mention some letters, neat artwork and a rather interesting article from Jenny Glover.

VILE ANCHORS #5 - Simon Polley (152 Woodside Rd, Leeds, LS2 9LZ) [p/tu] To my shame, I've not had time to read this, but if it's as good as the first four...

FICTION ZINES

Reviewed by John Peake

FOR AS LONG AS MOST PEOPLE CAN REMEMBER THERE HAS BEEN A vigorous and at times acerbic debate about the rôle of fiction in amateur magazines. On the one side is the argument that if the fiction is good enough to be printed for public consumption then it's good enough to get into the professional magazines; on the other the belief that amateur publication provides a vital, possibly even a necessary, stepping stone to professional publication. Whatever the rights and wrongs of these arguments, and both have a great deal wrong with them, one element has been ignored: the fiction. So, I shall ignore the debate and concentrate on the contents of these four amateur and semi-professional fiction magazines.

The first thing to say is that the two paying markets, *Dream* and *Opus*, have the better selection of stories, perhaps because both magazines show greater sign of editorial input. *Dream* contains the best story here, "Green Troops" by William King. The setting and the tone are straight out of Lucius Shepard, a futile little incident in a greater war played out among the jungles of Central America. But King has done more than simply pinch Shepard's concerns, he has learned from Shepard to get under the skin of both the place and the people and has added a little inventiveness of his own, so that plot and atmosphere combine to create a very satisfying whole.

Nothing else quite reaches this standard, though Peter T. Garratt tries with his startlingly original "Voices of Other Times", with an alternative world England has ruled France since the Middle Ages, hypnotic regression to other lives, and a new explanation for Joan of Arc's voices. Plot-wise it's a tour de force, but doesn't work because the characters don't work, and the political background is not drawn in strongly enough for us to understand the political motivations of the hypnotist. It's a long story, but not long enough, and Garratt has hamstrung himself by cramming too much into too small a space.

Elsewhere in this issue there's an alien invasion story by Mark Iles, so full of clichés, so dependent upon coincidence, and so lacking in characters or actions that are even half-way believable, that I could not even begin to suspend my disbelief. And there are two comedies. "An Old Old Story" by Charles Luthor is hamfisted stuff that might just work if your idea of subtlety is Cannon and Ball, while "Sea Changes" by Graham Andrews is an attempt to do the sort of humorous twist story that Asimov churned out by the yard. And it almost comes off.

Opus leads with "The Karma Kid Transcends" by Eric Brown, a very effective novelette about the impact upon society of a drug that reveals the moment after death, and then of another that reveals what happens after that moment. It is sharply perceived and fairly well plotted, but has too many rough edges to work as well as it might. Some ruthless editing and a rewrite could have turned this into an excellent story.

Which is more than can be said for the other stories in here. Kenneth Harker's "Eye for an Eye" is a well-written psychological drama about what may be revenge from beyond the grave. It's a neat, stylishly-told tale that makes you wish Harker was turning up in the professional markets again, but it is slight and unsurprising. And that's pretty much the case with Graham Andrews' "The Man who Met His Maker", which commits the fundamental crime of giving the plot away in the title. The neat trick of interspersing the narrative with a shooting script that turns out to have relevance to the plot does not compensate for tedious dialogue and an irritating line in obnoxiousness. "Still Reading" by David Vickery is a reasonably well written piece that leaves you frustrated because it doesn't go anywhere, instead we get one of those metafictional bits Borges did so much better, and which comes back round to its own beginning in a dull loop. Vickery can write, he just needs to turn his attention to something rather more original.

"Congregation", the very short piece by Dorothy Davies, is the only story in any of these magazines that attempts anything experimental. Davies has eschewed all punctuation bar full stops, paragraph breaks, capital letters and quotation marks. Unfortunately I think she is still let down by a lack of daring, one great flow of words unbroken by any punctuation might have been far more effective. And she does need a stronger story line under it all.

Before leaving *Opus* I should say that an otherwise good magazine is let down by atrociously crude comic-book artwork. The stories deserve better.

Auguries, though it does offer a "modest payment" to its contributors, is a much more amateur, and amateurish, affair. Like *Works*, the stories are much shorter, slighter. In general the authors have put down their ideas as they must have occurred to them, without taking the time to examine implications, consider character, excavate depths or sound resonances. They read far more as if they are first draft, full of determination to be "a writer" and the excitement of a good idea, but without much evidence of the sheer hard graft that turns the idea into a story. These are stories for workshoping rather than the sort of critical consideration I have turned upon the other two publications. Unfortunately I do not have the space here to perform such an analysis, so I will just take the opportunity to find examples for certain general points.

In the first place I am not saying that these are bad stories. Some, such as "Balkan Dance" by Tim Nickels in *Auguries* and "Mas" by Andy Darlington in *Works* show signs of a sterling imagination and a nice turn of phrase. But they need work to draw out of them the story huddling underneath rough and ready drafts. Nickels, for instance, obviously has a very fully realised background hovering behind his story, but it needs to be in the story. At the moment there are statements that pull you up short because you are given no clue as to what is going on, and there are logical lacunae that the author has filled but which he doesn't allow the reader to fill. He needs to explore the why and where of his world, and the actions of his characters, more fully in order to make his story work better.

Darlington, on the other hand, does put it all in. But it's thrown into the stew without much thought for balance or pace, so that what emerges is a breathless rush of incident. We barely glimpse something before it is gone and the scene has changed completely. If things were a little slower, if there were perhaps cutting from one scene to another rather than taking them all in sequence, the story might come across more coherently and more vividly.

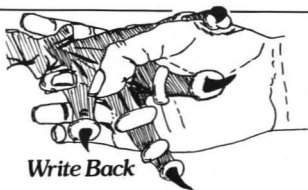
There are stories that build up nicely, only to be let down by poor endings. "Terminal Case" by Philip Eick is a case in point. The story of the man who shows signs of death starts well enough, but Eick ducks the opportunity to provide an outsider's view of the controllers of his closed society, and the final confrontation with "Mercicontrol" is thrown away with a gratuitous bloodbath and an entirely predictable end. Steve Lockley's "Mildred" is another. The entire story rests on the revelation that Mildred was a robot, but that is neither fresh in a science fictional context, nor particularly unexpected in this story.

Others are brave attempts at atmospheric subtlety, but without the technical skills to bring it off. "Jake's Journey" by John Avison in *Works* is one example. Given a chance to hone his skills, Avison could turn into a worthy writer.

Still others need to learn the basic technique of the narrative hook. Too often there was nothing to bring me into the story at all, and I wouldn't have got past the first sentence if I wasn't reading for review. The John Light stories in both these magazines are prime examples: to introduce your main character in the very first line as A.I.M. Less is unforfeitable. That the story itself goes on to be aimless is unsurprising.

But, as I've said, there are good stories and promising writers in all four of these magazines. Of the 30 or so stories I've read here, there are probably half a dozen that might as easily have made it into a professional magazine. Though I somehow doubt that they would have been the ones to stick out in the memory from that issue.

Auguries 8, edited by Nik Morton, 48 Anglesley Road, Alverstoke, Gosport, Hants PO12 2ED. Published quarterly, 50p.
Dream 15, edited by Trevor Jones, 1 Ravenshoe, Godmerschester, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE18 8DE. Published quarterly, £1.35 per issue, £5 for one year, £10 for two years.
Opus Quarterly 5, edited by Michael Hearn and John Hindmarch, Staff House 2, Broxbournebury, Fx bourne, Herts EN10 7PY. Published quarterly, £1.50 per issue, £5.50 for one year.
Works 1, edited by Dave Hughes and Andy Stewart, 12 Blakesstone Road, Slaitthwaite, Huddersfield, HD7 5UD. Published quarterly, £1.25 per issue, £4.50 for one year.



Write Back

WELL, THERE HAS BEEN A MINOR SPATE OF LETTERS THIS TIME, RATHER cheering after the meagre haul of late. In fact, I've had to hold over a couple of Soapbox articles until next time, to give the letters a fair crack of the whip this time. It's a big relief to know that with the completion of publishing the accounts, I shall get a couple of extra pages-worth of space. Just to remind you, the next deadline is less than entirely auspicious:

FRIDAY 13th JANUARY 1989

In the meantime, on with the correspondence...

My editorial last issue drew a sizable response, as I, of course, intended it to. First of all, Ken Lake, finally escaping from the IAHF column, with a very practical analysis of the future:

Ken Lake
115 Markhouse Avenue, London E17 8AY

The next fifty years, you ask: I still vividly recall taking to the physics master the issue of the newspaper that announced the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. "Surely this proves all your teachings wrong!" we gleefully asked. "Don't believe all you read in the papers," he told us, "there's no such thing as an atomic bomb - you can't split the atom like that!" My faith in scientists never recovered.

I foresee fax completely replacing postal services for everything but goods and such things as greeting cards; everyone will have a fax in the house, and consequently far more people will work from home, never needing to fight through the weather, suffer the commuter drag, run the risk of mugging... etc

This will change the whole pattern of commercial and private travel on the roads as well as trains and buses: increased cost of petrol and pollution fears will mean viable electric cars but most people will rely on public transport and the fax. We'll go back to ordering goods by (video?)phone and having them delivered by electric truck. Satellite TV and other entertainment improvements (3D) will kill off the cinemas at last, and we'll wonder why we ever wanted to go out to them; theatre will probably perform to empty houses but be watched on the small screen (which will get bigger and flatter).

This means houses will have to be safer and more soundproofed and more secure, so we'll have far more efficient furnishings and fittings, better materials for the structure central station security monitoring via telephones (available now) for all. Because of all this, people will entertain more so houses will get bigger - larger rooms, better facilities, more guest rooms.

But here's my word of warning: unless everyone is prepared to accept the automation/etc. revolution, accept retraining for work, accept shorter working hours and the removal of all restrictions on work practices that cut efficiency and profit, then any brave new world will die of inanition, strangled by the Dead Hand of tradition. My world can be a safer, cleaner, more relaxed, more enjoyable, far more rewarding one - but when did such considerations ever halt stupidity and bull-headedness?

Closing last story: my father once tore up and threw out all my SF magazines. "You want to stop reading that tripe!" he told me. "Men on the Moon and all that - there's no sense in it." He has watched every space launch since Sputnik on TV, but never apologised for ruining my collection!

I'll be most interested in other readers' views: it is, of course, perfectly easy to sketch out a dystopic scenario, but I am talking about the world I WANT, not the ones I fear.

Steve Rothman isn't quite so confident about the world to come:

Steve Rothman
49 Burney Bit, Pamber Heath, Basingstoke, Hants, RG26 6TL

I think that although technical change will probably be faster than during any other period in history, with one possible exception, social change will be very small. Space travel and pocket calculators have not changed the way that people live, and frankly, much of today's technology is ultimately only toys for adults. In contrast, over the fifty years up to the present, radio and TV have given the individual a vastly greater knowledge and understanding of the world he lives in, as perhaps also has air travel; the more widespread need for skilled labour has meant that who you are is becoming less important than what you can do, and also that people are more mobile, moving where they can find work, which must have had some effect on the role of the family, if children are more likely to leave home. Internationally, the bomber, and later the ICBM, have meant that now everyone is in the front line in war and so no-one can, in safety, advocate sending a gunboat or an army to sort out some unpleasant foreigners.

In the future, I can't see improvements in communications having the effect of the introduction of television; high temperature superconductors may give us faster computers and new designs of train - but they will still be computers and trains; biotechnology may produce cheaper drugs but does it matter how they are made? New drugs will change the lives of individuals but not of those who don't need them; genetic engineering on humans is unlikely for religious-based reasons.

The one area where I can see the potential for major change is in work patterns, if people can work at home, using computers, or if robotics advances enough to drastically reduce the numbers of humans employed. Obvious effects are on populations of cities, and how people will see themselves and their aims if there is no work for them to do.

Whether the future will be one of leisure for most people or just a contribution of the present economic expansion, increased material wealth, world economy based on competition in mostly technological trade, what worries me is that no-one is planning ahead. The present British government is particularly bad with its dogmatic refusal to invest in anything, but no politician seems to have any thoughts beyond the next election. I don't know if this is a British trait, as when I was in Florida recently, I visited the EPOC Center, where there were exhibits on space and undersea colonies, hydroponic farming, energy resources and advanced travel. At the time I didn't believe that you could get the British to pay to see such things, if they knew what to expect, although there were lots of UK tourists there. However, the EPOC Center was basically a more-of-the-same future with nothing radical, and although many Americans support their space project as a national goal or achievement (compare with Britain where we have no national aims and certainly no space programme) I doubt if many have any fundamental picture of what it means for them or their nation.

In summary, I can't see the future being other than a bigger and better (or smaller and cheaper!) present, unless the greenhouse effect gets really serious, or there is widespread unemployment due to technology. Unless this is planned for, I think that millions of frustrated, and probably angry, people will be much more of a problem than a mere disruption to the biosphere. History does show that technology creates more jobs than it destroys, but there's a first time for everything...

P T Ross isn't confident either, but takes a different perspective.

P T Ross
Address withheld by request

"Tarnished by the cold grubbiness of reality" - in seven words, David Barrett sums up the world of today, which was once the bright future of the Fifties (Vector 146, editorial).

The SF fan of a generation ago, saw it all as a shining promise. The factual books - the von Braun/Ley/Bonestell collaborations, our President's Exploration of Space - confirmed the fiction of Clarke (again), the young Heinlein, Hampson's *Darwin* spacecraft was coming, we would grow up with it. Some of us would be in that first moonship, all of us could hope to take our grandchildren to Mars - the colonies there were little further, in our imagination, than Australia had seemed to our grandparents. The New Elizabethan Age (it would, of course, be a British moonship), the slow emergence from post-war austerity

and reasoning ... how could we guess it was a false dawn?

Sputnik - a football that went 'bleep'. Others were the ships from Woomera, the R A Smith space-station? NASA - clumsy, throwaway skyscrapers topped with Barrett's tacky dustbin. If an engineer was a man who could do for a shilling what any fool could do for a pound, what did that make the space programme? I remember seeing the "gigantic leap" headlines and thinking "Oh, so they've finally got there." I didn't bother to buy the paper. But I didn't shed any of my enthusiasm for SF - only for dreary reality. SF was too good to lose.)

And of course it was all like that. Cars - how wonderful for every family to have one. But somehow, no-one imagined the million other families jamming the road ahead and behind. Public transport today, thanks to the private car, isn't a patch on what it was a century ago (and wartime aside) right up to nationalisation.

Around 1950, I read an advertisement - hire feature films for your home projector. Now there was a promise for my grown-up self! I cherished it for years. *Destination Moon* as accessible as any book on my shelves... ah, well. What did we get? Video. A screen, the wrong shape and the effective size of a postage-stamp, and about as much detail. We foresaw the videophone, we guessed at some aspects of TV education, but...

So it goes on. The SF writers, and we who read them and dreamed, saw some of the best and some of the worst - but rarely, if ever, the shoddiness of what has actually come.

There's another factor: each story tends to take one new development and extrapolate - sometimes accurately, more usually overlooking some lurking detail that changes the whole aspect of what will, in fact, follow. That is why we - the community of SF writers and readers - are constantly seeing our dreams and nightmares coming true, and yet are constantly being taken by surprise. Many writers have predicted this or that; many "shapes of things to come" are mutually exclusive; no-one yet has been able to put all the kaleidoscope together to say not just "Look - we could do this" or "Look out - the consequence could be that" but "Here is what it's all going to be like." The sea futures - not the future.

And if they could - would the politicians ever listen? It's votes they want - not advice. Whether in a global slump, or as the IQMs plunge down on us, or as the seas rise... I suspect the clearest-sighted of us, in the end, will only echo the dying Wells: "I told you so - you damned fools."

This century has moved faster than any other. In *Matrix* 78, Maureen Porter mentions friends "who cannot remember a time when man was not travelling into space" yet the Wright Brothers' first powered flight is still within living memory - perhaps not of witnesses, but certainly of contemporaries. If we do no more than maintain that rate - and if the Outsiders don't arrive - can we really guess accurately what today's children will live to see?

Perhaps they won't. I wonder how the odds really stand. Perhaps the happiest prediction (for the long term) is George R Stewart's *Earth Abides* (already forty years old): as C S Lewis put it, "A small race - a smiling heaven - all round the silences returned ..." My money for the best hope is on monarchy: decision-makers educated from birth to responsibility, not chosen for their plausibility in election speeches. As for prediction, it's the other way, with little hope of none: when it comes to democracy, the Lies have it.

But it was a lovely future while it lasted.

Relating more directly to my editorial speculation as to whether we SF readers were any more prepared for whatever the future has to offer, Ian Mundell and Richmond Hunt offer a few thoughts:

Ian Mundell
5 Sunnyside Lane, Oare, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4JG

I would think it as much a hindrance to be able to see multiple futures from any one event or scientific advance. There is a danger that a practiced extrapolator will blind himself/herself with so many possibilities, whereas a reader of historical novels might choose rightly on the basis of what has gone before (Arnold Toynbee, I think, but it's not my field). Neither of these hypothetical people is going to be able to predict random occurrences or the irrational acts of people in general. History, past or future, is after all, about people, and here again the SF reader may not be at such an advantage. Early SF and hard SF is notorious for its lack of rounded characterisation and interaction of characters. There's little advantage in being able to cope with the strain of hyper-modern technology if one unhappy love affair leads to suicidal depression.

Here I'm at fault for the same reason as early SF - one dimensional characterisation. SF readers are not just SF readers, and there are many other factors that may or may not lead to a thriving life in the future. Fiction is the depiction of possibilities, be they in future science, past or present human relationships, crime, whatever. If there is any division, it will be between those who do and those who do not read, in favour of those whose minds are prepared to toy with possibilities.

Richmond Hunt
51 Danes Road, Exeter, Devon, EX4 4LS

People who claim that SF predicts the future, except incidentally, ought to be ignored. Science Fiction is the genre of fictional happenings in an 'alien' environment, which allows the writer to explore the dramatic tension between ordinary (or perhaps extraordinary) people and unusual, often unrealistic environments, not a genre of futurology. It is only a way of investigating human responses and actions in an extrapolated future or environment, rather than in a contemporary setting. As such, I have no need or requirement to present true scenarios, only possible and internally consistent ones. Fantasy, while similar, is under the constraint of presenting impossible but internally consistent ones.

By implying that "good" SF (as George Turner incidentally does, in his speech reproduced in *Vector* 146) must be "true" to contemporary life and concerns, the genre is open to attack every time a fictional "prophecy" is proved wrong or unimportant to the present. Fine, SF has had a few futurological successes, but so have other genres. Any mainstream novel, for instance, dealing with people in a war-zone might, incidentally, "predict" the course or causes of a subsequent conflict.

Julian Billis also has a few thoughts on the matter:

SF readers are much more conscious of the possibilities than most people. Where they differ greatest from the general public is the awareness of the great divide between what is possible and what people (particularly politicians) will allow. Taking the current interest in the greenhouse effect - the politician sees it as an argument against fossil fuels and towards nuclear power. By making a trade-off, they ignore the fact that in the time spent building any new system the requirement becomes out of date in light of new sources and more economic usage. Narrower horizons can be limiting, and in the long run, dangerous.

On a more optimistic note, we have Kev McVeigh, responding to Peter Tennant's response to Cecil Nurse's Soapbox - got that?

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

As far as I can see, there is a tremendous optimism about most SF I read. However, it is in three distinct forms:

The first is the most traditional, with its roots in Heinlein and others. This comes through in David Brin's *Uplift* series as a reflection of "our" ability to defeat all the odds, and in his novel *The Postman*, as a faith in some survival of a Nuclear War (as also shown in Kim Stanley Robinson's *The Wild Shore*). This is a strange optimism, part idealist, but with frightening overtones, to me.

In contrast, the cyberpunk and related authors have a view of world decay, that somehow manages to avoid the all-out war that Brin and co have used. There is war, and terrorism, but even in Richard Kadrey's *Metrolaphy*, things are pulled back from the brink. Again, this may be somewhat idealistic, and is disturbing in some ways. However, I can live with this future more easily than that of Brin.

In British SF though, things are more restrained. Our heroes are not superbeings achieving miracles, mostly, rather they are attempts at becoming real people in fiction, and their deeds are small to external viewers, though they may be huge to themselves. Garry Kilworth, Guyaneth Jones, Iain Banks and others like them are not concerned with saving the world, as most of the Americans of both groups are, but merely with surviving within their own corner of the world, as best as possible. That they usually make it, is an optimistic viewpoint, and one that is more convincing than any other.

These groups are not rigid, of course. For instance, I would suggest that Lucius Shepard most often fits the British group, whilst Ian McDonald has written stories for all three groups, but they do outline the basic streams of optimism in SF at the moment.

Moving back one issue, Richmond has a few things to say about genres and reading habits, as does Lynne Bispham. Lynne first.

Lynne Bispham
Burshe, Herts

If mainstream fiction purports to portray reality as it is, then Science Fiction distorts reality - how far reality can be distorted and still remain convincingly "real" depends on the skill of the author. I would argue that it is the nature of this distortion of reality that determines whether or not a novel is SF. SF portrays that which could happen (or could have happened, in the case of alternative history) even if it has not happened yet, and even if it is not likely to happen. This is not to say that SF is simply the addition of robots/powerspaceships/aliens/androids to everyday reality (otherwise every spy novel which includes futuristic technology would be SF). SF considers how present day reality would be altered if, say, androids were commonplace. I realise that much of the "science" in SF breaks every law of physics in the known universe, but the skill of the author persuades the reader otherwise.

It seems to me that fantasy differs from SF in that it does not seek to convince the reader that its distortions of reality are possible - it only requires a suspension of disbelief (I mean, non-one actually believes in all those magic swords, do they?). I must admit that my knowledge of magic realism is extremely limited, but from what little I've read, it appears that rather than exploring the effects on "reality" of, say, ESP (the "what would happen if...?" of SF), authors of magic realism fiction describe a reality which has absorbed these aberrations without change - even if their reality is macabre or bizarre.

Richmond Hunt

The reading tastes of the public are partly influenced by the prevailing social trends, and people's attitudes towards technology (those who are optimistic about it read SF, those who are trying to escape from it read fantasy - this is a generalisation). It is also influenced, mainly to our detriment, by the publishing industry. Blurbs and classifications are used to SELL books, not promote their literary merit. Life would be so much easier, disappointments so much fewer, if authors wrote their own blurbs (for a start, they'd not give away the plot, otherwise you'd not read their opus all the way through, let alone buy. Or perhaps not categorise themselves at all. Iain Banks has said (of his novel, *The Wasp Factory*) that he didn't realise he'd written a horror novel until the reviewers told him! And then, this morning, on Radio 4, we have a short piece on the World Fantasy Convention where the listening public is informed exclusively about HORROR writers attending it. Is Iain Banks a horror writer? Is Fantasy just another name for Horror? Some structuralists think that the author's intent is neither here nor there: if a publisher's reader says "Buy this manuscript - and label it Fantasy," then fantasy it is, regardless of whether the author meant it that way or not, but really only the individual reader can decide whether the author didn't actually write the sort of book he meant to, or if the 'promoters' - the reviewers, critics, journalists - have completely misread it.

The division of literature into genres has, in fact, been around since Aristotle, but over the centuries the classifications and divisions have varied, and only since the rise of the novel in the eighteenth century has this classification caused problems. I suggest that these problems are not a result of intrinsic demerit or public disinterest in certain modes of expression, but, because books have become business, the industry is more interested in classification than in quality. This is what has allowed hack writing to proliferate, this is what gives rise to the interminable fantasy trilogies. If you can label a book you can target a buyer, and if you can do that effectively, you can make more money.

As we've reached the fraught question of publishers, let's talk about the Net Book Agreement. Ben Staveley-Taylor offers a few thoughts:

Ben Staveley-Taylor
39 Entry Hill, Bath, BA2 5LY

I've just read David Barrett's opinions on the scraping of the Net Book Agreement, and must confess to being puzzled.

His arguments for keeping the NBA seem to be (a) small retailers will be unable to compete, much as supermarkets have

killed off corner shops, and (b) publishers will be forced to concentrate on moneymaking bestsellers at the expense of exciting new books. Let's take them in turn - I speak, incidentally, as one of the Kerosina Books mafia, so I do know something about the economics from the publisher's side, although not from the retailer's.

Point (a) is only partly true: many small general shops may suffer, but the specialist shops will thrive. Supermarkets will have killed grocers, but there have never been more Chinese supermarkets and specialist food stores around to make up for the limited choice in the big chains. Anyway, just how much of a crossover is there between W H Smith's shelf stock, and Forbidden Planet's? People don't make the trek to New Oxford Street just to pick up an Asimov paperback, they already buy those in Smiths for convenience. No, there'll be no pressure for the specialist shops to price-cut unless Andreassens and FP go for each other's throats. Value added deals like offering signed copies will still attract the majority of fans to buy from specialists.

As to (b), the trade discount that publishers give to bookshops won't be affected by a reduction in the retail price, so there is no reason why the mathematics of authors' royalties and investing in new writers should be affected at all. You might argue that the big chains will ask for higher discounts from publishers, but that already happens. W H Smith demand an extra 5% discount on hardbacks and 10% on paperbacks over the normal trade rates - isn't that discrimination enough against small general bookstores who don't have the clout to get that extra profit margin for themselves? There's no Net Book Agreement on wholesale rates, so the problems of bulk-buyers wielding unfair power are already there for publishers. It's up to the country's publishers to act together for once and ensure that the retail price cuts come from the retailers' profits and not at the authors' expense.

Let's not forget that books have increased in price far beyond the inflation rate over the last five years. Typical hardback prices have risen from £8.95 to £10.95, some 22%, while paperbacks have risen from £1.50-ish to £2.50-ish, over 65%. As a reader I welcome anything which could slow that trend.

Penultimately:

Arthur C Clarke
Sri Lanka

Even twenty years after 2001 first appeared, I still receive several letters every month from SF fans and computer bugs (not to mention serious historians of science) who suddenly 'discover' there is a strange 'relationship' between the name HAL and IBM.

It is still not widely known in the computer industry and SF circles that HAL stands for Heuristically programmed Algorithmic computer, even though I spelt this out carefully in Chapter 16 of the novel. I've spent the past two decades trying to disown the legend that HAL is derived from IBM by transposing one letter. But alas, like many convincing legends, it refuses to go away. I even had my characters in 2010: Odyssey Two contradict this canard (chapter 35).

I'm now thinking of offering an attractive prize of a computer virus called HALlucination (which invades IBM and compatible machines and makes them sing 'Daisy, Daisy...') for anybody who will come up with a fool-proof method of burying this myth.

Lastly, a prediction from Dave Langford:

Dave Langford
94 London Rd, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU

In the next fifty years, I anticipate that the editorships of more than one BSFA publication will change, more than once. Letters will be received, many of them expressing huge annoyance at the startling discovery that BSFA editors and committee members hold opinions and sometimes even express a story from *Interzone* will win a BSFA Award. Focus will explain how to type double-spaced on one side of the paper. Paperback *Inferno* will struggle to be tactful about 5,271,009 fantasy trilogies. *Matrix* will complain of difficulty in getting people to enter competitions, write letters, create news or review fanzines, while *Vector* will complain of lack of difficulty in getting articles from Ken Lake. The committee members who actually do any work will be removed at the usual orderly pace to retirement, universities, asylums, etc. babbling strange oaths like 'sci-fi!', 'cyberpunk' and 'L Ron Hubbard'. And finally ... too late, the mists return, my piercing vision of the future is veiled once more, and a good thing too.