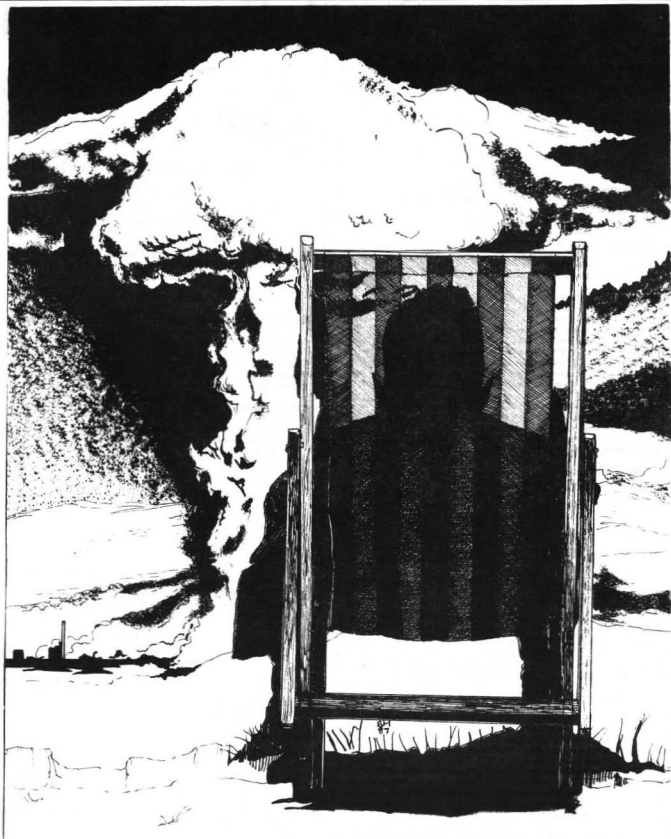




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80

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



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THE NEXT MATRIX DEADLINE IS
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Red Shift

PERHAPS IT WAS A BAD IDEA TO IMAGINE THAT PEOPLE WOULD FIND the thought of writing to *Matrix* more enthralling than watching *Back to the Future* or *The Empire Strikes Back*. Or maybe it was the unfortunate fact of the deadline falling on Friday 13th. The competition was well subscribed to, presumably because of its comparative simplicity, but I have the merest handful of letters. Which means, of course, that those who did bother to write will be able to have their say at greater length than normal. On the other hand, it would have been nice ... she said, wistfully. But perhaps you all got struck down with the latest variety of influenza. I never used to take much notice of Hoyle's theory that these viruses have an intergalactic origin, but after this Christmas, I am really beginning to wonder.

Still, that is quite enough of my disgusting ailments. Another year of *Matrix* begins, with the usual bout of threats and cajoling. Maybe I ought to set up a regular document to take care of this section of the editorial. After all, we all know what's coming. Letters, obviously, are needed, plus the usual convention and media reviews. And Soapbox articles. I know that 1500 words seems like a lot, but please don't feel you have to produce an article of that length. A few pithy thoughts on an SF-related subject will go down just as well, even if expressed in 572 words. This time around, you will have noticed that I've published two Soapbox pieces, in an effort to spark off some fierce debate in the letter column.

I should be back to 24 pages next issue as our financial situation is picking up very nicely, and I'm looking to keep those pages filled. And there will be plenty of space, particularly now that we have completed the mammoth task of publishing the Association's accounts up to date. So it's time to start looking for longer articles. I'm looking for ideas, and for articles. If you have either, how about getting in touch with me, to discuss the matter further.

Mind you, I get the impression that the majority of you seem perfectly content with *Matrix* in its current state. I've received a couple of useful offers for material, which will be duly followed up, a comment that any alteration would dilute the current effect, and a plea for more information about publishing activities overseas, which seems to be feasible. The deafening silence from the other 900-and-something members leads me to suppose that there is nothing much you really want to see. Okay. Well, I hope you don't mind if I incorporate a few extra ideas of my own - I'm taking the silence as a vote of confidence, in which case, thanks very much.

One rather amusing little idea which drifted across my consciousness goes something like this. If you were about to be deposited on a deserted, but basically user-friendly, planet which five SF and/or fantasy etc books would you regard as necessary baggage. We'll assume, & la Roy Plomley, that the complete works of Shakespeare, and an appropriate religious text (bearing in mind, the comments of one C Segan when he was deposited on said desert island) are already in place. What would you like to take? And why? To start you off, this is what I would take - *Lord of the Rings* by Tolkien, mostly for sentimental reasons, and because I still think it's an exemplary piece of fantasy; *The Collected Ghost Stories of M R James*, because they are superb ghost stories which never pall; John Crowley's *Aegypt*, to give me a chance to finally read it; Lucius Shepard's *The Jaguar Hunter*, to remind me that there is still classy writing in this world; and Rob Holdstock's *Lavondyss*, to give me a chance to re-read it, and think about it more carefully. These choices are, of course, subject to change at any moment. So, give me your choices, and reasons, in not more than 500 words, and I'll publish some of them in the next few issues of *Matrix*. I shall also see if I can produce a top ten of favourites for publication at the end of the year.

One thing I would particularly like to encourage this year, and that is the use of *Matrix* as a platform for advertising forthcoming events. Hitherto, I suppose the deadlines have been rather shrouded in mystery, and it's not uncommon for me to receive material after one deadline, only to realise that the event will be over before the next deadline. Imperial College's Picocon fell victim to this unfortunate occurrence last time around. The editorial might not be the most appropriate place to list deadlines, but it seems good enough to me, so here goes:

March 17, May 12, July 14, September 15, November 10

The set-up, as you may be aware, is that the paste-ups for the magazine are despatched to the printer, two weeks after the deadline I give you, and the magazine reaches the members a week and half further on after that. Effectively, it means that there is a week's grace after my deadline for material to be sent in, though that's not a signal for people to start taking advantage of my kind nature. I'm mentioning this more as a favour to people who want their events advertised rather than for those people who left the business of writing a letter to the very last moment.

So, if you would like me to advertise forthcoming speakers at your club or group, or if bookshops wish to advertise signing sessions, anything like that, please send them to me, marked "What's On", and I'll publish them in the next available issue of *Matrix*, and continue advertising until the event is over, as I do with the convention roundup.

Similarly, in an effort to encourage people to plan ahead for this year, I might as well give you the dates of forthcoming mailing sessions, in the hope that you might feel inclined to scribble them down in your diaries. So, the remaining mailing sessions for this year will be held, in the usual place, on

April 8/9, June 3/4, August 5/6, October 7/8, December 2/3

Anything else you feel you ought to know?

There's not a lot else left to say in this editorial, except to encourage you to contribute to your magazine in 1989. I anticipate it being a year of plans coming to fruition, and I would like to think that we did the work between us, rather than me jumping up and down, enraging everyone in sight.

On that rather startling note, I shall wish you all a slightly belated Happy New Year, prise the cat off the keyboard, and add the finishing touches to *Matrix* 80.

Maureen Porter



February/March 1989 *Matrix* 80

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REPORT ON THE EGM

There were two major items on the agenda. The first was to receive and approve the accounts for 1986. These were accepted nem con, and were published in the last issue of *Matrix*.

The second item was to consider a proposal to lower the quorum for BSFA general meetings from 15 to 3. This followed occasions in the recent past where it had proved extremely difficult to gather a quorum at very important meetings. Brett Cockrell proposed the change, and suggested that a nominal quorum would avoid such problems in future without significantly eroding the accountability of the BSFA. There was considerable support for this proposal, and the size of the quorum, however, and a compromise suggestion was made that the quorum be reduced to ten. After some discussion, this suggestion was accepted by an overwhelming majority.

Under any other business the question of the Doc Weir Award was raised by Peter Mabey, who has administered the award. The Award is nominally under the control of the BSFA, but nobody now seems to remember how or why it was handed over to the BSFA, and there was discussion about whether the current situation should be allowed to continue. In the end it was decided that the BSFA committee and those involved with the Doc Weir Award should separately consider the position.

The meeting was closed after about half an hour.

LONDON MEETING

The first London Meeting of the New Year got off to an unexpectedly bad start. We arrived to find that the pub had booked the room out to another group - who were, it appeared, about to show a slide presentation on mountaineering. This was a very unsettling moment, because we were convinced that the room had been booked. After some discussion with the landlord, however, it emerged that Robert Fargo, who had taken on the task of booking the room and liaising with the pub, had not in fact done so; and, although the landlord was unable to pass on the message, the Kingsmen's efforts had got through. We were able to confirm on the spot bookings for the room for the rest of the year (bar March and December), but that still left the problem of working out what to do that evening.

Fortunately Gemma came to the rescue, and got everyone in to his drinking club, the Troy Club. And we must express our gratitude to everyone at the Troy Club for putting up with us.

Despite the somewhat different circumstances we still had our planned programme, and David Langford gave a talk about the book he has written in collaboration with John Grant, *Guts*. It appears that this has been an auspicious year for Dave, because for the first time he has demanded payment from a publisher for a book they commissioned but did not publish. That book was *Guts*, and he illustrated his talk with lengthy readings from it, which he delivered with the same joyful growling and shouting for more. It would be unfair to describe too much of what he read, but we can only hope that the publisher soon sees fit to give the book a deserved public airing.

Maureen Porter was also due to speak about the new magazine she has edited, *The Gate*, which is due out now. However, university commitments forced her to cancel, though she has promised to talk on the subject in April, which should coincide with the second issue of the magazine.

TOMORROW AND TOMORROW AND TOMORROW AND TOMORROW

The London Meetings for the future are as follows:

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

March: No meeting.

April 20: Maureen Porter talks about *The Gate*.

May 18: A panel discussion involving other fan groups (postponed from March).

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

JOBS*JOBS*JOBS*JOBS*JOBS

VECTOR EDITOR

We're looking for a successor to David V. Barrett as Editor of *Vector*, the critical journal of the BSFA. This is a committee post, and will entail commissioning and editing articles for the flagship of the BSFA. As David says, it's "rewarding, frustrating, damn hard work, and great fun".

If you think you have what it takes to edit one of the leading critical journals of science fiction in the country, write and tell us. We want to know what brilliant ideas you have for filling Vector with fascinating material every two months, so that you not only keep readers but attract more.

Apply now, to David V. Barrett, Vector, 23 Oakfield Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 2UD.

AWARDS ADMINISTRATOR

We're also looking for a successor to Mike Molr. This is a staff position reporting to the co-ordinator, and it entails producing ballot forms for nominations and final ballot for the BSFA Award. You'll also have to count the votes and handle the award ceremony, as well as sending out publicity on the award after the winners have been announced.

It may come but once a year, but it's still a challenging post. After all, you'll have to keep up to date with what's happening in SF enough to know whether a nomination is eligible or not. And you're going to have to be the sort of person whom nobody doubts has got the winner right.

If you think its a job that would suit you, tell me about it. Write today to Paul Kincaid, BSFA, 114 Guildhall Street, Folkestone, Kent CT20 1ES.

Members' Noticeboard

Advertising in the Member's Noticeboard is free to all members of the BSFA. It is also possible to have a repeat advert should you so require. You are welcome to advertise short wants lists, items for sale, requests for information, penfriends, anything which seems reasonable, but the editor does reserve the right to refuse any advertisement. All ads should be sent to Maureen Porter, 114 Guildhall St, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 1ES

• • GENERAL • •

[illegible]

Do you enjoy collating? Give just a little of your time to the BSFA by helping to collate its magazines at mailing sessions. Mailing takes place every two months at the Stats Department Annex at Reading University, under the aegis of Keith Freeman. We can promise tea or coffee, plus an extra month on your subscription for giving a hand each day. It's good fun (honest), you get to meet other BSFA members, and Committee members do turn up regularly to help. You are making a most valuable contribution to the running of the British Science Fiction Association.

Next session is

1/2 April 1989

See you there? Contact Keith Freeman for more information
(address inside front cover or phone 0734 666142)

• • FOR SALE • •

THE TRANSATLANTIC HEARING AID by Dave Langford. A report of Dave's trip to the 38th Worldcon in Boston in 1980, as TAFF winner. A must for any fan of his writing, and the ideal introduction for anyone unfamiliar with Dave's fanish work.

Available for £2.25 (£2 to TAFF, 25p for postage) from
Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU

CONSPIRACY FAN ROOM PUBLICATIONS

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

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

PLATEAU STORIES by Dave Langford. A collection of Dave's writings. Each of these publications costs £2

EMERGENCY JOURNALS comp. Graham James. A representative collection of fan writing over the last 50 years. Price £1 All the above items are available from Greg Pickersgill at 7a Lawrence Rd, South Ealing, London W5. Cheques should be made payable to Conspiracy, and there is a flat rate of 50p postage per order.

IMAGINATION UNLIMITED - Third list still available, though books are going fast. List 4 should be available in the New Year. Reserve your copy now. Many fantasy and science fiction paperback, secondhand and review copies, for sale at reasonable prices, plus a selection of secondhand hardbacks. Contact: Maureen Porter, 114 Guildhall St, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 1ES. Return postage appreciated.

WORKS A new quarterly magazine of speculative and imaginative fiction, poetry and art. 52 pages, £1.25 each, or £4.50 for a year's subscription (post inclusive in UK). Cheques payable to 'Works'.

Contact: Dave Hughes, 12 Blakestones Road, Sleithwaite, Huddersfield, HD7 5UG



ST 81

COMPETITION CORNER

ANSWERS TO COMPETITION 79

The word square certainly generated a good response, we were flooded out with entries. A few of you noticed that there were other words contained within the square - we'd secreted a few book titles, the names of planets, and so forth, just for fun. Asking for all the authors we'd planted there seemed too hard at the time so we limited it to 26, from the response that was obviously too easy - one or two of you even found a couple of names I'd not noticed myself (Kee, Roy, Tam). Anyway, these were the names you might have found:

Aldiss Asimov Bear Brin Clarke Compton Delany Dick Evans Glass Goulart Heinlein Herbert Ing Jones LeGuin Lem Niven Plauger Poe Pohl Priest Reed Roberts Kim Stanley Robinson Russ Shaw Smith Tarr Tiptree Tuttle Van Vogt Varley Wolfe Yoien Zelazny

And the result was an astonishing 17 entries with 28 names or more right. The winner - drawn from the hat - is June Laverick.

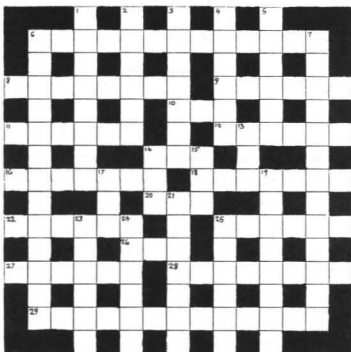
COMPETITION 80

It's a crossword puzzle this time round, set by Rob Jackson.

Around half of the clues need a degree of science-fictional, fantasy or fanish knowledge at least as an aide to solving them. For a change, the sfnal content isn't excessively challenging - but the general crossword clues are (I think) quality newspaper standard.

If the response to this one is positive then you can have more, with nastier sfnal content... is that a threat or a promise?

Solutions to the editorial address please by the next deadline. If you don't want to decimate your copy of Matrix (perish the thought) then you can either list the solutions in clue order or, if you're feeling terribly kind to an overworked Matrix editor, Xerox the diagram and send it in.



CLUES ACROSS

- Walking side near McKillip's backward land in a vicarage near Maldenhead - ruined Isis (6,7)
- Partly US less is a fantastically aquatic person (1,7)
- Latin male in the past, but now feminist and literary (6)
- Boss has a point, but isn't hot stuff (3)
- High time for nearest star to be due south (6)
- Backward little bear broken by little sister to end (6)
- Take on me, sound surprised (3)
- Ashes gone, mythical bird of Bryant's and one other (7)
- Levi's person, e.g. Asian (7)
- Gestapo point back to chain of letters (3)
- Leaning towards classic Irish fanzine (6)
- Dis is vacuum or at least lacking (6)
- Run about - it's jarring (3)
- Intercellular substance - you're looking at it (6)
- Editor looks back briefly with writer to account (8)
- Short day before loving Dad far apart has to be a space eating chap (5,8)

CLUES DOWN

- Mother turns up at arch archery site (8)
- Inferno editor gets mixed up with the Spanish - wrote 19 (6)
- One ring, evil one laughed back, says old prognosticator (7)
- Infernal boss is back one short after exclamation gets bisected (6)
- Left in monies for travel, so goes off like a rocket (6)
- Fanish wife puts up with this for 3 days after a con - undoes (6,7)
- Euro plan for 1991 - already out of date, though (10,3)
- Pointlessly close for flapper (3)
- A bit of equipment to decapitate *Heliconia xeranthemum* (3)
- Reply in short - indefinite article in the plural (3)
- Devoted, but sounds negative (3)
- Extremely light inside another light - fantasy world of 2 (8)
- Backward learners' group laidback - if bright enough, it can tell you what time it is (7)
- I mix with a raver but get there in the end (6)
- Quoted with ten to see a DJ (6)
- Intention to do artwork (6)

NEWS

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

CLARKE AWARD SHORTLIST

The shortlist for the 1989 Arthur C. Clarke Award has been announced. The books are:

Philip K. Dick Is Dead, Alas - Michael Bishop (GRAFTON, £3.99) an alternative history novel in which Dick is reborn, and Richard Nixon has been elected president of the USA four times.
Rumours of Spring - Richard Grant (BANTAM, £3.50) a novel set in the far future in which the last forest on Earth suddenly begins to reclaim the planet.

Kairos - Guyaneth Jones (UNWIN, £11.95) a complex and demanding morality tale set in the near future in which a reality-changing drug affects a frighteningly-realised social order. (*Kairos* will be reviewed in *Vector* 149).

Unquenchable Fire - Rachel Pollack (CENTURY, £11.95/£5.95) set in a magical USA where vividly created legends come to life. (*Unquenchable Fire* was reviewed in *Vector* 146).

Life During Wartime - Lucius Shepard (GRAFTON, £10.95) where the hard science fictional forces of North America clash with the magic realism of South America in a grim Central American war. (*Life During Wartime* was reviewed in *Vector* 145).

Empire of Fear - Brian Stableford (SIMON & SCHUSTER, £11.95) an epic story spanning three centuries in which long-lived vampires rule the world. (*Empire of Fear* will be reviewed in *Vector* 149).

Whores of Babylon - Ian Watson (PALADIN, £3.95) an inventive novel in which Babylon has been recreated in the middle of Arizona. (*Whores of Babylon* was reviewed in *Vector* 147).

The judges this year were Maureen Porter and Andy Sawyer on behalf of the BSFA, Mary Gentle and Maxim Jakubowski on behalf of the Science Fiction Foundation, and Dr Maurice Goldsmith and George Hay on behalf of the International Science Policy Foundation.

The Jury also commended the following books which came close to the shortlist:

Sleeping in Flames - Jonathan Carroll; *Roofworld* - Christopher Fowler; *Days Between Stations* - Steve Erickson; *Great Sky River* - Gregory Benford; *Fade* - Robert Cormier; *Mona Lisa Overdrive* - William Gibson; *Lavender* - Robert Holdstock; *Lincoln's Dreams* - Connie Willis; *East of Laughter* - R.A. Lafferty; *Half a Glass of Moonshine* - Graham Dunstan Martin.

The winner, who receives a cheque for £1,000, will be announced at a special presentation at The Groucho Club, 45 Dean Street, London, at 7.00 pm on 15 March.

CONSPIRACY BAILED OUT

The Science Fiction Day held at the Cafe Munchen in London on 17 December to raise funds for Conspiracy proved more successful than anticipated. In total it raised £3,654, and with other money already in the Conspiracy account this was enough to pay off the major creditors, most notably the Metropole Hotel, Brighton. There is, therefore, no danger that the convention will now be forced into bankruptcy. Not all of Conspiracy's debts have been cleared, but those remaining it should now be possible to pay off in time.

RUSHDIE BOOK SPARKS CENSORSHIP ROW

Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses* is at the centre of a major row involving blasphemy and censorship. The book, which, like much of Rushdie's work, contains strong fantasy elements, is named after those passages which were removed from the Koran by Mohammed because they were inspired by the devil. Moslem leaders have denounced the book on the grounds that it is insulting to Mohammed and their religion. It has already been banned in India, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, and now Moslem leaders are calling for it to be banned in Britain. On Saturday 14 January more than 1,000 Moslems gathered at a rally in Bradford and ceremonially burnt copies of the book. Following that incident, police in Bradford advised W.H. Smith's in Bradford to remove copies of the book from their shelves. In response W.H. Smith removed the book from all its 430 stores throughout the country. Despite it being a persistent bestseller for three months before the incident, Smith's claimed that sales of the

- CLARKE AWARD SHORTLIST
- CONSPIRACY BAILED-OUT
- BARRETT TO EDIT NEW ANTHOLOGY
- MURDOCH WINS COLLINS

book were slowing down and they were due to withdraw the book anyway.

These events have unleashed a storm of protest. The book burning incident has been condemned by a host of literary figures - including Brian Aldiss, one of the Booker Prize Judges who gave Rushdie the award for *Midnight's Children* - and there has also been condemnation for the censorship that lies behind the Moslem action. The leaders of Britain's Moslem community, meanwhile, are calling for Britain's blasphemy laws to be extended to other religions than Christianity. Meanwhile ambassadors of other Moslem countries, including Pakistan, Qatar and Somalia, are applying political pressure on the British government to ban the book. Dr Syed Pasha, general-secretary of the Union of Muslim Organisations, admits that he hasn't read the book, but claims that it is liable for prosecution under the public order and race relations acts. The Organisation is writing to the attorney-general and the Home Secretary requesting prosecution, and are themselves considering legal action. Further public demonstrations are planned.

The publicity, however, has had a contrary effect and demand for the book has gone up tremendously. Now W.H. Smith, along with other bookstores, has increased its order. The publisher, VIKING, has placed an initial order of 250 extra copies, and there were plans to rush out another 600 copies if it won the Whitbread Prize.

BANNED BOOKS

Britain isn't the only place with trouble over banning books. In the year up to May 1988 the following titles were all banned or challenged in American schools:

Watership Down - Richard Adams, *Evoks Join the Flight* - Bonnie Bogart, *The Martian Chronicles*, *Fahrenheit 451* - Ray Bradbury, *The Witches* - Roald Dahl, *Alas, Babylon* - Pat Frank, *The Lord of the Flies* - William Golding, *Brave New World* - Aldous Huxley, *Flowers for Algernon* - Daniel Keyes, *The Bachman Books*, *Carrie*, *Christine*, *Cujo*, *The Dead Zone*, *Different Seasons*, *It*, *Night Shift*, *Salem's Lot*, *The Shining* - Stephen King, *Le Mort d'Arthur* - Sir Thomas Malory, *Animal Farm* - George Orwell and *Slaughterhouse Five* - Kurt Vonnegut.

NET BOOK AGREEMENT DUE TO BE BROKEN

It is now almost certain that the Net Book Agreement, one of the last surviving remnants of Retail Price Maintenance, will be broken before the end of the year. Terry Maher, the chairman of Pentos, which owns Dillons and Athena, has made it plain that he intends to discount prices on selected bestsellers shortly. Though his original scheme to sweep away the NBA appears to have been modified somewhat, and it is likely that discounts will be offered on books from two or three publishers who support his action.

The other major book retailers, W.H. Smith and Waterstone's, have both come out against Pentos; but both Sir Simon Hornby of W.H. Smith and Tim Waterstone have admitted that if Dillons makes the expected move, they will be forced to follow suit. The Publishers' Association has also come out firmly in opposition to Pentos, and has threatened legal action.

The threat to the NBA has generated a lively debate, with a huge variety of authors, agents, publishers and booksellers arguing one side or the other in letters and articles in the newspapers. There is no clear consensus, with defenders of the NBA claiming that it will reduce consumer choice, decrease backstock, force small bookshops out of business, and make it more difficult for new authors to get into print. Opponents of the NBA say that discounting prices will attract more customers into bookshops and so increase impulse sales of other titles, and point to the example of choice and backstock in record stores where there is no Retail Price Maintenance. The only reliable statistics in a confused argument seem to suggest that between 1981 and 1987 the price of books rose by about 45%, 10% more than the rate of inflation, while in the same period the number of books sold in the UK also rose by 10%.

DRABBLERS RAISE MONEY FOR TALKING BOOKS

The Drabble Project, edited by Rob Meades and David B. Wake, and published by BECON PUBLICATIONS, is raising money for the Royal National Institute for the Blind's Talking Book Library.

A "drabble" is a story of exactly 100 words, and *The Drabble Project* collected together 100 of them, from 75 writers, including Isaac Asimov and Brian Aldiss among others. All profits from the book are going to the Talking Book Library, and it is hoped to turn *The Drabble Project* itself into a talking book.

Meanwhile a second book is planned.

SCIENCE MUSEUM TO RESTORE 100 YEAR COMPUTER LEAD

The Science Museum in London is launching an appeal to raise £250,000 with which they plan to build a working model of the Difference Engine designed by Charles Babbage in 1836. Worked by a giant handle, it was intended to eradicate inaccuracies from navigational charts and mathematical calculations. But it was never built because government funds were withdrawn. However, academics at the Science Museum claim that the design would have worked, and their full-scale reconstruction is intended to show that Britain could have had a 100-year lead in computer technology but for the lack of funds. It is hoped to complete the reconstruction in 1991, the bicentenary of Babbage's birth.

AWARDS

The winners of the Mythopoeic Awards have been announced. The Fantasy Award went to *Seven's Son* - Orson Scott Card; the Scholarship Award went to C.S. Lewis - Joe R. Christopher.

The Prometheus Award, presented by the Libertarian Futurist Society, has been given to *The Jehovah Contract* - Victor Kamen. The Prometheus Hall of Fame Award went to *The Stars My Destination* - Alfred Bester.

The Judges for the 1989 World Fantasy Awards are Ed Bryant, Susan Allison, Lisa Goldstein, Peter D. Pautz and Jon White.

The "oversight committee" for the Bram Stoker Awards, with the right to add one title to each shortlist which is otherwise chosen by popular vote, are Don D'Alessio, Bentley Little and Katherine Ramsland.

The Judges for the continuing Writers of the Future Contest have also been announced, they are: Algis Budrys, Gregory Benford, Ramsey Campbell, Anne McCaffrey, Larry Niven, Frederik Pohl, Jerry Pournelle, Robert Silverberg, Jack Williamson and Roger Zelazny. Former Judge Gene Wolfe has resigned because of pressing deadlines.

The Artists of the Future Contest will also continue, with judges: Frank Kelly-Frees, Edd Carter, Leo & Diane Dillon, H.R. Van Dongen, Bob Eggleton, Will Eisner, Frank Frazetta, Jack Kirby, Paul Lehr, Ron & Val Lahey, Lindsay, Moebius, Alex Schomburg and William R. Warren Jr.

The French National SF Awards, the Prix Rosny, have been announced:

BEST NOVEL: *Les Olympiades Truquées* - Joëlle Wintrebert tied with *Le Serpent d'Angouleme* - Roland C. Wagner

BEST SHORT FICTION: *Roulette Mousse* - Jean-Pierre Hubert

The Kurd Lasswitz Awards for the best SF published in Germany in 1987 have been announced. The winners were:

BEST NOVEL: *The Cloud* - Gudrun Pausewang

BEST SHORT FICTION: *Solution to the Problem of Unemployment* - Karl Michael Armer

BEST TRANSLATOR: Lore Straessl

BEST ARTIST: Klaus Holtzke

BEST FILM/TV: *The Sky Above Berlin* - Wim Wenders

BEST RADIO PLAY: *The Penthouse Protocol* - Carl Aeney

SPECIAL AWARD: Wolfgang Jeschke for his series *The Science Fiction Year*

BEST FOREIGN NOVEL IN TRANSLATION: 1 - *The Glamour* - Christopher Priest

2 - *Neuromancer* - William Gibson

3 - *Galapagos* - Kurt Vonnegut Jr

The winners and nominees of the Gorgamesh Award have been announced. The awards, decided by popular vote, are for the best works of science fiction and fantasy published in Spain during 1987. The Awards were announced in Barcelona on 20 December 1988.

BEST SF NOVEL

Dying Inside - Robert Silverberg

Nominees were: *Starling at the Sun* - Julian Barnes; *Blood Music* - Greg Bear; *Our Friends from Frolix 8* - Philip K. Dick; *Gather Darkness* - Fritz Leiber; *The Merchant's War* - Frederik Pohl; *Tom O'Bedlam* - Robert Silverberg; *A Time of Changes* - Robert Silverberg; *The Gardens of Delight* - Ian Watson; *Miracle Visitors* - Ian Watson.

BEST SF COLLECTION

No Award

Nominees were: *The Wind's Twelve Quarters*, Vol. 2 - Ursula LeGuin; *The Compass Rose* - Ursula LeGuin; *Nebula Awards 1985* - George Zebrowski (Ed).

BEST SF SHORT STORY

No Award

Nominees were: "The Postman" - David Brin; "The Margin" - Orson Scott Card; "The Day Before the Revolution" - Ursula LeGuin; "Mazes" - Ursula LeGuin; "The Water is Wide" - Ursula LeGuin; "Portrait of his Children" - George R.R. Martin; "Dinner in Audogast" - Bruce Sterling; "Unicorn Variations" - Roger Zelazny; "24 Views of Mount Fuji, by Hokusai" - Roger Zelazny.

BEST FANTASY NOVEL

Gugel's Saga - Jack Vance tied with *The Farthest Shore* - Ursula LeGuin

Nominees were: *The Book of Three* - Lloyd Alexander; *A Maggot* - John Fowles; *The Magician's Nephew* - C.S. Lewis; *The Watchtower* - Elizabeth A. Lynn.

BEST FANTASY COLLECTION

Swords in the Mist - Fritz Leiber

BEST FANTASY SHORT STORY

"Ill Times in Lankhmar" - Fritz Leiber

Nominees were: "Calderilla" - Ursula LeGuin; "Gillian's Harp" - Ursula LeGuin; "The White Monkey" - Ursula LeGuin; "The Hate Cloud" - Fritz Leiber; "The Adopt's Gambit" - Fritz Leiber; "Simón el mago" - Danilo Kis; "History of the master and the disciple" - Danilo Kis.

BEST HORROR NOVEL

No Award

Nominees were: *The Damnation Game* - Clive Barker; *The Ceremonies* - T.E.D. Klein; *Lycanthia* - Tanith Lee.

BEST HORROR COLLECTION

Best Stories 1 - Walter de la Mare tied with *Books of Blood 3* - Clive Barker

Nominees were: *Books of Blood 2* - Clive Barker; *The Inhuman Condition* - Clive Barker; *The Year's Best Horror Stories 13* - Karl Edward Wagner (Ed).

BEST HORROR SHORT STORY

"The Inhuman Condition" - Clive Barker

Nominees were: "The skins of Fathers" - Clive Barker; "Confessions of a Pornograph Shroud" - Clive Barker; "The Thing in the Bedroom" - David Langford; "Horrible Imaginations" - Fritz Leiber; "The Wife's Version" - Ursula LeGuin.

BEST MAGAZINE

No Award

BEST FANZINE

Cuasar (Buenos Aires) tied with *Tránsito* (Barcelona).

BEST COLLECTION

Fantasy tied with *Super Ficción*

SPECIAL AWARDS

The Science in Science Fiction - Peter Nicholls (Ed).

Francisco Pardo, editor at MINOTAURO, for 30 years of dedication to the genre.

EDICIONES PLENILUNI for their SF series in Catalan.

El Péndulo magazine, in memoriam, for its quality.

[Alejo Cuervo]



resign or be ousted in the next few months.

COLLINS and Murdoch also had a 50-50 stake in the American publisher HARPER & ROW, and this deal gives Murdoch outright control there also. George Craig, former COLLINS executive who left to become chairman of HARPER & ROW, will return to Britain to become the new head of COLLINS. But it is Murdoch himself who will replace Chapman as chairman.

Murdoch now has a substantial stake in newspapers, publishers and satellite broadcasting, and it is likely that these will be used to tie-in with one another in varying ways. It is unclear as yet how much effect the Murdoch takeover will have on the science fiction and fantasy currently published by GRAFTON - no SF writers were prominent among those threatening to leave the company.

Meanwhile Murdoch's rival Robert Maxwell has bought the American publisher MACMILLAN for \$2.6 million, to give him the American publishing base he has long been after. The American company is not the same as the British publisher of the same name.

It was interesting to note in the pages of *The Observer* a paragraph relating how the appointment of a new Managing Director for Macmillan London has prompted the resignation of one of their long-serving senior fiction editors, James Hale. Whilst his name is not one of those widely known in the SF world, it is perhaps relevant to point out that he is the editor who signed up and nurtured Iain Banks' work. In a list which has not been known to publish SF/fantasy on any scale, it will be interesting to see whether Iain remains with Macmillan or moves with James, who did much to revitalise the Macmillan fiction list, which was in the doldrums until the early 1980s.

The resignation of Phillipa Harrison earlier in 1988, from the Macmillan London Managing Directorship, reportedly over the merging of the sales/publicity departments of Macmillan and that of subsidiary company, Sidgwick and Jackson, was a surprise. The *Matrix* note on Kathy Gale's appointment to be SF editor of Pan, a Macmillan Subsidiary, and the intention of collaborating with one of the associated companies, to arrange hardback and paperback deals, may be affected by this.

[Peter Colley]

MACDONALD FUTURA have bought the British rights to *Endangered Species* a new collection of short stories by Gene Wolfe. They will also be publishing an anthology of hard SF edited by David Hartwell and Kathryn Cramer, though as yet it has no title.

TITAN BOOKS have announced the publication of volumes 9 and 10 of *Alan Moore's Swamp Thing*, with the 11th and final volume presumably due later this year.

They are also publishing *Bad Company* book 4 by Pete Milligan, Brett Evans and Jim McCarthy, taken from their successful 2000 AD strip.

Also coming out are two Judge Dredd books, *Judge Dredd in Monkey Business* and *Judge Dredd in Oz Book Two* by Wagner and Grant; and Book 8 of *Nemesis the Warlock* by Mills and Roach.

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NEW AND FORTHCOMING BOOKS DECEMBER-FEBRUARY

Paul & Karen ANDERSON *The King of Ys: Debut* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of 3rd part in continuing fantasy series.
Piers ANTHONY *Out of Phase* (NEL, pbk, £6.95) 1st UK edn of 1st part of new trilogy set in same world as the *Apprentice Adept* books.

Edward ASHFORD *The Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence* (GLANFORD, hbk, £14.95) 1st edn survey of latest thought on the subject.

J.G. BALLARD *Memories of the Space Age* (ARROW HOUSE, hbk, £16.95) 1st edn of new collection of stories.

Clive BARKER *Cabal* (FONTANA, pbk, £2.95) 1st edn of new novel by modern horror master.

Greg BEAR *Eternity* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn, sequel to *Enig*; *Beyond Heaven's River* (VG&F, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of 1980 novel.

James P. BLAYLOCK *The Elf Ship* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of 1982 fantasy novel.

Herbert BURGHOLD *Strange Bedfellows* (HEADLINE, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of thriller with CIA agents with psi powers.

Ramsay CAMPBELL *Ancient Images* (LEGEND, hbk, £12.95) 1st edn of new horror novel set in the world of film.

Jack L. CHALKER *Warriors of the Storm* (NEL, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of Book 3 of *The Rings of the Master*.

C.J. CHERRY *Wave Without a Shore* (VG&F, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of 1981 novel.

Arthur C. CLARKE *2061: Odyssey Three* (GRAFTON, pbk, £2.99) reissue of 3rd *Odyssey* book.

John CLUTE *Strokes* (SERCONIA, hbk, \$16.95) 1st edn of collection of essays and reviews by one of our finest critics.

Paul DAVIES *The Cosmic Blueprint* (UNWIN, pbk, £5.95) non-fiction (Heinemann, 1987) on the theory of chaos.

Tom DEITZ *Firepaper's Doom* (ORBIT, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of sequel to *Windmaster's Bane*.

Samuel R. DELANY *The Jewels of Apor* (VG&F, pbk, £2.99) Reprint of 1967 novel; *Neverdya* (GRAFTON, pbk, £4.50) 1st UK edn of the 2nd *Neverdya* book.

Joe DEVER *Slaughter Mountain Run* (BEAVER, pbk, £2.50) 1st edn of *Freeway Warrior 2* gamebook.

Ann DOWNER *The Spellkey* (ORBIT, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of fantasy novel.

Rose ESTES *The Demon Hand* (PENGUIN, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn, vol 3 of Mike Trilogy, set in Greyhawk role-playing universe.

Alan Dean FOSTER *Into the Out of NEL*, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (NEL 1987) of fantasy novel set in Africa.

Stephen GALLAGHER *Down River* (NEL, hbk, £10.95) 1st edn of new horror novel; *October* (NEL, pbk, £2.99) Reprint of his last successful horror novel.

Sheila GILLILLY *Greenbriar Queen* (HEADLINE, pbk, £6.95) 1st UK edn of fantasy novel.

Rodney HALL *Kisses of the Enemy* (FABER, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn of Australian political novel set in near future.

K.W. JETER *In the Land of the Dead* (MORRIGAN, hbk, £11.95, Collectors Edn £40) 1st edn of new novel; *Death Arms* (GRAFTON, pbk, £2.99) Reprint (Morrigan 1987) of companion novel to *Dr Adder and The Glass Hammer*.

Tanith LEE *The Book of the Damned* (UNWIN, pbk, £2.95) & *The Book of the Beast* (UNWIN, pbk, £2.95) reprints (Unwin, 1988) of the 2 Books of Paradsy.

Ian McDONALD *Desolation Road* (BANTAM, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of 1st novel by new British writer.

Loren J. MACGREGOR *The Net* (ORBIT, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of former Ace Special.

Claire McNALLY *Come Down Into Darkness* (CORGI, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of horror novel.

Andre NORTON *Trey of Swords* (VG&F, pbk, £2.99) Reprint (W.H. Allen, 1979) of 8th *Witch World* book.

Milord PAVIC *Dictionary of the Khazars* (HAMISH HAMILTON, hbk, £11.95) 1st UK edn of extraordinary novel enjoying European success to match *The Name of the Rose*.

Charles PLATT *Plasm* (GRAFTON, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of continuation of Piers Anthony's *Chthon* & *Phthor*.

Jerry POURNELLE *Clan and Clown* (ORBIT, pbk, £3.50) Sequel of *Janissaries*.

Christopher PRIEST *The Affirmation* (VG&F, pbk, £2.99) Reprint (Faber, 1981), VG&F Classic 29.

W.T. QUICK *Dreams of Flesh and Sand* (ORBIT, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of "cyberpunk" novel.

Anne RAMPLING *Belinda* (ORBIT, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of erotic pseudonym novel by the author interview with the Vampire and *The Vampire Lestat*.

Keith ROBERTS *The Road to Paradise* (KEROSINA, hbk, £13.95, Collector's edn £37.50) 1st edn, detective novel.

Joel ROSENBERG *The Silver Crown* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of Book 3 of *Guardians of the Flame*.

Heliana SCOTT *Silence in Solitude* (VG&F, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of sequel to *Five-Twelfths of Heaven*.

Charles SHEPHERD *Sight of Proteus* (NEL, pbk, £2.99) & *Proteus Unbound* (NEL, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edns of linked novels involving form-changing process.

Robert SILVERBERG *Project Pendulum* (HUTCHINSON, hbk, £6.95) 1st UK edn of children's novel involving time travel.

Whitley STREIBER *Cat Magic* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Grafton, 1987) of horror novel.

Judith TARR *The Lady of Han-Gilen* (PAN, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of Vol 2 of the *Avaryan Rising* trilogy.

Sheri S. TEMPER *The Gate to Women's Country* (BANTAM, pbk, £6.95) 1st UK edn of novel about the separation of men and women; *The Enigma Score* (CORGI, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of novel called *After Long Silence* in the USA.

Keith TIMSON *A Far Magic Show* (ORBIT, pbk, £4.99) 1st edn of 1st vol in new fantasy series "in the tradition of Terry Brook's *Shennars*".

Gene WOLFE *There are Doors* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn; *Peace* (NEL, pbk, £2.99) Reprint (Chatto, 1985) of eloquent and subtle fantasy.

Jonathan WYLIE *Dreams of Stone* (CORGI, pbk, £2.99) 1st edn of Book 1 of *The Unbalanced Earth*.

Roger ZELAZNY *A Dark Travelling* (HUTCHINSON, hbk, £6.95) 1st UK edn of children's novel.

David ZINDELL *Neverness* (GRAFTON, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn of 1st novel by a winner of the Writers of the Future contest.

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Media News

Compiled by John Peters

Though EMPIRE FILMS has been sold, Charles Band, former producer/director for that company has not given up film-making. He is joining with director Stuart Gordon to remake *The Pit and the Pendulum*. With a budget of \$6 million, it will be filmed in Italy. While being faithful to Edgar Allan Poe's original story, they will also make full use of the time period, which included the rise of the Inquisition and the Witchcraft trials.

The most successful movie in America over the recent Presidential election week was John Carpenter's *They Live*. It deals with a surreptitious alien invasion, the use of subliminal suggestion, and capitalism. Apparently, its story of free enterprise aliens who exploit the Earth like a third world country struck a receptive nerve. *They Live* should be released over here sometime in the early part of the year.

Director Ridley Scott is currently filming *Black Rain*, a thriller set in Japan, and produced by Sherry Lansing and Stanley Jaffe - the team responsible for *Fatal Attraction*. Scott's future also seems to be linked to that of James Cameron - on completing *Black Rain*, he is to direct *Aliens III*, in which Sigourney Weaver will make only a guest appearance, though she will star in the fourth film in the series. Meanwhile Cameron is to film a sequel to *Blade Runner*. Whether Harrison Ford is to return as Rick Deckard is unknown.

Arnold Schwarzenegger, currently to be seen in *Twins*, has just earned \$7.5 million for not making a film. Signed to make *Sgt. Rock*, production was cancelled, but a clause in his contract ensured that he was still paid in full. The release of *Red Heat* should follow quickly after *Twins* to ensure that Schwarzenegger has a successful year at the box office.

Once again rumours have surfaced that George Lucas is about to begin work on the next *Star Wars* trilogy. After the lacklustre performance of *Willow*, Lucas is going to need a blockbuster poem to restore his reputation. It's been ten years since the first part of the *Star Wars* series was released, changing SF cinema radically both in special effects terms and in the way money was spent in the making of films. Any new film is going to cost upwards of \$40 million, and it will have to recoup at least three or four times that sum before it makes a profit. So Lucas is going to have to make sure that there will be overwhelming evidence for the continued adventure in a galaxy far, far away. Perhaps the near certain success of the currently in production third *Indiana Jones* film will convince him to think about giving the public what they want - but I wouldn't hold your breath.

Brian Stabileford and David Langford have just signed contracts with a French TV company to make a four-part mini-series based on their "speculative history of the next thousand years", *The Third Millennium*. The TV company will be making an English-language version as well as the French one, and it is hoped in the fullness of time that it will be sold to a British TV company.

Meanwhile he reports that his story "Cinderella's Sisters" which leads off the first issue of *The Gate*, along with several other recent stories, is a spin-off from that book.

(Brian Stableford)

Film rights for Lucius Shepard's Arthur C. Clarke Award nominee *Life During Wartime* have been sold to 20th Century Fox for "a high six-figure price" plus a share of the profits.

Klaus Kinski recreates his rôle as Nosferatu in *Vampire in Venice*, set during carnival time in Venice and also starring Christopher Plummer and Donald Pleasance. The film is released by VESTRON VIDEO INTERNATIONAL on February 6.

SNIPPETS: Another sequel being planned is *Time Machine II*, budgeted at around \$12 million ... *Ghostbusters II* is in production, but without Sigourney Weaver in the cast ... *Star Trek V*, directed by William Shatner, just finished shooting; in an interview in *The Independent*, Leonard Nimoy reports that Shatner has gone for a more action-packed style, but Nimoy hasn't seen the rough cut yet; budget for the film was \$30 million ... Ex-Munster Fred Gwynne joins Denise Crosby in *Fun*

Sanctuary, which has been scripted by Stephen King from his own bestseller... Due to the poor box-office reception of *Polltexgeist III*, there are no plans for any further *Polltexgeist*... Mad Brooks's follow-up to the disappointing *Space Balls* is *Life Stinks...* Shelley Winters (who single-handedly kept the SS Poseidon afloat) is to co-star with *Nad Beatty* in *The Purple People Eater...* *Short Circuit II*, which stiffed at the US box office, is released here on February 10... Music for the new *Beethoven* film is by Danny Elfman... A script is being prepared for *An American Werewolf in London II*.

COMING ATTRACTIONS: *The Dead eat the Living*; *Mutant on the Bounty*; *Girlfriend from Hell*; *Monster High*; *My Mom's a Werewolf*; *Alienator*; *Beverly Hills Vampires*; *Blab II*; *Short Circuit III*; *Phantasm III*; *Halloween V*; *Psycho IV*.

TV NEWS: Peter Onofri is definitely returning as Jim Phelps in a new series of *Mission Impossible* ... As is Gene Barry, who returns to the small screen in a remake of the '60s series *Burke's Law* ... *Superboy* is to be played by unknown actor John Heyes Newton ... the series has just opened on British TV in January ... New fantasy TV series in the USA include: *Denver*; *The Last Dinosaur* and *Teenage Hunter*; *80 Years Turtles* ... NBC-TV is to launch *Star Trek: The Next Generation* ... *Star Trek* has a 6-hour mini-series starring Pierce Brosnan in *The Day After Tomorrow* ... other series include Eric Idle, Peter Onofri, Christopher Lee, Lee Remick, Robert Wagner, Jill St. John and Roddy McDowall.

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SPRING BOOKS

Compiled by Paul Kincaid

This is the time of year when publishers start to produce their spring lists, which gives us an opportunity to look ahead to some of the good (and not so good) things that are promised for the first half of the year.

GOLLANCZ remain, despite some determined competition, this country's leading publisher of science fiction, so it makes sense to start with their offerings.

The year begins with *Eternity* - Greg Bear, the sequel to *Eon* and a book which, so it is claimed, "dwarfs its predecessor" in the scale of its ideas. It takes as its subject the creation of a Universe - which certainly sounds like SF on the grand scale.

That was for January. In February things scale down somewhat with *There are Doors* - Gene Wolfe, in which "Mr Green, a man from our world... falls in love with Lara, a woman (or perhaps she is a goddess) who appears from a different world, and just as quickly disappears." Also in February there is a new collection of 15 short stories from Ian Watson - *Salvage Rites*.

March offers another very welcome short story collection, *Dark Night in Toyland* - Bob Shaw, who crops up again in an unexpected place on the GOLLANCZ list in July with *Killer Planet*. This is his first novel for children, and is a fast-moving adventure story set on Veridia, "the most mysterious, most deadly planet man has yet discovered." It sounds like the sort of book that should please all his fans.

March seems to be a popular month with all the publishers. GOLLANCZ is also publishing *Catspaw* - Joan D. Vinge, about a half-human, half-Hydran with psionic gifts; and *The Instrumentality of Mankind* - Cordwainer Smith is the first hardback edition of a collection of 14 stories that has already appeared as a VGSF Classic. And there is a significant non-fiction book: *Astounding Days* - Arthur C. Clarke is subtitled "A Science-Fictional Autobiography", and uses his memories of the stories from *Astounding* which first got him interested in SF as the hook upon which to hang the story of his life.

For more books in April, including another non-fiction title that promises to be fascinating: *Dancing at the Edge of the World*—Ursula LaRuin is a collection of articles, reviews and papers culled from the last decade. Perhaps even more eagerly awaited, however, is the first new Elric novel for more than a decade, *The Fortress of the Pearl*—Michael Moorcock, in which the albino Prince of Melniboné sets out on a quest to find the Pearl at the Heart of the World.

Another familiar character resurfaces in *To the Land of the Living* - Robert Silverberg, in which Gilgamesh embarks on a quest through the Afterworld where everyone who has ever lived reawakens when they die.

The other book scheduled for April is *Second Variety* - Philip K. Dick, the second volume in his *Collected Stories*, with 27 examples of his superb short work. This is followed up in July with *The Broken Bubble*, another of his mainstream novels now at last seeing the light of day, this time a black comedy featuring a local radio DJ in San Francisco in 1954.

May brings only one title, but it will probably be the best news of all to a devoted army of fans. *Pyramids* - Terry Pratchett is the latest Discworld novel, this time featuring the misadventures of a teenage pharaoh when the Great Pyramid has just exploded.

In June, *Imago* - Octavia Butler is the third and concluding volume to her intense *Xenogenesis* series. Douglas Hill is better known as a children's writer, but *The Fraxilly Fracas* is his first adult novel, an adventure involving galactic crime syndicates, bandits, alien pirate chieftains, and the God-King of Fraxilly. And there is *Dressmaker* - Peter James, a horror novel that describes "a vortex of terror from which there is no escape".

Finally, in July, in addition to the books from Dick and Shaw already mentioned, there are two sequels. *Rama II* - Arthur C. Clarke & Gentry Lee, is the long-awaited sequel to *Rendezvous with Rama*, set in 2200, four years after a second spacecraft has been detected. And *War of the Sky Lords* - John Brosnan, is the second volume of his far-future trilogy.

The GOLLANZ catalogue no longer gives the dates for VGSF paperbacks, nor does it indicate which (if any) are VGSF Classics. However, the complete list for the Spring is: *Silence in Solitude* - Melissa Scott; *Trey of Swords* - Andre Norton; *The Jewels of Apor* - Samuel Delany; *Cryptocodex* - Brian Aldiss; *Brother Berserker* - Fred Saberhagen; *Windplayers* - Pat Cadigan; in *Alien Flash* - Gregory Benford; *Dying Inside* - Robert Silverberg; *The Sky Lords* - John Brosnan; *The Committed Man* - M. John Harrison; *Feyre Dream* - George R.R. Martin; *Psychone* - Greg Bear; *The Coming of the Quantum Cats* - Frederik Pohl; *Adulthood Rites: Xenogenesis II* - Octavia Butler; *Man in His Time: Best SF Stories* - Brian Aldiss; *Berserker's Planet* - Fred Saberhagen; *Dreamsnake* - Vonda N. McIntyre; *The Fraxilly Fracas* - Douglas Hill; *Metrophege* - Richard Kadrey; *Big Planet* - Jack Vance.

One of the rivals to GOLLANZ is UNWIN HYMAN who, in advance of their full catalogue, have sent their schedule for the entire year.

January saw the paperback editions of *The Book of the Damned* & *The Book of the Beast* - Tenth Lee; followed in February by the paperback of *Ambient* - Jack Womack.

UNWIN is another publisher making a big thing of March, with three new hardbacks. One is *Hunter's Moon* - Gerry Kilworth, his longest novel to date and an animal saga featuring foxes that the publishers have made their lead title for 1989. The same month sees the second novel from Jack Womack - *Terraplane*, set in a 21st century Russia gone crazily capitalist, and including time travel to a 1939 New York in which the Depression never ended, Roosevelt has been assassinated, and Hitler is preparing to take over the world. The third book for the month is *The Annotated Hobbit* - J.R.R. Tolkien, with annotations by Douglas A. Anderson.

April sees *Infants* - Louise Cooper, the third part of her 8-volume *Indigo* series; *Phoenix Fire* - Lynden Darby, the third part of *The Eye of Time* series; and *Mother of Storms* - Adrian Cole, the first part of a new series, *Star Requiem* (followed by *The Dream Thief* in November; all are in paperback).

In May, the popular American writer Megan Lindholm joins the UNWIN list with *Reindeer People*, the first part of a series in the tradition of *Clan of the Cave Bear*, which will be concluded by *Wolf's Brother* in August. Also in May there's the paperback edition of Scott Bradford's acclaimed collection of short stories, *The Secret Life of Houses*.

June has the hardback of *Forests of the Night* - Tenth Lee, a collection of 20 short stories, including eight that have never been published before. There is also *Winter in Aphelion* - Chris Dixon, a Celtic/Norse fantasy that is the first novel by a new Welsh writer. And there is the paperback of *Cloudrock* - Gerry Kilworth, while his other 1987 novel, the even better *Abandonell* comes into paperback in August.

Louise Cooper continues *Indigo* with *Nightmare* in July, and *Troika* in October; and there's a new fantasy series by a new American writer, Midori Snyder, beginning with *New Moon* in July, and continued with *Sadder's Keep* in September. Finally in July there are the paperback editions of *Other Voices* - Colin Greenland and *Kairos* - Gwyneth Jones.

For August I've already mentioned the books by Kilworth and Lindholm. The rest of the month is taken up by J.R.R. Tolkien with the hardback of *Traveller in Isengard* and the *Tolkien Calendar 1990* by Ted Nasmith.

In September Tolkien continues with the paperback of *The Lost Road*, but the book of the month has to be the hardback edition of *Love Sickness* - Geoff Ryman's long story which stretched across two issues of *Interzone*, though this is now apparently going under the title *The Child Garden*. Also that

month is the latest part of the original anthology series, *Other Edens* 3 edited by Christopher Evans & Robert Holdstock.

October has a new paperback from Colin Greenland, a big space opera called *Take Back Plenty*, plus the hardback of *The Archivist* - Gillian Alderman which is described as "an extraordinary science fiction epic".

Finally, in November, there is the novel from Cole I've already mentioned, as well as *The Book of the Night* - Tenth Lee, and a new Sun Wolf and Star Hawk adventure from Barbara Hambly, *Hard Full of Darkness*.

GRAFTON are also challenging GOLLANZ, and their Spring List begins with *Neverness* - David Zindell, a massive SF adventure by a writer who emerged from the Writers of the Future competition.

That's in February, but March has possibly the biggest prize on the GRAFTON list, with *The Toybee Convector*, the first collection of short stories in over a decade by Ray Bradbury, with 25 stories in all. March also offers *Starmaster* - Jenny Wurts, the first volume in a new fantasy saga, *The Cycle of Fire and Myrmex* - A.A. Attanasio, a tale of piracy, sea battles and sorcery set in the 17th century.

April offers up *Demopell*, *The Bristling Wood* - Katherine Kerr, the third volume in her successful Devery sequence. There's also *Blue World* - Robert R. McCammon, a collection of short stories by the award-winning horror writer. This hardback coincides with the paperback publication of his latest novel, *Slinger*.

There's another animal saga in May, this time concerned with a community of Barn Owls, in *The Ancient Solitary Reign* - Martin Hooke.

Finally, in June, there comes what will probably be the biggest money-spinner of the lot, *The Diamond Throne* - David Eddings, the opening volume in his new trilogy, *The Elenium*, which is described as being his most ambitious and most imaginative yet.

Anyone wanting to prepare for the new Elric novel coming from GOLLANZ might like to look to NEW ELRIC LIBRARY, who have released *Elric at the End of Time* - Michael Moorcock in hardback in January. In the same month there are also hardback reissues of *The Shining* and *Salem's Lot* - Stephen King.

February sees more reissues, with hardbacks of *Shrine and Domain* - James Herbert. But if you were beginning to think that HE were doing nothing original, then in the same month comes *Out of Phase* - Piers Anthony (in hardback and trade paperback), which is the first volume in a new trilogy set in the same worlds as his *Apprentice Adept* series.

March is much more interesting, with *Down River* - Stephen Gallagher, about an amoral cop back from the dead; and *Bere Bones* - Tim Underwood & Chuck Miller (editors), a collection of interviews with Stephen King.

More horror in April with *Adversary* - Daniel Rhodes, the sequel to his first novel, *Next, After Lucifer*.

Then, in June, it's back to the prolific Piers Anthony, with the hardback and trade paperback of *Heaven Cant*, the second part of his new *Magic of Xanth* trilogy. And there is also a new hardback edition of *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress* - Robert Heinlein.

HEADLINE continues not to publish any science fiction in hardback, though there is a hardback of the new thriller from Dean R. Koontz - *Nightfall*, coming in hardback in April.

The paperback list starts in January with *The Sensitives* - Herbert Burkholz, a spy novel with psi overtones; *Greenbrier Queen* - Sheila Gillyall, "an exhilarating and glorious fantasy debut"; and *A Night in the Netherlands* - Craig Shaw Gardner, the conclusion (?) to the Ebenezzer trilogy.

February offers *Ether of Athos* - Lois McMaster Bujold's follow-up to *Shards of Honour*; *The Khyber Connection* - Simon Hawke, book six in the Time Wars series; and *The Fall of Fyrlund* - Roger Taylor, the second part of the *Chronicles of Hawkian* fantasy series.

Dean R. Koontz crops up again in March with the paperback of *Lightning*, plus *The Green Man* - Lynn Abbey, the second part of her fantasy trilogy; *Timeless* - David Nighbert, an intergalactic space adventure; *A Difficulty with Dwarves* - Craig Shaw Gardner, it again with a new trilogy; and *Abduction* - Jenny Randles, an examination of the phenomenon of alien abduction.

There are two fantasies in April, *Elf Defence* - Esther Freemeyer; and *On the Seas of Destiny* - Ru Emerson, the final volume of *The Tales of Nedra*.

May has *Night Feers*, an original collection of horror stories from Dean R. Koontz, Edward Bryant and Robert

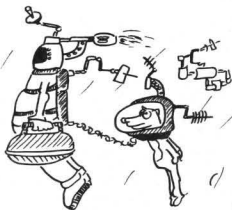
McCommon, with an introduction by Clive Barker. There's also the science fiction of *Falling Free* - Lois McMaster Bujold.

Finally, in June, there is the space opera of *Shadows of the White Sun* - Raymond Harris; the fantasy of *The Fire Sword* - Adrienne Martine-Barnes in which a modern woman is cast back in time to a magical middle ages; and *A Touch of Magic* - M. Ruth Myers in which an amateur female magician sets out in pursuit of an international terrorist.

STOP PRESS * STOP PRESS

Good news from Dov Rigal: Edward Markov has been granted a visa to leave the USSR. He will be travelling to Israel, leaving Russia on February 25th. I've also been told that he eventually plans to move to the USA, but I've not been able to confirm this with Dov. Edward specifically thanks the BSFA for their support, although it seems that very few letters actually got through to him. He says:

"I ask you to thank everyone who wrote to me and gave me the spiritual support. It is beyond value. You can believe me."



LOCAL FANOMENA

The Clubs Column

Compiled by Keith Mitchell

IT TURNED OUT THAT DISCUSSING AT LENGTH THE HAZARDS OF NOISY pubs, in my last column, was too much of a temptation for providence. No sooner had I finished my article than we discovered that Milne's, the pub where the Edinburgh group Forth has been meeting for the past 6-odd years, was introducing live folk music on our Tuesday nights.

The fact that this happened about the same time that the manager who has run the place for the time we have been there left, is probably not unconnected. Our thanks to Harry and his staff for their good-natured hospitality over the past few years. Anyway, as I predicted, the place became uninhabitable, and a hasty move to a pub with much better beer was convened. We now meet in The Malt Shovel, too, which is in Cockburn St, even closer to Waverley railway station. It is next door to the original Malt Shovel, and used to be known as Copper's. However, the Real Ale (or "Proper Beer" as they like to call it), reputation has been enhanced, and in addition to 2 or 3 guest beers, regular delights include Mitchells, Macays and Strongarm. Meetings continue as before, Tuesday nights from 8.30-ish onwards. Get in touch with me at the clubs contact address if you want to know more.

I recently heard from Paul Treadaway about CUSFS, the Cambridge University Science Fiction Society, which is another group I have attended in the past. This appears to be continuing in the same vein and strength as it has for the past twenty years of its existence, with over 20 members this year.

Regular meetings are open to everyone, and happen each Thursday, in the bar of New Hall college (it only had Greene King keg beer when I was last there, 4 years ago). A broad cross-section of fandom can usually be found there. Guest

speakers also feature, and CUSFS has been quite successful in attracting big names. John Brunner is planned shortly, and past speakers include Harry Harrison, Anne McCaffrey, Alan Moore and Terry Pratchett.

They have quite a lot of other less regular activities, including video showings, and the annual (and unconventional) Christmas Party, and vice-presidential "elections", as well as production of the multi-titled acronymic groupzine, *TIBA* (I'm told that the staff at the Cambridge University Library love it because it subverts the cataloguing system - MSPJ). CUSFS boasts a library of over 2000 books available to members. In the past, they have been involved with organising Unicons, and maintain contact with their counterparts in Oxford to the extent of having joint events.

If you want to know more, then for this academic year, you can contact Paul at Magdalene College, Cambridge, CB3 0AG. The general contact for the society is The Chairman, CUSFS, c/o Cambridge University Students' Union, 3 Round Church St, Cambridge.

Finally, I have an update on the Brighton group, from its co-ordinator, Andrew Robertson. They still meet every Friday night, but the pub is about to change. If you want to go along, then you should contact Andy first. He has recently changed his address, and can be found at 38 South Way, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1LY, tel: 0273 474468 (home), 01 637 3434 ext 5246 (work).

ADDITIONAL NEWS

Compiled by Maureen Porter

The Drake Science Fiction Association has finally found a new venue, and is now meeting at the King's Head, Bretonside, next to the bus station in central Plymouth. Their AGM is in February, and there will be a new chairman - John Peters is not standing for re-election. However, as he is the only BSFA member in the DSFA, he will be continuing to act as a liaison with the BSFA. He plaintively enquires whether there are any local BSFA members who would like to contact the DSFA. Contact John at 299 Southway Drive, Southway, Plymouth, Devon, PL6 6NW. Tel: 0752 785853 for further information.

Going overseas, I've received information about a Russian SF group in Volgograd. The Volgograd SFCC (Science Fiction and Fantasy Club?) "The Wind of Time" recommenced activity on 1st October 1988. Nearly 100 fans attended the opening ceremony, and met SF author Sergey Sinikin, from Volgograd, and SF translator Alexander Korzhnesky from Moscow. After a discussion of club matters, *Terminator* was shown on video, and there was a book raffle.

The group is sponsored by the "The Palace of Youth" (komosol organisation) but will rely on self-financing. Club meetings will be held every Saturday at noon, and the organisers are planning regular video SF viewings, meetings with SF writers, distribution of SF news, pen-pal links with Soviet and foreign clubs and fans.

Contact: Boris Alexandrovich Zavgordny, Poste Restante, Central Post Office, Volgograd-66, USSR 400066.

Relating to the Volgograd group, John Brunner passed the following notice to me.

"Komkon-3 [another SF group] chairman, Alexandr Korolkov, offers Eastern and Western fandoms conclude an agreement on non-currency basis about exchange by fan representatives. Rules of exchange: Komkon-3 and interested party, on their side of deal, pay for road expenses, hotel, lease car for time of visitor, provides with translator for fifteen days with allocated sum of 500-1000 roubles for a person."

Those interested in pursuing this matter should contact Alexandr at 690900, USSR, Vladivostok, POB 72, KOMKON-3 or else contact The Wind of Change at the address in the previous paragraph.

On the literary front, I've just received the second newsletter from the recently formed Ghost Story Society. They have announced that they have finally decided on a name for the society journal, which is to be called *All Hellows*, and is to be edited by Mark Valentine. Newsletter #2 contains a roundup of publishing news, the next instalment of a Ghost Story Gazetteer (I'm still reeling from the discovery that Oxford, my native city, whilst rich in 'true' stories, has sadly inspired nowhere near as many fictional offerings as Cambridge - MSPJ). There is a listing for specialist catalogues, an excellent idea which I plan to emulate, and information about other similarly aligned societies, not to mention reviews of ghostly fiction.

MEDIA REVIEWS

NIGHTMARE MOVIES - Kim Newman
(Bloomsbury, 1988, pp.251, £12.95)

Reviewed by Alex Stewart

THE FIRST EDITION OF THIS BOOK HAS GENERALLY BEEN REGARDED AS the definitive study of the contemporary horror film ever since its appearance in 1984; unfortunately, due to the almost immediate bankruptcy of the publisher, finding a copy has been virtually impossible.

Now, completely revised and updated, *Nightmare Movies* is at last freely available. Newman has taken advantage of the intervening four years to restructure and expand the original text, which now neatly covers the twenty year period between 1968 and the first three quarters of 1988. Concise, witty and informative, each chapter studies a particular facet of the cinema of dark fantasy in considerable depth, tracing not only the evolution of the genre, but the crossing over of influences with others; SF, the political thriller, the road movie. The *Omen* series is perceptively compared with Tex Avery cartoons, while *Dirty Harry* and *After Hours* are cited as early as the introduction. It's partly this willingness to probe beyond the generally perceived boundaries of his subject matter which makes the book so uniquely valuable and thought-provoking.

Partly, too, it's because Newman communicates an infectious enthusiasm for his subject, backed by an encyclopedic knowledge not only of horror movies, but also of cinema in all its forms. His criticisms are cogently argued and sometimes surprising; his disdainful dismissal of what are generally referred to as "video nasties", for instance, is balanced by a spirited defence of *Driller Killer* as a work of genuine artistic merit. As a bonus, we also get one of the most comprehensive listings of alternative titles ever produced. This alone is almost worth the cover price.

The adjective "indispensable" is grossly over-used in reviewing reference books of this kind, but for once, it's literally true. No real cineaste can afford to be without a copy, and there's absolutely nothing better for the casual reader with even the most cursory interest in the genre. If you only ever buy one film book in your life, it has to be this one.

WILLOW - Directed by Ron Howard, produced by George Lucas, screenplay by Bob Dolman.

Reviewed by Jessica Yates

INSTEAD OF MAKING A FANTASY MOVIE OUT OF THE AVAILABLE BOOKS, George Lucas preferred to invent his own fantasy world, laying himself open to the accusations of inconsistency, lack of motivation for the forces of Evil, and simply appalling choice of names. Willow (Warwick Davies), the undersized hero, appears to have been named for the tree, so why are his fellow Nelywns (i.e. hobbits) given names like Bunglekutt and Meegosh? Against such criticisms, we should appreciate the realistic settings which show you just what it would be like to live and fight in a Dark-Age type fantasy world, and to suffer racial prejudice because you're a Nelywn of restricted growth.

The plot starts off as a combination of *Moses and The Court Jester*. A prophecy has foretold that a baby with a birthmark will bring about the end of the reign of evil Queen Bavmorda (Jean Marsh), who consequently forces all pregnant women to give birth within her castle walls. A midwife smuggles out the baby Elora Danan, and sends her floating down the river, to be found by two Nelywn children, who insist that their father Willow look after her. Willow is a farmer who dreams of becoming a magician, but so far can only perform conjuring tricks.

When Bavmorda's Death Dog invades the village in search of the baby, the Nelywns banish Willow until he gives the baby back to a human, not wanting to become involved. At a cross-roads, Willow finds a warrior, still alive, suspended in a gallows-cage, and frees him, so that he can take the baby away. When the baby is kidnapped by tiny brownies (special effects here), Willow follows them, and is told by the Fairy Queen about the prophecy, and that it is his duty to take her to safety. Reunited with the warrior, Madmartigan (Val Kilmer), the two set out with the baby...

Enjoyment of the film stands or falls by whether you go for Val Kilmer as the drop-out warrior who is a genius at swordplay. His role is similar to that of Han Solo in the *Star Wars* trilogy; the outsider who reforms and wins the princess. Any dialogue or behaviour which might render the film unsuitable for young children is so quickly passed over that you need to be very attentive and sharp-eared to catch it. I could have done with a longer film, and more time to linger

over the scenery and costume shots, but it seems that child viewers must not be allowed to become bored.

There are two splendid chase scenes, one involving carts and horses, and the other, downhill on a shield through the snow. Chris Achilleos and Moebius are both credited with design honours, and Madmartigan slays a very credible two-headed dragon. See it either with children, who will be enthralled, or as a local group outing, with plenty of room around you so that you can make Rocky Horror-style comments.

Reviewed by Lynne Siphon

MOST OF THE REVIEWS OF *WILLOW* IN THE PRESS AND ON TELEVISION have been lukewarm, at best. Often they have been bad - which is unfair as this is not a bad film. Unfortunately, it is not a great one either. To most fantasy enthusiasts it will be cosily familiar - we've seen these warriors, sorcerers and duels of magic before, although they usually have less style.

The film concerns the efforts of Willow Ufgood (Warwick Davies), a Nelywn or dwarf, and would-be magician, to save the baby Elora Danan from the evil sorceress Queen Bavmorda (Jean Marsh) whom Elora is destined to destroy. A rather whimsical Faerie Queen-type person gives Willow two helpers, a pair of brownies, and he also acquires the reluctant assistance of Madmartigan (Val Kilmer), a warrior of dubious morals. Sorsha (Joanne Whalley), warrior daughter of Queen Bavmorda, provides Madmartigan with a somewhat predictable romantic interest.

On the plus side, the characters are, without exception, extremely well-acted, the plot is coherent (no mean feat for a fantasy film, in which the offerings in my local video shop are anything to go by), well-paced and not without humour. The special effects are excellent, and the overall look of the film, the locations, sets and costumes makes a splendid backdrop to a tale of swords and sorcery. Where the film falters, apart from its lack of surprises for the jaded viewer of technicolour fantasy, is that it does not seem to know which age group it is aiming at. It tries too hard to be that elusive thing, "family entertainment", and in doing so, becomes too "childish" for an adult audience, whilst retaining several sequences which could be alarming or confusing for children - very few films seem to be able to get the formula right for adults and children without patronising the former or boring the latter. *Willow* tries hard - but it could do better.

THE PERIODIC TABLE

CONVENTION NEWS

compiled by Maureen Porter

I have been contacted by Vince Docherty who is, as some of you may already know, exploring the possibility of bidding for the Worldcon sometime in the 1990s. It's probably simplest if I quote extensively from Vince's letter.

"After Conspiracy 87 I was concerned that the knowledge and experience gained during the convention, whether good or bad, shouldn't be lost. In mid-88 I began making enquiries as to the feasibility of putting together a new bid. The main priorities, as I saw it then, were -

Having a pool of enthusiastic, committed and experienced people to run and staff the bid/convention, and organising them properly. This should include non-British fans.

Finding a site with adequate facilities/accommodation and using associated PROFESSIONAL help where possible. This includes getting financial assistance for the bid, airline tickets etc.

Last autumn, a group of us obtained detailed information about potential sites. At that point, I distributed a flier asking for help in setting up a study group to formally research a bid. The response was favourable, and since then, a group, comprising myself, John Fairley, Henry Balen, Tim Illingworth and others have been investigating the practicality of running a Worldcon in Britain in the 1990s. The remit of this group was to look at possible sites and dates, organisational structure, personnel and to begin setting up a Programme team.

The current plan is as follows -

We will constitute a 'Board' which will oversee all areas of the bid/convention and begin building a committee and recruiting staff. This is scheduled for late February. To facilitate this, I have begun contacting a large number of fans. I don't know everyone so if anyone reading this wishes to contribute in any way, please get in touch with me (address at end of item). This

includes anyone with prior experience of Worldcons, who may wish to be an adviser but not get involved in any other way.

Get firmer details from potential sites, regarding availability, facilities and possible financial assistance. This is now proceeding with the new International Conference Centre in Birmingham and The Jersey Conference Centre. A decision will be made on the choice of site as soon as possible after the Board is constituted.

We have already accepted that the most suitable dates are 95/97 so we are planning for the earlier of these. (We may however announce two bids to pre-empt any WFSF amendment to the constitution which could create a fourth, non-American zone of prevent an American zone losing more than twice in a row.

We must begin raising money as soon as possible. Obviously, until a formal bid is announced, we cannot officially offer pre-supporting membership. However, we certainly need some funds before this. Any donations to assist with setting up the bid will be GRATEFULLY received. As pre-supporting is likely to be in the region of £5, this would be an appropriate amount for an individual. This will count as a pre-support when the bid is announced. Should the bid be canceled or become unfeasible, then the remaining funds will be allocated to fannish groups or charities. Accounts will be available at regular intervals. ALL THE STAGES of the bid/convention. We also welcome suitable sponsorship of any kind."

If you are at all interested in the idea of a Worldcon bid for the 1990s, please contact Vince Docherty at 26 Larce Close, Batham, London, SW12 9SY. Tel: 01 673 2178 (Evenings).

News from Microcon, taking place over the weekend of 4-5th March - neither Dave Gibbons nor Dave McKean are now scheduled for Microcon, but Richmond Hunt assures me that Storm Constantine really will be at the convention. He also assures me that Mary Gentle and Diane Wynne Jones have confirmed their attendance whilst there is a possibility that Lisa Tuttle, Colin Greenland, Neil Gaiman, Terry Pratchett and Alex Stewart will also be present. For further details, contact Richmond at 51 Danes Road, Exeter, Devon EX4 4LS.

CONVENTION ROUNDUP

compiled by Maureen Porter

Please enclose an sse when writing for information. Most cons run on a tight budget and this is always appreciated. If you are running a convention or know of one which I've missed, please send information to the editorial address. All listings are free, and will continue until the convention has taken place.

1989 CONVENTIONS

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

MICROCON 9 - 4-5 March, Exeter University. Guest: Storm Constantine. Membership £5. Contact: Richmond Hunt, 51 Danes Rd, Exeter, Devon, EX4 4LS

CONTRIVANCE - 1989 British SF Convention/Eastercon 24-27 March 1989, Jersey. Guests: Anne McCaffrey/M John Harrison/Avdon 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 Darsingham Ave, Manor Park, London, E12 5GF. Trek con

ULTRAWORLD - 28-29 May, Unicorn Hotel, Bristol. Membership: One day - £9, two days - £16, supporting £4. Contact: Steve Brittain, 8 Springfield, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 1BB. Media con.

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

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

CAROUSEL - 24-25 June, Holiday Inn, Cardiff. Membership: both days £15, one day £8, supporting £4. Contact: Carousel '89, 76 Thwaite 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: £10. Contact: UK Agent: Kay 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, Jarrow, Tyne and Wear, NE32 3NQ. A week-long festival with planned events.

HONEYCOMBEE - 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 Dvys Ave, Great Barr, Birmingham, B42 1HG. Trek con, plus all night horror programme.

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

NOREASON 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

PORTMEIRCON '89 - The Annual Six of One Prisoner Appreciation Society Convention; 1-3 September, Portmeirion, N.W. Wales. All outdoor events free (Small hotel toll to non-residents), inside events solely for Six of One members. Contact Six of One, PO Box 60, Harrogate, HG1 2TP or PO Box 172, Hatfield, PA 19440, USA.

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, Acoccs Green, Birmingham, B27 7UY. General con.

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 Deryni novels, and also gave hints of much more to come. After the book signing (guests 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 Omenar 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 Babycare 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.

Reviewed by John Peters

TO ACTUALLY CONCEIVE THE IDEA OF RUNNING A CONVENTION IS considered slightly off-wack, to say the least - to see it through, despite hang-ups, set-ups and cock-ups, and remain sane says something about the committee and chairman of Armadacon.

After a year of uncertainty, general uninterest and apathy in local fandom, the weekend looked set to be the Drake SF Association's Pearl Harbour. And yet, that old black magic happened - the guests of honour arrived, book dealers arrived, and people appeared. It was a bloody miracle! Starting on the Friday night, auspicious in Plymouth only as THE night for taxi drag-racing along Union Street - a red-light district made even redder by brake-lights, and yet the Ballard centre began to look a little more colourful than of late. Local SF club-members and Plymouthians gathered, and there were even a few out-of-towners. Still, the thought that no-one would come to a con in Plymouth was on everyone's mind - and that did mar the success of the event.

Instead, writers Katherine Kurtz, Adrian Cole, Brian Lumley and actor Brian Croucher came, and the isolation lifted a little for the weekend. 62 people came and had a great time, many books, comics, cassettes etc were sold. Ginsters pasties were eaten by the dozen, a few brave registrars went skinny dipping in the in-house swimming pool, and there was a marvellous model castle that was perfect in every detail - I half expected Boris Karloff or Noggin the Nog to stride manfully across its ramparts!

No con is without its problems, and Armadacon had its share. While the organisation on the day was adequate, publicity beforehand had been scarce and support from local traders for poster space had been minimal - and it has to be admitted that while people will travel happily (and are expected to travel) to Birmingham, Manchester, Coventry or wherever, north of Bristol, a new venue like Plymouth has to fight to be noticed.

It was an intimate con, given its size, and there were panels on world-creating, readings from latest books, and an auction which helped the local baby-care unit. There were mistakes, but that had to be expected - it was a raw, unseasoned committee, some of who had never been to a con, and few had tried to run a con before. I'd like to think that lessons have been learned, and the next con will be even better than this one.

MILFORD SF Writers Conference 1988

Reviewed by Elizabeth Sourbut

FOR ME, THERE HAD ALWAYS BEEN A MYSTIQUE SURROUNDING Milford. I'd heard people talking about it, and had read the annual reports in *Matrix*, but none had given me a proper feel for what it was about, when I imagined the workshops, I saw an oak-panelled room dimly lit by high, mullioned windows. Stretching its length was a polished mahogany table, around which clustered the earnest, intellectual authors, deep in scintillating argument. However, one of the first things I learned at Milford was to abhor paired adjectives, so I was left with a room lit by windows in which a group of authors a table - which still isn't accurate, because there wasn't a table.

The workshop is named after a similar gathering in the U.S., where I assume that Milford is quite a large place. The British Milford isn't. Having arrived at the nearest railway station with only three changes, I then caught a taxi the remaining four miles along the coastal road. Reaching the hotel at last, I followed the sound of voices, and found the first arrivals congregated in the bar. "Grab a room key," they said, "dump your stuff and the room's yours for the week." There were ten rooms, and this year ten of us, which meant that everyone could have a room to themselves if they wanted it.

Besides myself, there were two other newcomers, Eric Brown, also from Yorkshire, and Robert Farago, an American. Happily endowed with at least his share of American self-confidence, Robert soon seemed like an old hand too, but all three of us were made to feel welcome. Life at Milford soon settled into a pattern of its own. Evenings were set aside for silly literary games, interspersed with tense pool matches, which were often even sillier. Several of us also found time to throw stones at the sea, and visit Hurst Castle, and almost everyone had a go on the swings in the beer garden of the local pub. (The locals did not entirely approve: word had gone round that were were UFOlogists, and from the looks some of them gave us, I think they had decided we were disguised Martians.)

There was work to do as well, and if the rest of the week seemed relaxed, almost to the point of indolence, suffice it to say that the workshop sessions more than made up for it. These were held in the afternoon, which, to me, seemed a little strange, as I work better in the morning. I was in a minority here. As the week progressed, I became accustomed to the sight

of Mary Gentle and Alex Stewart staggering to the table gasping, "Coffee, coffee, for God's sake give me coffee." But at least they were articulate. When I came down on the first morning, the curious expression on Neil Gaiman's face led me to suggest that perhaps he wasn't a morning person. He replied with a hollow laugh.

He had made a special effort that day. Subsequent breakfasts were made memorable by the touching sight of Diana Wynne Jones guiding his hands to his coffee cup, buttering his toast, and handing him unwanted cooked breakfasts, to see if he would eat them without noticing (which he did). However, by lunchtime he was considerably more wide-awake than I was, and remained so until well into the small hours, whereas at about 11:30 pm, I have to tendency to fall over sideways and start snoring.

My introductory letter had spoken of a swimming pool, so in anticipation of an Olympic-sized pool in the basement, I had packed my costume. This was unfortunate, because when I discovered that the pool was actually outside, the only excuse I had for not going in was cowardice. It was quite sunny, and some of us told each other that if the weather held until the end of the week, we might go in. By Friday we had talked ourselves into a corner. After having finished early, we had a whole hour before dinner. The others came out to watch, swathed in their woolly jumpers, while Paul Barnett, Robert Farago and I swam a rapid length. Then we looked at one another, agreed that it wasn't really that cold, and swam another one. After that, we decided that honour had been satisfied, and climbed out. By this time, Paul and I had turned a funny sort of purple colour; I expect Robert had, too, but his tan concealed it.

Back inside, the atmosphere in the lounge gradually thickened until it consisted of approximately one part oxygen to ten parts cigarette smoke. The head-cold with which I had arrived developed into a very presentable baritone cough, and I held it in check only by consuming an entire packet of throat pastilles donated by David Barrett.

Drawn closer together as we strove to see one another through the fog, we observed the development of a bizarre group mind. This manifested itself particularly during the evening games. We wrote some round-robin poems in which each person only saw the last line of what had gone before. Despite this, one or two of the second batch made a surreal kind of sense. Later in the week, we played *Guess the Adverb* and the whole group joined in to act in the manner of the word. The sudden switches of mood, from "fervently" to "primly" to "inconveniently" were very strange.

And so the week drew to its close. Paul Kincaid made his chairman's speech, and was presented with a squeaky purple octopus. We all raised our glasses, and stayed up late (me until 11:45; Neil until the following morning, when he amazed everyone by being lively at breakfast). The pool contest was decided in a thrilling display between Paul Barnett and Mary Gentle, who both raised their games to hitherto undreamed-of heights, before Paul finally emerged the victor.

I left, the mystique exploded, the reality revealed as a group of friendly, amusing people who enjoy getting together for a week of mingled nonsense and hard work. Which element is more useful in developing one's writing skills. I wouldn't like to say.

NOLAACON - The 46th Worldcon, New Orleans
Reviewed by S D Rothman

I ARRIVED WITH A FRIEND ON THE WEDNESDAY EVENING, BUT only had time to find that, in common with most British fans, our badges had been lost. The con started properly on Thursday with an exuberant opening ceremony, with a jazz band and showers of (aluminium) doubloons being thrown to the audience. Speeches were pleasantly very brief. As my friend intended to spend his time filing, I was on my own, and had decided to do some gophering to meet people. During Thursday, Friday and part of Saturday, I spent most of my time at registration, with spells in con ops and the green room where I chatted happily with my co-workers. However, because of the size of the con (4000+) I rarely saw these people again.

Due to little need for extra gophers on later days, I resorted to the programme for entertainment. The first problem was to find out times and places, as the pocket programme was mostly incorrect, and daily schedules had to be issued, one of which, itself, had to be superseded. Others generally omitted film times and other items, notably the filing. The programme itself was extremely weak: out of 5 plus parallel streams, I went to 5 or 6 items over the entire con. This compares very poorly with Conspiracy where, at most times, I could have found some talk or quiz to interest me. This may be because I am not familiar with U.S. fandom and so might have missed their equivalent of a Bob Shaw Serious Scientific Talk, but I doubt it. Basically, there were just too few famous names in the programme. There are rumours that the original intention was to

have no programme, but that the committee were eventually persuaded that this would not be wise, and a rushed programme was thrown together. The pocket programme fiasco, and the fact that programme ops was only set up a few days in advance, supports this. To digress slightly, organisation in general was erratic: the masquerade started 45 minutes late, registration was set up too late (and they asked for advice from the 1990 Worldcon registration team), and a tour of a nearby NASA facility was arranged, only no one booked a coach to ferry fans to the site. On the plus side, the masquerade was very good, with 60-plus entrants of a very high standard, including some highly entertaining performances: notably 'Leonard Nimoy and the Spockettes', miming to a record released (I am told) by Leonard Nimoy, under the title 'Back to the (Twenty) Sixties'; a smoke-breathing Godzilla, and a menacing Blob. Unfortunately, the entertainment during the judging was booted off the stage.

The film programme would have been much better had not all the best movies been scheduled in the small hours or during the masquerade. However, one of the highlights of the convention was the surprise film, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* This was shown to a wildly enthusiastic audience as the closing movie. The film was great fun, and ended the con on a high note, leaving with a much better feeling about the weekend than the usual tail-off of a convention would have done. Film-related items on the programme included slide presentations of new and future movies. I believe there were three by different companies; the one I attended featured *Roger Rabbit*, and *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. Apart from the hilarious interview with Roger Rabbit, the most amusing feature of this was the shrieks of delight from the American fans whenever slides of Harrison Ford or Sean Connery were shown.

Most evenings, I was lucky enough to meet up with someone I knew, to go to eat with. The best times I had at Nolano were meals out, or drinks in local bars, either possibly accompanied by music - blues, jazz or Cajun music. The Cafe du Monde in Jackson Square was particularly good: you could eat doughnuts and drink coffee while sitting in the open air, watching the activity in the square - very relaxing.

After dinner came parties. A noticeboard was provided for people to advertise their part and so, armed with a list of possibilities, I would venture in search of an attractive party. Now British convention parties feature booze, people and maybe some music, whilst US ones need soft drinks (alcohol is very rare) and ice, dips with vegetables, crackers, chocolate cake and kazoo. This led to three of us wandering bemused along corridors and up and down elevators and stairs, across streets between hotels, ticking parties off our list, searching for beer and familiar faces. We lost track of which ones we'd visited already, and were soon feeling as if trapped in one of those time-warps where you re-live, over and over, a particular episode or period (a feeling enhanced by the not uncommon experience of a lift arriving on our floor twice in succession, carrying the same people and going in the same direction, without having passed in the reverse direction).

Although I did have some good times at Nolano, I didn't really enjoy it. Partly, this was because the programme was very poor (and the art show and dealers' room were, to my mind, not as good as at Conspiracy) but mostly because I was on my own. The Americans I did talk to, I rarely saw a second time, and others I found would exchange pleasantries and answer questions, but were not willing to maintain a conversation with a stranger. However, my friend got on well with the U.S. flippers, so I imagine that if you have a special interest, you are much better placed to make friends.

I hear there is some debate as to whether Nolano was the worst of recent worldcons, so maybe I'm not alone in my opinion of it. If this con had been in, say, Pittsburgh or Chicago, it would have been dire, but it was saved by being in New Orleans. It's a wonderful city with an easy-going atmosphere, plenty to do and see, and superb food (although I didn't sample the best of it, for financial reasons). I shall remember the con as a disappointing few days in the middle of an otherwise enjoyable holiday, but I have not seen enough of New Orleans, and would jump at the chance to re-visit.

1988 WORLD FANTASYCON 27-30 October, London

Reviewed by John Peters

THE HALLOWEEN WEEKEND IS A RATHER AUSPICIOUS DATE IN many diaries, but this year it also meant something else - the 1988 World Fantasy Convention, which for this year only, had left the ghostly climes of America to come to fog-washed, Jack-the-Ripper hipped London.

With the theme of Gaslight and Ghosts, the Worldcon also incorporated the annual British Fantasycon, giving fantasy and horror fans a long weekend to remember. Along with Guests of Honour James Herbert, Clive Barker, Diana Wynne Jones and artist

Michael Foreman, there were enough big-name writers from all three genres (SF/Horror/Fantasy) to leave you wondering if anyone was actually doing any writing this weekend!

Held in the Ramada Hotel, West London, a sprawling monolithic hotel that seemed to have the best invisible central heating in world, the con began on the Thursday afternoon, though unfortunately I couldn't get there until the evening. Too late to register, we were nevertheless allowed in, and the tone of the convention was immediately apparent - the Fontaine Books party was well into the swing of things, the first of several over the weekend, and the first of many occasions to pick up as many free books as possible. As the registration charge was £50, it was a splendid way to recoup the expenses.

Friday morning, and I registered, collecting a bag that literally bulged with more books, including a handsomely printed hardbound programme book which will be one of THE most sought-after collector's items in the future. A veritable who's who of modern British and American Fantasy and Horror, it had been illustrated by Dave Carson, Jim Pitts and Michael Foreman. Edited by Stephen Jones and Jo Fletcher, the co-chairmen of the con, and published in conjunction with Robinson Publishing, all concerned should be proud of it.

I always look back at a con afterwards, and wonder just what I did for the weekend. This time was no different, I sat in on some interesting panels, heard Adrian Cole read (and act out) his hilarious parody of recent fantasy trilogies - a reading that was shamefully under-attended; watched Diana Rigg's Emma peel-off her clothes in the infamous *Helixfire Club* episode; I saw a magnificent artshow - complete with artistically draped *Helixfire* corpses; and there were enough parties with free booze to ensure that you didn't need to prop up the bar too much. And there was still more: a dealers' room that may have been only a fraction the size of Conspiracy's, but still held back to entrance the wallet. The only sour note of the con as the rash of thefts from the dealers - in some cases, involving merchandise worth hundreds of pounds. A sad fact that even thieves go to cons.

The programme was sensibly laid out, with only one main strand of events supported by a series of readings and videos. This, at least, ensured there was enough on offer at any one time for all tastes, but not enough to teach away attendance from the main events. As always, there was the infamous raffia, and while there may have been fewer prizes than of late, what was on offer was certainly worth winning, including many tickets to view the sequel to Clive Barker's *Hellraiser*. Apparently, this viewing of *Hellbound* will be the only time it will be seen uncut.

So, there you have it - a great weekend, with sensible timing, and plenty of freedom to opt-out if you wanted to. The Hotel's price, especially the food and drinkwise, but it was clean, spacious and friendly. I doubt if the World Fantasy Convention will return here for some while, but I think that I'll remember this one for a long time as a convivial weekend among friends - an incredible achievement when you consider that over 700 people attended. The committee should be proud of this.

NOVACON 18 - 4-6 November, Birmingham

Reviewed by Kev McVeigh

MY FIRST CONVENTION WAS A NOVACON, AND I KEEP COMING back. This year was as good as any; the atmosphere was good, the people were interesting, the hotel is decent and Garry Kilworth was an excellent guest.

The programme at a convention is of varying importance to people, and there weren't many items here which really caught fire. Robert Holdstock got quite vigorous in defending fantasy on Friday night, and a panel on Alienation in SF turned into an interesting discussion on American/British SF on Sunday. In the quiz, Mike Gould and myself scored the lowest score by a long way (3), but we had a go, and enjoyed it. Storm Constantine and friends put on a surreal but very skilled video presentation sometime amongst this, and there were various films as well.

Garry Kilworth's Guest of Honour speech included a delightful story about what happened to Pooch and Christopher Robin, when they grew up a bit, and were shot down as they attempted a bank robbery. Garry was also a very good guest socially, being very approachable and friendly, and seemingly having a great time in the disco, as did M John Harrison, Storm Constantine and Frede Warrington.

It's this which makes a Novacon so good for me; the friendliness, and the casual attitude of everyone. You can have a blazing argument in a panel, and then a friendly discussion at the bar afterwards, and nobody holds a grudge. It's all FUN! I think you can safely say that I enjoyed Novacon, and I met a lot of people who had just been names before. If that isn't enough, there's always Maureen Porter's taste in hats. See you next year?

FIRE & HEMLOCK

MAGAZINE LISTINGS

Compiled, with comments, by Maureen Porter

DEFINITIONS

A **genzine** (g) tends to have more than one contributor, contents might include articles, reviews, fiction, letter. A **perzine** (p) usually has one author, contents vary. A **clubzine** (cl) is produced by a group or society, containing a mixture of items. **Mediazines** (m) and **Fictionzines** (f) are self-explanatory, as are critical journals (c), reviewzines (r) and newzines (n). Anything else is probably indefinable (i). 'The usual' (tu) varies: a letter of comment (loc), a contribution, the promise of either, a stamp. Trade means their zine for yours. Simply asking nicely often does the trick.

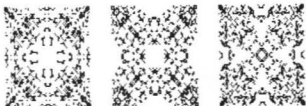
Review copies are appreciated, though please send two copies if Paul Kincaid or myself are on your mailing list. I don't use my own copies for reviewers.

ve received a letter from Nik Morton, who enclosed copies of the two most recent issues of *Auguries*, issues #9 and #10. Among other things, he tells me that issue 11 will be available at the end of February. Issues 2-8 are still available, for 70 pence each (\$1 sea mail, \$1.50 airmail), issue 9 for £1.00, issue 10 for £1.25, all incl. postage and packing. Subscriptions are £5.20 or \$5 for four issues. See the listings for further information.

Nik also informs me that *Opus* fiction magazine has folded, and that *Dream* and *New Moon* have amalgamated.

John Peters tells me that he is planning to increase the page count for *Flicker's Frames* to a regular ten pages from issue #5 onwards, which will be available in early March. He's planning to keep to a regular quarterly schedule. FNFF is now available for 40p, or two loose first-class stamps, plus a large SAE for each issue. He is also interested in trading for other zines. John, as you might recall, is currently doing a sterling job in providing media news for this magazine, and FNFF reflects his interest in this as well as all matters science fictional. See the listing for further information.

Somewhat further afield, I have received a filer about Gambit, which is a Blakes 7 fiction zine. The price may seem a little steep, but from the contents listed on this filer, it seems to be well worthwhile. The filer refers to issue #3, but issues #1, and #2 are apparently still available. The cost is \$20 air mail, \$16 surface mail. Money orders and drafts must be in US funds, but foreign currency is acceptable at current exchange rates. Contact: Jean Graham, 5417 Streamview Dr, San Diego, CA 92105, USA, to whom cheques should be made payable.



LISTINGS

ALL THAT JAZZ #1 - Dave Wood (1 Friary Close, Marine Hill,, Clevedon, Avon, BS21 7QA) (p/tu). New perzine from the editor of Xyster. Low-key, laid-back, a pleasant read.

AUGURIES #9, #10 - Nik Morton (48 Anglesey Road, Alverstoke, Gosport, Hants, PO12 2EQ) (£/£9 for £1, #10 for £1.25, 4 issue subscription for £5.20) A5 format and both packed with material. Good value for money.

AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW 3/5 - Science Fiction Collective (UK subs available from Joseph Nicholas, 22 Denbigh St, Pimlico, London, SW1V 2ER, £10 for six issues surface, £15 airmail) Critical articles on utopias this time around.

THE BOOK OF GOLD #1 - Jeremy Crampton (302 Walker Building, University Park, PA 16802, USA) [tu] Subtitled "The Newsletter on Gene Wolfe and his works", Jeremy does observe that he expects to include articles of a more general nature in future issues. Not overly serious or academic, and a very pretty shade of gold paper. Looks promising.

ETA - Rob Hansen (144 Plashet Grove, East Ham, London E6 1AB)
[p/gu] Longish article about The White Horse, legendary meeting
place of fans prior to The Wellington, Tun and other pubs I'm
much too young to know about. Interesting for those with a
taste for fan history.

FLICKERS'N'FRAMES #4 - John Peters (299 Southway Drive, Southway, Plymouth, Devon, PL6 6QN) (n/tu or a large SAE and two second class stamps, or 2 IRCs if writing from abroad) Small newszine with a little bit of everything, including reviews, and interviews promised for future issues.

KAMERA OBSKURA #4 - Owen Whiteoak (Top Flat, 11 Horsell Rd, Highbury, London, N5 1XL) [p/tu] Anecdotes about Novacon, and a lettercol. All good stuff.

LARRIKIN #19 - Perry Middlemiss (GPO Box 2708X, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, Australia) and Irwin Hirsh (2/416 Dendenong Rd, Caulfield, North Victoria 3161, Australia) [jp/tu] Anecdotal - helps to know the names, but probably enjoyable anyway, on further consideration. Well, I like it.

THE STALE TINNED MILK OF HUMAN KINDNESS - Owen Whiteoak (Top Flat, 11 Horsell Rd, Highbury, London, N5 1XL) [p/tu] Not sure what to say about this. Owen presents his reasons for why Mike Ashley shouldn't have won the Nova Award for Best Fan Writer at last year's Novacon. Highly controversial.

PULP #11 - Rob Hansen and Avedon Carol (144 plashet Grove, East ham, London, E6 1AB) [g/tu]. Includes Avedon Carol's comments on Mike Ashley winning the Nova Best Fanwriter Award, fnz reviews from Bridget Wilkinson, and articles by Chuch Harris and Dave Langford.

STICKY QUARTERS #18 - Brian Earl Brown (11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit, MI 48224, USA) [g/tu]. Meaty-looking, but Moby Dick intervened again, I'm afraid.

THE TOMB(S) Ambler Rd, Finsbury, London N4 2QU) Bit of a mystery, this one, apparently produced by another sentient house, though several other names are mentioned. Availability is uncertain, but I can tell you that it's a rather irrelevant Dr Who zine. If the perpetrators would like to give me more info, I'll publish it next issue. Oh, and guys - you're gonna have to do something about the photocopied photos.

VSOP III - Jan Dawes (18 Burchett Place, Leeds, LS6 2LN) [g/tu] I haven't had time to tackle this one yet (have a heart, you lot, I'm supposed to be reading Moby Dick), but if it's as enjoyable as the previous two... Check it out.

WORKS #2 - Dave Hughes and Andy Stewart (12 Blakestones Rd, Slaithwaite, Huddersfield, HD7 5UG) [£/£1.25 an issue, 4 issues for £4.50] New fictionzine with a whizzy line in desktop publishing presentation, and plenty of material. Worth seeing.

WRITE BACK

WELL, AS I SAID IN THE EDITORIAL, THE SELECTION OF LETTERS THIS time around was very small, so a select number of people are going to get a very large bite of the cherry. There is not a lot I can say about this - either you want to write or you don't, and all the ranting and raging I can muster is not going to improve matters one iota. For those who are interested, the next *Matrix* deadline will be:

MARCH 17th 1989

if you would care to drop me a line.

Taking up the theme of what we should expect from the next fifty years, Jo Raine, better known to members of the BSFA as our Membership Secretary, offers a few thoughts.

Jo Raine
33 Thornville Road, Hartlepool, Cleveland, TS26 8EW

As members of my Orbiter group know only too well, it's depressing living in my future.

Thatcherism and its disciples extend their sway over the hearts and pockets of the electorate into the 21st Century. (The urban and social chaos of Zoe Fairbairns' *Benefits*, and Miranda Miller's excellent *Smiles and the Millennium* become a reality. The Welfare State dies away, and with it any pretence that the enterprise culture cares. Urban protest is often violently

repressed; a new generation of social martyrs arise. Civil war is a possibility.

Brazilian rainforests burn out, casting a smoky pall over the Atlantic and accelerating the greenhouse effect (*Nature's End* - Strieber and Kunetka). Despite last minute efforts to find a cure, the last of the whales dies of a pollution-linked viral infection, joining the porpoise, the dolphin and most species of seal in the history books. Increasing concern over green issues begins to make the difference, but it will be several decades before it will be known whether emergency measures adopted by the UN will be effective.

There is no global nuclear war - although several minor ones do take place.

The first manned expedition to Mars is successfully launched by a joint Russian/EEC mission. Britain does not take part. The Americans concentrate on building their space platform and moonbase, amid widespread protests at its overtly military nature.

The first real evidence of alien life is found on Mars (*The Martian Chronicles* - Bradbury). Von Daniken enjoys a revival. *Eastenders* becomes the longest running soap, beating *Coronation Street's* 41 year record. Cliff Richard, in his ninetieth year, records a new album. Lloyd Webber's Fifth Symphony is premiered in Los Angeles. The latest craze is for holographic home movies (outselling the previous year's craze of artificial pets) and the first genetically-tailored chimp (*Sundiver/Startide Rising* - Brin) holds a press conference.

And your editor pours herself a stiff drink, and hopes that this all remains a horrible dream.

Ken Lake gave us his thoughts on the matter in the last issue of *Matrix*, and this has drawn a response from Kev McVeigh.

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

I'd like to ask Ken Lake about the removal of working restrictions which cut efficiency. He said he'd like them ALL removed. Does he include the rules on Children in the Mines, Slavery, Safe Working Practices, Race and Equality Laws? Does he perhaps feel that the Health Service might be more efficient if junior doctors worked longer hours? Or has he just not thought enough about what he has said?

Where am I going to get the money for my fax machine if my working hours are to be cut? Where is my firm going to get the money for all this futuristic equipment, when we are currently struggling with twenty-five year old machines?

Machines are great, but people come first. Ken, I think, has failed to realise that if you make it simpler for people to do a job they become more efficient, BUT they also become lax and if the machine breaks.... compromise is needed on all different levels.

Ken has also neglected the efficiency of spending money on things whose sole purpose is to explode. Peace will come, sometime after the Reagan-Bush era, but the recent Treaties have done nothing to make World War 3 any less likely. It has long been accepted that WW3 will come from the Third World rather than Europe, except by those who insist on spelling 'world' in big white letters as EUROPE or, more likely, USA.

Today, the Pentagon states that two Libyan jets were clearly hostile because they were armed, whilst denying that US action in actually firing their weapons was hostile. In Israel, the indigenous population is restrained, and beaten by Government Forces for not being Jewish, for demanding basic rights; in South Africa it is the same. In the Soviet Union, things are improving, as in China. In Britain and in the USA, rights are being removed and the people are being put down, some slowly, some quickly. Bland stereotyping is the order of the day: Thou Shalt Not Stray From The Norm!

The future needs to be the future of the individual, taking each person on their merits, not on their gender, colour, sexuality, religion or any other generalisation. That will be more efficient, Ken, believe me. It also needs the realisation that massive profits are not always the ideal, that break-even can be more efficient in some situations.

Steve Palmer, noting that I had been 'inundated' with future scenarios, thought he would add a few thoughts of his own.

Steve Palmer
22 Glebe Road, Egham, Surrey, TW20 8BT

Male and female roles will continue to change. The liberation of women, central to a safer future world, will be the catalyst

that sparks something still more crucial, the liberation of men; or more accurately, the demise of traditional male roles. Once it is perceived by the majority of men that women are their equals, they will find previously absent freedom in which to express those aspects they repress. However, they may create more masculine extremists in doing so (disguised in the eighties as football hooligans, for example).

This means traditional views of power will change, and although diffused power, as opposed to hierarchical, centralised power, could become the norm, I think it's unlikely to appear in the next fifty years because of the inertia of tradition.

It is possible that a global communications network will effect such diffused power, but since such technology is as good as impossible to predict, because it changes so fast, it's hard to see very far into the future.

The current trend towards a dehumanised society, propelled largely by the media, will reverse, the consequence of male and female roles becoming more flexible. Men will be able to express their humanist feelings without guilt, censure, ridicule, ostracism, etc. The idea of the global village will slowly become entrenched in people's minds, losing its status of a trendy topic about which empty words are spouted.

The subordination of people to large organisations will decrease as communications technology brings about changes in work patterns. People will cease to become dehumanised cogs, and consequently will regain the ability to be individual.

If such impulses are repressed, they accumulate to dangerous levels. One escape from such an environment is war. The most ominous facet of this argument is that people have no idea that, because they unconsciously desire war, the peace stratagems they devise are worthless. This is why it's essential that women change the present sex imbalance in Parliament, Congress etc.

We're presently in a society inhabited by people who live in a marketing, or exchanging, mode - their personalities are like chameleon skins, changing according to fashion or demand. Hence the rise of the ultimate inhumane human - the yuppie. These days, people seem unable to spontaneously give. Live Aid is a classic example - when Michael Buerk's reports were shown, there was no outburst of financial compassion, Bob Geldof had to give the punters something before they felt able to give back.

Industry in particular depends on irreplaceable material resources. It consumes these at an alarming rate, and spews chemical and radioactive rubbish into the environment. When tree destruction, pollution, global warming, etc, go beyond the point at which it's finally clear that something will have to be done (as I'm afraid it will), new sources will come into operation. One of these will be solar energy. Meanwhile, there will be the unenviable task of righting the misdeeds, blinkered vision and crass ignorance of our generation. This will not be easy.

Humanism will increase in popularity, and the present plague of loneliness will abate. Human relationships will not be placed below work. Marriage will become more unpopular and religion will have to accommodate the new morals in order to survive.

Increasing numbers of people will have receive sex education to avoid unwanted children being born. Sex education is vital in unindustrialised countries, as is contraception, but there are forces opposed to such stratagems. One is the curse of religion, especially those fundamentalist (i.e. masculine extreme) creeds currently in resurgence. The other is nationalism. For as long as people are seen as cannon fodder, there'll be no progress and much misery.

The incidence of left-handedness will increase. Now that religious and social restrictions have been lifted, the ratio of right to left will approach its natural state (whatever that is - accounts vary). This means more people with emotional, holistic, artistic and intuitive characteristics. Incidentally, George Bush is left-handed.

Science has been, with a few notable exceptions, reductionist over the past century or so, which is to say, it's probed deeper into smaller areas. Today, experts know far more about far less. The current trend towards holism (synthesising things into wholes) will gain credence, helping people see the whole world rather than the tiny portion they inhabit - to their benefit.

I think science fiction has mostly ducked important issues and concentrated on sustaining traditional male roles, rampant materialism (particularly in America), machine idolatry and other lunacies. It's time this disappeared. If we had no Brian Aldiss, no Frederick Pohl, no Gwyneth Jones, no Terry Pratchett (eh?!), no Geoff Ryman, no Margaret Atwood, things would be far from merry.

Science fiction is blessed with the ability to guess the nature of the future, but without genuine, compassionate intelligence, it can only be laughable. Also, science fiction is far too ready to look to the future with no respect for the past. And as P T Ross said, it's too easy to take one aspect of the future and disregard the rest. Nothing is isolated.

Peter Tennant, a regular correspondent, wrote me a letter detailing his thoughts on *Matrix* - and yes, I would have agreed with you about the wisdom of holding over the Soapbox, Peter, but I was trying to balance it up against not being able to publish any letters, and thus removing the incentive to write at all. Still it seems to have worked out for the best - and commenting generally on various subjects in the last letter column.

Peter Tennant

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One or two items piqued my interest. I had vague misgivings about David Barrett's defence of the Net Book Agreement and Ben Staveley-Taylor's well-reasoned response put my doubts into words. I'll be interested to see if and how David will counter Ben's arguments as they seem pretty conclusive to me. In any event, there is no getting round the fact that book prices, especially for paperbacks, have outstripped inflation. Ben's £2.50ish understates the position, and with increasingly more books being printed in trade paperback editions, the situation looks set to get worse. Using David's logic, the introduction of paperbacks should have killed off literature (I know it's not an exact parallel, but near enough). Using David's logic, the only music on show should be Bros and their ilk, but you only need step into any record shop, to see it isn't so. It seems to me that making things cheaper is synonymous with making them more available, and where books are concerned, that can only be to the good. Nor can I see why David thinks cheaper books will result in a limited choice on the shelves and more conservative tastes among readers. When books are £5.00 each, then I'll stick

with writers I know and trust, but at £2.50 each, I can afford to take risks, and so can publishers who know that new writers will be more likely to sell at cut prices. I usually agree with David Barrett's views, but this time I'm afraid I'll need more convincing.

On the subject of optimism in science fiction, we seem to have come full circle, from Cecil Nurse's denial that it exists, to Kev McElvigh's insistence that it's popping up all over the place. I guess, ultimately, it depends on how you define optimism, and, in my case anyway, exactly what value you place on it. Kev's first example, as typified by Brin's *The Postman*, about which he, himself, appears to have doubts, illustrates my point perfectly. This school of thought seems to equate nuclear war with natural disaster, in the wake of which man will crawl out of the rubble, shake off the dust, and get on with the business of living. His indomitable spirit will see him through anything, even the consequences of his equally indomitable stupidity. Well, it's optimism of a sort, I suppose, but it also strikes me as dangerous foolishness and irresponsibility if taken as serious comment on the perils of nuclear warfare. Nuclear war equals the end of mankind. To believe otherwise is to flirt with destruction, the possibility of extinction. Post-holocaust novels have an honourable standing in science fiction, and there's no denying the appeal of speculation about after-effects of the Bomb, but let's take care to distinguish between fiction and reality, between optimism and blind faith. What purpose does the optimism in *The Postman* serve? If it's to make you feel better about the prospect of nuclear war, then I think I'll pass.

And that seems to be all for this time around. I hope there will be more letters in the next issue. You have two contentious Soapbox articles, for a start. Just to remind you, the deadline is

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though, if you can get your letters in sooner, so much the better. I don't enjoy the last minute typing.

SOAPBOX

THE GREAT CONVENTIONAL DIVIDE

By John Peters

THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN TALK OF A GREAT NORTH/SOUTH DIVIDE in this country, and to some extent it's true. It is also equally true that there is an East/West divide - the contention being that anyone west of Bristol has straw or worse coming from their ears. This seems to be particularly true for political decisions, social attitudes and rock concerts, just as much as for conventions, which is the main reason for this Soapbox rant.

My local SF group as just (successfully!) staged a convention - Armadacon. We had a reasonable venue, cheap food, plenty of room and, though it was a dry venue, none of the 62 attendees complained. It was the only venue available to us. We had four guests of honour. One of them, Katherine Kurtz, was of international stature (whether you like her writing or not is immaterial, she is a big name as these things go). The others were high calibre writers, Adrian Cole and Brian Lumley. (Perhaps they are fantasy rather than SF but they came!)

Now, I'd like to ask a question - given the fact that we advertised the con in *Matrix* (thanks, Maureen), *Dreamberry Wine* (thanks, Mike (Don)) and elsewhere - WHERE THE HELL WERE YOU?? I'm the first to admit that I didn't expect the whole of the BSFA to drop their Harlan Ellison's and come speeding down the A33 to Plymouth, but surely some of you were interested?

Just a little?

True, we did have 62 - and that ain't peanuts - but of those 62, only twenty or so came from beyond the Devon border. And of that approximate 20, only a few were recognisable faces from other cons that I have attended. Also true was the fact that a team from Contrivance '89 came down and had a good time (but there was an ulterior reason for their attendance - their own future con).

So, I want to ask you another question? A very simple one - were we too distant - away from the SF hub of this country, the Midlands? I can't accept a 'yes' answer. You go to Albecon in Glasgow every year or so, and you'll be expected to brave the sea for Contrivance in Jersey next year, so why put the mockers on coming down to Plymouth? Communications aren't that bad - you can fly, train or bus it here - and transportation costs shouldn't be any more than if you went to Glasgow from the

Midlands or London.

Next question - what did we do wrong? I honestly don't know, but we made sure that the word was definitely out there that Armadacon existed.

Of course, it's understandable that everyone has their own commitments, and I am the first to say that I wouldn't expect you all to come down for a small con, but the question has to be asked about the geographic-fixation of cons in general. There seem to be few listed for London or the South-East, and they're a bloody rarity on the South Coast (Worldcons and Seacon excepted). While Brighton is fine for the mega-cons which seem to have blossomed and expanded over the last few years, there are other coastal towns and cities which have the facility, and the collective will to put on a convention. The North/South divide might be there, but it's much rather attend a convention which is on the coast, (with its inherent spaciousness and clean air - no recriminations about the Yorkshire Dales, Holmfirth etc. I know the Midlands and the North have their own beautiful landscape, but so do we) than one lurking deep in a concrete jungle in Britain's hinterland.

It is becoming a rather one-sided expectation that we all have to travel to the Midlands or the North of England, and that no one will come down here unless there's a damn good reason for it. Again, that's my assumption, but having been involved in Armadacon (though not on the committee) and seen the lack of interest it engendered, one can't help but wonder if there's some sort of inverted snobbery going on here.

I am not a FAN as such, I'm not involved in any fanish activities (except the hesitant production of a zine on my PCW) - I am a member of the BSFA, I read SF books, watch SF films and write a bit - but I don't consider myself a fan - there's something that smacks of elitism in the use of that term nowadays which I find disturbing. So when a small club tries to add something to the SF calendar, and it is met with indifference, it pisses me off mightily when others smugly write in *Matrix* and elsewhere about the success of the mega-cons on the SF calendar.

If I've put a few noses out of joint in this article, then tough - we had a good con, and those who attended enjoyed every minute. As far as I'm concerned, those of you who might have come are the losers.

SOAPBOX

TUNE IN, TURN OFF

By Kev McVeigh

I WAS BORN MIDWAY BETWEEN GAGARIN AND ARMSTRONG; I remember writing a story at primary school about Apollo 14; I remember drawing lessons at school to watch the first Shuttle launch; I remember watching the Soviets put the second woman into space, on a hotel TV in Moscow; I also remember my initial excitement at *Dr Who*, *Star Trek*, *Blakes 7*, *Star Wars*, *CBS*, et al. Some of these events had me almost breathless at the time, some still make me dream, some have faded away.

At Albecon there was a heated debate on the merits of *Star Wars*, an event I was forced to miss part of, but I said then, and would like to repeat, we should not consider *Star Wars* in isolation, nor even media SF in that way, but we should condemn the whole medium, Television and Film, for its flaws, for its rotten heart and false gloss. Hollywood is the worst offender, but the decay has corrupted British TV as well, and while this system is in force, I suggest that it is virtually impossible for the medium to produce SF of any lasting merit.

I can see all those media fans screaming and leaping for their pens and typewriters, to show me the error of my ways, but the evidence is on my side, some of it provided by those same media fans.

Beginning outside the genre, however, it takes a particularly weak mind to treat *Eastenders* as reality, but so many people do, because this is what TV encourages people to believe; this is the function of television, to distract. It is escapism, but not sense-of-wonder escape into imagination, but rather a negative escape into banality and a comatose existence. It is soporific when we need a stimulant. This is why Christine Ouback shot herself dead whilst presenting a live show on WGL-TV in Florida, in 1974 (recounted by Daniel Schorr in *Rolling Stone*, and Harlan Ellison in *Strange Wine*); because her death would be meaningless to her viewers, people who believed that the show was specifically for them, if it happened in her own bedroom. It had to be on television, and she was making a truly radical statement about television. Poor Chris, no one understood.

Having set up a basic reason why television is a flawed medium, let's go further, into the boardroom, to where people tell us what we can and can't see. In America, the powers-that-be belittle their audience by refusing them the ability to think, or to cope with a negative ending, such as that in *Brazil*. Some American versions edited the last few seconds so that it was not revealed that the escape was only a dream. Instead, viewers are encouraged to get excited over *The Price Is Right*, where Ellison says: "some yotz is having an orgasm at winning a thirty-year supply of rectal suppositories". This is a show where a failed comedian assisted by a set of sex-objects encourages illiterates to become property worshippers without ever learning any values. Thus television enforces capitalist greed on us all.

There are other things that can't be shown, such as an adult male crying (Vila in *Blakes 7*), even though editing that scene renders what follows, less comprehensible; logical, loving homosexual relationships are out, too (*Avon/Vila* in *B7* for instance?), or if they do creep in, such as in *Eastenders*, one or both later realise they were wrong and become 'normal' again.

There are so many more examples, Harlan Ellison's *Star Trek* screenplay, the changing of *Dr Who*'s assistants from real characters (Jo Grant, Sarah-Jane Smith) to a succession of clumsy stereotypes; sexy warrior (Leela), icy intellectual (Romana); screaming jelly (Perrin, Mel). The idea of a black and/or woman *Dr* was rejected because "it would be difficult for people to relate to her". Again, no one must be allowed to THINK!

At the cinema, moralistic fairy tales become big box-office, as long as thinly disguised un-Americans get their just reward. Treachery by the empire must be destroyed, whilst the heroic rebels bring back a monarchy which, presumably, had its faults to be rejected in the first place. That question is ignored though, as it's a result of pinkie, commie brainwashing, the good guys are always perfect, didn't you know. Nor is it coincidence that the press have seized upon *Star Wars* as a label for the Strategic Defence Initiative, as the film used stylish special effects to glorify, and make spectacular, a space battle. Those who could use their rayguns best became heroes, those who couldn't were baddies. And of course, just to give the

good guys some motivation, there is no such thing in films as an ugly princess.

At Albecon, new author Louise Turner spent a lot of time wearing various *Star Wars* costumes. I have nothing against costumes, and these were good examples, but why did she choose *Star Wars*? Why not a costume from any of the other works which have a similar story with much tighter plot, better characters etc. I really cannot see what *Star Wars* has that they haven't, but I can see the reverse, why did no one have a costume based on *Starship Troopers*, or *2001*, or *Consider Phobos*, or all those that came between? I think, sadly, that film and TV makes literary activity a difficult option, even for the most determined of us. It hypnotises and creates a sinking into lassitude that will lead to a complete lack of creativity in any medium, and the only way to solve this is to put radicalism into the media, not just in small doses but in a widespread reversal of trends.

There are possibilities, there always have been, with things like Ellison's *I, Robot* (and reports that he is working on *The Seventh Victim* and *Costa-Gavras* Jack Barron *Star Cops* hinted at new directions, but was replaced by the awful *Red Dwarf*, *Blakes 7*, *Blackadder*, *Brazil* and others were cut. Some changes are necessary in putting a book onto screen, but many are just silly. Take *2010: Odyssey Two* - why was Tanya Orlova (in the novel) changed to Tanya Kirbuk (in the film)? To allow a hint of romantic interest, perhaps, emphasised by the casting of Helen Mirren, renowned for her 'sexy' roles in *Caligula* etc?

So what happens if these brave new works are filmed? Will *Big Jack Barron* be the hit of 1997? Even in the wake of Jesse Jackson, can America accept the final blow in that powerful book, a black radical president? I fear not in a time when George Bush can suggest that criticism of any American President is un-American (the assumption being that this would even have applied to Watergate). The rehabilitation of Vietnam continues also, with *Full Metal Jacket* et al, but could a film of Lucius Shepard's *Life During Wartime* succeed, with its present day Central American setting. Radicalism can be too close to home for some people.

The fans will be accusing me of a 'bookish' elitism, yet for many of them, SF does not exist outside their favourite show; for some, life does not exist outside the show. In *Matrix* 77, reviewing UFP Con '88, Kathy Shiel said that David Gerrold was a "product of *Star Trek* fandom", thereby rejecting his excellent novels. When *HARLE* was *One*, *The Men Who Folded* and *The War Against the Ottomans* series. A former acquaintance of mine could not accept that Harlan Ellison's award-winning *Star Trek* screenplay was not what he saw on the TV, but insisted that the pictures were more important than the words. I was in my local SF shop recently when someone came in for the new *Trek* novel (one of those which Kathy Shiel described as being of little consequence), and then picked up Chris Priest's *The Space Machine*, read the blurb and condemned it as a blatant rip-off of *The War of the Worlds*, "it's even got the red weed!", he said. The inability to understand pastiche and satire is a direct result of television's lowest common denominator attitude, where everything must only be taken at face value, no ambiguity or inner meaning is allowed. Failing that, any submerged statement is followed by an explanation which, as Isak Dinesen said, is an admission of the failure of the original text:

"People say, 'what does it mean?' That's what it means... It would be a bad thing if I could explain the tale better than what I have already said in the tale."

So, if the medium is to produce anything of great merit, in SF or any other genre, it must accept its audience's ability to think, and promote that ability. The fans must keep demanding better scripts, better acting, and real characters who do real things as well as extraordinary things. Escape in creativity, not neutrality.

Finally, the literary forms of SF have no room for complacency, but a new move in the media will have an effect on the quality of the written form as well. After all, isn't it the film medium which is responsible for the negative opinion about SF, the misguided view of SF that leads Philip Glass to say that Doris Lessing's books "aren't science fiction, they're allegory". Why can't they be both? Isn't it *Star Trek* etc that influences the derogatory tone of the phrase, "sci-fi"? Isn't it time the media grew up?