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EDITORIAL

Issue 16/17 was posted on September 23. It is now November 23 and so you now possess another late issue. Ah, but after what trials! Your humble editor is now a councillor for the Central Riding (ie 95% of the population and finance) of the County of Waiheke. A brilliant political career stretching before him, he adjusts his suit and strides...

Actually, it was out of distrust for the political system in this country that I decided to stand for local politics — hopefully local administrative bodies can save us from some of the national ravages. In Waiheke's case, a pleasant semi-rural and geographically 'protected' island, a population with over two-thirds of the people over the age of 45 has voted in a council of 9 with 6 members under the age of 35 (and two not much older than 45). The basic change of emphasis and approach by the younger candidates was towards quality of community life, rather than the expansionist and "major works" approach of the last few years. We'll see...

The hectic campaign and subsequent familiarization with necessary issues (I'm on the Town Planning and the Finance committees) has meant this issue is packed with as much as I could fit in. Alas, *Rags, Solecism & Riches* got squeezed out again but as it is typeset and partially pasted-up it will be in the lead for the next issue (before Christmas, trust me). And there's still a stack of letters and reviews.

I'd also like to mention that issue 18 should have the first part of a lengthy article on *sf* and Rock by David Wingrove. It is a fine piece and complements my article in issue 8/9 nicely (still a few back copies available folks). Til next time — Brian.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

sf is the standard abbreviation used for the term *science fiction* throughout this magazine: *SF* is considered unnecessary, and *sci-fi* undesirable.

WorldCon is the standard abbreviation for the annual World Science Fiction Convention.

GoH is the abbreviation for Guest(s) of Honour at a convention or gathering.

1, *2* (etc) are used as the standard footnote indicators. I feel the asterisk is an under-used symbol and can be used in place of brackets in certain instances.

The following conventions are used in *Noumenon*: The titles of novels or books are in capitals, bold face. The names of films or television programmes are in capitals. The titles of stories or magazines are in capital and lower case, bold face. The titles of articles are in quotation marks. Record album titles are in capitals, bold face. Song titles are in capitals and lower case, bold face. The names of musical groups are in capitals.

Mailing label: The number after your name refers to the last issue of your current subscription. Please renew at least one issue prior to expiry to avoid unnecessary postage and to simplify accounting. A T indicates a trade copy; C indicates a complimentary copy; E means an "experimental" copy (are you interested in seeing more, trading, contributing?).

GUIDON'S PAGE

NEW MAGAZINE

Destinies, a new bi-monthly sf magazine in paperback format, will be published by Ace Books, beginning July 1978. Jim Baen, former editor of *Galaxy* and presently editor at Ace, will edit and says it will be a true magazine, with an editorial plus science, review and letter columns.

The first issue will have a guest editorial, fiction by Larry Niven, part of a 6-part series on sf by Poul Anderson, book reviews by Spider Robinson, and a science article by Jerry Pournelle as well as other fiction. About one-third of the magazine will be non-fiction.

Baen is not buying much at the moment but will next year. His tentative minimum rates will be a flat \$200 for stories under 2,000 words; 6 cents a word for those between 2,000 and 7,500; 5 cents a word between 7,500 and 15,000, and 4 cents a word above that. ■

UNICON IV

The 1978 Australian National SF Convention is really getting underway. I have received another bundle of information sheets, this time with a tentative programme outlined (I will send copies of the information sheets to all interested people -- just send a postcard or note requesting and, if there are enough people interested, perhaps we can organise a charter flight from NZ).

The Guests of Honour have been included in as many programme items as is humanely possible, with additional guest speakers and panel discussions, an art show, masquerade party, ESP test, Awards banquet, Easter Egg Hunt, and a host of films (including *CLOCKWORK ORANGE*, *DARK STAR*, *LEEPER*, *MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH*, *8½*, *WILENT RUNNING*, *MONTY PYTHON & THE HOLY GRAIL*, *FLESH GORDON* (a clever and funny soft porn parody), *SLAUGHTERHOUSE 5*...). I'd say all NZ fan should be members of UniCon. Join Now!

DATE: Easter 1978
 VENUE: Melbourne Town House Hotel, 701 Swanston Street.

GUEST OF HONOUR: Brian Aldiss

SPECIAL GUEST: Roger Zelazny

MEMBERSHIP: Supporting: \$4.00.

Attending: \$8 until January 1st;

\$10 until March 1st; \$15 thereafter.

ADDRESS: UniCon, Box 106, Melbourne University, Parkville, Victoria 3052, Australia. ■

New STAR TREK TV Series

Finally underway, with Gene Roddenberry as executive producer and Harold Livingston & Bob Goodwin as producers, 22 episodes have been ordered and booked. All of the original stars except Leonard Nimoy have signed up, with Kirk still in command, Scotty as chief engineer, Chekov as security chief, nurse Chapel is now Dr Chapel, McCoy still chief surgeon, and Rand and Sulu will also return.

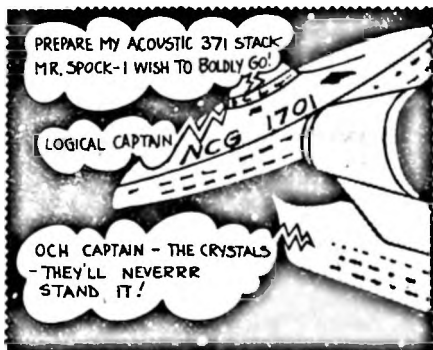
There will be 3 new characters: Will Decker will be the new first officer; Li Xon, a full Vulcan, will be the new science officer; and there will be a new female navigator. ■

CONAN RATIFIED

Conan Properties (Inc.) has been formed, which now controls all rights to the fictional character and milieu of Conan, including book, dramatic, merchandising and advertising rights. Agreements and contracts have been made with various parties, including Ace, Berkley and Bantam Books. Pressman & Co have taken an option on film rights, as well as commissioning a screen play based on an original story by Edward Summer.

Manufacturers and advertisers of games, toys, T-shirts and similar merchandise will be offered sub-licences to use the Conan name.

Ace, which republished the Conan series in May (see *Noumenon* 12 and 13/14), has been averaging sales of 200,000 copies per month. The initial print run on the 12 titles was 1.5 million. Under the new agreement with C.P.I. they will continue to publish those titles plus six heavily illustrated novellas, two books of essays, and up to six trade paperbacks. ■



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SF IN THE MAGS

Ram, Australia's Rock magazine, had a brief 'relevance and history of sf' piece in the October 7 issue (reprinted from American Rock magazine Creem). As usual, the 'brief facts and cheap jokes' nature will probably put more people off than on, though it wasn't the worst of its kind by any means.

Well, not exactly sf, but **Rolling Stone** (June 16) had a remarkable, enlightening and thought-provoking article on contact and communication with another intelligent race -- none other than our ancestors, the apes. Attempts at teaching chimps to speak have failed (differences in vocal apparatus), but since the mid-1960s people have been teaching chimps (and later gorillas) to use sign language. The results are mind-expanding, heartening and humorous -- I was astonished and pleased at the progress made. The high intelligence, self consciousness and social interaction (many moods are expressed) of the chimps has knocked great holes in all the "man is superior" dogmas -- I'm glad. I recommend this article most highly.

Every magazine seems to have articles on the space shuttle and/or STAR WARS at the moment, so I trust non-fen are catching up to 1930s thinking. ■

MINIATURES

Ray Palmer, long time fan and one of the most influential (if controversial) pulp magazine editors, died recently following a series of strokes.

Cosmos, a magazine I had great hopes for (see Noumenon 15), has suspended publication until return figures of the first four issues come in.

Spider Robinson, **Galaxy's** very popular book review editor, has quit after a disagreement with the publisher.

THE SILMARILLION stands a good chance of being, next to the Bible, the largest selling hardcover of all time. There are now 700,000 copies in print -- it may become the first million-copy hardcover seller.

Frank Herbert is writing **DUNE IV** (working title only), which takes place a long time after **CHILDREN OF DUNE**. ■

NORSTRILIA PRESS

Australia's semi-pro/fan publishing house has a new title in the works, **THE VIEW FROM THE EDGE**. Edited by George Turner, it is a collection of sf from the 1977 Writers Workshop held in Australia with George, Vonda McIntyre and Christopher Priest. ■

CHRISTMAS GIFT SETS

The following are the gift sets with sf relevance likely to be available this Christmas, a complete listing as far as publishers have been able to determine.

ASIMOV: THE FOUNDATION Trilogy (G&G \$5.15).

ASIMOV: THE EARLY ASIMOV (Volumes 1, 2 and 3; G&G \$3.75).

BALLARD: Contains The Drought; Terminal Beach; Drowned World; Wind From Nowhere (Penguin \$4.20).

BRADBURY: Contains Silver Locusts; Dandelion Wine; Golden Apples of the Sun; Fahrenheit 451; Illustrated Man (G&G \$10.45).

HUXLEY: Large pack which includes Brave New World; Doors of Perception; Chrome Yellow (G&G \$17.70).

LE GUIN: THE EARTHSEA Trilogy (Penguin \$4.45).

C.S. LEWIS: COMPLETE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA (Penguin \$8.95).

ORWELL: Includes 1984; Animal Farm (Penguin \$11.25).

E. E. 'Doc' SMITH: LENSMAN Series (G&G \$12.70).

E. E. 'Doc' SMITH: SKYLARK Series (G&G \$7.00).

VONNEGUT: Contains Breakfast of Champions; Slaughterhouse 5; Mother Night; Happy Birthday Wanda June; Welcome to the Monkey House; God Bless You Mr Rosewater (G&G \$11.75).

VARIOUS: PUFFIN S.F. GALAXY: Contains Of Time and Stars; Catseye; Grinny; Islands in The Sky; Heritage of the Star (Penguin \$6.95).

Two 'Science Speculation' packs are:

EXPLORERS FROM SPACE: Including titles by Landsburg, Dione, Berlitz (G&G \$5.60).

VON DANIKEN: His "Of the Gods" titles, plus Return to the Stars (G&G \$13.45).

A SNIPPET SQUEEZED OUT OF ISSUE 16/17

***I'd like to mention that Deb and I spent a very enjoyable day and evening with Garry Tee recently. Quite apart from many lesser-known books, Garry has a marvelous collection of 'pulp' sf magazines, both American originals and some British (abridged) reprint editions. Just leafing through them gives instant understanding of the keen nostalgia felt by old time fans and collectors. It is no wonder that such titles as del Rey's FANTASTIC SCIENCE FICTION ART 1926 - 1954 (Ballantine), Frewin's 100 YEARS OF SCIENCE FICTION ILLUSTRATION (Hamlyn) and Sadoul's 2000 A.D.: ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THAT GOLDEN AGE OF SCIENCE FICTION PULPS (Souvenir) are so popular.** ■*



Issue 13/14 seems to have stirred many people to write and discuss various items. In the interests of continuity I've grouped letters dealing with that issue or discussions arising from it at the front of this month's lettercol, instead of putting them in the usual approximately-chronological order. Mail deliveries and reading habits of fan being what they are, it doesn't surprise me to get a letter written in November relating to a zine posted off in June.

Thomas J. Murn
530 Eau Claire Avenue
Madison, WI 53705
U.S.A.

(15 November 1977)

I enjoyed looking through 13/14; several items require some further comment.

The letter from Kerry Doole claims that the BLUE OYSTER CULT's AGENTS OF FORTUNE was one of the best Rock LP's to be released in 1976. Doole lauds the sf content of that album but he does not do the Rock audience at large a favour by neglecting to mention the CULT's past sf-related music. Their first album was chock-full or mysterious themes; need I mention Stairway to the Stars, Cities on Flame with Rock and Roll, Workshop of the Telescopes? It seems that as the CULT becomes more aware of commercial imperatives their dalliance with sf becomes uninspired; insipid even.

As for Patti Smith, I think she should have kept writing good poems instead of trying to turn them into bad songs.

And why didn't Doole mention HAWKWIND? Aside from FLOYD, they were the first with the most in the strange area where sf and Rock come together.

John Alderson's article about Australian sf had a perhaps properly-righteous tone ... but I fail to see the value of a segregation of sub-genres in an age where the ability to communicate with people in distant places is increasing at a rapid rate. Per-

haps Alderson should emphasise educating the rest of the world as to the qualities which make Australian sf a unique and worthwhile sector of the literary universe.

Two more short observations: Pownall's art seems to have great promise ... and I have to commend the taste and perception of your fanzine reviewer -- she or he was right on target about that great Wisconsin fanzine, Janus.

***Kerry's letter was a comment and update on my lengthy article on SF and Rock in Noumenon 8/9. HAWK WIND were mentioned therein. ***

P. Lyle Craig
Professional Artist
2815 Amarillo Street
Baton Rouge, LA
U.S.A.

(12 November 1977)

Thanks a lot for 13/14. I thoroughly enjoyed seeing the efforts of our overseas friends. This ish really excited me. Colin Wilson is very good and I wager that he'll be up there in the big times soon (I'm not saying he isn't -- well, you know what I mean).

I enjoyed the layout of your 'zine too. When I get a zine in the mail, I usually go through to see the artwork first, then content, and then layout. That doesn't mean I consider layout the least; for without a good layout one could have good artwork and content and yet not have an appealing zine. Yours brings all three together in top form. I especially like the idea of the letter column towards the front. It works well.

As soon as the next ish of EE comes out, I'll send you a copy. It'll probably be a while because I'm still paying off debts I made before I got my new illustrator job.

Thanks for the kind words Lyle and I know Colin has bought a hat two sizes larger.

Eric Lindsay
6 Hillcrest Avenue
Faulconbridge, NSW 2776
AUSTRALIA

(November 1977)

Thanks for 13/14. That is one impressive new logo on your cover -- Colin Wilson is to be congratulated on that, and on the cover as well, naturally. I think you have most of your printing problems under control, despite the story of fear & loathing in the printing presses that you detail in your pages of excuses.

In the letters, Ira Thomhill makes a whole bunch of assumptions that just are not so. He assumes that THE SILMARILLION is a "must buy" for every fan, which is simply unfounded -- Tolkien's other works aren't sf, by any reasonable definition. Although I'll agree that a fair percentage of those ►

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into sf are also into the "pure good vs total bad" sort of fiction that the Silmarillion is likely to be, by no means all sf fans will find it attractive (or in my case, even readable).

On his views on alternatives, it is hardly likely that the extended family unit, if basically totally independent, would be likely to be at the mercy of disease, for disease (like the "natural" disasters that threaten and destroy monocultures of wheat and other grains, despite various poisonous 'insecticides'), no matter how harmful to the individual, is never a true threat to an entire species provided that the species is scattered and in only sparse communication with other groups. Epidemics are a consequence of the human monocultures of city and suburban areas; packed groups. Likewise, malnutrition is not a problem until you get large populations. Early hunter cultures did not appear to have too much of a problem with it, and it is the same today, except for those primitive groups that have been forced into exceedingly poor country by more aggressive cultures. Stupidity, in an age of nuclear weapons, is more of a threat than it ever is in a small group. The present system is not better, unless you add the proviso that you must also have the present excessive human population.

Ira M. Thornhill
1900 Perdido Street, Apt B97
New Orleans, LA 70112
U.S.A.

(12 August 1977)

I'd love to take the time to tell you all about the 'history' of V. Bode in sf fandom, etc. . . remind me to do so someday. But it would take much too long tonight, so allow me to simply recommend that you do two things: (1) find a copy (Bud Plant or any large dealer in comics should still have copies) of the BODE INDEX, and (2) write to Ned Brooks to see if he still has any old copies of the Bode Bulletin left that he could send to you. I will note, for you, that Bode's flirtation with sf illustration seems to've been cut horribly short by the phenomenal success of the Cheech Wizard strip in Nat Lamp and the Deadbone strips in Cavalier. Okay? Now, what else do you wanta know?

Explain, please, exactly what you mean by "medical monotreatment" (he said, dangerously).

I wouldn't have thought that the inability of long-term culture tissues (cellular) to provoke an immune response upon injection/transplant into an immune-proficient host (as mentioned by David Bimler, for those who've forgotten) would've been newsworthy enough to've made a recent issue of Science. I seem to remember having read that (somewhere) a few years back when I first studied

immunology. It's only natural after all that cells removed from the hormonal/biochemical environment which 'causes' their major immune-unique characteristics would, after several generations, lose those characteristics. And, without the original donor's glycoprotein (and other) membrane elements being present, there's no reason for the host to react. The suggestion that this is a Good Thing with regard to possible organ transplants and/or organ banking is, of course, debatable. (Tho I'm not altogether certain that you'd care to debate it in the pages of Noumenon. Well, shall I or not?)

As for 'Dracopters', why would they even need rotary muscle actions? A human being, with plain ole everyday linear contraction and expansion, is able to take an object (of sufficient 'flexibility') and 'twirl' it with a rotary motion in his/her hand(s)



by 'whipping' it back and forth. A dracopter's rotors might easily operate on a similar principle.

Mike Pownall's strip (that's a horrible word for what he has done, but I can think of no other) is simply lovely. I spent nearly twenty minutes looking at it the first time, and still don't quite believe it. Do try to obtain more of these!

I had to check Rollo's information on the newer editions of the Darkover books. I was just certain that the cover for PLANET SAVERS was by George Barr. Rollo was right. I'm impressed. . . and made more aware of an outstanding new talent. I'd also seen the Heyne: SF ART book-of-posters that Rollo mentions (sometime

ago I had it given to me as a gift, in fact) and was still am impressed by it. I do wish that the Continuum books, when published in the USA, had covers anywhere near as nice as the Star editions and Woodroffe's art. No such luck. Surprisingly enough, my tastes continue to pretty well parallel Rollo's, and his column, therefore, remains one of my favorite parts of Noumenon. Good Stuff. Tell Rollo to watch for the new Freas book in September, and to let me know what he thinks of Leo and Dianne Dillon.

****Yes, I've had a good look at the BODE INDEX and not only is it very informative, it's extremely well-produced.**

"Medical monotreatment" refers to modern medicine's emphasis on the physical alone, to the reliance on drugs (blast it out) and surgery (cut it out), and to the GP as the curer of all ills. I would also like to restate that orthodox medicine's fear of alternatives has resulted in little else but allopathy, with all other treatments regarded (and so repressed) as "quackery".

*Yes, I hope more work is on the way from Mike.***

Cuyler Warnell (Ned) Brooks, Jr.
713 Paul Street
Newport News,
Virginia 23605
U.S.A.

(6 October 1977)

Much thanks for the Noumenon! I am slowly working through the 28th and last issue of *It Comes In The Mail*, hope to get it out this year. It will be somewhat larger than most previous issues. I may start another zine after a while with more emphasis on books and less on fanzines.

I enjoyed the issue, but it had me scurrying around various references and old zines in my collection. I had to read Jim Brown's *THE EMISSARY* -- quite remarkable, as you say. It was obviously placed first in the issue to match Campbell's editorial (it was the July '52 issue in the US edition), and there were some letters in subsequent issues that mentioned the ideas and the editorial, but no one mentioned the Brown story by name, even though it did place first in the "Analytical Laboratory" in the October '52 issue. But who was 'Jim Brown'? His style seems vaguely familiar and some of the idiom is British. . . He never wrote anything else that I can find a listing of, and he isn't in the *Pseudonym Index*.

Alderson is fascinating as always, though since I'm unfamiliar with the stories he mentions I can't tell whether I would agree with him or not -- many of them sound like fantasy based on local folklore. Not that there is anything wrong with that -- Manly Wade Wellman did very well with it in the "John The Ballad-Singer" stories.

I checked Marc Ortlieb's list of Bode illos against

our **VAUGHN BODE INDEX** and I must admit that we missed some! He is wrong about the Shekley story in the Feb '69 *IF* though -- it was Feb '68. Freedom was somewhat divided on the Bode work in the prozines in the late 60s -- some liked it very much and others loathed it. I met Bode at the '67 PhilCon and he mentioned that he would like to contribute art to fanzines, if they could guarantee reasonably good repro. When I got back home I sent him a list of names and addresses for all the faneds I knew that did offset (at least on the cover). In the following two years, he had scores of illos in some 25 fanzines -- covers, strips, cartoons. In the annotation to the *INDEX* he says "I hadly over-committed myself to fan publishers who I much preferred to work for because of the freedom and appreciation of the owners." In my opinion his best material is that in the fanzines.

I have not finished Callenbach's *ECOTOPIA* yet, but I don't think Goldman's review is quite fair. There is no doubt that the book is intended as a polemic, but I haven't found that anyone was forced to watch TV in Ecotopia. His objection that the Ecotopian society is 'unfree' because certain things are forbidden is meaningless -- all societies are unfree to that extent. It's just that different things are forbidden in the Ecotopian society than in our own.

Good review of **THE FIFTH HEAD OF CERBERUS**.
US.

R. (Buck) Coulson
Route 3
Hartford City
Indiana 47348
U.S.A.

(17 September 1977)

In his discussion of Australian science fiction Alderson leaves out Dal Stevens, who had a fair number of short stories published in American magazines (and a few in British ones, if memory serves) in the mid-1950s. His stuff was not all that good but it was Australian. (I'm sure John will say that it was watered down for foreign consumption, but it was exotic enough to American readers.) As for Wodhams' story of scientific con-men; the theme isn't as unknown to US science fiction as John seems to think. C. M. Kornbluth's *The Rocket of 1955* gets reprinted regularly, and there are other somewhat lesser-known ones. (So much lesser that I can't recall the titles offhand.) And **THE YEAR OF THE ANGRY RABBIT** is of course science fiction -- it's just not very good science fiction. Or a very good story, for that matter. (I'm not well enough versed on the Australian Way Of Life to judge its satirical qualities.)

Do foreign fanzines need a New Zealand agent? How hard is it for the individual to send money out of the country? Yandro has a British agent strictly

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because of the difficulties of exchange (even our British agent can't send us the subscription money; he buys us British books with it). Incidentally, we're quite amenable to the barter system, if anyone is interested; we'll swap Yandro or US science fiction for anything we can use from Down Under; copies of Void, some of the books Alderson mentions (not all of them, by any means), etc. Every trade has to be negotiated, of course.

Peter Hassall asks "What about his STAINLESS STEEL RAT? (as basic sf). It's a third-rate novel, that's what about it. Even with the scarcity of humour in science fiction, there are better examples than this turkey for a basic library.

I don't remember the name of "Sky's" film either, but it was indeed an adaptation of the Zenna Henderson stories. A very loose adaptation. William Shatner was one of the leads. An excellent effort for US tv, though a long way from the printed version. (One gets out of reading what one puts into it; a less "mystic" story than MORE THAN HUMAN would be hard for me to imagine, but then I'm not attuned to mysticism -- and extremely happy about the fact.)

I enjoyed Goldman's putdown of ECOTOPIA.

***I don't say fanzines "need" agents but, if someone has sufficient subscribers in NZ to warrant the savings in bulk mailing to me direct, for re-mailing within NZ, I will do it. Yes, there are strict limits to sending NZ's "internationally worthless" money out of the country. ***

Alan D. Foster
Box BC-1
Big Bear Lake
California 92315
U.S.A.

(4 October 1977)

Thanks for the copy of Noumenon. Perhaps I can reciprocate with a little information of some interest to your other readers.

STAR TREK has been revived as a regular television series. Plans currently are for formal production to begin early in November, with the first shows airing some time in the Spring of 78. I've written the story for the opening episode, which will be a two-hour special with a four-week shooting schedule. The intention at Paramount studios is to market the show as part of a "fourth network" package, for showing on independent stations around the country. I can't talk about the format, sorry to say, except to mention that there will be some changes. However, Gene Roddenberry is once again at the helm and is dedicated to making the best show possible.

STAR WARS is (a phenomenon). I've written

the sequel novel, but whether it will form the basis for the sequel film is very much a moot point. There will be a sequel film, however, and probably several. I strongly urge everyone, when it comes your way, to see the film in its roadshow version, in 70mm and Dolby stereo sound. The 70mm is not terribly important, but the stereo sound is critical to proper enjoyment of the film, due to the complexity of the sound track (overlapping music, dialogue and sound effects) and much is lost when the film is heard over standard theatre speaker systems.

Very slight preview information indicates that CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND should be a considerable success in its own right. I've confidence in the film, being a Steven Spielberg (the director/writer of ENCOUNTERS) fan since back when he directed THE KILLER BEES (or QUEEN BEE, whatever it was called) and DUFL. Though I'm getting sick of these talented folks trying to call STAR WARS, ENCOUNTERS and other sf films anything but science fiction. We're also looking forward here in the Los Angeles area to the release of the film version of Roger Zelazny's DAMNATION ALLEY (retitled for the film: SURVIVAL RUN), previews of which, again, look promising. It looks like a banner year for cinematic science fiction.

Keep up the good work. Hope to get back to New Zealand again some day soon. My favourite place in Asia.

***Thanks for writing Alan and passing on the info. I just hope sequels to STAR WARS will be able to rise above the "flash but trash" plot line of the first episode. Yes, a banner year -- which could make or break sf as a serious film theme. ***



JOHN'S REPLY

John J. Alderson
Havelock Vic 3465
AUSTRALIA

(28 October 1977)

I don't think that Lee Harding's letter deserves any large comment (Noumenon 15), not because of any lack of commonsense in the letter but because we just happen to think rather much alike on most of the issues at stake. So I'll only deal with those with which we differ.

1. I can put Lee right about my definition of sf. I used it in my article to mean that body of writing produced in the US and labelled "sf" or "science fiction". When I referred to Australian sf I referred to material of a similar nature (generally lacking the label however).

2. I don't wish to discuss *Crooked Mick* and *The Bunyip* as it is still looking for a home in print. But I am amused at Lee's definition of a "tall story", that is one which "succeeds" when "read aloud"! I thought a "tall story" was one which used exaggeration to impress, usually with a straight face. The Billy Barker stories of Frank Hardy are excellent examples and they come over well as told verbally. They read well too. Dal Stevens' stories read well but don't shine when read aloud, but are nevertheless "tall stories". *Crooked Mick* is by my classification, fantasy, but Americans don't make that same clear-cut distinction between sf and fantasy. I believe Lee did not understand the story because he has not penetrated to the very serious theme beneath the hilarious and very simple story.

3. I did not suggest that there is an international conspiracy against Australian sf. Simply the US sf editors worship the god science/technology and we Australians consider humanity the subject. Simply, those editors insist that science/technology must always triumph whilst we Australians prefer to search for the truth.

As for the "literary Establishment" with "the passion for the sheep-dip tradition in local fiction," well I don't know of it. The only literary establishment I know in Australia is highly urbanised, literally hates the country and depicts the rural side of Australia, if it must be mentioned, in the Dad & Dave and Ben Bowyang style. Does Lee think I believe that this is the real Australia?

4. I spoke of fans, not sf writers, otherwise I agree with Lee.

5. I mentioned that Ivan Southall was "no great shakes as a writer" and when I compared him with Heinlein and Norton it was to emphasise how bad they are. Actually, since the Simon Black novels Southall has written some extremely good juveniles.

6&7. Sorry about mixing up White and Keneally. Otherwise Lee emphasises what I said about the said workshop.

8. I have to disagree strongly with Lee's estimate of the value of local folklore to a writer. Does Lee really believe that the local folklore used by Thomas Hardy produced an "indefensible and bastardised" sort of work - ... a "tall story"?

Incidentally, I don't find the tall story attractive as sf at all. The tall story is a living art form in Australia, as is I hope, sf and fantasy, but I distinguish between them; many Americans however do not. John Campbell, 'Doc' Smith and Van Vogt trotted forth rotten tall stories and thought they were science fiction... but they didn't have a sense of humour!

9. Maybe Lee has completely misunderstood the point about the use of local material. I complained that we were not allowed to use it, not that we had to, and the other point of my complaint was that "fans" were ignorant of it.

I must disagree with Lee about the possibility of a "collective" at least helping put Australian sf on its feet. The idea is quite commonplace in the other arts. Individuals still usually do the job, however. For instance the Australian Book Society (& Co-operative publishing co. of some sort) put many of our Establishment writers on their literary feet. The idea that merit alone is sufficient to get an author published is bullshit.

Michael Newberry's comments are too contemptible for comment.

P.S. Noumenon 16 is to hand due to my procrastination. Re the nonsense written by Don D'Amassa who is up to his usual game of wilfully misinterpreting what I wrote. In this instance quoting a sentence entirely out of context and then knocking that Aunt Sally down. My criticisms were of US editors, not writers. To cap it all Don accuses me of xenophobia and thereby exposes his own fault. It is a sad state of affairs when one cannot discuss one's own country's literature without being abused as anti-something else.

P.P.S. I had intended to write you another article but have started on my next novel instead... Oh well, would you keep beauty from the people?

Just to throw in my two cents worth, I do wonder whether Australian sf writers have had much encouragement within Australia, or if they have to rely on overseas markets. The occasional mass-market magazines in NZ (they come and go rapidly) have usually been sympathetic towards mild sf, while radio has featured sf consistently in the form of plays. I do see that to become a professional sf writer it is necessary to sell in America, however.

10 LETTERS...

Constance Yeabsley
384 Manchester St.
Christchurch 1
NEW ZEALAND

(8 September 1977)

I was interested to hear from you and to see copies of *Noumenon* which were lent to me by a friend.

About SFRA: my name was put forward by a member in the US, a kind of pen-friend. One of the advantages of belonging to SFRA is that I seem to be on a mailing list, though this is usually a means of becoming the recipient of much boring junk. Such is not the case here; I receive all kinds of fascinating material (e.g. a catalogue of rare sf books, request for help from a student doing a thesis on sf, a communication from the Buck Rogers 25th Century Institute for the Advancement of Science).

As to my own interest in science fiction, I must be one of the oldest readers of it in New Zealand. As soon as I began to read, I discovered *Astounding*, *Weird Tales*, Edgar Rice Burroughs, and ever since I have been a fan. My children too were brought up on sf, and on Paul Klee in art. (I am not the only one to make this connection: there was a paperback, either by Wyndham or Vonnegut -- sorry my memory is failing -- with a Klee on the cover.

Pleasant though it has been to have my sons share my enthusiasms, there were drawbacks: magazines and books were lent recklessly and my precious sets of *Astounding* (later *Analog*), *New Worlds*, *Galaxy*, *Fantasy & Science Fiction* are sadly gappy.

The only thing I have ever written regarding sf is a presidential address for the local Classical Association on "The Classics in SF". I cannot believe that your reading public would be the least bit interested!

Having studied with interest your *Notes Towards a Basic SF Collection*, I would in the main agree with you. But to my mind *NEW MAPS OF HELL* by Kingsley Amis is a better critical work than *BILLION YEAR SPREE*. *STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND* I could not even finish, and for van Vogt I would choose *WEAPON SHOPS OF ISHER*. For hard-core sf, Hal Clement's *MISSION OF GRAVITY* seems to me an outstanding example. Alas! now out of print. But each to his or her own taste.

***Thanks for writing Constance and those gaps sound like a terrible travesty. Thanks for your comments on the Basic List too -- where is that update? ***

David Bimler
706 Massey Street
Hastings
NEW ZEALAND

(22 September 1977)

An item for *LORD OF THE RINGS* readers. *Bib* is Czech for "idiot", *bibby bagout* means an idiotic Hungarian pig. This might be connected to *Bilbo Baggins*... then again, it might not be.

More on astronomy. Arrakis (Mu Draconis) is only 76 light years away. I had a computer print out maps for parts of its night sky, and the stars seen from there fell into distinct constellations. Alas, the Arrakis system includes a close binary of two F6 stars, a third star farther away, plus "astrometric perturbations which may signal the presence of an unseen companion." I don't expect habitable planets orbiting there.

***David's letter continued with a section on "Astroforming", which appears elsewhere in this issue. ***

We Also Heard From:

John Thomson (NZ) * Who sent some info on *STAR TREK* *

Roger de Vere (COA: Flat 81, Hobson Court, Hobson St. Thorndon, Wellington, NZ) *Who has stories away to many prozines *

Tony Lovatt (NZ) *Yes, Tony, I did receive the "guff" you sent me! Anytime now *

Alan Freshwater (COA: c/- Health Office, Napier City Council, Private Bag, Napier, NZ).

Carey "Long-suffering" Handfield (AUST) *To whom I have actually written a loooong letter. After all, he is Australian Agent as well as a Ghod Friend, so he deserves one now and then. Hi, Carey. *

John Millard (Canada) * Who sent another parcel of books and magazines, for which again many thanks John. May the Great Moose smile on you. *

And many thanks to all the others who have taken out subscriptions/renewals of late and who have complimented *Noumenon*. Those small measures of praise (and finance!) all help greatly.





Written & Directed by George Lucas.

**Produced by Gary Kurtz for
Twentieth Century Fox.**

Mark Hamill as Luke Skywalker.

Harrison Ford as Han Solo.

Carrie Fisher as Princess Leia Organa.

Peter Cushing as Grand Moff Tarkin.

Alec Guinness as Ben Kenobi.

The Masked One as Darth Vader.

C3PO as See Threepio.

R2-D2 as Artoo Detoo.

STAR WARS is undoubtedly the film phenomenon of our time. With his undisguised display of re-filling childhood dreams, Lucas has captured the attention of millions. What the people see, and go back to see, and tell their friends to see, is a remarkably sophisticated Saturday matinee, the likes of which has not graced the screens in years.

In short the film is a masterpiece of juvenile adventure, the young heroes battling against the older villains and great odds to win a resounding victory. The acting is very polished and the sets and special effects are designed to dazzle, to lift you out of

kick, a tall anthropoid with an engaging manner (a Wookiee); and swoon to the plight and courage of the beautiful Princess; while to many people the stars of the film are the two robots ("droids") See Threepio and Artoo Detoo.

But, and I'm afraid this is a large but, don't go to see the film thinking it is a science fiction masterpiece, out-dazzling 2001. It is a space opera, goodies and baddies dressed in futuristic costumes, cowboys and indians on a galactic scale, cops and robbers duelling with advanced fireworks-effects technology.

There were, in fact, a number of occasions when I was bored during the film. The much-hailed special effects may have been ten times more expensive than any other film, but they palled badly. After the 85th time the laser guns whiz and pop (always missing the heroes), or the laser swords clank slowly against each other, or the spaceships make the same manoeuvre for the fifth time, one can be forgiven for shifting restlessly in the seat.

The special effects in 2001 are stunningly effective; the special effects in STAR WARS are repetitive techno-flash -- you'll get a far better feeling for space and space craft from 2001; SW's spaceships are merely Ford Mustangs in the sky. Even the two robots (the comic and the straight guy) owe more to the (dreadful) TV show LOST IN SPACE than to any of film. In fact, the whole of SW is LOST IN SPACE on a far grander scale (sorry Mr Lucas, that's how I saw it) -- although it's possible that is what Lucas had in mind anyway.

Don't let dreary old me put you off, however.

THE RETURN OF THE SATURDAY MATINEE

your seat and transport you to a wondrous (wonderworld/universe) of advanced technology overlaid on the timeless tradition of goodies vs bad-dies.

The story is a very simple one of conflict, manoeuvre, battle and victory. But the characters are surprisingly well-drawn and I'm sure this is one of the main reasons for the film's success. Luke is a bright youngster who, as a result of social injustice, grows up very quickly and eventually fulfills a large destiny. He is helped along the way by a remarkable collection of allies whom I'll only outline in broad strokes, not wishing to spoil the surprises and effects of the film.

You will see the 'return' of Ben Kenobi to this heritage (the last of the Jedi Knights, who were the guardians of peace and justice before the "dark times" came to the Galaxy) and his battle with Darth Vader (the malevolent Dark Lord of the Sith), both men wise, powerful and gifted/trained with extra-sensory talents. You will thrill to the exploits of the "young and dashing" Han Solo and his side-

kick, a tall anthropoid with an engaging manner (a Wookiee); and swoon to the plight and courage of the beautiful Princess; while to many people the stars of the film are the two robots ("droids") See Threepio and Artoo Detoo.

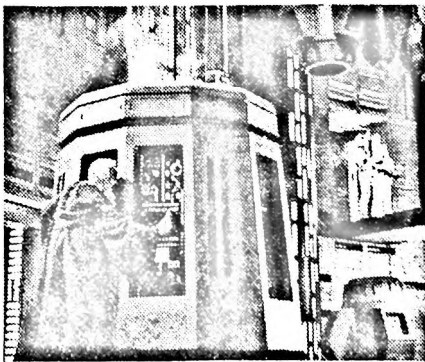
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Don't let dreary old me put you off, however.

There are a number of fine moments: the opening sequence; the excellent scene in the bar with a superb array of 'races' mingling together; the 'hovering' hovercraft; the scenes in the desert, etc, etc. The epic Saturday matinee has returned in the form of a fast and colourful fantasy and will undoubtedly appeal to the child in all of you. —BAT



ASIAN REPORT

or . . .

I am still sweating and slaving over a hot typewriter trying to catch up with things -- report for the Australia-Japan Foundation, articles for *The Australian* and *The Australian Author*, likewise for various fanzines, a rewrite of the second story in the *Kitty And The Commodore* series for George Scithers and, when I get around to it, carrying on with *MATILDA'S STEPCHILDREN*, which novel Hayakawa Shobo in Tokyo want by last Thursday if not before.

So it goes.

Meanwhile, the account of my brief (luckily I wasn't briefless) stay in Beppu might be interesting. But first, some general news.

It looks like I shall be flying the coop again next year. I had decided on blowing my travel allowance on a tour of inland Australia when I received an invitation to be GoH at the Marcon in Columbus, Ohio, mid-April. Have accepted. I've been there before, but not to a Con. It struck me as strange that the place has done so little to honour the memory of its most (and only) famous son. I was looking forward to getting a picture postcard of some place or building connected with the late James so that I could send it to Susan with the message, "It is Thurbur than you think . . ." But there wasn't a thing.

I did send her one from and of the Grand Canyon with the message, "Not a patch on Ayers Rock . . .". She retaliated a little later with one of Mount Fujiyama. This year I was able to use Ayers Rock again as a yardstick, the postcard being of picturesque rock formations in the Inland Sea. Believe it or not, I was in Japan for 24 days and never saw Fujiyama. The smog was something awful. Oh, I suppose that I could have seen it if I'd known just where to look when flying from Fukuoka to Tokyo.

What I did see, well off the tourist-beaten track, was the grave of Will Adams and his Japanese wife. Will Adams (upon whom James Clavell modelled his John Blackthorne in *SHOGUN*) was the first Englishman in Japan, dying there in 1620. Clavell's character only got as far as being known as the Anjin-San and being made a samurai; the real-life Adams was known as the Anjin-Sama and, as well as being made a samurai, became a noble with a rank roughly corresponding to baron. His grave is well-tended and every year, on April 15, there is a festival held in his memory.

The day that we visited his resting place the junior member of the party, dear little Yoshie Hayashi (my favourite Faithful Reader) poured a

libation over the stones while the rest of us made Shinto obeisance.

On the same day we were aboard the battleship *Mikasa*. She was Admiral Togo's flagship during the Russo-Japanese War of 1905 and has become a national monument just as Nelson's *Victory* has. I had to be dragged away from her. I was demonstrating how to work the Morse key on one of the bridge searchlights, and then how to lay and train one of the 3" guns of the secondary armament. (Unfortunately the breach block was sealed and there was no ammo . . .)

The Hinkon at Yokohama? I give them credit for one thing (at least) -- the arrival of the GoH on the platform was announced by Waltzing Matilda played over the PA system. Otherwise, apart from slight language problems, it was very like a Con anywhere at all. Recently Joan Hunter Holly was having a whinge in one of the organs of SFWA (Science Fiction Writers of America) that it is only at Cons writers become aware of piracies, when the unpaid-for (from the author's viewpoint) books are presented to them for autographing. That very thing happened to me in Yokohama -- one of my earlier novels brought out by some outfit called QT Books. (I managed, later, to get a copy for my own collection of Japanese translations but I don't think that I shall ever be paid for it.)●



BAGLESS IN BEPPU

A. Bertram Chandler

The things that happen to me should happen only to Commodore Grimes. (Of course they usually do eventually, sometimes - but not always - slightly improved upon . . .)

Well, I was in Beppu. Beppu is a seaside-cum-spa resort in Kyushu Island, on the shore of Beppu Bay. Steam oozes or gushes from the vegetation-covered hillsides everywhere one looks and roadside gutters run with almost boiling water. There is an omnipresent tang of sulphurous gasses in the air.

Volcanic activity always seems to spawn legends. I was particularly intrigued by the one concerning the Lost Island in Beppu Bay. For some reason or other this island was very prosperous and the houses of its inhabitants well stocked with precious things. The gateway to one of the shrines was guarded by two stone lions. It was believed that if the eyes of these beasts turned red then the island would sink beneath the sea.

Some bright boys on the mainland decided to cash in on this belief. One dark night they rowed out to the island, taking with them a pot of red paint. Unobserved they coloured the eyes of the stone lions, then hid. The first early risers to pass the shrine looked in horror, then raised the alarm. The islanders hastily piled into their boats and fled, taking nothing with them. As soon as everybody was gone the thieves emerged from hiding and began happily to ransack the houses.

And the island sank.

My own misadventure in Beppu was connected with pigment, although it was black not red.

I was staying at one of the spa hotels, well up the hillside. Being free for most of the day I decided to walk down to the city itself and then to take a taxi back. It was a narrow road, a series of hair-pin bends. There was barely room for cars to pass each other and a pedestrian, such as myself, was obliged to keep well to the side.

There was a gang of roadworkers, three men and three women, gnarled gnomes in baggy trousers and broad-brimmed straw hats. One of them straightened up just as I drew abeam, swinging his tarbrush, literally bespattering the legs of my light blue, tropical weight (and fortunately drip-dry) slacks. There were profuse apologies. I suggested the use of petrol to remove the thick of the tar as a preliminary to dry cleaning.

Then I was hustled into a nearby garage and told to remove everything from my pockets, after which I was debagged. I thought that the trouser-cleaning operation was going to take place there and then but two of the women vanished with my nether

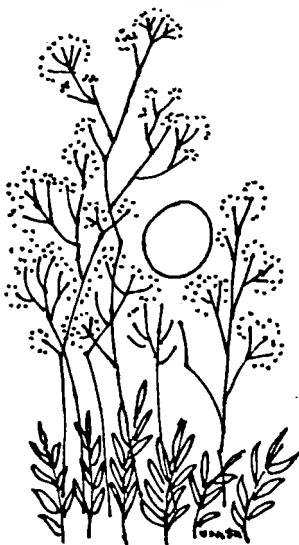
garments. The foreman, whose English was quite good, told me that water would have to be used as well as petrol and that, in about an hour, I would get my trousers back.

I managed to convey to him that, as it was a hot day, my trousers could dry on my legs just as well as hanging on a line somewhere. At last he got the message and the women brought my slacks back, still damp below the knee but absolutely spotless. (I had them dry cleaned on my return to Sydney but that was to remove sundry sukiyaki splashes acquired, a few days later, in Kumamoto and Nagasaki.)

During the entire operation there was considerable embarrassment; I kept wondering what the owner of that garage would say if he returned to find a bagless *gaijin* standing there with all his personal possessions spread out on the roof of the family Toyota. But never once did I doubt that I would get my trousers back; the standard of honesty in Japan is extremely high.

I was amazed by the good job done by the road workers. Perhaps accidents such as the one that befell me are rather common, so that there is a standard drill laid down for pacifying tar-besmirched passers by. I suppose that as road-menders they're good at their job; as trouser-cleaners they are first class.

But I'm glad that the reporter who interviewed and photographed me later in the day did not find me in that garage! ■



14 STARSHIP



MINSTRELS

****The two albums reviewed this month have a number of similarities. Both are written and produced by two people, Parsons & Woolfson lately of TALES OF MYSTERY AND IMAGINATION (reviewed Noumenon 10) fame and Johnson & Knight recently of STEELEYE SPAN. Both teams have picked themes which allow a great deal of musical scope, and both have chosen various singers to present the individual songs/chapters.**

I ROBOT has greater appeal and power; in most respects it is also a superior work to MYSTERY AND IMAGINATION. I think the basic failing of ELFLAND'S DAUGHTER lies with the limited musical styles employed -- more of a thoughtful but light play-along with friends than an adventurous display of imagination. Anyway, to the reviews proper. -- BAT **

I ROBOT

THE ALAN PARSONS PROJECT

Written & Produced by Alan Parsons & Eric Woolfson.
Orchestra & Choir arranged and conducted by

Andrew Powell.

Cover design & photography by Hipgnosis; Robot design by George Hardie; Illustration by Richard Manning.

(Arista Records; AL 7002)

Featured vocalists: Allan Clarke, Steve Harley, Jack Harris, Peter Straker and Jaki Whitren, Dave Townsend, Lenny Zakatek.

From the suitably atmospheric beginning you could be excused for thinking this is the new TANGERINE DREAM opus. But you're soon corrected as the main tune emerges, that choppy and catchy song-writing which typifies the Parsons/Woolfson approach. Being very chirpy and melodic, with nice textures, it seems all is well in their future world.

A clever use of instruments, giving a sophisticated

techno-funk, then leads us into I Wouldn't Want To Be Like You, another catchy piece with a good vocalist and an uplifting guitar solo. Not only the theme but also (yes, it does look like Pete & Dud on the cover, doesn't it) the ambiguous lyrics suggest the concerns of the album are not as utopian as imagined however, and Some Other Time leaves no doubt Pretty, but with punch (like the best of Elton John), and with another good vocalist (Jack Harris?) and tasty guitar work, this track adds to the ambiguity of viewpoint in the lyrics.

Breakdown, perfectly written in a familiar style for Allan Clarke of the HOLLIES (Parsons was an engineer for the HOLLIES at one time), is also a fine display for the powerhouse drums and bass duo of Stuart Tosh and David Paton. I like the epic finale too. Robots, having mental breakdowns? Whatever next is Don't Let It Show, shades of a futuristic, underground (android?) brotherhood.

Side Two opens with another choppy and catchy piece, here for that excellent vocalist Steve Harley, the up-to-the-minute arrangement drawing on the best from many styles. The ambiguity of viewpoint is maintained in the lyrics -- I don't know if it was a deliberate intention to have the lyrics open to two interpretations (man vs robots, or else the development of neuroses in robots) but it makes for head-scratching and attentive listening.

Nucleus is a sound-picture, the resolution unclear because of not knowing the exact context; quite pretty but slightly predictable in its 'spaceyness'. Day After Day is for PINK FLOYD, most definitely (Parsons engineered for DARK SIDE OF THE MOON), from the introduction, to the background guitar, the feel, the voices -- only the ordinary chorus belies its origins.

Total Eclipse owes a lot to Ligetti I'd say (quite effective), while Genesis returns us to (a variation of) side one's introductory title track.

A very clever, catchy, musically adventurous and successful album -- highly recommended. --BAT



THE KING OF ELFLAND'S DAUGHTER

Written, Arranged & Produced by Bob Johnson & Pete Knight.

Narrated by Christopher Lee.

Based on the book by Lord Dunsany.

Cover art by Jimmy Cauty (?)

(Chrysalis Records; L36220)

Christopher Lee as The King of Elfland.

Mary Hopkin as Lirazel.

Frankie Miller as Alveric.

Alexis Korner as A Troll.

P.P. Arnold as The Witch.

Derek Brimstone as A Villager of Earl.

Chris Farlowe as A Villager of Earl.

First the raspberries - - this album seems to have caused the split in STEELEYE SPAN. Now the roses.

The cover by Jimmy Cauty (?) is marvelous. It is perhaps a little too detailed to function well as an attention getter (on the shelf at a distance it can be a blur which the eye skips over) but up close (like with a magnifying glass and I still don't think I got it all) the detail is incredible.

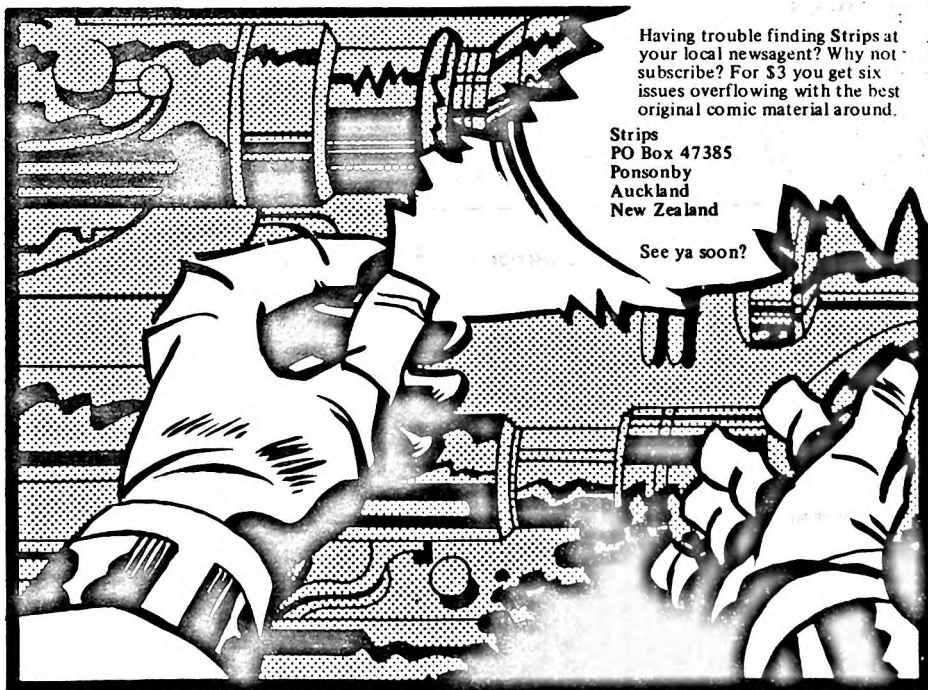
The painting has Alveric, the Witch, Lirazel, the Elf King, the Rune, the Trolls and the Sword immediately obvious. But then the eye is drawn to fields and villages beyond, with "things" lurking under toadstools, in trees, peeking out of borders



and from behind and under still more "things". Not to mention a Lamadryad, stray runes (magical fall-out?), the elfin mountains, stray camels, and a horde of very toothy dragons by Nidhug out of Ouroboros.

Moving from the cover we come to an album similarly detailed. Individually I don't suppose there are any 'hits' on this album and, let's face it, you just don't expect to find Christopher Lee, Mary Hopkin and P.P. Arnold on the same piece of vinyl. In fact the album is a new concept, not just another rock opera but a fantasy transferred from the written word to record; as such I think it largely succeeds. Lord Dunsany should approve.

The best performance on the album is easily that of Christopher Lee as the Elf King and narrator. In fact it is the narration which holds a series of ordinary (in a musical sense) songs into a successful album. Recommended to all fens. —Mike Newberry



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ALSO KNOWN AS ASTROGERIATRICS

I've been giving a bit of thought to "astroforming" (analogous to terraforming) of late. The main concern of this 'science' is lowering or raising a star's light output, to make more of its planets fit for colonisation.

Actually, this is not as ambitious as it sounds: stars are temperamental great things, much easier to deform or destroy than planets. They are remarkably sensitive to changes in composition.

The amount of radiation from a star depends on how much hydrogen in its core is being fused, producing helium and energy. Hence astroforming is performed by adding nuclear catalysts or inhibitors, which diffuse into the star's heart and accelerate or decelerate the reactions of fusion. If you give it extra carbon, more hydrogen is fused through the carbon-nitrogen-oxygen cycle. On the other hand, consuming carbon or nitrogen or oxygen (by stimulating the right fission or fusion reaction with some combination of materials) will slow the cycle and reduce the star's output. You get the idea? You have a feeling of power?

Astroforming is not the only term for this - others are "solforming", "astrotectonics", "unnatural tampering". Peter Graham has suggested "astrogeriatrics" for another aspect of it, stopping an aging star from becoming a red giant (the red giant stage appears when the fusion-formed helium accumulates in an inert core to the star, and hydrogen burning moves out into a layer around it). You could destroy the core with a few thousand tonnes of helium fusion catalyst. But it's probably easier and safer to act on the shell of fusing hydrogen. Suppress the C-N-O cycle altogether, maybe, and leave only the proton-proton cycle producing energy.

There's the Greek myth of Phaeton, and a Finnish one (wherein the Sun and Moon were lured down to Earth and trapped, and various ingenious substitutes were tried).

Another use for astroforming involves a large class of stars, the red dwarves. The majority (and perhaps all) of these seem to be "flare stars" - they often increase in brightness a few times, then return to normal. This reduces the land values on their planets, and is something to be corrected.

"Muon catalysis" is an example of the techniques we want for astroforming. Muons are particles related to electrons, but heavier; when one meets a hydrogen nucleus it falls straight in, instead of into an orbit. The nucleus can now fuse easily with other hydrogens. When this happens the muon is released again, with extra energy. Muon catalysis has no uses though... they are short-lived, and today's nuclear physics theories have no place for a similar but stable particle.

But once we have methods for stimulating fusion in stars, we can apply them to gas giants as well. Jupiter would be a red dwarf if it were 10 times heavier. I don't propose altering the planet's mass, or the conditions at its interior (not yet, anyway), but we can lower the requirements for fusion, and make it a star. This would be called "astropediatrics". Jupiter is perhaps not the best candidate for this honour: its inner layers are molten and solid hydrogen metal, which might not fuse predictably (for one thing, it's too much like a red giant's degenerate centre), and its radiation belts rule out the moons for colonies. Saturn seems better. It is less dense, suggesting a more gaseous interior, and Titan could easily be made habitable with a little heat coming from its primary.

The rings couldn't stay, obviously. Move the lot to Jupiter, where they'd look better.

By the way, there now appear to be two ringed planets in the solar system - Uranus has a set too. They were discovered (by observers in Australia, India, China and an airborne laboratory) when the planet passed before a faint star. Unexpected variations in the latter's brightness were noted. There are at least 7 rings: widely separated and each only a few km wide. Not the same as Saturn's broad set! They might be the debris from a large moon in a retrograde orbit, that spiralled into the planet under tidal friction and was broken up. In the process the moon tipped Uranus' axis through a right angle.

There's also the word "galactofarming", but I have no idea of the ambitious operation it describes.

— David Bimler

Sky Blue

*Who speaks to me in tones
Of sweet command.
Bidding my return.
No silent mistress now.*

*The travelling players
Part the curtains.
Night determines day.
Come - where my dark Samantha waits.
Blue, the sky of her eyes.
All-embracing.
I surrender.*

*Who is victor, vanquished.
Where men
Acquainted with a code laid down
By time - -
Spin, thrust dive,
Seduced by SPACE.*

Eleanor Mayles (N.Z.)



VIEWED FROM ANOTHER SHORE

**Rollo Treadway discusses
SF Art and Illustration**

It seems strange that in the twelve or so *VFAS* columns on sf art I have written so far for *Noumenon*, I have yet to mention any of the fine work currently appearing in contemporary fanzines.

Art has always been an important part of fandom publishing and a surprising number of present day big names in the sf art field have built or at least improved their reputation by publishing original material in fanzines.

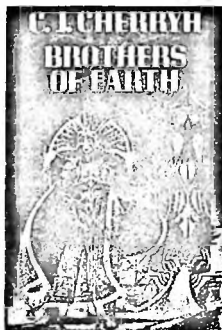
For the artist, fanzines have always been exciting because this is one of the only fields where talented amateurs can publish alongside work produced by the greats of the field. For the reader, fanzine art has always been looser, lighter and far more varied than work appearing elsewhere. That's why fanzines like the *New Venture Special Art Issue* (No. 5) are especially enjoyable.

New Venture is one of the most well-produced fanzines and editors Steve Fahnstark and Jon Gustafson have worked long and hard to get this *Special Art Issue* into the excellent publication that it is. Originally intended as a collection of fan art, the contents apparently grew until eventually it included many of the big names in both fan and pro art. The editors have rounded out the contents with two short introductions, an extensive and very readable interview with Hugo Art winner George Barr, and a short but interesting piece by the same artist on his approach to sf illustration.

But the art is what this issue of *New Venture* is all about. In the 118 pages the work of 24 artists is presented, usually preceded by a short biographical note (often by the artists). In many cases the art is often far from the best available from the respective artists, but this is only to be expected in a publication such as this which cannot hope to present definitive portfolios on 24 artists in a single issue. In searching for previously unpublished

material (although this was not a necessary prerequisite -- publishing credits where known at the time of publishing are presented in the index), much widely known material has been either unavailable or overlooked. This in no way detracts from the overall merit of the volume presented here, however Highlights abound, but this is not a publication in which to compare favourites... suffice to say that a large percentage of names already mentioned in *VFAS* appear between the covers. At two dollars *New Venture's Special Art issue* is definitely a bargain.

Not much to offer in the paperback field this month although one or two covers have caught my eye. Mentioned in my last col, the artist responsible for the Robert E. Howard covers (is it "Meryn"? or "Melvyn"?) has produced another winner for **THE SOWERS OF THUNDER** (Sphere). Similar



Left: Cover art by "Meryn" (?)
Right: Cover art by Dave Roe

in many ways to his other covers, this one is somewhat more successful through good composition and an interesting eye for detail. Certainly an artist to watch.

A couple of other Robert E. Howard titles deserve a mention here, not so much for the covers (slightly substandard and poorly printed Pete Jones paintings), but for the fact that each contains a small black and white illustration by the cover artist as a frontispiece. Although not unusual for US paperbacks, **THREE-BLADED DOOM** and (REH) **OMNIBUS** are both British Orbit publications. The beginning of a new trend, or did the artist have a couple of spare illustrations lying around?

Highlight this month has to be the appearance of work by an artist I had previously not associated with the sf paperback field. Dave Roe is the artist responsible for the superb artwork on the album **OLIAS OF SUNHOLLOW** by Jon Anderson (of YES fame) and his distinctive, detail-laden style at first appears rather unsuitable for reduction to

the confines of a paperback book cover. Yet with **BROTHERS OF EARTH** and **GATE OF IVREL** (both Orbit) Roe has produced two very fine covers indeed. The detail is still there, almost threatening to overwhelm the artwork entirely, but the covers are held together by the artist's keen eye for tone and colour. With the later title also available in a DAW edition (featuring a strong cover by Michael Whelan) it is interesting to compare the two artists' differing approach to similar problems.

Whereas Whelan has produced a strongly constructed visual with little or no attention to detail, Roe has used a more unconventional design. A vast amount of detail is lavished on the only figure in the visual (who is looking away from the reader) and the whole painting is tied together with a subtle tonal depth totally lacking in the Whelan cover.

The best of Dave Roe's three paperback covers I have seen so far is **CHIMERA** by John Barth (Quartet). While not strictly an sf title, the book deserves a mention here for its cover would not be out of place amongst any sf paperback stand. For this cover Roe has subdued the colours and tones and the picture construction (when fully open -- the cover is a wrap-around) is stronger and far more eye-catching than the artwork mentioned previously.

Once again the detailing is rampant and the creature portrayed in the painting fairly drips with encrusted, crystalline embellishing. Covers such as this are unusual in a field where price usually dictates considerable limitations, and Dave Roe must be commended for lavishing his work with such obvious attention. Science fiction art could benefit greatly from artists with the ability and imagination of Roe



SLEEPING DOGS

Based on the novel **SMITH'S DREAM** by C.K. Stead.

Produced and directed by Roger Donaldson for Aardvark Films.

Screenplay by Ian Mune & Arthur Baysting.

Sam Neil as Smith

Ian Mune as Bullen

Nevan Rowe as Gloria

Warren Oates as American Soldier

Stead's book is a short-term political extrapolation -- in the tradition of **ANIMAL FARM**, 1984, and "scores of science fiction novellas" -- with considerable relevance to New Zealand's political climate. Written in 1971 (the Vietnam years) it is also a comment on how NZ may be 'saved' from 'communism' by our (American) allies. It is a surprisingly realistic book and not a little prophetic -- a recommended read.

The film is not nearly as good as the book and I wonder if people who've not read the book will see anything other than a romanticised adventure thriller. The political elements are played down until barely existent, while the action sequences, though well portrayed, have a certain distance from reality -- it's just something on the screen, not really relevant to us, now, here, surely.

Still, the acting is surprisingly good and the film flows along nicely, most scenes a credit to the production departments. As a world class B movie, **SLEEPING DOGS** shows NZ moviemaking has at least come of age in some respects. --BAT



Cover art by Dave Roe

and I look forward to viewing more work from this obviously very talented painter.

Rollo Treadway
New Zealand
October 1977



MINDBRIDGE — Joe Haldeman
(Macdonald & Janes, 1977, 190 pp, \$10.55)
Jacket art by Chris Foss

I have a feeling this was an experimental book for Haldeman (winner of both the Hugo and Nebula Awards in 1976 for his first novel, **THE FOREVER WAR**) and I have doubts it worked. With 53 sections, of which 15 are labelled "Chapters" (even though just as brief as most other sections), Haldeman tries to present a host of information concerning the times, technology and cultures pertaining to his story.

Linking initially disparate pieces of information ('letters', extracts from 'papers' and 'memos', interviews, scenes and, occasionally, storyline), Haldeman manages to present an interesting and slightly thought-provoking story at first reading. I'm sorry to report the book is not memorable after a few weeks and pales significantly on re-reading. —BAT

THE MOTE IN GOD'S EYE —
Larry Niven & Jerry Pournelle
(Orbit, 1976, 565 pp, \$2.90; First Br. paper ed.)
Cover art uncredited

"... It is an original and well-written novel on a theme that has been dealt with before in a far less realistic manner. ... The religious aspect of first contact is very diluted, but the ethics of self-preservation vs co-operation are ... the important themes of the novel. An excellent new work, well worth reading (though you may like to wait for the paperback if you wish to add it to your shelves.)" — ARF

[*Noumenon* 5/6, August 1976, of the *W&N* hard-cover.]

BEST SCIENCE FICTION OF THE YEAR 5
Edited by Terry Carr
(Gollancz, 1976, 295 pp, \$10.25)

This anthology runs from the best to some of the worst aspects of sf. The opener, Cordwainer Smith's **Down To A Sunless Sea**, is one of the better tales in his series, even if it contains much bitter despair. John Varley's **Retrograde Summer** is likened to the work of Heinlein -- it certainly has all the faults, especially the soppy aspect.

Thereafter things pick up, Gene Wolfe's **The Hero as Werwolf** a fine piece of neo-gothic in the Ellison mould (who's own story, *Croatoan*, is light and typical). **The Silent Eyes of Time** by Algis Budrys is a beauty of a time-twister, as well as a lovely piece of writing. Benford's **Doing Lennon** also plays with time and identity and, like Robert Young's **Clay Surburb** (similar themes), is a good piece of storytelling.

LeGuin's **The New Atlantis** is an excellent piece of writing, a beautiful and evocative fable for our times. Tuttle & Martin's engaging and memorable tale of triumph over tradition, **The Storms of Windhaven**, reminded me greatly of McCaffrey's *Dragonriders of Pern* series, especially the two recent titles (reviewed last month).

Plauger's **Child of All Ages** is one of the most widely 'anthologised' stories of the year -- and rightly so. Although finishing poorly with Varley's (second story) rather hack treatment of a Puritan Father in the stellar outback (*In The Bowl*) and Lupoff's soppy **Sail the Tide of Mourning**, this is still a well-above-average anthology and a worthy addition to your reading pile. —BAT

STELLAR SHORT NOVELS — Edited by Judy-

Lynn del Rey
(Ballantine, 1976, 200 pp, \$1.75)

Cover art by Darrell Sweet

In this, the third in the 'STELLAR' series by Mrs del Rey, she explains the strategy of her collection. The first paragraph of her introduction is a quote from the Ballantine book **STAR SHORT NOVELS** by Frederick Pohl. In the 1950's Fred Pohl was editing a series of original stories. The aim of the **STELLAR** series of stories and novels is to continue the path of Pohl's **STAR** collection.

The three tales in this collection are by Gordon R. Dickson, Andrew J. Offutt and Richards S. Weinstein. Offutt's tale is a mystery story circling around the murder and the eventual solution. It is a well-written tale which gives the reader enough clues to keep the trail open but still hide the ending.

Richard Weinstein's story follows the discovery of intelligent life in an aquatic environment. Scientists develop intelligent octopi to assist communication with the aliens. This is a story that could be better as a novel — as it is the ending is incomplete and begging for a sequel.

Dickson's story is proof that bigger does not mean better. It is an overlong story about Nessie which could have been told in a quarter of the length. The developing conflict between *The Mortal* and *The Monster* is not climactic, but merely boring.

In conclusion this anthology is a moderate success and I will be waiting for the next publication in the series. —BWF

THE HISTORY OF THE SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE — Part 3 : 1946 - 1955 —

Edited by Michael Ashley
(NEL, 1977, 350 pp \$14.45)

Jacket art by Bob Layzell

This book deals with what the editor calls "The Platinum Age of S.F." (as compared with the previous "Golden Age") and, with reservations, I agree because I feel that this 'era' (along with the following decade) produced more than half of the best sf of all time, and I'm prepared to argue the point.

The book has a similar format to the previous volumes with a lot of valuable historic info about authors, editors, stories and first publications. In addition, if you are interested, you can read about the famous 'Shaver' controversy and Campbell's and Hubbard's Dianetics.

There are four b&w plates showing sixteen 'typical' magazine covers of the period and ten stories, one from each year. The editor's choice for memorable writers are Sturgeon, Clarke, Kuttner, Bradbury, Knight, Anderson, Sheckley, Tubb and two lesser-known, Rocklynne and Matheson.

While the stories are fairly good they seem more dated than many others from the same period. Certain-

ly there are others which are, in my opinion, more suitable for inclusion — more representative and better known. I understand though that a 'classic' can't really be considered representative because it is superior, and Ashley probably had to take what he could get from the diminishing list of less-exposed stories.

Ashley also listed a further ten writers to make a list of twenty 'most representative authors'. The ten are Blish, Brackett, Christopher, Del Rey, Heinlein, Nourse, Pohl, Russell, Shaver and Wyndham. This list is obviously debatable, both in the British and American lists, and the collection cannot be considered complete by any means; for instance, where is Simak?

The appendices of the book are a star-mine of info for information buffs looking for story origins, pen-names or magazine issues. A Glossary of editors, a note on cover artists, a three-page bibliography, and a checklist of the above 'top twenty' authors' works for 1946-55 are also included.

The lengthy historical section covers lucidly the effects of the atom Bomb on sf and the gradual change from space opera (and planetary westerns or private-eye type tales) to the considerations due to sociology and technology, morals and ethics. No real mention is made of novels of the time, even though they were being serialized in the mags, and the influence of such a masterwork as *THE LOVERS* by Farmer is hardly considered. Nonetheless, this is a very worthwhile read (from a friend or library) and a worthwhile buy if you're really into sf history. —ARF

Alan's review of Parts One and Two of this series appeared in Noumenon 4, June 1976. ▶

BSFA

THE BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION

- An organization designed to promote and advertise science fiction activities.
- A body comprised of writers, publishers and readers of science fiction.
- Which produces the critical journal, *Vector*, to which most sf authors have recently contributed — including Ellison, Le Guin, Silverberg, etc.
- Which also produces *Matrix*, a newsletter (letters, informal articles, news, chat, etc.) and *Tangent*, a quarterly amateur writer's magazine.
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The big 1977 bestseller—from **SPHERE BOOKS**

THE SILMARILLION — J. R. R. Tolkien
(Allen & Unwin, 1977, 365 pp + map, \$13.10)

This is not a 'review' - it would take a Tolkien scholar to review this book and my best wishes go to anyone who tries. I am just jotting down a few thoughts after having completed a second reading of this book on consecutive Saturdays.

Comparisons are inevitable and very difficult. In style and readability I can only compare it to the Bible or the Koran, and therein lies its fault - especially if one is expecting a new **LORD OF THE RINGS**. The dust jacket says: "The Silmarillion is not a romance, not a fairy story, not a fictitious history contrived for its own sake. It is a work of unparalleled and sustained imagination . . .". It is indeed, so be warned - it is a story in the sense that the old testament is a story and, if this book were found a thousand years hence without the dust jacket, that is where it would be placed.

The book was edited and prepared for publication from Tolkien's many manuscripts by the author's son. I like to think that if J.R.R. had lived the book would have been characterized and plotted out like L.O.R.. It is "brilliant" and "unparalleled" but I can't help being just a little disappointed - I didn't learn anything more about Ents. —ARF

STARLOG #8 — September, \$2.10.

This latest issue (see overview of the first seven in *Noumenon* 16/17) has a number of interesting features. As well as the improving lettercol and the still-expanding, very informative news section, you will find articles on the film *THE FLY*, the Space Shuttle, Saturday Morning TV sf, and part three (Model Animation) of their Special Effects series.

The outstanding feature this issue is an "exclusive" interview with Harlan Ellison, extremely well-presented by new editor Howard Zimmerman and including extracts from Ellison's resignation speech to the SFWA (see *Noumenon* 15, page 4). Ellison is one of the few people determined to knock holes in the naive romanticism which surrounds sf and he deserves attention. —BAT

VISIONS OF THE FUTURE

Edited by Janet Sacks
With an Introduction by A.E. Van Vogt
(NEL, 1976, 130 pp, \$9.90)

Coffee table sf art books are plentiful at present and yet most leave something to be desired in the presentation of that increasingly popular genre. **VISIONS**, the latest entry into an already overflowing field, does little to change this feeling.

A large format (13¼" x 9½") full colour publication, **VISIONS** collects together much of the notable sf artwork previously published (at this same page size) in *Science Fiction Monthly*. Thus, it is one of the first collections of modern sf art New Zealand has seen. As to be expected in a title originally produced while the ill-fated *SFM* was still in publication, **VISIONS** contains many of the faults of its parent magazine.

The selection of artists presented is once again arbitrary at the very least. Several lesser artists are included, one suspects because their work was more readily available for publication than work by other more deserving artists. Perhaps a definitive collection of modern sf/fantasy artists is a little too much to expect.

While the format is excellent, both the art and the small amount of written material on the artists is the same as appeared in *SFM*. The only new material is the introduction by van Vogt, and perhaps the less said about this the better.

The large page format alone will probably ensure the book some success in the coffee table league. And yet I am still to be truly satisfied by a collection of present day sf/fantasy art . . . perhaps the basic format is at fault and sf art is more suited to single artist presentations along the lines of *VIEWS* or *MYTHOPOEIKON*.

If the selection of artists/artwork included could have been wider and fresher, the copy more thoroughly researched, then perhaps **VISIONS** could have produced a little more enthusiasm. As it stands the publication does little to encourage the more knowledgeable viewer to part with his hard-earned \$9.90.

—RT

PUBLISHING INFORMATION continued . . .

Novalit Australia Pty Ltd:

MINDBRIDGE - Joe Haldeman (M & J \$10.55): First British edition; Jacket art by Chris Foss.
A WORLD OUT OF TIME - Larry Niven (M & J \$10.55): First Br. edition; Jacket art by Tony Roberts.

Oxford University Press:

NIGHT VISITORS: The Rise and Fall of the English Ghost Story - Julia Briggs (Faber \$17.90): First edition; Non-fiction; Jacket illustrations uncredited.

Penguin Books (NZ) Ltd:

THE MOON BOOK - Bevan M. French (Penguin \$4.95): First edition; Non-fiction; Includes photos.

Gordon & Gotch (NZ) Ltd:

{Storemen & Packers Union strikes and some October books listed last issue equals no list for G&G this month}

Wholesale Book Distributors:

[No information had been forwarded by our (late) deadline. Hopefully next month...]

PUBLISHING INFORMATION

SF (AND RELATED) BOOKS PUBLISHED IN NEW ZEALAND - SEPT. & OCT. 1977

— Listed in order under their NZ publishers and distributors

Associated Book Publishers (NZ) Ltd:

[Incorporating Hicks Smith & Sons Ltd, Sweet & Maxwell NZ Ltd, and Methuen Publications NZ Ltd]

STOLEN FACES - Michael Bishop (Gollancz \$6.60): First edition.
 DEUS IRAE - Philip K. Dick & Roger Zelazny (Gollancz \$6.60): First British edition.
 THE WORD FOR WORLD IS FOREST - Ursula K. Le Guin (Gollancz \$5.40): First British edition.
 THE SIMULACRA - Philip K. Dick (Methuen \$8.30 hb; \$2.50 pb): First Br. edition; Cover art by Chris Moore.
 NEW DIMENSIONS 7 - Edited by Robert Silverberg (Gollancz \$10.75): First British edition.
 TIME AND AGAIN - Clifford Simak (Methuen \$7.75): New edition; Cover art by Tony Roberts.
 BEST SF STORIES OF THE YEAR 5 - Edited by Lester del Rey (Kaye & Ward \$9.85): First British edition.

Beckett Sterling Ltd:

THE BEST OF JOHN W. CAMPBELL - Edited by Lester del Rey (Ball. \$2.90): Collection; First paper ed.; Cover art by H. R. Van Dongen.
 WALK TO THE END OF THE WORLD - Suzy McKee Charnas (Ball. \$2.25): Reprint; Cover art by Szafran.
 WHEN HARLIE WAS ONE - David Gerrold (Ball. \$2.25): Reprint; Cover art uncredited.
 THE STAR BEAST - Robert Heinlein (Ace \$1.95): Reprint; Cover art by Steele Savage.
 INHERIT THE STARS - James P. Hogan (del Rey/Ball. \$2.25): First edition; Cover art by Darrell Sweet.
 THE WORLDS OF THE IMPERIUM - Keith Laumer (Berkley \$2.25): New ed.; Cover art by DiFate.
 THE WORD FOR WORLD IS FOREST - Ursula Le Guin (Berkley \$2.25): Reprint; Cover art uncredited.
 SWORDS & ICE MAGIC - Fritz Leiber (Ace \$2.25): First edition; Sixth in the Fafhrd & Gray Mouser series; Cover art by Michael Whelan.

STARSHADOWS - Pamela Sargent (Ace \$2.65): First edition; Cover art by Paul Alexander.
 THE TREASURE OF WONDERWHAT - Bill Starr (Ball. \$2.25): First edition; Cover art by D. Sweet.
 WARM WORLDS AND OTHERWISE - James Tiptree Jr. (Ball. \$2.25): Collection; Reprint; C by D.R. Smith.
 THE BOOK OF VAN VOGT (Daw \$1.55): Reprint; Cover art uncredited.
 SCIENCE PAST-SCIENCE FUTURE - Isaac Asimov (Ace \$2.90): Non-fiction; First Ace edition.

Book Repts (NZ) Ltd:

THE SILMARILLION - J. R. R. Tolkien (Allen & Unwin \$13.10): First edition; Cover emblems by Tolkien.
 J. R. R. TOLKIEN: A BIOGRAPHY - Humphrey Carpenter (A & U \$13.10): First edition; Cover photo.

Wm. Collins (NZ) Ltd:

THE DARK SIDE OF THE EARTH - Alfred Bester (Pan \$1.85): Reprint; Cover art by D'Achille.
 STARBURST - Alfred Bester (Pan \$1.85): First Pan edition; Cover art by D'Achille.
 THE SQUARES OF THE CITY - John Brunner (Fontana \$2.40): First Fontana edition; Cover art by Peter Goodfellow.
 WE CAN BUILD YOU - Philip K. Dick (Fontana \$2.10): First British edition; Cover art by Peter Tybus.
 THE LOST WORLD - Arthur Conan Doyle (Pan \$2.15): New edition; Cover art uncredited.
 THE MARACOT DEEP - Arthur Conan Doyle (Pan \$1.85): New edition; Cover art uncredited.
 NIGHTMARE BLUE - Gardner Dozois & George Alec Effinger (Fontana \$2.10): First British edition; Cover art by Justin Todd.
 TO LIVE AGAIN - Robert Silverberg (Fontana \$2.25): New edition; Cover art by Jim Burns.

Wm. Heinemann (NZ) Ltd:

THE INCANDESCENT ONES - Fred & Geoffrey Hoyle (H. \$8.05): First edition; Jacket by Ian Robertson.

Hodder & Stoughton Ltd:

STAR WATCHMAN - Ben Bova (Sphere \$2.40): New edition; Cover art by "PE".
 THE BEST OF ARTHUR C. CLARKE 1956-1972 (Sphere \$2.40): New edition; Cover art uncredited.
 THE GAME-PLAYERS OF TITAN - Philip K. Dick (Sphere \$2.15): Reprint; Cover art uncredited.
 THE TURNING WHEEL - Philip K. Dick (Coronet \$2.55): Collection; British edition of Daw's THE BOOK OF PHILIP K. DICK; Cover art uncredited.
 VAMPIRELLA 3: DEADWALK - Ron Goulart (Sphere \$2.15): First Br. ed.; Cover art by D'Achille.
 STAR WARS - George Lucas (Sphere \$2.75): First British edition of the film tie-in; Cover art uncredited.
 THE SECRET GALACTICS - A. E. Van Vogt (Sphere \$2.40): New edition; Cover art uncredited.

Hutchinson Publishing Group Ltd:

TECHNOS - E. C. Tubb (Arrow \$1.55): New edition; #7 in the Dinnarest Saga; Cover art uncredited.
 VERUCHIA - E. C. Tubb (Arrow \$1.55): New edition; #8 in the series; Cover art uncredited.
 HEALER - F. Paul Wilson (S & J \$8.05): First British edition; Jacket design by Des Jordan.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23 . . .