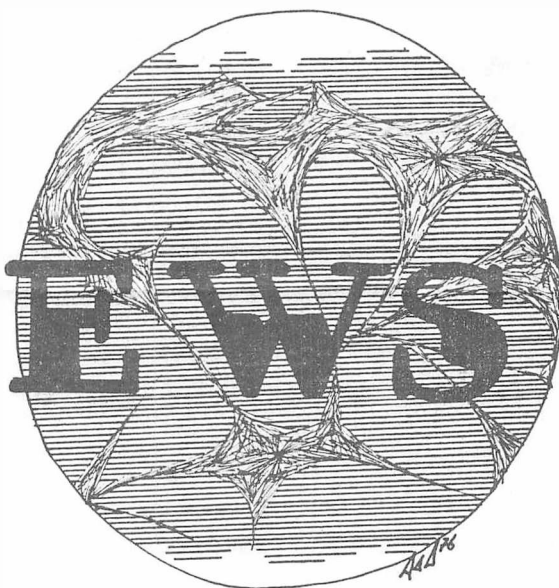


REVIEWS



PASSING FOR HUMAN by Jodie Scott. The Women's Press pb, dist in Aust by the Australasian Publishing Co. (C) 1977. 191pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

PASSING FOR HUMAN is the first book from The Women's Press that I've read that has been published by them. The novel is from the viewpoint of a non-human female who is visiting earth to ascertain if the humans on the planet should be destroyed. It seems that the aliens are building a sort of hyperspace tube from one end of the galaxy to the other and earth is at one nexus.

Benaroya's original body is a dolphin-like creature. She has the ability to change bodies and has a stock of human look-alike in her wardrobe. The body types have been taken from film and tv shows over the years. She has one in the likeness of Emma Peel, Virginia Woolf and Brenda Starr. When she first arrives in the USA she has the Starr body and manages to create havoc by wending a trail of destruction and leaving dead bodies (other humans) in her wake.

The plot is something that does not stand up to close scrutiny; however Jodie Scott is a quite good writer and glosses over the inconsistencies well. **PASSING FOR HUMAN** is good humorous sf. The Message shows its bare bones in a couple of (short) paragraphs, otherwise it is very enjoyable.

THE BOOK OF THE NIGHT by Rhoda Lerman. The Women's Press pb, dist in Aust by the Australasian Publishing Co. (C) 1984. 287pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

This is billed as science fiction - it isn't. It is closer to speculative fiction than fantasy. It is set on the island of Iona, apparently somewhere in the Mediterranean, but at a crossroads in time with the twentieth and tenth centuries. Celeste is brought to the island by her father, who has snatched her from her mother and has fled to the island where he knows the head priest of a monastery. Her father is an artist of sorts who creates strange hangings as well as bringing up his

daughter using an unusual educational and logic method. He pretends to the other inhabitants of the island that Celeste is a boy. Her upbringing is relatively smooth till her teens when, after falling in love with the newly arrived Priest (and making love to him after he nearly drowns) she turns into a small cow and spends the remainder of the novel trying to change back.

For a speculative fiction novel **THE BOOK OF THE NIGHT** is relatively straightforward - except for the few passages where it is not, which includes the last two-page chapter. One of the more memorable scenes concerns the discovery of a giant naked woman washed up on the beach. The corpse is stripped of its skin and meat and the bones are taken away for the manufacture of furniture, among other things.

QUEEN OF THE STATES by Josephine Saxton. The Women's Press pb, dist in Aust by the Australasian Publishing Co. (C) 1986. 175pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

The States the title of Queen refers to is the USA. The plot starts out normally enough, with Magdalen Hayward driving her car along a road in the moors. ~~The motor stops and she is~~ kidnapped by a flying saucer piloted by aliens of the size and shape of a aphid. They tell her they wish to study her and let her dream up rooms and situations as she likes - they then become a reality dream. Several chapters along it seems that it all could be taking place in a mental hospital. Her husband telephones her several times, when the visits of his mistress allows. Most of the characters have character defects - even her husband has trouble with his mistress making love to suit him - she wants herself satisfied as well!

THE QUEEN OF THE STATES is written as though the writer tried to write a 'science fiction' novel using the popular idea of sf (ie flying saucers and dream states) rather than reading the genre first to see what it was all about. It also reminds me somewhat of the latest semi-porn 'romances' that are being marketed these days for the commuters and housewives under the Mills & Boon and the-like mastheads.

GREEN EYES by Lucius Shepard. Chatto pb, dist in Aust by the Australasian Publishing Co. (C) 1984. 275pp. A\$10.95. On sale now.

GREEN EYES is the size of a small hardcover book and uses the same printface. The blurb on the back cover is a dilly - 'When scientist Dr Ezawa discovers a method of extracting bacteria from the dirt of old slave graveyards, and injecting them into the brains of the dead, he little suspects the hidden powers of black magic he simultaneously evokes'. If Ezawa didn't think there was something not normal in what he was doing he must have been quite unimaginative.

Jocundra Verret was a 'therapist' at an experimental institution. After ~~years of work using bioengineering the doctors there had discovered that some~~ special bacteria that lived in certain kinds of soil had peculiar properties when injected into animals. They also discovered that when injected into dead animals the bacteria took over the higher activities of the brain and created a new kind of 'zombi'. Jocundra's charge was Donnell Harrison, one of the animated corpses that had been given new life. However events began to become more complicated when the newly awakened came under the influence of personalities that did not originate in the original mental arena of the bodies occupied.

An original novel in more ways than one - *Recommended*.

SCHISMATRIX by Bruce Sterling. Penguin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust Ltd. (C) 1985. 288pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

The Schismatrix referred to in the title is a cluster of colonies scattered through the solar system. Ever since earth and its colonies had parted ways (earth had decided that stasis was better than the headlong plunge into new technologies and life patterns) each little colony, most of which were freewheeling ecologies, independent of each other except when they were fighting, had followed the dictates of the men and women who had built it. Abelard Lindsey had been trained

and conditioned to be a diplomat and he spent his (long) life attempting to gain and keep power and escape from the many debacles that blew up when the fighting (both political and actual) started.

I have been trying to think of just what this novel reminded me of - about the closest I can come is to is something like LAST AND FIRST MEN which has been limited to several centuries. The detail that Sterling has put into SCHISMATRIX is extensive, and the plotting is intricate. After reading it once one can see the universe he has created. It would take another reading to start to sort out all the images and to begin to filter through the different levels of meaning. Not that the novel is turgid. It is one of the better science fiction novels to be released in Australia this year.

Recommended

IN OTHER WORLDS by A.A. Attanasio. Corgi pb, dist in Aust by Corgi & Bantam Books. (C) 1985. 175pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

The cover blurb claims that IN OTHER WORLDS is the second book in the RADIX tetrad. There is actually no common ground as far as I can see between the two books.

IN OTHER WORLDS is quite creative in the background that the author sets up. Carl Schirmer was a quiet young man whose disappearance left his employer, her daughter and his best friend with problems in perception. Not only had Carl disappeared in what appeared to be an explosion of energy, but he had left an image of his last moment with a grimace on his face - a grimace of pleasure. His friend ended up in an asylum (as a patient) when he tried to follow an exotic brand of thinking as to what had happened to Carl - that he had turned to light and fell through the spaces between the atoms and ended up at the end of time in a place called the Welkyn, which was situated past the event horizon at the black hole when the universe collapsed. Here Carl had some strange and harrowing adventures, not the least of which was being sent back in time to the earth to procure three point five tonnes of pig manure.

I enjoyed RADIX; I don't know what Attanasio was trying for in this novel, but I don't think he achieved it. The images of the floating islands and the aliens are good, but the central idea of the novel is a little flimsy.

MAN OF TWO WORLDS by Frank and Brian Herbert. Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1986. 317 pp. A\$24.95. On sale now.

I don't know just how much Frank Herbert has in these latest collaborations of him and his son - but the writing seems to be improving.

MAN OF TWO WORLDS is a novel which holds up a mirror to the present world. Though the action of the novel takes place several years in our future, the basic ingredients are there from this world. It seems that in some other dimension there exists the world of Dreenor, where live a species that can "imagine" lifeforms and even planets of differing complexities, depending on the "storytelling" ability of the individual Dreen. In fact a Dreen created the earth. Since they life on earth had been closely watched by the Dreens - they were strangely drawn to the savage humans and it was almost too late when they found that the humans had managed to build a spaceship capable of voyaging to their home planet. One of the more emotional Dreens decided to "erase" earth and save his planet (and big-note himself in the meanwhile).

The plot is moderately complicated and the book is interesting to read. There are some memorable passages.

BLOOD MUSIC by Greg Bear. Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1965. 262pp. A\$24.95. On sale now.

BLOOD MUSIC is a hard science fiction novel that uses the terminology of the 1980's and the scientific advances of the last ten years in the area of biotechnology to create an atmosphere that is gripping and which has that elusive

"sense of wonder" that many authors have lost.

Vergil Ullam is a biotechnologist who is brilliant in his field, but he does have faults - one of which is he does not think through the results of the illicit experiments he is conducting. The research he is officially doing is into biochips (biologic computers). However he finds a line of research which leads him away from the main focus and he breaks the rules governing genetic research. When he is found out and sacked, rather than destroy the work he has created, he injects the tailored bacteria into himself to smuggle them out. What he has created, though, are actually intelligent cells in their own right, and events get away from him...

Some aspects of the micro-world remind me somewhat of those early stories from the 1930; however BLOOD MUSIC is firmly rooted in the present day.

Recommended.

TOM O'BEDLAM by Robert Silverberg. Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1985. 320pp. A\$24.95. On sale now.

The plot of TOM O'BEDLAM starts out fairly straightforward enough - the scene is set in an America in the early 21st century. Some time previously there was a limited nuclear exchange, using radioactive dust rather than bombs. The USA had been effectively cut in two. Tom was an apparent product of the radiation - he had visions of other worlds; had had then for as long as he could remember. He fell in with some 'scratchers' - a band of men who 'scratched' for their living by robbing and looting. In another part of California a treatment centre had been set up for people who were mind 'picked' rather than being sent to prison or being mindwiped. To all these people, and others besides, began to appear strange dreams, even in the daytime, of some seven worlds. All were inhabited by often beautiful aliens.

Most of the novel follows the burgeoning release of the dreams onto the populace, until hundreds of thousands of those left after the holocaust are affected. Tom is shown to be the centre of things when he declares that the time has come for the 'Crossing', when he will, with help, begin sending people across to the waiting worlds. Whether these are real, or if Tom's power is what he says it is is something left to the reader to decide. A strange book.

SEASONS IN FLIGHT by Brian Aldiss. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1984, 1986. 160pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

This collection of Aldiss's stories are copyrighted 1966 to 1986, with the majority being from around 1984. The earliest story, THE 'O' IN JOSE, is from the British prozine, IMPULSE, from 1966. The other stories follow the same lead. They are: THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LAKE; THE GODS IN FLIGHT; THE BLUE BACKGROUND; IGUR AND THE MOUNTAIN; INCIDENT IN A FAR COUNTRY; THE GIRL WHO SANG; THE PLAIN, THE ENDLESS PLAIN; CONSOLATIONS OF AGE; THE O IN JOSE; JUNIPER and A ROMANCE OF THE EQUATOR.

Although the cover artwork is that of faun-like idyl, there are only two stories that I would consider fantastic - THE PLAIN, THE ENDLESS PLAIN and A ROMANCE OF THE EQUATOR. The other stories are usually set in some European country around the time of the Great War and a central position is given to peasants. This is not to say that the stories are not interesting; they tend to be moralistic in that each has a moral at the end. The hardest plot to follow is that of THE PLAIN, THE ENDLESS PLAIN. The ending could be sfnal, but is so unexplained that because of that I found the story unsatisfactory.

HIGHLANDER by Garry Douglas. Grafton pb, dist by William Collins. (C) 1986. 252pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

This a book of the movie - unfortunately, I haven't seen the movie. I'm sorry now as it is an action-packed adventure on the theme of the struggle between immortals to become the last and supreme one, featuring MacLeod from the 16th century, lonely and wanting to fade into the background of normality, and The Kurgan from the Steppes who was quoted on the cover blurb as being evil, but with the

revealing of some of his history, it more like insane. He's not normal; none of them are, but MacLeod is the nearest they come to it. The details are gory but well-handled (translation: I wasn't actually sick when reading them), and the book is visually told so that you could see the action. Not many feelings are revealed and explored but they are implied and you can understand the characters and their motivations and reactions.

Well handled adaptation. - Susan Clarke

LYONESSE II - THE GREEN PEAL by Jack Vance. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1985. 357pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

The sequel to LYONESSE is a novel that has all the hallmarks of one of Vance's better books. It is one of his fantasies - this time set in the Elder Isles back in the time before King Arthur. The islands are lands of warring magicians, kings, armies and individuals.

The plot follows the exploits of king Aillas as he expands his sway over South Ulfland. His chief opponent is king Casmir, who has his own plans as to what empire to extend. Their common opponent is the Ska - a fierce people who keep slaves of conquered peoples and who are excellent warriors. Both kings had magicians working for them, though in the case of king Casmir the magician worked with the king because it suited his own ends.

357 pages is a hefty book and in this case it kept up my interest throughout its entirety. It leaves the reader with a satisfied feeling after putting it down when one has read for an hour or so. And, because I do my reading in one-hourly stretches on the train, I found this book of excellent worth.

A fresh and well-crafted fantasy.

CONTACT by Carl Sagan. Hutchinson Aust h/c, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1985. 432pp. A\$19.95. On sale now.

I have been hearing comments and speculations about this novel for some time before it was published. Some novels have doubt cast on their intent from the first release.

CONTACT is about exactly that - first contact with an extraterrestrial intelligence. Unlike the earlier Fred Hoyle stories ANDROMEDA and THE ANDROMEDA BREAKTHROUGH (which made a lasting impression on me from the time I saw it on B&W tv) there is hope that the machine that the message describes how to build will be able to (somehow) transport representatives of humanity to the stars. It is not really clear why the scientists think this, other than because there are five armchairs facing each other in the module.

The suspense develops nicely, with just the right amount of released information for the reader to want to read on. There is some violence as the people who do not want - for various reasons - the contact to go ahead try to destroy the project. The personal touches are also not too heavy and the storyline is, overall, believable. Of course the book was destined by the publisher to be a best seller.

A good book to give as a present to a non-sf reader (the Sagan by-line would probably get it past their guard).

INCONSTANT MOON by Larry Niven. Sphere pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1965/69. 200 pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

I have read most of the stories in this volume before - but can't remember where. On the other hand this anthology has been six times since its first edition in 1973, so it may have been one of them. The original anthology contained 12 stories - this edition contains 7.

The seven are: INCONSTANT MOON (the classic about how, one night on the US West coast, the moon's face becomes many times brighter and the characters fear that the sun has gone nova and life on earth is about to end as winds of superheated steam boil everyone alive); BORDERED IN BLACK (about the return of an expeditionary ship to another star and the lifeforms they found - a lifeform that killed one of

the crew before they managed to break back to earth). **HOW THE HEROES DIE** (about the first murderer on Mars, the argument for mixed crews and the discovery of martian life); **AT THE BOTTOM OF A HOLE** (or how an asteroid miner found the meaning of a gravity well and that the martians were at least as bloodthirsty as humans); **ONE FACE** (is straight space opera - a ship is lost in space and manages to limp its way to a planet that keeps one face turned to its parent star); **BECALMED IN HELL** (or, Venus isn't all that it was cracked up to be); and lastly **DEATH BY ECSTASY** (a story that has something for most sf readers - one of the most memorable stories around).

If you haven't gotten this volume it isn't to be missed for fans of good sf. Niven is well known for his 'hard' sf - which is used as a solid background for these stories.

THE TIDES OF TIME by John Brunner. Penguin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1984. 235pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

THE TIDES OF TIME reads sometimes like one of J.G. Ballard's novels. A couple have reached seclusion on a lonely Mediterranean island. The island was once inhabited, indeed had been back to the earliest times; the rising seawaters had put stop to that.

Each chapter is a regression in time. The man and woman are the same in each chapter, and appear to share a linearity between them while the rest of their world is of a different era. At first the regressions are decades - in the last few chapters it is nearly a thousand years. In each time period the background of the couple is different, though they are together at the time of the narratives, which are spaced about a month apart in the physical time of the couple. There is some conflict with fellow travellers (so to speak) as the woman is known as a local, while the man is a black foreigner. The woman becomes pregnant and the man finds it increasingly difficult to keep what appears to be visitors from the present from intruding on their tryst.

Everything is wrapped up in the end, though I found that the climax was not as fulfilling as the lead-up. There are hints through the story as to what to expect as the denouement and the people involved, but the final revelation is not as satisfying emotionally as it could have been if the author had used a slightly different approach.

DEALING IN FUTURES by Joe Halderman. Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1975/85. 277pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

Some anthologies strike you as different from the time you flip through the pages. **DEALING IN FUTURES** is a mixture of ingredients, more like a magazine than a collection. That the stories are also a mixture shows when you look at the sources - from **PLAYBOY**, to **AMAZING** and collections such as **THIEVES WORLD**.

Reading through the contents, we find novellas such as **SEASONS**, short stories such as **A TANGLED WEB**; **MANIFEST DESTINY**; **BLOOD SISTERS**; **BLOOD BROTHERS**; **YOU CAN NEVER GO BACK**; **MORE THAN THE SUM OF HIS PARTS**; **SEVEN AND THE STARS**; **LINDSAY AND THE RED CITY BLUES**; **NO FUTURE IN IT**; vignettes such as **THE PILOT**; and poems such as **THE BIG BANG THEORY EXPLAINED**; **THE GIFT** and **SAUL'S DEATH**.

I find the best of Joe Halderman is very close to the best of RA Heinlein. Halderman has written some good novels, such as **THE FOREVER WAR** and **ALL MY SINS REMEMBERED**. His shorter fiction is also good, and collections such as this are worth investing in for your library. *

THE 2024 REPORT - A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE FUTURE 1974-2024 by Norman MacRae. New English Library pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1984. 198pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

This book is obviously not meant for the casual reader - the print is in 15 pitch. In that way what would have been a much more hefty book has been cut down in physical size; however I think it will suffer in sales from being that much more difficult to read.

As can be gleaned from the title, this is a 'future history' that commences some twelve years ago and ranges on to 2024. The introduction gives some background back to the WWII and how the present situation was set up. It then ranges over the following fifty years and describes how the changes occurred that resulted in a world in which the vast majority of people did not know the meaning of words such as "EEC, mugging, nuclear disarmament, sexism and ministries of the interior". The author mentioned in the foreword that he is a Christian libertarian economist. He also mentions that two others helped with the book - his son and a scientist.

The range of the subjects the book covers is quite wide as is shown from some of the chapter headings: RED SUNSET; THE INTRODUCTION OF CENTROBAND, THE THIRD TRANSPORT REVOLUTION; THE RETREAT FROM GOVERNMENTS; HEALTH IS DELIVERED; THE FORECAST FAMINE BECOMES GLUT; THE END OF ONE DRUG CRISIS AND THE FALSE FEAT OF ANOTHER; HANDLING THE MAD AND THE BAD and lastly, ONE WORLD, BUT TAUGHT BY OTHERS.

Some interesting ideas. *

THE ENDS OF THE CIRCLE by Paul O. Williams. Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1981. 203pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

From another vision of the world after atomic war comes the Pelbar Cycle. The first book was THE BREAKING OF NORTHWALL.

In most of the novels about the time after the destruction of civilization it is a time of barbarism and lost talents, of names that linger through the centuries long after their original meaning has vanished and been forgotten. In THE ENDS OF THE CIRCLE one of the artisans who worked in the city Pelbarigan was being effected by one of the happiest events of his life - his marriage to Ahroe. Both his tribe and hers was not happy with the event and he found he had made enemies. At last the pressure grew too much for him and he left his family and struck out into the barbaric landscape of the untamed continent.

After a surfeit of these post-holocaust novels lately it takes a well told novel to keep my interest, even though it is only an hour or so on the train. THE ENDS OF THE CIRCLE kept it and I can say that though it isn't marvellous, it is worth reading.

THE SHATTERED WORLD by Michael Reaves. Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1994. 413pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

The back-cover blurb says this novel is 'the first in a brilliant and compelling new fantasy series in the tradition of Piers Anthony and Alan Dean Foster'. It would take a lot to live that down.

The story takes place in a future universe where the earth has been broken up by the evil machinations by the Necromancer, who using his powers taken from the dead, had shattered the earth into fragments, on which the magicians of that long ago time had placed stones of power to control the orbits so they would not destroy themselves. Most of the fragments were inhabited by humans, though on one fragment dwelt demons from the interior of the earth, and fire breathing dragons swept the space between them. The orbits of the travelling islands are steadily decaying and already some have collided. There are two groups attempting to set things right - one working through the old libraries trying to find out such arcane knowledge as might help, the other attempting to bring back from the dead the Necromancer, who they hope will be able to use his power over the other dead to reunite the shattered earth.

I found this first rate fantasy - and am looking forward to the publishing of the other volumes. *Recommended*.

THE SWORD OF THE DAWN by Michael Moorcock. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1968. 144pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

Moorcock writes bracing fantasy, and none were better than the History of the Runestaff. THE SWORD OF THE DAWN is volume three of that History, the others being THE JEWEL IN THE SKULL and THE MAD GOD'S AMULET. These latter have been

recently re-released.

The first two paragraphs set the scene and mood of the novel:

'The grim riders spurred their battle-steeds up the muddy slopes of the hill, coughing as their lungs took in the thick black smoke that rose from the valley.

'It was evening, the sun was setting and their grotesque shadows were long. In the twilight, it seemed that gigantic beast-headed creatures rode the horses.'

Moorcock uses these short sentences and paragraphs to good effect through the novel to give a sense of urgency and action. Hawkmoon is as settled as much as he can ever be in the beginning of the book, but after several chapters he is again in the thick of it. *

THE BOOK OF SAND by Jorge Luis Borges. Penguin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1971/79. 186pp. A\$8.95. On sale now..

THE BOOK OF SAND is a collection of Borges' short stories and poems translated by Norman Thomas di Giovanni. Many of them have a fantasy element and thus the book is mentioned here.

The short stories included are: THE OTHER; ULRIKE; THE CONGRESS; THERE ARE MORE THINGS; THE SECT OF THE THIRTY; THE NIGHT OF THE GIFTS; THE MIRROR AND THE MASK; UNDR; UTOPIA OF A TIRED MAN; THE BRIBE; AVELINO ARREDONDO; THE DISC; and THE BOOK OF SAND.

The poems are: TANKAS; SUSANA BOMBAL; THINGS; THE THREATENED ONE; YOU; POEM OF QUANTITY; THE WATCHER; TO THE GERMAN LANGUAGE; 1891; MILONGA OF MANUEL FLORES; THE DREAM OF PEDRO HENRIQUES URENA; THE PALACE; HENGIST WANT MEN, AD 449; TO A CAT; THE GOLD OF THE TIGERS; I; THE DREAM; BROWNING RESOLVES TO BE A POET, INVENTORY; THE SUICIDE; TO THE NIGHTINGALE; I AM; FIFTEEN COINS; PROTEUS, BRUNANBUCH, AD 937; A BLIND MAN; 1972; ELEGY, THE EXILE (1977); IN MEMORY OF ANGELICA; MY BOOKS; TALISMANS, THE WHITE DEER and THE UNENDING ROSE.

Borges is an internationally read author - fifteen years ago fandom was reading him through the admonishment of ASFR and SFR. He should be brought to the attention of new fans. *

SPECIAL EFFECTS by Rick Clise. Viking Kestrel h/c, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1986. 64pp. 8.75"x11". A\$16.95. On sale now.

The subtitle is A LOOK BEHIND THE SCENE AT TRICKS OF THE MOVIE TRADE, and the book has dozens of B&W and coloured photographs. Though the slim-looking volume, it has as its obvious aim the juvenile audience. The text does not go too deeply into the technical details, though it does describe in simple terms and visuals how the special effects in movies are set up and shot. The chapter headings are: THE WORLD OF SPX; PHYSICAL EFFECTS; OPTICAL EFFECTS; DEATH AND DESTRUCTION; THE CHASE; FIRE AND HEAT; RAIN AND STORM; OUTER SPACE; ANIMALS AND MONSTERS; AMAZING MACHINES AND RIGS and UNDERWATER. The creations described covers many sf and Australian movies (the book is published in Australia) and the author has succeeded in conveying information in understandable language to the reader.

This would make a good present for children from age eight on, and no doubt will appear on library shelves. A good beginners book for media fans.

THE SWORDS OF CORUM by Michael Moorcock. Grafton h/c, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1971/72. 509pp. A\$24.95. On sale now.

Grafton are reprinting Moorcock's Swords books in hardcover. This volume includes THE KNIGHT OF THE SWORDS; THE QUEEN OF THE SWORDS and THE KING OF THE SWORDS. A sequel volume will be called THE CHRONICLES OF CORUM.

The History of the Swords is the journey of Prince Corum Jhaelen as he sets out from the age old country of his own kind to find world of how the outside world fares. For a million years his kind, the Vadhagh, had lived in their castles and followed civilized pursuits - writing novels and symphonies, creating

masterpieces in wood, class and stone and generally following their classic inheritance. Their age-old foes, the Nhadragh, had fought their latest battle centuries before. A timeless quiet had settled on castle Erorn when Corum left. Corum soon found himself in bloody battles, pitting his intellect and centuries long experience against the newly arisen Mabden - the race later to be called human, but now just rising from their animal forms and mentality.

Moorcock writes excellent fantasy. This hardcover edition is just the thing for Moorcock fans who wish reread his novels without them falling apart. *

THE PALACE OF ETERNITY by Bob Shaw. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1969. 221pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

Another novel joins the vast 'in print' list of the older sf novels. I would think most of Shaw's novels are now in print, both in hard and soft cover.

THE PALACE OF ETERNITY is different from the sf adventure novels of the sixties and early seventies in that Shaw has put more characterisation into it. The story is set on the planet Mnemosyne, one of hundreds under earth's colonisation programme. Unfortunately for the colonists, who are mainly artists and poets, the war with the Syccans comes in their direction and the Federation's High Command engineers a gas giant to turn into a sun. This creates some problems on the planet.

The protagonist, along with the other inhabitants, has either to go along with the military or join the resistance. As mentioned above, Bob Shaw is known for his interpersonal relationships - mainly between the hero and his wife/womanfriend - and **THE PALACE OF ETERNITY** is no exception. Not a bad read for an hour or two of relaxation. *

BOOKS PUBLISHED BY BANTAM IN THE USA AND FOR PROBABLE RELEASE IN AUSTRALIA BY CORGI & BANTAM BOOKS:

THE GANDALARA CYCLE II by Randall Garrett and Vicki Ann Heydron. Contain the **THE WELL OF DARKNESS**, **THE SEARCH FOR KA** and **RETURN TO EDDARTA** in one volume. Explores a world of not-quite-humans and telepathic big riding cats.

THE RIVER WALL by Randall Garrett and Vicki Ann Heydron. The conclusion to the Gandalara Cycle. Throughout the series the reader and the main character knows that the world of Gandalara is not earth - in the conclusion of this novel All is revealed.

CHILD OF FORTUNE by Norman Spinrad. Nearly 500 pages of science fiction that seems to have caught the critic's eye in the USA. Quite a cornucopia of adventures as the heroine, Wendi Shasta Leonardo travels over the known universe.

THE DREAM YEARS by Lisa Goldstein. A story of how a young surrealist living in Paris in the 1920's follows a dark-haired woman and ends up in the Paris riots of 1968. Speculative fiction rather than sf, but well written.

THE VOID CAPTAIN'S TALE by Norman Spinrad. Spinrad seems to be really turning them out. This tale is set in the same universe as **CHILD OF FORTUNE**. It tells of how a ship's captain and a ship's pilot, whose sexual drive is powered into the ship's propulsion system take a blind jump into the void.

REBEL'S SEED by F.M. Busby. F.M. Busby created a unique universe with his tales of the Hutzein dynasty. For those who have read **REBEL'S QUEST** and **THE ALIEN DEBT** this adventure continues in the same vein, with Hulzein pitting wits and training against Uet.

FIRE WATCH by Connie Willis. A collection of short stories including the title story, plus **SERVICE FOR THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD**; **LOST AND FOUND**; **ALL MY DARLING DAUGHTERS**; **THE FATHER OF THE BRIDE**; **A LETTER FROM THE CLEARYS**; **AND COME FROM MILES AROUND**; **THE SIDON IN THE MIRROR**; **DAISY, IN THE SUN**; **MAIL-ORDER CLOSE**; **SAMARITAN** and

BLUED MOON.

OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND by Chester Aaron. A juvenile, telling of the adventure of a pair of telepathic youngsters whose parents were killed in a plane crash and who are determined to deliver their dead parents peace message to the world.

A WORLD BETWEEN by Norman Spinrad. Along the line of **THE IRON DREAM**, this novels is a satire of both female and male supremacy, whose adherents join in a media battle to win the world of Pacifica's citizens minds. Did you really think they could?

THE PROTEUS OPERATION by James P. Hogan. The paperback of the hardcover. An Alternate History wherein the Reich has won World War II. America is the sole defender of faith. And will an expedition back to 1939 to change history work?

OTHER CURRENT RELEASES (TO BE REVIEWED NEXT ISSUE):

GRAFTON:

NEUROMANCER by William Gibson.
THE ANUBIS GATES by Tim Powers.
A DARKNESS AT SETHANON by Raymond E. Feist (h/c).

CENTURY HUTCHINSON:

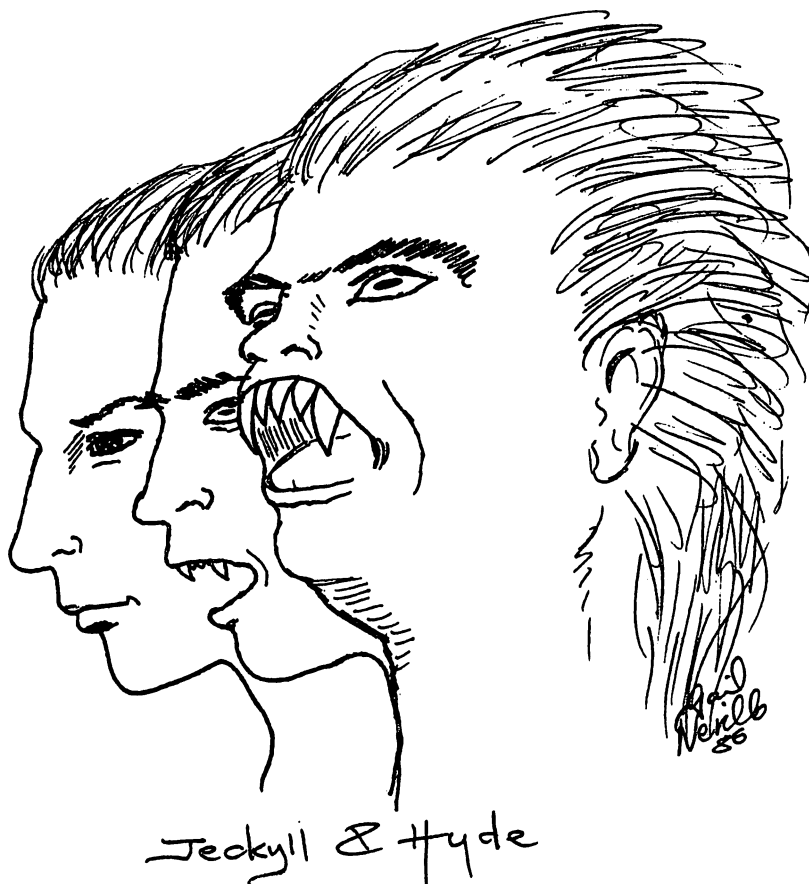
BLACK STAR RISING by Frederick Pohl (h/c).
THE RAGGED ASTRONAUTS by Rob Shaw (h/c).
MASTER OF PAXWAX by Phillip Mann (h/c).

PENGUIN:

LORD OF THE FLIES by William Golding.
THE WAR OF THE WORLDS by H.G. Wells.
COMPUTER CRIMES AND CAPERS edited Asimov, Greenberg.
MAKE ROOM! MAKE ROOM! by Harry Harrison.
THE MAN IN THE TREE by Damon Knight.

CORGI & BANTAM BOOKS:

THE BOOK OF KELLS by R. A. Macavoy.



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