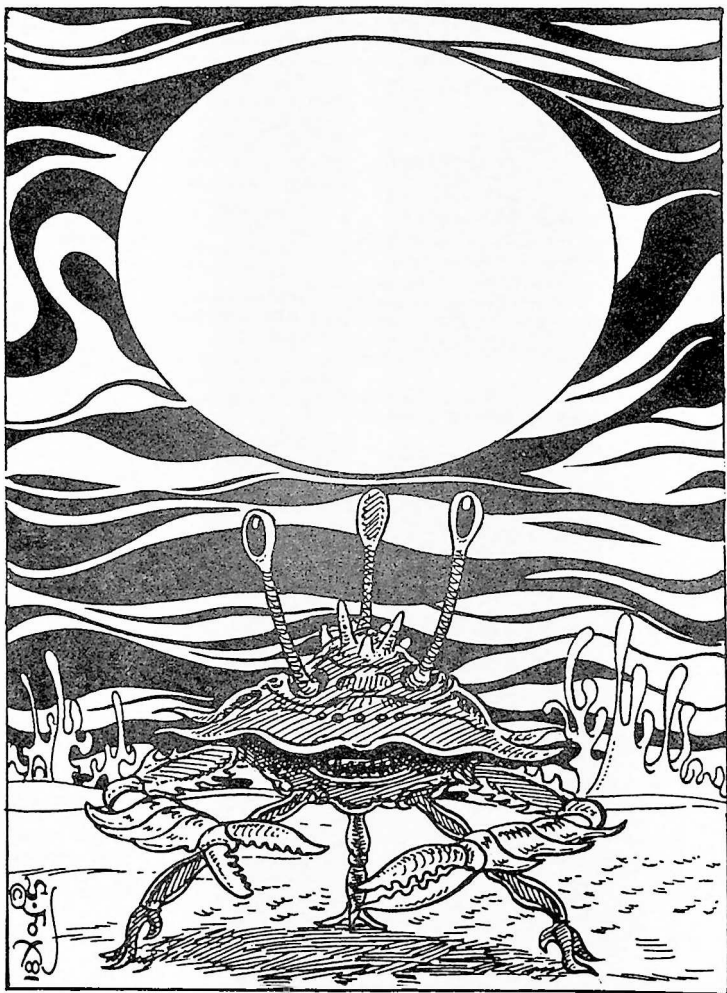


noumenon

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NOUMENON

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Ralph Silverton (AUST): pp 13, 25, 26.
Crankshaft (NZ): p 25.
Tom Cardy (NZ): p 27.
Colin Wilson (headings): pp 3, 6, 26.

EDITORIAL

This issue was planned for a fall release with a pre-production budget of £12s.3d. The script, in part based on a 100,000 word outline by David Bimler, was rewritten to reflect changing values of socially redeeming virtue, and the director was changed three times. First, Lightning Ontime was replaced by Later Butbetter, and the final chores were completed by Apologia Sorry (of mixed European and Asian descent).

The issue contains some 14 Academy Award Nomination features, with Best Archeologist for Mark Turner, Best Academic Deserving of Wider Recognition for Mike Johnson, Best Special Effects for Steven Fox, and Best Grossing for David Bimler.

Behind the Scenes Dept: Brian and Kath will be out to lunch for 10 days in June, pursuing family matters and obscure restaurants in Sydney. They will be on a special pre-production assignment for future issues, with a working title of 'Food in the Year 2001' or 'How New Zealand is Two Centuries Behind the Culinary Times'. Additional staff for this assignment are *not* required.

Future releases from this Studio will include a 4-volume analysis of the work of Jack Vance by David Bimler; 'Science, The Occult and Space Shuttle Blues' by David Bimler, serialised in 18 parts; and 'The Complete Guide to Thunderbirds Are Go' in a special microfiche edition of 2,000 pages, also by David Bimler. How one man can produce so much in such a short span of time in a Ford Transit is beyond me.

Careful viewers will notice a huge number of book reviews in this issue, cunningly disguised as letters, articles and book cover reproductions. Normal transmission will be resumed as soon as possible.

Final production costs on Nm 44/45 were: Editor/Publisher, 1/6d; printing 18, 3d; postage £2,500; advertising 2/8d; special assignments prepayments £750. In short, double issues look to be the norm.

□ 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.

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?).

EQUIP NUNC'S PAGE

PHILIP K. DICK DEAD

Philip Dick, aged 53, died on March 2 following a series of strokes. He suffered the first one on February 18, regained consciousness, then had a second stroke which put him in a deep coma, surviving on a respirator. However, there was no brain activity and doctors finally turned off the life support equipment.

Locus reports that Dick was commanding decent advances and sales, the film *BLADE RUNNER* was due to appear, and worldwide critical acclaim had arrived. He had lost a lot of weight, had his high blood pressure under control, and seemed in good health before the tragic strokes. ★

AMAZING SALE

Amazing Stores, the oldest of the science fiction magazines, has been sold to Dragon Publishing, a subsidiary of TSR Hobbies (Dungeons & Dragons, etc). The price and page count will remain the same for now and it will go bi-monthly early in 1983 (it's currently a quarterly).

George Scithers, former Isaac Asimov's SF Mag editor, has been announced as the new Amazing editor.

Fantastic, Amazing's 'companion' magazine, will probably be revived as a pure fantasy showcase. The Dragon, TSR's D&D mag, will stay as a large size slick with separate distribution.

Dragon Publishing/TSR have also purchased Ares and Strategies and Tactics from Simultaneous Publications, both gaming mags. ★

BRITISH AWARDS

The 1982 British Science Fiction Association Award nominations, for work first published in 1981, are:

NOVEL

HELLO AMERICA, J.G. Ballard (Cape).

WHERE TIME WINDS BLOW, Robert Holdstock (Faber).

THE AFFIRMATION, Christopher Priest (Faber).

THE SHADOW OF THE TORTURER, Gene Wolfe (S&I; Arrow).

SHORT FICTION

Mythago Wood, Robert Holdstock (F&SF 9/81).

The Checkout, Keith Roberts (F&SF 2/81).

The Killing Thought, Edward Shaver (F&SF 5/81).

Treading The Maze, Lisa Tuttle (F&SF 11/81).

A Cage for Death, Ian Watson (Omni 1/81).

MEDIA PRESENTATION

BLAKE'S 7 (BBC TV).

DR WHO (BBC TV).

EXCALIBUR (John Borman, Warners).

STALKER (Andrei Tarkovsky, Mosfilm).

TIME BANDITS (Terry Gilliam, Handmade Films)

COVER ARTIST

Chris Achilleos, Pete Lyon, Chris Moore.

Bruce Pennington, Tim White.

The winners, announced at ChannelCon, the 33rd British EasterCon, are:

THE SHADOW OF THE TORTURER, Wolfe.

Mythago Wood, Holdstock.

TIME BANDITS.

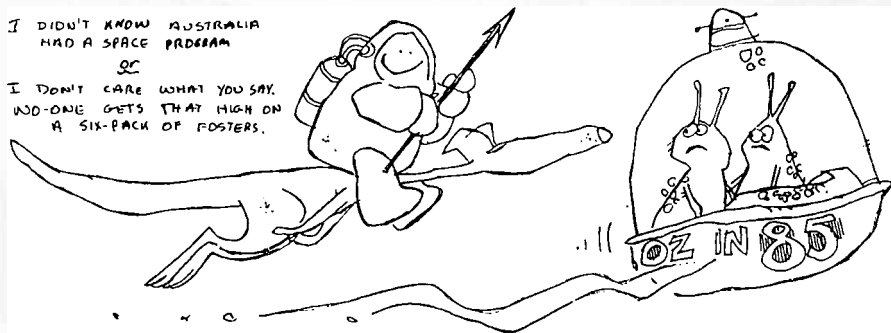
Bruce Pennington.

Guests of Honour were John Sladek and Angela Carter. AlbaCon 11, a bid from Glasgow won the voting for EasterCon 34. ★

I DIDN'T KNOW AUSTRALIA
HAD A SPACE PROGRAM

SC

I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU SAY,
WOO-ONE GETS THAT HIGH ON
A SIX-PACK OF FOSTERS.



NEBULA AWARDS

The winners of the 1981 Nebula Awards (ie for work first published in 1981) were announced at the Nebula Banquet at the Claremont Hotel, Oakland on April 24.

The winners and other nominees were:

NOVEL

THE CLAW OF THE CONCILIATOR, Gene Wolfe (Timescape).

RADIX, A.A. Attanasio (Morrow).

THE VAMPIRE TAPESTRY, Suzy McKee Charnas (Pocket).

LITTLE BIG, John Crowley (Bantam).

RIDDLEY WALKER, Russell Hoban (Summit).

THE MANY COLOURED LAND, Julian May (Houghton).

NOVELLA

The Saturn Game, Poul Anderson (Analog 2/81).

Swarm, Gregory Benford (SF Digest 10/81).

Amnesia, Jack Dann (Berkley Showcase 3).

In The Western Tradition, Phyllis Eisenstein (F&SF 3/81).

True Names, Vernor Vinge (Binary Stars 5).

The Winter Beach, Kate Wilhelm (Redbook 9/81).

NOVELETTE

The Quickening, Michael Bishop (Universe 11).

Sea Changeling, Mildred Broxon (IASFM 8/81).

The Thermals of August, Edward Bryant (F&SF 5/81).

The Fire When It Comes, Parke Godwin (S&SF 5/81).

Murmer Kiss, Michael Swanwick (Universe 11).

Lirios: A Tale of the Quintana Roo, James Tiptree (IASFM 9/81).

SHORT STORY

The Bone Flute, Lisa Tuttle (F&SF 5/81).

Going Under, Jack Dann (Omni 9/81).

Disciples, Gardner Dozois (Penthouse 11/81).

The Quiet, George Guthridge (F & SF 7/81).

Johnny Mnemonic, William Gibson (Omni 5/81).

Venice Drowned, Kim Robinson (Universe 11).

Zeke, Timothy Sullivan (TZ 10/81).

The Pusher, John Varley (F&SF 10/81) ★

Noumenon

NEW ADDRESS

40 Korora Rd, Oneroa
Waiheke Island, N.Z.

HUGO NOMINATIONS

This year's WorldCon committee received 648 ballots for the Hugo nominations, up from 454 last year. The ballots were counted by computer and the successful candidates are listed below.

NOVEL

DOWNBELOW STATION, C.J. Cherryh (DAW)

LITTLE BIG, John Crowley (Bantam)

THE MANY COLOURED LAND, Julian May (Houghton)

PROJECT POPE, Clifford Simak (Del Rey)

THE CLAW OF THE CONCILIATOR, Gene Wolfe (Simon & Schuster).

(BAT comment: As an example of the ballot figures, there were 1732 votes cast in the Novel category, with 187 titles mentioned. The range for making the final list was 53 to 139. This type of proportion applied to most of the other categories.)

NOVELLA

The Saturn Game, Poul Anderson (Analog 2/81).

In the Western Tradition, Phyllis Eisenstein (IASFM 3/81).

Emergence, David Palmer (Analog 1/81).

Blue Champagne, John Varley (New Voices 4).

True Names, Vernor Vinge (Binary Stars 5).

With Thimbles, With Forks and Hope, Kate Wilhelm (IASFM 11/81).

NOVELETTE

The Quickening, Michael Bishop (Universe 11).

The Thermals of August, Edward Bryant (IASFM 5/81).

The Fire When It Comes, Parke Godwin (IASFM 5/81).

Guardians, George Martin (Analog 10/81).

Unicorn Variation, Roger Zelazny (IASFM 4/81).

SHORT STORY

The Quiet, George Guthridge (F&SF 7/81).

Absent Thence From Felicity Awhile, Somtow Sucharitkul (Analog 9/81).

The Pusher, John Varley (F&SF 10/81).

The Woman The Unicorn Loved, Gene Wolfe (IASFM 6/81).

NON-FICTION BOOK

ANATOMY OF WONDER (2nd ed), Neil Barron (Bowker).

AFTER MAN, Dougal Dixon (Macmillan).

DANSE MACABRE, Stephen King (Everest).

THE GRAND TOUR, Miller Hartman (Workman).

THE ART OF LEO & DIANE DILLON, Byron Preiss (Ballantine).

PROFESSIONAL EDITOR

Terry Carr
Edward Ferman
David Hartwell
Stanley Schmidt
George Scithers

PROFESSIONAL ARTIST

Vincent Difate
Carl Lundgren
Don Maitz
Rowena Morrill
Michael Whelan

FANZINI
File 770 (Mike Glycer)
Locus (Charles Brown)
SF Chronicle (A Porter)
SF Review (R E Geis)

**DRAMATIC
PRESENTATION**
DRAGONSLAYER
EXCALIBUR
OUTLAND
RAIDERS OF LOST ARK
TIME BANDITS

IAN ARTIST
Alexis Gilliland
Joan Hanke-Woods
Victoria Poyser
William Rotster
Stu Shiffman

IAN WRITER
Richard I. Geis
Michael Glycer
Arthur Hlavaty
Dave Langford

Jerry Pournelle has turned in **JANISSARIES II** to Ace.

The planned UK spinoff **Omni: The Book of the Future** was test marketed for five issues and then scrapped, cancelling the scheduled nation-wide release. Deputy editor Peter Nicholls and others have been fired.

Robert Silverberg has sold another Valentine book, **VALENTINE PONTIFEX**, as part of a 3-book contract with Arbor House.

Frank Herbert has signed a contract with Putnam for a fifth **DUNE** book. The rumoured advance is \$1.5 million. Herbert's latest novel, **THE WHITE PLAGUE**, has been completed, due for September publication. "It's a mainstream book about Ireland, mad scientists, plague, the destruction of the human race, and various other things." (*Locus*)

LIFE, THE UNIVERSE, AND EVERYTHING, the new 'Hitchhiker' novel by Douglas Adams, has been completed and radio and tv series are on the drawing boards. Adams says he regards himself as a comedy writer who has strayed into science fiction.

Marion Zimmer Bradley's **MISTRESS OF MAGIC** (see Nm 44/45) is scheduled for September publication following MZB approving changes to the copy-edited manuscript. Knopf will publish it as one volume, approx 1600 pages long.

Ursula K LeGuin's new collection **THE COMPASS ROSE**, due in June, will include 2 new stories, one German publication only story, and 17 other short stories, some previously published in obscure places.

Douglas Trumbull's newly-completed sf film **BRAINSTORM** is in danger of being shelved after the death of its star, Natalie Wood. ★

Final ballot papers have been posted out to eligible voters and should be returned before July 15, the last date for mail-in memberships.

MINIATURES

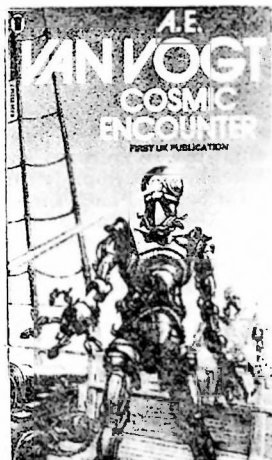
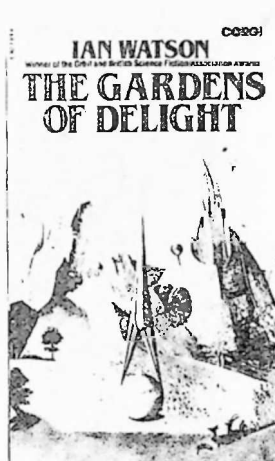
Gene Wolfe has completed **THE CITADEL OF THE AUTARCH**, the fourth volume in the 'Book of the New Sun' series. A fifth book is in preparation.

Kathleen Moloney, former executive editor at Bantam Books, has replaced **George Scithers** as editor of *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*.

Michael Moorcock's popular *Elric* series have been resold to Berkley Books, which outbid DAW after their five year contract expired.

Brian Herbert son of Frank Herbert, has sold a novel, **SIDNEY'S COMET**, to Berkley.

Anne McCaffrey has signed a contract with Del Ray for the seventh *Dragon* book, tentatively titled **DRAGONIADY**. It will be a 'prequel' to the series. Anne's **CRYSTAL SINGER** (based on stories in the *Elwood CONTINUUM* anthologies) was due from Severn House early this year.





Phil Stephenson-Payne, in transit back to England. (2/5/82)

Many thanks for Noumenons 39/40, 41 and 42/43, the last of which reached me by a somewhat circuitous route after reaching England last August. A few over-hasty comments on the issues, which were much appreciated and read with great enjoyment as ever.

Unfair of you to print comments like "Question time revealed a few home truths about the publishing industry, notably re **DINOSAUR PLANET**" in the McCaffrey piece, and then not elaborate on what they were. Will the series ever be finished, or has it died the death?

The piece on "SF, Social Criticism and Utopia" was interesting as a set of three unrelated book reviews, but lacked the cohesion to make it into an article. By all means use the three books as examples to be quoted in context, but I didn't really feel the piece make any useful points, structured as it was.

As I'm sure you've since heard from other sources, Wyndham's **WEB** was complete long before his death (though I don't have any details on exactly how long). According to John Carnell, shortly before his death, the book had been bounced by Michael Joseph when first submitted. Wyndham subsequently rewrote the book (mainly the ending) twice, and it bounced each time. Carnell's opinion at the time was that it would probably never appear, as it would only damage Wyndham's reputation — a comment that surprised me greatly when the book finally did appear, as I thought it was really very good.

Glad to see the good reviews of the Saberhagen *Dracula* novels, which I enjoy immensely. There has been another one since (**THORN**, also very good) and his forthcoming **DOMINION** looks like it

might be in the same series (the advance publicity is not explicit). I also recommend his recent **OCTAGON** — much lighter, but a nice idea.

Also very glad to see your good review of **A WORLD BETWEEN**, a book that I enjoyed immensely. I thought his use of 'cliche' was important in the book — the standard tool of satire in expanding current trends to extremes to demonstrate their folly (look at **GULLIVER'S TRAVELS** for instance). Have you read **SONGS FROM THE STARS**, which does a similar thing for the arguments for and against technology, and is, I think similarly successful. One of the better aspects of our trip over here is that I've been able to fill out my Spinrad collection, particularly with a copy of his early mainstream **PASSING THROUGH THE FLAME** which I recommend very highly if you ever see a copy.

A pity you didn't hold your review on the first three *Demon Prince* novels until the last two came out, as it would have been interesting to see your comments on the whole thing. I find Vance a very patchy author, at best, and certainly felt, like you, that the series suffered greatly from its limitations. **THE BOOK OF DREAMS** had some nice ideas in it, but I found **THE FACE** unbearably tedious.

I enjoyed David Harvey's piece **UNFINISHED TALES**, but felt he should really have spent a little more time on the amount of work Chris Tolkien had put in. I would say it was as much his work as his late father's — it is an immensely 'scholarly' work with all the divergent fragments put in place, cross-referenced and compared, and reads at times more like an



abstruse commentary on variant editions of Joyce's *ULYSSES* than a fantasy. I hope he can continue to produce books of this quality — Allen & Unwin implied a while ago that there was no shortage of material.

Anyway, enough for now. There are letters to write, and a flat to pack. Will write again once we're established in Leeds.

*** Good to hear from you again Phil, and to hear that Nm catches up with you eventually. Your bits of news and commentary are welcome — I find it easy to miss out on 'trade gossip and tips' down here in the colonies. ***

Steven J Green, 11 Fox Green Cres, Acocks Green, Birmingham, B27 75D, U.K.

Many apologies for not writing sooner, but as you can see I've changed my address and mail is taking its time getting to me (the miracle of British technology: letters take as long to travel five miles as ten thousand).

Like Don D'Amassa (Nm 42/3), I take exception to Lynne Holdom's absurdly generalising comments about horror fiction, but for different reasons — that the same criticisms can be levelled at other genres is irrelevant; that no genre can be so dismissed until the critic in question has read *every* novel and short story it envelops is not. The reverse applies to awards like the Hugo and the Nebula: no one can label any piece of fiction "best" until every possible candidate has been reviewed, clearly an impossible task.

*** Lynne said that most examples were not very well written. I took this to be a reasonable opinion to hold, and don't see that one needs to read 'every' book before making such a comment. 'Well written' covers style as well as content, and a repetitive or cliched situation is not 'well written' even if the grammar is perfect. ***

Peter Hassall, 21 Invermay Ave, Mount Roskill, Auckland 4, NZ. (20/12/81)

Thanks for 42/43. Up to the usual high standards of layout and printing (you should deliberately do a terrible issue to remind us all how good Nm really is) with hardly a typo to be seen.

The Great Debate over words per page per fanzine ignores the fact that different fanzines have different ratios of illustrations (both stills and artwork). This also brings into play the interesting idea of

a picture being worth a thousand words. Is it? Depends upon the particular illustration artist. Is the drawing merely a filler or does it actually complement the writing? Verbiage (whether written or drawn) is condemnable when it is unnecessary. One writer can say more of worth in 500 words than another with 10,000.

R.N. McLean, 43 Gurney Rd, Belmont, Lower Hutt, NZ. (24/2/82)

So you find your comp/set 500 to your taste. Now if only it could spot typographical errors... And Vera Lonergan wonders about the shortcomings of an IBM offering. My opinion of IBM generally involves such words as contempt, hate, fury, disgust, loathing, frustration and the like. Being such a giant in the field, they can foist virtually any abortion off on the suckers, err customers and expect them to learn how to do things the IBM way and at their price.

Your criticism of the story quality in 2000 AD is on the mark, but Sturgeon's Law applies, especially when one considers the pressure of a weekly deadline. But all is not tripe; they Judge Dredd stories, especially the longer ones, are often to my taste, even the single issue stories have their moments.

Just because mainly kids read something is no excuse for poor quality; indeed the role playing that can be done when reading a fairy tale allows a child to explore concepts otherwise too fearsome to articulate. As in Grimm's Fairy Tales which in the unboudlerised originals are really *grim* stuff, dealing with such features as cannibalism and desertion (Hansel and Gretel for instance). Which is why the plasticised pap such as CLASH OF THE TITANS so annoys me with its cute, androgynous hero rolling in puppy fat and displaying no more bravery/initiative mental capacity than would be required to decide whether to put on his left sandal before the right or vice versa. With stupefying stolidity he manages to lose (1) his helm of invisibility, (2) his shield and (3) his sword, all being items of great power. And yet he gets the heroine, as if to make the oh so comforting suggestion that struggle is not necessary.

I prefer the original stories, which incidentally have a wealth of interesting characters and events worthy of special effects, so why the latter-day additions. Damn it, when the heroine screams, I want her to scream and *mean it*. Acertain Bruce Christianson holds this view most strongly and sent me *The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter*, a short story by a

Miss Carter; herewith an extract, admittedly notable.

... Their days are shrouded troughs of glum manual toil and their nights wet, freezing, black, palpitating clefts gravid with the grossest cravings, nights dedicated solely to the imaginings of unspeakable desires tortuously conceived in mortified sensibilities habitually gnawed to supuration by the black rats of superstition whilst the needle teeth of frost corrode their bodies ...

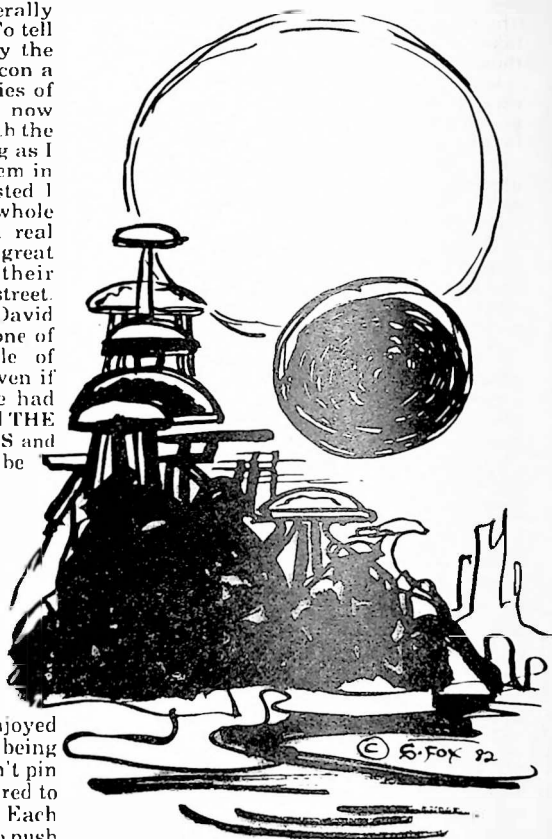
KimHuett, GPO Box 429, Sydney, NSW 2001, Australia.

Nm 44/45: That conreport from Nicky McLean was excellent, not so much as a record of what happened but as record of Nicky's feelings while there (not that the former was badly neglected) and generally built up a mood picture of the con. To tell the truth it resembles rather closely the experiences I remember of my first con a few weeks ago (Tschiacon) — a series of memories in no logical order that now seem very dreamlike. The meeting with the Scientology mob was rather amusing as I have had a few experiences with them in Sydney. The first time I was accosted I ended up going through the whole rigmarole, which I found to be a real downer. Since then I have taken great delight in annoying any of their representatives who stop me on the street.

It was nice to see so much from David Harvey this time around as he is one of those people who seem incapable of writing in an uninteresting way, even if the subject isn't one which I have had much interest in. Though I have read *THE HOBBIT* and *LORD OF THE RINGS* and *THE SILMARILLION* is waiting to be read, my interest doesn't extend to Tolkienalia. Despite this I thoroughly enjoyed the various book reviews by David. His letter covering his trip to England was, if anything, even more interesting than the reviews. I hope that he has the time to do a little bit of writing on something a bit different to Tolkien.

I have to admit that when I read *LORD VALENTINE'S CASTLE* I enjoyed it but afterwards I had a feeling of being unsatisfied. For a long time I couldn't pin down what was wrong until it occurred to me that it is a very bland novel. Each supporting character is there only to push

Valentine a little closer to his goal, and as such has no individual character. For the same reason Valentine himself has no depth of character but is merely carried forward by events. Maybe this would not matter so much if Majipoor itself had been interesting, but here again everything is bland. Majipoor is a huge world with a huge population, but it is such an antiseptic world, painted in plain primary colours. There is none of the exotic atmosphere that can be found in any of Jack Vance's books, for example. Instead I get the feeling of an urban type of Utopia, ie. the type of Utopia that the typical unimaginative, routine-dominated urbanite would revel in. I could easily believe that, in all those houses Valentine passes in those huge cities, each has a TV and the occupants are all clustered around it watching reruns of *My Favourite Martian*.



The last two pieces in Nm 14-15 were interesting but I have seen so much written on these subjects before and commented on them so many times that I just can't raise the enthusiasm any further than to say that I'm all for space and not so sure about the benefits of SF in education. Anyway it was a good all round ish, even

those parts I didn't mention here. You are to be commended for not only publishing a zine of such high quality but doing it on a fairly regular basis. Sure Nm is frequently late but never to the degree that people have begun to wonder if it still exists. All in all you have done a good job so far and I hope you will be able to continue to do so.

Bimler's Book Bash

What is Robert Silverberg's **LORD VALENTINE'S CASTLE** doing there in the Hugo nominees? It is a nothing book. It's something Edgar Rice Burroughs might have dashed off in a spare fortnight, as if Silverberg were an earnest admirer of ERB the Master, seeking to emulate him. The plot is a traditional one: a character starts the book with no money, discovers he is rightful ruler of the planet, embarks with a snowballing following to repossess his throne. Along the way we get a travelogue of the planet (which is oversized and inhabited by many races... this gives Silverberg a chance to be inventive, if inventiveness consists of detailing a humanoid with six arms instead of two). He meets no opposition.

So far then, it's something Jack Vance might have written. Now misunderstand me not: I like Jack Vance's work. Greg Hills tried to introduce me to him while we both dwelt in Palmerston and evidently the teachings took, the seed of corruption was sown. Jack Vance gets away with mere Theseus-threads of story lines because style is the thing with him. **VALENTINE** has no style to be found. It has as much colour as Queen Victoria's diary. The difference is between an unimpressive William Norris fantasy printed in ornate gothic or Anglo-Saxon lettering, and one typeset in standard Baskerville 10-point.

The odd thing is that I *like* previous books of Silverberg's. They had concepts, deep-running metaphors, multi-level meanings, the sort of furniture which satisfies the intellectuals. The one objection I'd sustain against them is that the metaphors and meanings get ultimately disarrayed; they don't tie together into neat handles to pick the books up with.

Possibly in **VALENTINE** Silverberg ought to avoid this confusion by abandoning the richness of concepts. If at the same time he'd stripped the volume down to 20 pages, or even 30, I wouldn't have flown off the handbag about it.

To redeem myself I shall praise a book,

Roger Zelazny's **ROADMARKS**, my current enthusiasm. I'm thrusting it at people and insisting they read it as confidently as the *New Musical Express* supporting next year's groups and denouncing this year's in-no-longer ones.

The book's distinguishing feature is its compactness. Conceive the whole Amber series pared down to fewer than 200 pages. Hence Zelazny wastes no words explaining vital background details when he's given you enough details to reconstruct them. If you persevere, by half way through you begin to understand what's going on, why events that appeared to be arbitrary before were not arbitrary at all. It doesn't help that the chapters are numbered 1 2 1 2... or that the main character is growing steadily younger.

By this time I have maybe lost you with this general talk. Excellent; being lost is excellent practice. Anyway, you soon pick up that time in **ROADMARKS** is a two-way street — literally, a bidirectional highway, with selected characters driving up and down it, exiting by the turn-offs. The highway and its exits can be altered by intervening at historical events (but then, the characters are changing too, so everything's even).

Here be dragons... designed, I suspect, to take the piss out of Anne McCaffrey's namby-pamby creations. One of them takes a Tyrannosaurus Rex for her lover. "He doesn't have much of a brain, but Oh, what a body!"

There are computers in the form of books (the medium seems to be the message, here, with books who quote their own contents to their owners) and the whole road that is time being an indicator, a pointer created by the dragons to keep track of the games they play — in that form, anyway, till they can earn the credit to buy something better. Doc Savage and the Marquis de Sade make cameo appearances. Interior decoration courtesy of Baudelaire and Huysman.

This might be the book for you, if you're sick of authors insulting your intelligence with uncalled for explanation. At any rate,

I reckon it's marvellous.

I have this list of books which need not be read: books which should be towed out to sea and sunk by naval gunfire. The next on it is Poul Anderson's *THE AVATAR*.

This book contains no fewer than 8 AKY's, which is surely some manner of record. AKY, as I probably need not inform you, is short for "As You Know" and refers to the way some writers force-feed their audience with the background of a situation by having one character tell it to a second; second character being already fully aware of the facts. It's about as subtle as ramming the background data into the reader's skull with a fork-lift truck.

The dialogues that these AKY's manifest themselves form fairly inflexible blocks, so any twists and turns in the story-line must take place between them, so when you have 8 AKY's articulated in one book (there might be more; I wasn't reading that closely), the shape of its plot can be compared to a derailed rail-car or a snake with its spine snapped in 7 places.

Reckon Anderson's running out of self-critical faculties almost as fast as Heinlein is.

AVATAR has all the standard Anderson components, including a few lyrical descriptions of the breathtaking/heartstopping/kidneykicking beauties of the universe. His characters spend more time goggling out of viewcreens of spacesuit faceplates, saying "goshwow, senseofwonder" than they spend doing anything worthwhile. As for the *plot* of the thing, if you've ever read Piers Anthony's *MACROSCOPE* then rehearse that in your mind and you'll be close enough.

Allow me one passing shot at Anderson. I've noticed that in the dialogue he writes, none of the characters every "say" anything. Always they "exclaim" or "blurt" or "gasp" whatever their message is, or just remain in awed silence. Indeed, I have never blurted. No-one I know is prone to blurt either. Whatever they have to declare, they say it in less colourful conversational tones. In Poul Anderson's novels everybody seems to have lost this ability ... looks like the future will be different in this respect.

Wait, I haven't finished yet! There's one more book I wanted to recommend. That's Frederik Pohl's *BEYOND THE BLUE EVENT HORIZON*. I'd need to read it a second time before I could precisely state why it's so good, but meantime Pohl has a

consistently high standard and he doesn't let it down here. When he has some background facts of astrophysics or computer mechanics it is necessary that you know, he doesn't stuff around with AYK's; he simply states it, in slabs of scientific popularisation that are as readable as anything Asimov has done.

His astrophysics, moreover, is state-of-the-art and accurate, being more than I can say for the stuff Poul Anderson lumps you with.

L.G. Welk, Christchurch, NZ.

As you have asked me for an article about M. John Harrison's work, one of my present great enthusiasms, I am happy to oblige. Here it is. As I am inarticulate, it is short.

An Article about an Air of Pessimism in the Atmosphere of M. John Harrison's Work, Especially the Novel *THE PASTEL CITY*.

Both the atmosphere of which this book certainly 'reeks' (good word, that) and the air of pessimism that supposedly sits uneasily within it, are elements of the same thing, and again I'm obliged to quote Cromis: "Some might find it beautiful."

In other words the atmosphere (mainly one of decay and other pessimistic things) is one of the main factors that goes to make up the air of pessimism. And so the pessimism does not sit uneasily within the work but is an essential part of it.

(Oh drat, the article is longer than it's title. What went wrong?)

WE ALSO HEARD FROM

Don Tuck (new postal address: PO Box 44, Lindisfarne, TAS 7015, Australia), who apologised for lack of activity but explained works are in progress.

Frank Macskasy Jnr (NZ), who sent a crossword but I've not had time to have it drawn and photoreduced. Perhaps by next issue?

Crankshaft (NZ), who sent a few more illos, for which thanks.

Gil Gaier (USA), who opines than an issue every two years is better than no schedule at all.

Steven Fox (USA), who sent a rather fine selection of artwork, for which much thanks.

Mike Willoughby (NZ), to whom thanks also for another batch of illos.

And many people who re-subscribed and said such nice things — thanks — and new subscribers who have taken the plunge. ★

Hidden Levels of Meaning

Mike Johnson discusses the work of Philip K. Dick

When I was thirteen or so someone gave me a copy of Ray Bradbury's *Something Wicked This Way Comes*; a novel in which illusion weaves a subtle, sinister web into the fabric of reality. From then on I was hooked on sf, a journey which has led me, among other places, to the master magician of alternate worlds, Philip K. Dick, who died on March 2, 1982.

Analysis will fuss for hours with Dick's work (he is a favourite with academics in the States) but the essential appeal of a Dick novel is hard to pin down. Is it his sharply focused character sketches, his zany plots, his superbly turned dialogues, his sense of the absurd — or is it just that inimitable zappy head-space in which the worlds of Dick's novels take place?

Although Dick's first novel, *Solar Lottery*, was published in 1954, Dick did not gain wide recognition until the 1960's. At one time it was thought that he was going to follow in the footsteps of Kurt Vonnegut Jr and break through the sf 'barrier' to the wider market. This didn't happen. Dick was an sf writer through and through (as Vonnegut has never been). There is a quirky, individual element in Dick's work

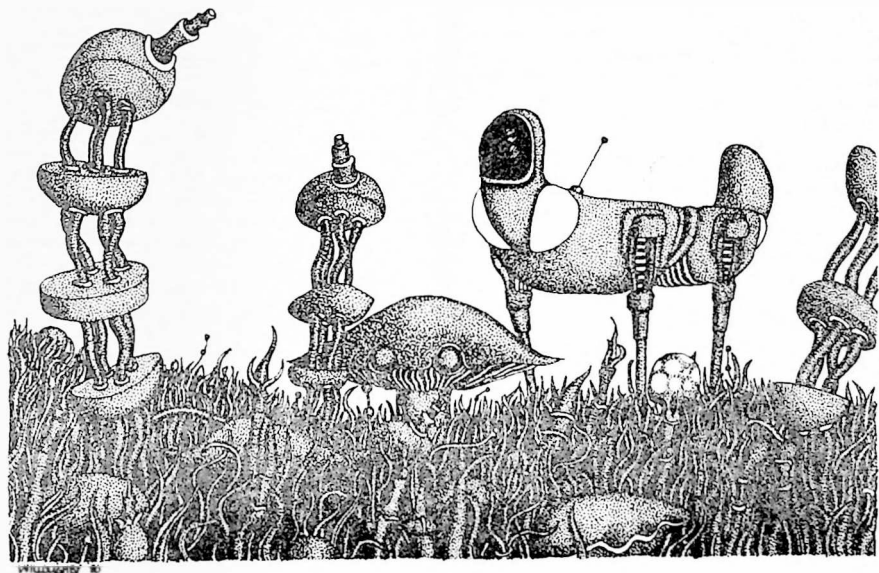
that does not make it as easily accessible as the over rated Vonnegut, despite that laconic, satiric edge both writers share.

AMBIGUOUS RECEPTION

A Californian writer (many of his novels are set in Marin County), Dick was slow to win recognition in the States and even by the mid-sixties British publishers felt his *Martian Time Slip* to be too "advanced" for the British market. But in France, as he once pointed out, he was considered to be the greatest sf writer of all time. He has been compared to Borges and Kafka, and highly praised by writers including Sturgeon, Brunner, Moorcock, Disch and Ursula Le Guin.

Yet for all the acclaim all but a handful of Dick's 50 published novels are seriously flawed in one way or another, and this might account for his ambiguous reception even within the sf world.

Among the most successful must be counted *Man in the High Castle* (the Hugo winner that put Dick on the map; 1963), *Martian Time Slip* (1964), *A Scanner Darkly* (1977; clearly a master work), *Now Wait for Last Year* (1966, a personal choice), *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* (1968 nominated for a Hugo, pipped



at the post by John Boyd's *Last Starship From Earth*), and Valis (1981; the last of his novels to reach N.Z. at the time of writing).

In Valis Dick drops the persona of character and speaks directly to the reader. The madness motif that runs throughout Dick's work, and the possibility or impossibility of salvation is made intensely personal, just as the list of drug casualties at the end of *Scanner Darkly* did with its cryptic entry: "Phil — permanent pancreatic damage."

FAILURE OF CONTROL

Dick's main failure (apart from signs of haste — most of his novels were written in four to six months, Valis being a notable exception) is his inability to fully resolve all the elements in his multi-layered plots; ultimately a failure of control. The *Galactic Pot Healer* (1969; surely one of his worst novels) is a glaring example. Here the ending becomes trite as Dick labours to work out the hints and implications of the first half of the novel.

In *Ubik* (1969), described by Brian Aldiss as "that magnificent but flawed novel", Dick attempts a double trick ending, tricking only the reader out of a fully satisfying ending, turning his ambiguities back on themselves. The *Three Stigmata Of Palmer Eldritch* (1964), Aldiss complains, disappears into "a cloud of quasi-theology".

It is interesting here to compare Dick's work with the elegant plotting of say, Bob Shaw, in his *Daggers of the Mind*. The unwritten law in sf is that no matter how weird and wonderful the events are they must have a rational or at least pseudo-rational explanation. In Shaw's novel the central character goes through a series of bewildering, hallucinatory events, all of which are neatly explained at the end — so neatly, in fact, that there's a sense of letdown! Where has all the mystery gone? In Dick's novels the real explanation, if there is one, may be hidden behind further, unseen levels of fakery.

PUSHING THE LIMITS

Before writing off Dick's plotting however, it is worthwhile noting that for many Dick admirers his disjointed, rather speedy plots are half the charm. "Like trying to carve a leafless tree in granite," says Sturgeon, describing how difficult it is to actually give a summary of a Dick novel. We find a pushing at the limits of plot form, and irreverence for the conventions that ally him to mainstream experiment-

alists and to writers like Delany and Zelazny in his own field.

The experimental element is strongest in *Scanner Darkly*, *Valis* and *Confessions of a Crap Artist* (his one published non-sf novel and certainly one of his finest). The confusion of personas in these novels pushes Dick beyond conventional narrative forms. Sudden transitions, dislocations and abrupt about-turns are all part of the Dickian vision and an integral part of his style.

Dick's novels have a cumulative effect. The same themes, the interface between sanity and madness, the illusion/reality dance, the ambiguous effect of drugs, the totalitarianism of modern states (nearly all of his futures are Orwellian), the problematical nature of time, are sounded again and again across the novels. We see



the same maze being traversed but from different angles. There is an obsessional element in his work and in the characters that populate it. To read Dick properly you really need to read all his novels.

CHARACTERISATION

To me, one of Dick's great strengths is his ability to create character. Ursula Le Guin praised Dick on this count, citing the morally thoughtful Mr Tagomi of *The Man in the High Castle*, who ultimately has to suffer a vision of an alternate world in which Japan did not win the war. In fact Dick's books are packed full of memorable characters — and not just humans. We find beings such as the frighteningly insensitive androids of *Do Androids Dream*, the compassionate telepathic mobile spore-fungus of *Clans of the Al-Phane Moon*, floating lights, talking doors and philosophic taxicabs. I can do no more

here than simply spotlight one or two aspects which I think to be interesting and typical of Dick's characterisation.

For a start, among his male, human characters we have several in-depth studies of power. The spectre of the misuse of too much power haunts Dick's novels, where it emerges as ubiquitous, subtle and destructive, although seldom infallible. We have the sinister Glen Runciter of *UBIK*, head of a team of psi talented industrial sabotage agents, who may or may not be behind Joe Chips' frightening time regression.

There's the crazed General Molinari of *Now Wait for Last Year* who cynically manipulates the alternative realities unleashed by the addictive JJ-180; and a surprisingly delicate portrayal of a cultured, corrupt cop, General Buckman, in *Flow my Tears the Policeman Said*. So grossly twisted is the paranoid Brose of *The Penultimate Truth* that he is scarcely recognisable as human, being comprised almost completely of artifacts (artificial organs).

There are small time big-shots too, like Arnie Kott, union boss of a bleak settlement on Mars in *Martian Time Slip*. Arnie's fate is instructive. Driven by greed for the title of a piece of land he learns will soon be developed by big interests on Earth, Arnie seeks to step back in time (before the speculators who'd trumped his had arrived) with the help of a visionary autistic child and sino native Martian medicine man. But things don't turn out as Arnie expects. His time-slipped worlds become filled with insidious phenomena that prevent him from ever reaching the claims office. His secretary turns into a succubus, people in the street become jerky cardboard cutouts, and his newspaper is filled with just one word — gubble, the child's 'word' for the entropic disintegration of the universe. Arnie fights his way back to his own time (he hopes) and is immediately faced with his killer, a man

he has recently trampled on to secure his monopoly of certain luxury contraband. Just before he dies he says: "Let me tell you a secret. This is another of those schizophrenic worlds. All this goddamn schizophrenic hate and lust and death, it already happened to me once and couldn't kill me." He dies deluded for he really is back in his own time.

ENDURE REALITY

At the opposite end of the scale we find the true Dickian hero, the ordinary man, the underdog, the downtrodden whose life is invariably going from bad to worse. Not only their marriages and their careers but their very reality constructs fall to pieces. In the face of this they evolve a stoicism that proves surprisingly resilient. The excitement of a Dick novel derives from identification with the character's struggle to decipher the cryptic, enigmatic clues he gets as to the true state of affairs.

Dr Eric Sweetscent of *Now Wait for Last Year* is a prime example. Married to an ambitious, spiteful wife, the depressed Sweetscent must both unravel the bizarre truth behind the Molinari dictatorship and his true feelings and obligations towards his wife. At the same time he has to survive the terrifying worlds of JJ-180 and a lethal grief. Finally he ends up in one of his JJ-180 futures with his suicide drugs ready, saved only by the solace he takes at the sight of a clash between two small mobile trolleys equipped with protoplasmic brains. Their blind urge for survival awakens his own. Despite the fact that he's confronted with his future self and knows the consequences, he decides not to abandon his wife, now irreversibly damaged by JJ-180. This is the course advised by Sweetscent's wise autocab: "Life is composed of reality configurations. To abandon her would be to say, I can't endure reality as such — I have to have uniquely special easier conditions."

The ability of his heroes to "endure reality as such" with no "special easier conditions" makes them true Stoics, caught up in a kind of universal 'sods law' in which everything that can go wrong does, and trips of further reactions. This 'sods law' in *Ubik* takes the terrifying form of a regression of things to more primitive models while the hero, Joe Chip, fights a fatal weary lethargy. All the way through these apocalyptic events Joe Chip continues to have minor bother with doors that will not open (in fact they answer him back) and slot machines that don't work properly. This gives rise to an element of dark comedy, always present in the exist-



ential predicaments Dick's characters land in.

In *Clans of the Alphane Moon* the paranoid Baines gets so tangled up in his loyalties that he can no longer work out who the enemy is. Jason Travernor of *Flow my Tears* ends up ironically being charged with a murder he did not commit. Life is constantly playing sour jokes on Dick's characters but by the time we reach *Scanner Darkly* the ironical edge has become horribly sharp. At the end of the novel the victim, hero Bob Arctor, undercover nark, has become a burnt-out substance D (Death) freak. He is apparently saved by a drug rehabilitation group, New Path, who put him to work on a farm. As he stares at the flowers he is hoeing something flickers across his crumbled synapses:

"Such lovely little blue flowers."

"You're seeing the flower of the future," said Donald, the Executive Director of New Path. "But not for you."

"Why not for me?" Bruce asked. "You've had too much of a good thing already," the Executive Director said. He chuckled. "So get up and stop worshipping."

Dimly recognising the plants as the source of substance D, Arctor pathetically hides a blue flower in his shoe.

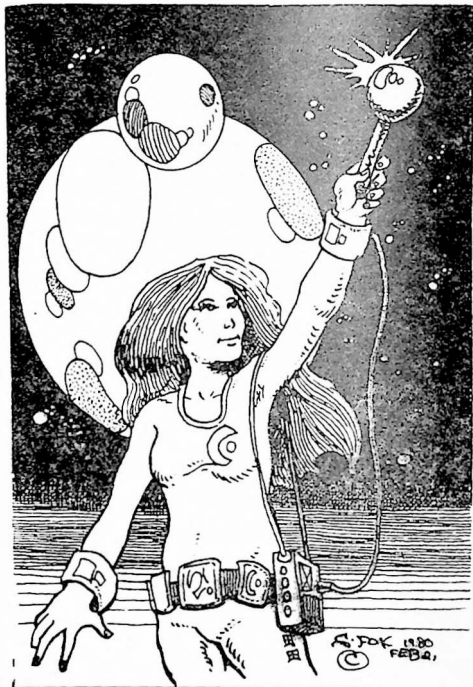
One of the last and most fully evolved form of the Dickian underdog is the hapless Horselover Fat of *Valis* who turns out to be a fiction, a persona, a fake appearance in his own right and Dick's schizophrenic second self. "I am Horselover Fat and I'm writing this in the third person to gain much needed objectivity," the narrator announces. But the 'I' turns out to be Philip Dick himself, the story teller, and Horselover Fat his friend and cross he has to hear. Fat spends most of his time locked in his room writing his *Cryptica Scriptura*, a series of primal, Wittgensteinian, ontological propositions ("One mind there is; but under two principles contend"). Dick is cured of his schizophrenia when he and Fat meet the child savior, Sophia, whom they have discovered in the course of unravelling a series of hints, messages and signals. But the novel ends ambiguously; Sophia dies and Dick falls into a depression. "You were better when you believed you were Horselover Fat," a friend tells him. In fact Fat returns only to take off again in search of more arcane clues, leaving the author alone in his room awaiting the fulfilment

of the savior's promise: "My search kept me home; I sat before the T.V. in my living room. I sat; I waited; I watched; I kept myself awake. As we had been told, originally, long ago, to do; I kept my commission."

MODEL WOMEN

It is impossible to talk about Dick's characterisation without at least mentioning the remarkable gallery of women in his work. Dick's women come in roughly three models: the Bitch, the Appealing Teenager and the Spiritually Vacuous Housewife.

One of the most thorough and successful character studies of all is Fay Hume of *Confessions*. Half Bitch, half Vacuous Housewife — with little flashes here and there of the Appealing Teenager who must have been — stuck in an expensive house with a husband she despises, a lover she ruthlessly beguiles, an idiot brother awaiting the end of the world, caught up in that Dickian sense of things getting out of control, Fay Hume faces her fate with that characteristic stoicism that is the mark of Dick's finest heroes. Capable of spite and petty mindedness, Fay nevertheless wins out sympathy, probably for her courage in the face of the spiritual desolation her life has become.



The real Dick Bitch is an incredibly dangerous creature. Kathy Sweetseent in *Now Wait*, locked in hatred with her husband, willfully addicts him to JJ—180 in an act of vengeful savagery. The vicious Mary Kittersdorf in *Alphane Moon* plots what she can get from the break up of her marriage. "... you'll be paying out for the rest of your life. As long as you live, darling, you'll never be free of me; it'll always cost you something." *It will cost you*, she said to herself, *more than you can afford to pay.*

The Appealing Teenager motif is poignantly explored in *Our Friends From Frolix 8*. Nick Appelton, the underdog hero of the novel, meets Charlie, a sixteen year old street girl, naive and reckless yet holding a powerful appeal for Nick. Demoralised by his marriage to a Spiritually Vacuous Housewife, his life already on the skids, Nick leaves home and takes up with Charlie, who leads him into both danger and self realisation. Charlie herself accounts for the appeal of the Appealing Teenager:

"I am life," the girl said.

"What?" he said, startled.

"To you I am life. What are you, thirty-eight, forty? What have you learned. Have you done anything? Look at me. I'm life and when you're with me some of it rubs off on you. You don't feel so old, now, do you?"

Nick denies it. "... sitting here with you makes me feel older, not younger. Nothing is rubbing off."

"It will," she said.

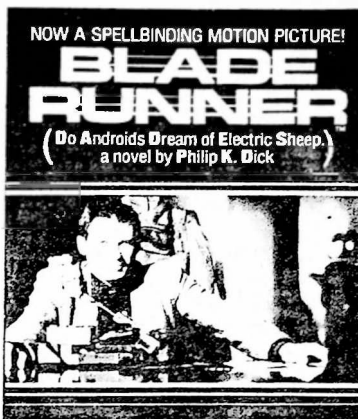
"You know this from experience," he said. "With older men. Before me."

Another favourite Dick figure is an insane visionary who sees more and further into the structure of reality than his hard-pressed heroes. Among these is Manfred Steiner of *Martian Time Slip* whose vision takes in the future and his own death. There are the apparently degenerate Bleekmen of the same novel, Martians, who possess some vetigal occult power and wisdom, and the Heebis of *Alphane Moon*.

Dick invests a mystic purity in these characters which has a beneficial, healing effect on the other characters. In *Frolix 8* the 'idiot' Amos Ild is able to comfort Nick Appelton when Charlie is killed by telling him that he will have to sing over her grave.

SHORTER WORK

Two years before *Solar Lottery*, Dick was hard at work full time writing sf stories. Lacking the faults that blemish his novels, Dick's shorter works are an ach-



ievement all of their own. Space forbids a full description of Dick's short stories but a few outstanding examples will be hard to forget. The chilling *Second Variety*, a novella, portrays a war-torn world where android bombs take the form of wounded soldiers and children with teddy bears. Then there is the mutant of the beautifully written *Golden Man* who can see the varieties of the future and so avoid a human dragnet.

Dick's clear, incisive tales are models of the short story form from straight out horror (*The Father Thing*) to fantasy (*King of the Elves*) and deserve a lasting place in the annals of sf.

* * *

So Philip K Dick is dead. All those who loved and admired him will mourn his loss. A passionately honest writer, endlessly inventive (as all sf writers must be) and always thoughtful, Dick wielded his art as a tool for examining the nature of mind and reality. Tough and unsentimental, at best an ambiguous salvation in the offing. Dick's novels and stories offer us our own fractured reality.

Not easy to fit into any niche, even in sf, Dick's work must now submit to the acid test of time. It is the opinion of this reviewer and devoted fan, however, that his work will continue to grow in reputation and his death seen as a loss, not just to the genre he served so well, but to literature as a whole.

Thank you Philip K Dick. Without you life would have been immeasurably poorer.

— Mike Johnson, Waiheke, March 1982.

David Bimler, in transit, NZ.

Why, yes, I went to see ALTERED STATES

Amongst my friends, when planning to see and appreciate the Cinematic Art to its deepest, the custom is to aid oneself with Reality Enhancer beforehand. None were available so we went to ALTERED STATES without. Probably just as well. The sequences towards the end were quite harrowing enough, thank you.

But it would be an error to focus on the psychedelic aspects of the fillum and say that all Ken Russell intended was to recreate a drug trip on celluloid, to entertain his fans with hallucinations. Had that been his aim alone, a simpler solution would be to leave the screen blank and dose the audience with selected Rationality Removers as they line for tickets.

It occurs to me that the psychedelic sequences were means, not end, a vivid way of exposing the protagonist's mind (this is the great beauty of Ken Russell movies: one can safely strip-mine meanings from them afterwards, with no fear of imposing a wrong interpretation, since there's *no way* Ken Russel knew what he meant). Example: the protagonist's neuroses concerning his wife are dramatised, or explained, when in a vision he sees her turning lizardlike. At the same time there's untold religious symbolism, for our scientist hero is somewhat of a Christian; a lapsed Christian, the worst sort. Hence reptiles/a vision of Hell with fire and brimstone and a tribe of agonised souls, sufficiently overdone that it would sit well on a stage in Wagnerian opera/bleeding lambs with seven eyes and more horns

FILMS AN

than you could count on both knees, a thalidomide catastrophe straight out of Revelations.

(And modelled, unless I mistake, on Durer's woodcuts illustrating Revelations. Now *there* are the outpourings of a deranged mind — Durer had been into the ergot or the Amanita Muscaria if these woodcuts are admissible evidence. One of them is "Saint John devours the Book" and shows him guzzling it up like spaghetti. A few pages later we find Jehovah wielding a sickle in his hand, only his expression is not very wrathful, indeed he appears more baffled — as if the implement has been planted there in a scheme to frame him, and he is protesting his innocence. But I digress.)

I could call this religious symbolism gross or blasphemous, but enough to say it's unsuitable.

Viewing ALTERED STATES as a psychological movie lets us understand its plot, which is not at all science fictional — the experiments that our scientist hero conducts (Ian Munro described them in Nm 42/43) are old hat — John Lilly was combining drugs and sensory deprivation back when LSD was still legal. There are some tedious scenes where researchers argue with one another about the implications of their work. If you manage to follow their voices, raised, two at a time, you find that they're spouting straightforward philosophy of science jargon; they're saying nothing novel, they're only



Scenes from Ken Russell's

D FILMING

arguing. It's not sf.

Interpreting it this way also lets us excuse the sillier bits. In one sequence, the spillage of hallucination into reality transforms the researcher into an apeman — he escapes from the laboratory pursued by peasants with torches aflaming — all we need is an assistant to whisper "There are some things Man was not meant to know"; camp as a row of frilly pink tents. And the finish (the scientist's wife rescues him from his self furnished hell, and vice versa) — it is laughable if it means we're to accept that True Love has conquered all. Understood psychologically, it makes more sense.

I set out to review the movie but seem to have treated it as if arguing with someone. I wonder who? Anyway, although *ALTERED STATES* did not unequivocally blow me away, it was still worth it.

Hear this: I will *not* be wasting ticket and time on the *HEAVY METAL* movie. From what I so far hear of it, the largest feature of the fillum is Richard Corben's *Den*. Corben is a loathly creature with the sensibilities of a John Norman fan. His technique to give his comics more realism is to sculpt the characters in plaster and plasticine and use these as models for each frame... outcome is, figures which resemble plasticine dolls miraculously well. I gesture coarsely in Richard Corben's general direction. I wipe my nose in his grandmother's intimate lingerie.

(A quick synopsis for readers who've just

joined us: the notion that Mr Bimler is struggling to express is that he is not the world's greatest admirer of artist Corben. The greatest admirer is, in fact, Oswald Ganderpinge of Twizel, although Ronald Reagan comes in a close second).

The new editor of *Heavy Metal*, Brad Balfour is a wimp and a half. He has turned *Heavy Metal* magazine into a sort of trades journal devoted to the promotion of Richard Corben. For a while Balfour was giving him the most sycophantic interviews I've seen since I typeset for a student newspaper too underfunded to have many reporters, so whenever a local band needed reviewing or interviewing, it was done by the band's groupies. Between these and artwork, maybe half of each issue was given over to Corben.

Another black mark against *Heavy Metal*'s editor and investigative journalism is one issue lacking many of the regular features and strips; they'd been jettisoned to make room for a report on "the making of the *Heavy Metal* movie" that was straight self-serving advertisement. This is not what I buy it for (actually I do not subscribe to it — I spent an evening reading my brother's collected copies, now they contain all the installments of *Changes*, but the principle's the same).

Peter Hassall, 21 Invermay Ave, Mt Roskill, Auckland 4, NZ. (20/12/81)

Nm 42/43: The film reviews of *THE LATHE OF HEAVEN*, *ALTERED STATES*, *SOMEWHERE IN TIME*, etc were interesting to read although I personally gain



ALTERED STATES

more enjoyment from reading witty reviews of bad movies — *THE HUMANOID*, *THE BLACK HOLE* etc. in Nm 39-40! The information on *CLASH OF THE TITANS* was also good — a pity it couldn't have been coupled with an actual review. Good coverage of both *CONAN* and *HEAVY METAL*.

Any bets as to whether *HEAVY METAL* will get past the censor uncut? *MAD MAX*, *EVILSPEAK*, *THE CHAIN REACTION* and numerous other genre films have been cut or banned in the past. Interesting to note though that New Zealand is one of the few countries in the world to get an uncut version of George Romero's *DAWN OF THE DEAD*. Both England and Australia had cut versions. The bloody effects were engineered by one Tom Savini who stars in a minor role and does his own stunts.

Savini can be seen in a bigger role in the

unusual *KNIGHTRIDERS* movie, also by George Romero. *KNIGHTRIDERS* is 2 hours long, but, unlike *DAWN OF THE DEAD* the storyline cannot last the distance. It's best points are the original idea, Tom Savini's acting and the numerous spectacular motorbike stunts.

Steven J Green, 11 Fox Green Cres, Acocks Green, Birmingham, B 27 7SD, UK.

Nm 42/43; Surprised (then considering its author, perhaps not so) at Alan Dean Foster's endorsement of Peter Hyams' *OUTLAND*, Hyams has style, I'll admit, but like his last venture into sf, *OUTLAND* is operating under false credentials. However, the sf element in *CAPRICORN ONE* was low key enough for the film still to succeed as an extended chase thriller. *OUTLAND* enthuses greatly over its sf content yet pays little more than lip service

6-PART HITCH-HIKER

When Douglas Adams gazed up at the stars one night while hitch-hiking in Spain, contemplating what it would be like to hitch-hike through the galaxy, little did he know that he was to turn his fantasy into a radio comedy hit and then into a television series that looks set to break new technical boundaries.

The BBC's 6-part tv adaptation began screening in New Zealand on May 24, with little pre-publicity.

The radio pilot programme was recorded with much care given to the casting, music and radiophonic effects. When the series was transmitted it was an instant success, soon gathering a following of enthusiastic listeners whose imaginations had been excited by the originality of Adam's work.

Firing the imagination of an audience is infinitely easier on radio, where the settings and paraphernalia of space are limited only by the bounds of the sound effects. So before setting out to produce a visual adaptation — as true as possible to the radio series — several firm decisions were taken. First and foremost, as many elements as possible of the radio series would be retained; it should not fall into the usual mould of sf productions; it would be shown without audience reaction; and it should be wholly entertaining.

Press releases say the programmes feature some of the most advanced technology in the field of television, with spectacular visual effects and a very original sound track.

The special effects include the spacecraft *Heart of Gold* with its all-steel interior and

revolving bridge; the flying gas-filled bubble car which seats two and has excellent all round vision; the Deep Thought computer which, with the help of a specially devised technique gives a sense of vastness to the scene; two-plane animation which allows the moving Colour Separation Overlay background to also pass in front of the artists, as well as many experiments with animation.

Although special effects play a major part in the series, every attempt has been made to avoid them detracting from Douglas Adams' classic tale.

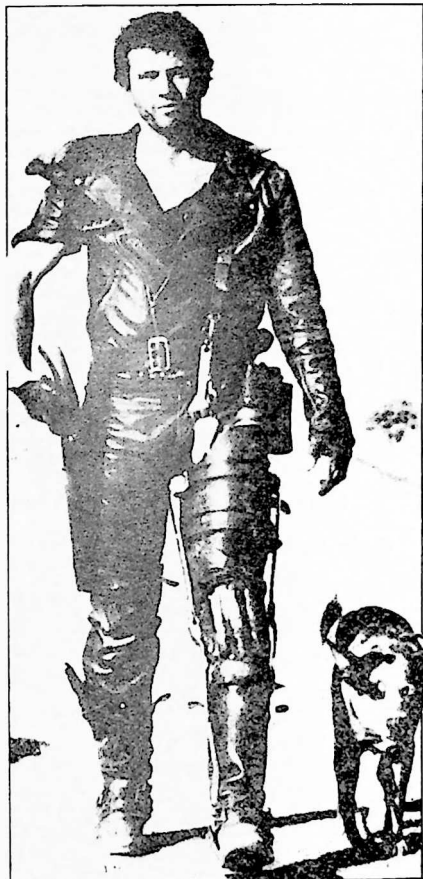
As in the radio series, Peter Jones is the voice of 'The Book' and the narrator who keeps everyone in touch with events — a part for which he has been widely acclaimed. Simon Jones plays Arthur Dent, the Earthling rescued from Earth a few seconds before its destruction to make way for a hyperspace bypass. Mark Wing-Davey is the two-headed, triple-armed Zaphod Beeblebrox, with Stephan Moore as the voice of Marvin the paranoid android.

New to the series are David Dixon, the alien Ford Prefect — a name he chose before coming to Earth after "minimal research" — and Sandra Dickinson who plays Trillian, an acquaintance of Arthur Dent, also rescued from Earth and now the girlfriend of Zaphod Beeblebrox.

Although Arthur and his friends find themselves in some very strange situations, everything has a possible explanation and every effort has been made to keep the stories within the bounds of credibility. ★

to it. That rips the core out the film, leaving only an updated HIGH NOON with fair-tamiddlin sfx, albeit scientifically inaccurate.

THE BED SITTING ROOM, however, is another matter entirely — a strikingly different (and at the time politically daring) film that succeeds on several levels, not least of which is its searing satirical broadside at British society. One minor point (although Milligan (currently responsible for some of the most off-base humour on UK television) was the driving force behind the film (and the original play), its success owes much to its above-average cast and Richard Lester's direction (a style he used to great effect in the Beatles movies a few years later).



Mel Gibson as Max in MAD MAX 2, the fast-paced sequel to the successful and award-winning 1979 production

Phil Stephensen-Payne, in transit to England. (2/5/82)

Interesting to read the 'preview' of CLASH OF THE TITANS which proved, I thought to be a truly awful film. Not as bad as some, mind you. If a thing called THE SWORD AND THE SORCERER ever comes your way avoid it like the plague — it is merely an excuse for tons of gore, lousy acting, and no plot. We walked out in disgusted boredom after the first fifteen minutes.

I also enjoyed ALTERED STATES, OUTLAND (despite its hoary 'western-in-space' story) and SCANNERS (minor, but good in places). Saw EXCALIBUR for the second time yesterday (on TV this time) and still find it a fascinating film, though I'm not sure I like it. Nicol Williamson hamming it up as Merlin was worth the entrance price alone. HEAVY METAL was fun, but could have been so much better!

One minor offering I caught recently that I recommend is Carpenter's ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK — surprisingly good. DRAGONSLAYER is worth catching for the appearance of the dragon itself (superb special effects). And, of course, best of the last twelve months was RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK — superbly light entertainment.

Two due this summer that seem, from their trailers, to be worth looking out for are BLADE RUNNER (of course) and TRON (lousy story line, but superb computer graphics).

Tim Hassall, 20 Burnley Tce, Mt Eden, Auckland 3, NZ. (31/1/82)

STALKER, the film of the book ROADSIDE PICNIC by the Strugatskii brothers, was shown one morning in the 1981 Auckland

SCIENCE FICTION STUDIES IN FILM

Frederick Pohl & Frederik Pohl IV

Ace, 1981, 350pp. \$11.95. Cover art uncredited

What an incredibly inappropriate title! While certainly covering 8 decades of film and commenting at some length on most important titles, this is a fan's uncritical grab-bag of history (personal and celluloid), commentary and quotable quotes. Brief filmographies are included, with many black and white stills, in episodic chapter groupings. A very curious omission is a lack of an index.

As an interesting book that one picks up to read a few pages, or to flip through to see what others say on your favourite films, this fits the bill well. It is *not* a "definitive text"; it is an "incredible page-turner". — BAT

International Film Festival. Noumenon readers who are members of Film Societies should try and get this film into the Federation of Film Societies repertoire. This excellent film covers one expedition into the "forbidden" zone, spooked by artifacts junked by really advanced aliens. Apart from a change of scene (from Canada to the USSR) the novel was faithfully followed.

Some of the scenes from the railway passing the zone reminded me so strongly of Zhores Medvedev's description of the railway skirting the Cheyabinsk forbidden zone (scene of a massive release of radioactive decay products) that it occurs to me that this disaster may have inspired the Strugatskii's to write their book in the first place.

Also, John Griffiths (**THREE TOMORROWS: American, British and Soviet Science Fiction**, Papermac, ISBN 0-333-26912-8, London 1980, \$13.95) has suggested that Soviet sf provides a party-approved forum for criticism of their system and for artistic innovation, but postulated that, since writing **ROADSIDE PICNIC** the Strugatskii's have not published a major

work because they have been under an ideological cloud. The appearance of the film **STALKER** was therefore especially welcome, signifying one more chink, albeit tiny, in the Soviet censorship.

UPSWING

Hollywood had its best Summer in years in 1981 and found, again, that sf and fantasy tinges helped a lot.

RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK, which cost \$21 million, earned over \$125 million; **SUPERMAN II** earned \$101 million; **FOR YOUR EYES ONLY** earned \$45 million; **CLASH OF THE TITANS** cost \$9 million and earned \$31 million, and **TARZAN THE APE MAN** was similar.

Disappointments included **DRAGONSLAYER** (cost \$18 million, earnings \$16 million), **OUTLAND** (which didn't recoup its \$14 million cost) and the **MUPPET CAPER**. ★

FICTION INTO FACT

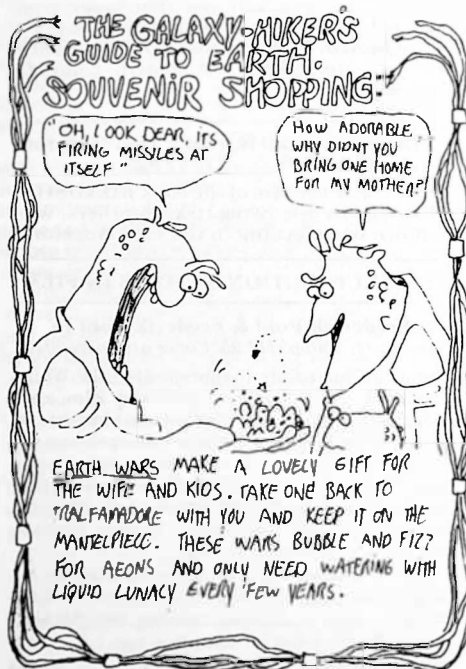
The concept of Gerry Anderson's tv series **THUNDERBIRDS** was both noble and exciting — a planet-wide rescue service which helped prevent and repair disasters. Ex-astronaut millionaire Jeff Tracy set up an island hide-away base with all sorts of experimental and highly advanced equipment and machines.

Following problems with food, shelter and transport for disaster relief teams in Europe, a group of volunteers from the British Fire and Emergency Services have set up a new organisation, **International Rescue**, with the motto "United to Save Life".

Hundreds of firemen and volunteers from other services have joined, and International Rescue has the backing of the British Red Cross and has been appointed as an official charity.

Operational units consist of a 5-man team in a 4-wheel-drive vehicle, which acts as home and shelter for the team and carries an exhaustive supply of rescue and medical equipment. The vehicles can be air-freighted to trouble spots, quickly and fairly cheaply.

Associate memberships are available in International Rescue. Write to 2 Winterton Dr. Aylebury, Bucks HP21 8BD, England. ★



GOSSIP

Producer Michael Phillips (**CE3K HEARTBEEPS**) has announced plans for simultaneous production of three films based on Isaac Asimov's *Foundation* trilogy. Budgetting the whole project at \$30 million, that's three films for the price of one at today's sf epic costs.

The British tv series from the mid 70's, **THE TOMORROW PEOPLE**, has become something

of a popular hit with cable tv in America. I remember it as a fairly good series and the USA people describe it as "a contemporary, realistic series which probes the limits of human intelligence."

HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY is a joint BBC/Australian Broadcasting Corporation production. The BBC has also agreed to joint productions with an American pay cable tv company, RCTV. One of their first major programs is a remake of John Wyndham's DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS, designed to be shown in either 3 episodes or 6 episodes.

ZARDOZ made it to the small screen in NZ recently and hindsight suggests it is a rather fine film. Director John Boorman can probably be as proud of it as he must be of DUTCHMAN and EXCALIBUR, and the three films suggest a thought-provoking preoccupation with "backwoods/medieval/progress-vs-regression" themes.

Disney Studios are hard at work on a number of big projects at the moment. SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES, using Ray Bradbury's screenplay of his own novel, is budgeted at \$15 million with a release date of Christmas '82. Richard McDonald (ALTERED STATES) is production designer.

IRON is being hailed as a revolutionary and unique film that could put Disney back on the

top of the ladder. It combines live action and computer animation and is designed to appeal to the vastly growing ranks of video game enthusiasts.

TOTAL RECALL, with a \$20 million budget, is also aimed at the 'mature' market. The ALIEN team of Ron Shusett and Dan O'Bannon are writing/producing the film, based on Philip K. Dick's story I Can Remember It For You Wholesale. They are using Dick's story as a stepping stone and say they feel it's better than ALIEN.

STAR BORES

A two-week reissue of STAR WARS brought in \$9,386,000 and topped a good number of first release film totals, while the EMPIRE STRIKES BACK reissue earned \$14 million.

Meanwhile, REVENGE OF THE JEDI (the third film but the sixth section of the Lucas masterplan) is underway, budgeted at \$20 million, although a May 1983 release date is the only one mentioned so far. So more reissues may be called for. ★

Strips

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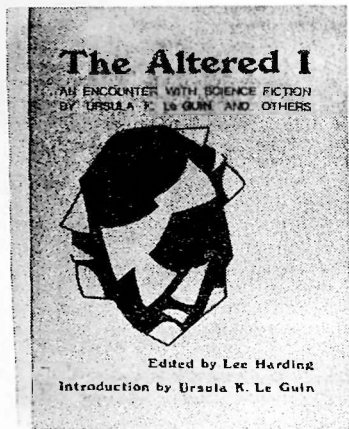
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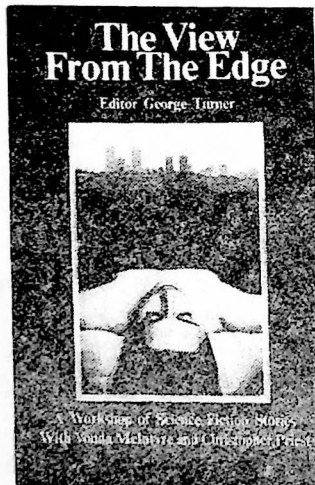
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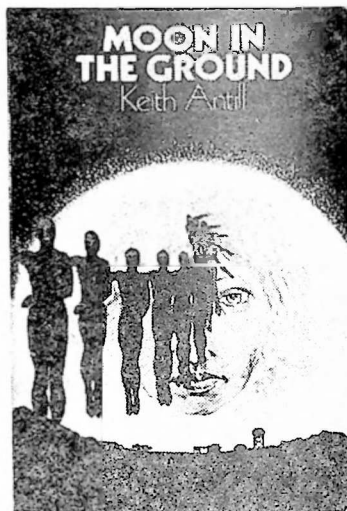


PAPERBACK

The Altered I
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The View From The Edge
Was \$3.90 — Reduced to \$2.00

Moon In The Ground
Was \$11.95 — Reduced to \$6.50



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ART ATTACK

This month we look at a few comic and art fanzines and magazines, as there appears to be another small boom taking place.

The Comics Journal — Gary Groth & Dwight Decker, 196 West Haviland Lane, Stamford, CT 06903, USA. A4, typeset, offset, heavily illustrated, averages about 120 pages per issue (!); \$37/12 surface, \$35/12 airmail.

To the comic and art world what Science Fiction Review is to the sf world, Comics Journal is a wonder to behold. They have fine writers, intelligent presentation, in-depth interviews with the top names, a letter column that pulls no punches, and a vast amount of artwork, either illos or reproductions.

Herein you will find Heavy Metal, Epic and the like put in their true perspective, news

presented some good work, primarily strips in many different styles and with the odd 'art strip' for a bit of class. Most of Inkspots is on a par with Epic, to give you some idea of standard and content. Worth a look and worth supporting.

RBCC 151 — James Van Hise, 10885 Angola Rd. San Diego, CA 92126, USA. A4, offset, heavily illustrated. 130pp, \$3.95.

I've not seen many issues of late but judging by this special Harlan Ellison issue the standard of writing, artwork and presentation is very high.

You'll find a few interviews with and columns on Ellison, photos of Ellison and his home and artworks, and artwork and strips based on his work. Recommended.



galore about the comic and comic/art book world, some marvelous critiques, and always a wealth of background detail and information to draw on.

Recent interviews include Wendy & Richard Pini, Steve Englehart, Gil Kane, Denny O'Neil, Art Spiegelman, Harvey Kurtzman and Frank Miller. You'll also find Harlan Ellison, Dale Luciano, Bob Stewart, Marilyn Bethke; film reviews and commentary; catalogues and art portfolios; and an independent and iconoclastic point of view throughout. Highly recommended.

Inkspots — Minotaur Books, PO Box 253, Doncaster, Victoria 3108, Australia. A4, offset on art paper, 68pp, \$3.

Subtitled 'Australia's Graphic Narrative Magazine' and with two issues, Inkspots has

STRIP NEWS

Marvel have cancelled their comic adaptation of the STAR TREK tv series with # 18. Headed "Special Last Issue" and a "Collectors' Item" it has a cover date of February.

Dargaud Editeur, France's biggest comic publisher (Pilote and over 150 comic albums per year), has launched an attack on the American comic market with a series of comic albums. A 'Valerian' story, *Ambassador of the Shadows*, a 'Vagabond of Limbo' story, *What is Reality Papa* (both serialised in *Heavy Metal* in 1981), a 'Lucky Luke' (Western-comedy hero) tale, *Calamity Jane*, and *Magnesia's Treasure* are the first four titles. They are full process colour titles with large print runs.

Wally Wood, described as the "greatest science fiction artist there ever was" by former EC publisher William Gaines, took his own life late last year. It is believed he could not face the rigours of regular dialysis treatments, plus the effects of some mild strokes and severe vision problems due to high blood pressure. He is remembered best for his work on *Weird Science* and *Weird Fantasy* for EC, over 12 years with *Mad*, plus much super-hero comic work.

Britain's **Eagle Awards** for 1981 were announced late last year. In the American division Marvel's *X-Men* won just about every award it was eligible for (again) and in the British division the *Judge Dredd* series (appearing in 2000AD) did the same. Other winners of note included Favourite Comic Magazine: *Epic Illustrated* (USA) and *Doctor Who Monthly* (UK); and Favourite Fan Publication: *The Comics Journal* (USA) and *BEM* (UK). ★

Stories Strange — Tim Bollinger. 41 North Tce, Wellington 5. NZ. A4, offset, all strips. 32pp \$2.

All self-produced by Tim, mostly funny animal styles, with plot lines a trifle above average (ie, still weak. Let's be honest, most comic story lines are not much better than tv or movie story lines, so don't expect too much). Polar Priscilla has some good bits, though, so you might like to take a look.

Strips 16, 17 — David Morgan, PO Box 2896, Auckland 1, NZ. Noumenon size, typeset and offset, mostly strips, 36pp each, \$6/6 (\$11 — \$20/6 airmail).

16 is the special Rock issue and, for me, has some of the poorest art yet seen in Strips.

Perhaps because a lot of it is loosely drawn, or a musician's first attempt at strips, but I was disappointed.

17 returns to form, with good artwork by the regulars and the newcomers. You can do a lot worse than spending money on Strips.

Words And Visions 7 — Adam Dutkiewicz. 21 Albert St, Dulwich, SA 5065. Australia. A4, offset, lots of art and photos. 48pp, \$11.50/4. WAV has seen a number of changes of style and format. Issue 7 is extremely well put together with stunning use of black and white.

You'll find a short story, four photography portfolios, interviews with Ralph Towner, Colin Walcott, Edgar Froese and John Scofield, a xerox-art spread, some poetry and short columns/stories, and a wide-ranging review section. Well worth a look. ★

“All Scientists Are Blind”

An Examination of Speculations — by David Bimler

Nicky McLean's Con report in Nm 44/45 is a fine piece of gonzo journalism. The notions of branching, or rather grafted, time he summarises on page 17 strikes me as eminently reasonable, with the one flaw that it contains no loopholes for paradoxes or absurdities, and for this reason no sf author will ever use it.

May I present my own theory of alternative universes and multiple times? Briefly it states that the authors have it all arsie-verse with this talk of branching time. Time does not branch. It converges. Disparate time-streams are continually flowing together, or we could use the metaphor of railway tracks meeting at a junction so that there is one future ahead of us, and behind us an infinite broom of pasts fanning in.

Consider the corollaries! All creation myths are true. As the Pope of the Greater Reunifactory Church of the Globe Artichoke, which at last count boasted of 51 wholly incompatible accounts of the origina of the universe, I'm naturally interested in this spin-off.

It's preferable to live in the closing era of the universe. Red dwarf stars might be flickering out with mournful wimpers all around, and no future at all, yet one would have an infinity of pasts to look nostalgically back on. Whereas an observer at the cosmos's birth has only a single-track future to look forward to, one he must share with all the parallel births.

Well, you'd be surprised how little evidence there is to support such a reasonable and self-evident concept, but the least I can do is cite the Rule of 48. Once upon a time, you see, in the late 1950s or early 60s, it was thought that 48 was the number of chromosomes in the human cell. Fewer than 48 thou shalt not have, nor any more, and 67 is right out. And the biologists of the time could prove it with enlargements of human cell nuclei that showed 48 chromosomes. Robert Heinlein wrote **BEYOND THIS HORIZON** way back then, so it quotes this figure of 48.

Then it was discovered that there were 46 chromosomes per cell; any more was greediness. Consternation.

Someone — probably Philip Dick or R.A. Lafferty, bless their pointy little heads — has explained this discrepancy by suggesting that in the late 1950's or early 60's the entire human race simultaneously and multi-laterally dropped a pair of chromosomes, a superfluous pair.

But wait; there are those microphotographs said to show 48 chromosomes. Biologists counted them again. They only showed 46! Michael Crichton has formulated this as the 'Rule of 48' which states, "All Scientists are Blind"

And my own explanation, as by now the brighter of you will already have guessed, is that two major time streams coalesced about then, two sides of a zipper. In one human beings had 48 chromosomes, in the other 46, and it was the latter that predom-

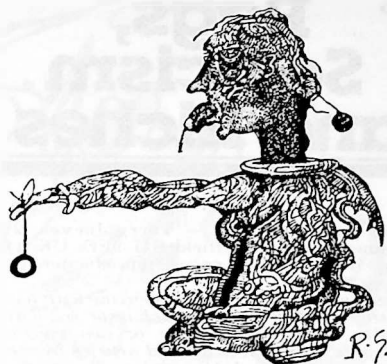
inated, so that even old microphotographs were amended — only human's memories of the old count remained.

Still on issue 44/45, I read Mike Madigan's "Columbus to Columbia" article. Oh my, Mike, you've been reading too many of Ben Bova's *Omni* editorials — the overdose is showing up in your style of rhetoric. "What a pity you kids are going to have to grow up sometime," as Aloysius Shimplap said under slightly different circumstances.

INTELLECTUAL ECLECTICISM

No, no. I am baselessly making mock of the article and committing similar intellectual misdeeds that are nameless but equally contemptible; I apologise. To make amends, Mike, there is a book I believe you would enjoy. *Disturbing the Universe*, by Freeman Dyson. Let me recommend it to everyone else, while I'm at it.

Freeman Dyson needs no introduction to science fiction readers. He calls his book an "intellectual biography," and it really deserves a proper review — maybe I'll buy a copy myself and write one — since it contains all manner of fascinating side-lights on Project Orion, Nuclear Test-ban Treaties, his involvement in a group designing safe nuclear reactors (they ended up with the high-temperature gas-cooled reactor, a design which I believe Britain is using, but for sundry reasons of profit margins we need not go into here, the US has clung to boiling-water and pressurised water reactors . . . unsafe, precarious little buggers and what's worse, inelegant. When New Zealand goes nuclear, they're probably the types we'll invest in), and so weiter.



One drawback of *Disturbing the Universe* is the peculiarly stilted grammar it's written in. One sentence differs little in structure from the previous one. This uniformity shows up all the more glaringly because Dyson is eager to prove what a Renaissance man he is, surmounting the boundaries between Science and Art, and quotes untold poetry (largely T.S. Eliot).

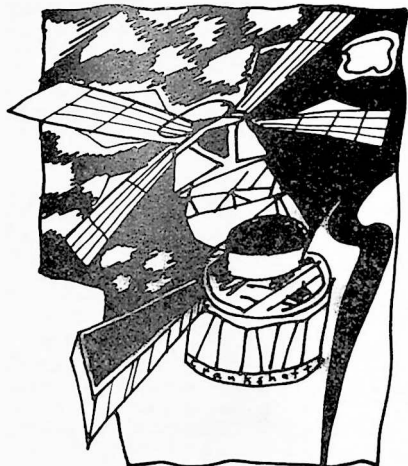
There's an article by Dyson in the *Review of Modern Physics* (Vol 51, number 3, if you want to look it up) called "Time Without End: Physics and Biology in an Open Universe." Well, I can't be bothered presenting a precis of his arguments (it's too late in the evening, also I unearthed a bottle of Southern Comfort, which dealt with the DT's but had lamentable side-effects of its own), but in it he overthrows the notion of the Heat Death of the Universe. Phew. Shows that life can adapt itself to survive indefinitely in an infinitely expanding universe. I'll quote the three questions he asks, and his answers to them:

"Does the universe freeze into a state of permanent physical quiescence as it expands and cools?" No.

"Is it possible for life and intelligence to survive indefinitely?" Yes.

"Is it possible to maintain communications and transmit information across the constantly expanding distances between galaxies?" Maybe.

Reassuring, isn't it? So Greg Hills can go right on squandering energy with the horrid profligacy that is his want without another word of complaint from me.



David Bimler, Flat 8, 486 Hereford St,
Christchurch. (7/3/82)

Rags, Solecism and Riches

Part 1

Erg Quarterly 78 — Terry Jeeves, 230 Bannerdale Rd, Sheffield S11 9FE, UK. Qto dup, illos on most pages, reproduction fair, 30pp, \$2/2.

Erg is an extremely chatty genzine with loads of short book reviews. In each issue you'll also find a lively lettercol, one or two excellent columns by Terry, news and articles by other folks, and often a NASA update. Recommended.

Fanzine Fanatique 40/41/42 — Keith & Rosemary Walker, 6 Vine St, Greaves, Lancs, LA1 4UF, UK. A4, dup, repro fair, 12pp, \$1/3. FF reviews fanzines and adds commentary on production methods, value for money, etc. Irregular (aren't we all) but a longstanding zine and therefore the reviews are worth taking note of.

P*S*F*Q 6 — Michael Ward, Box 1496, Cupertino, CA 95015, USA. A4, offset, layout clean, a few illos, repro excellent, 36pp, \$7.50/4.

This is the first issue I've seen of a rather fine new contender to the 'A Magazine About Science Fiction & Fantasy' stable (SF Commentary, *Algol/Starship*, *Janus/Aurora*). Highlight is a 9 page round table discussion/interview with Vonda McIntyre, Joanna Russ and Jessi-a Amanda Salmonson. You'll also find columns on: the challenge of the future; the non-possibility of laser handweapons; Doris Lessing's *Canopus* books; *Dune*; and *Lovecraft*. plus a lively lettercol. High recommended.

Q36 One — Marc Ortlieb, PO Box 46, Marden, SA 5070, Australia. A4 dup, repro good, 18pp, available for trade only.

A very fine collection of fanzine reviews, with all sorts of interesting items commented on. Highly recommended.

Q 36 F — Marc Ortlieb again. A4 dup, illustrated, repro good, 44pp, available for trade only.

Marc's genzine, a fine and fannish collection of columns, poems, illos, editorials and letters, with many a humorous moment. Recommended.

Science Fiction: A Review of Speculative Literature 8, 9 — Van Ikin, Dept of English, University of Western Australia, Nedlands, WA 6009, Australia. A5 offset, repro excellent, 48pp each, \$4.50/3.

Subtitled "Australia's Literary SF Magazine" and with expensive production standards, this is not wholly a dry, serious, academic exercise. Articles, interviews and art can be fannish.

there's also verse and fiction, and the reviews are usually well thought out and presented.

Out of the Blue 3 — Harry Bell & Kevin Williams, 9 Lincoln St, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, NE8 4EE, UK. A4 dup, lots of illos, repro good, 36pp, \$1/1.

I have gone on at length in this column, previously, about the wonderfully humorous British fannish zines and this is another from Harry and co. The 'co' includes, of course, a column by Bob Shaw and illos by Jim Barker and therefore this is automatically a 'perfect' fanzine. You'll also find Peter Roberts' TAFF report and columns by Andy Firth, Bruce Townley and Kee Williams. Recommended.

Thyme 1, 2, 3 — Irwin Hirsh, 279 Domain Rd, South Yarra, VIC 3141, Australia. A4 dup, repro good, 4pp each, \$1/3.

A new Aussie fannish newzine. I haven't seen later issue so don't know how it's progressing.

Wahf-Full 6, 7 — Jack Herman, 1/67 Fletcher St, Bondi, 2026, Australia. A4 dup, offset covers, repro good, 30pp each, available for trade only.

Issue 6 is mostly about films, plus a lettercol. Issue 7 continues 2 film columns plus columns on music, fanzines, letters and Space Shuttles. A fannish genzine.

Warhoon 29 — Richard Bergeron, Box 5989, Old San Juan, Puerto Rico, 00905, USA. A4, offset, some illos, repro v good, 64pp, \$2/1.

Warhoon is the pinnacle of fanzine publishing — excellent columns, articles and letters, carefully edited and lovingly produced. You'll find a high standard herein — Bergeron's editorial, columns by John Bangsund (another I've raved on at length about in this column), Harry Warner, Tom Perry, Walt Willis and Ted White. Plus an inspired lettercol. Highly recommended.

The Whole Fanzine Catalogue 18/19 — Brian Earl Brown, 16711 Burt Rd #207, Detroit, MI 48219, USA. A5 dup, repro fair, 40pp, \$2/4. Pretty much the bible if you want to know what's available, and how good it is. A labour of love, surely, and one easily excuses the typos and occasional grammatical lapses due to the wealth of material. Recommended. *





Part 2

Recent issues of titles annotated in 42/43. See that column for addresses, etc.

Aerial 4 — 24pp A5 dup, repro fair. *Still a bit messy but still showing promise.*

Arena SF 12 — 40pp A5 offset, repro v good. *Another fine issue, with a piece on James Blish (and religion and philosophy), a column by Ian Watson, an interview with Richard Cowper, an excellent review column, and weighty letters. Recommended.*

Australian SF News 25, 26, 27, 28 — 20pp ea A4 offset, repro excellent. *News, booklists, photos, fandom, reviews and book cover reproductions in a lively mixture. Slightly loose in parts (stand up the boy who said 'sloppy') but they are a hell of a lot more regular than Noumenon, have lots of professional and fannish Aussie news, and give a good overview of what's available or coming. Recommended.*

Aurora SF 19 (formerly Janus) — 36pp A5 offset, repro v good.

Subtitled 'Speculative Feminism' and with communication the theme for the issue, the editorial collective prove again their ability to present some fine writing, put together in a lively way with illos and artwork. Recommended.

Cygnus Chronicle 10, 11 — 8pp/20pp A4 offset, repro v good.

Slightly less impressive issues. It sounds like Ner has my troubles with time and finances — the finished products don't quite come up to the New Yorker standard, for all the best intentions. Fiction, news and reviews cover sf and fantasy with the accent on the Aussie scene.

Fantasy Artist 9 — (Fantasy Artists Network): 44pp A4 offset, repro v good.

Interviews, illustrated articles, artist's guidelines, news, portfolios, market and convention lists, strips, letters and columns, all aimed at

budding artists. The full colour cover is impressive and the interior illos mostly pretty good.

Comics Journal, through to 70 — See this issue's Art Attack column.

Locus, through to 256 — Usually 32pp A4 offset, repro v good.

The best source of news, comment and listings for the sf world, from big name professionals through to fannish antics. The emphasis 's on the serious side of publishing and events with tons of news and reviews mixed in with regular columns (Agent's Corner by Richard Curtis. Stayin' Alive by Norman Spinrad, guest and regular book reviewers, publishing lists, etc). Essential for serious followers of the faith, and for libraries.

Science Fiction Review 41 — 68pp A4 offset, repro v good.

Still way out front, in the genzine stakes, with a who's who of contributors and commentators, covering the fields of writing, film, art and magazines. Highly recommended.

Starship 42 — 52pp A4 offset, repro excellent. *Slightly more commercial flavour but up there with Science Fiction Review. Brian Stableford interviewed, columns by Gardner Dozois, Fred Pohn, Vincent DiFate and Robert Anton Wilson, plus the marvelous Lupoff book reviews, a film column and letters galore. Highly recommended.*

Strips 16, 17 — See this issue's Art Attack column.

Warp, through to 27 — A4 dup, 12-20pp, repro fair to good.

NASF's newsletter which is becoming less broad in scope and dealing mainly with club news and member's contributions.

Yandro 253/254 — 62pp A4 dup, repro good. *Another bumper issue of columns, reviews, letters and commentary that is a joy to a fan's heart and a bane to faneds one. Recommended.*

DAW BOOKS

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NOTES ON H. BEAM PIPER

Gathered by Mark Turner

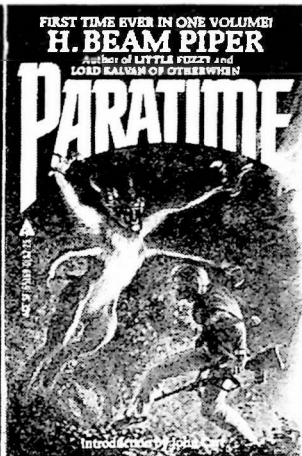
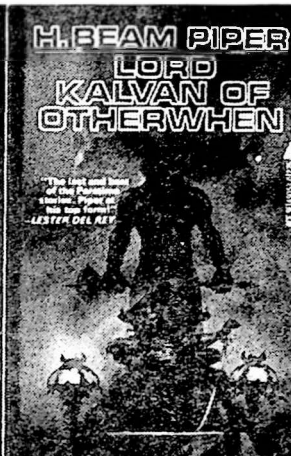
Horace Beam Piper was born in 1901, the son of a Protestant Minister. Unfortunately little is known about his early life, however we do know that he had no formal education.

He was a voracious reader and schooled himself deeply in the fields of science and history. Other interests included writing and collecting firearms and other weapons.

At the age of 18 he took a labouring job with the Pennsylvania Railroad Company at their yards in the town of Altoona. Piper remained there for 32 years, staying even after he had obtained some small measure

far the story is quite true — Bathurst did indeed vanish in this manner. But Piper then has it that he was transferred to another time continuum. The idea of parallel time is the essence of Dunne's theories. One month after this story, the second one, **Police Operation**, appeared. This introduced the Paratime Police and further developed the theme.

Later on in the series **He Walked Around the Horses** is linked in by having the main character casually allude to the incident as an accidental 'pickup'. The same sort of accident is the start for the novel **LORD KALVAN OF OTHERWHEN** where the 'pickup' carves himself a nice little empire in the time line where he is dropped. This is probably the best of the



of success as a writer. Apparently he needed a regular paying job to support his mother. He eventually left when she died in 1954 and he took up full time writing.

His first published story appeared in the April 1947 issue of *Astounding*. **Time and Time Again** has a WW3 soldier, on the brink of death, flung back in time to inhabit his own body at a much younger age. This story introduces his two most dominant themes, time travel and the cyclic nature of history, setting the trend for the bulk of his later work.

In the August 1948 issue of *Astounding* appeared the first of his 'Paratime' series.

He Walked Around the Horses concerns a British diplomat Benjamin Bathurst who, in November 1809 while inspecting a change of horses on his coach, stepped out of sight of his valet and secretary and was never seen again. Thus

Paratime stories along with **He Walked Around the Horses**.

Soon after the Paratime stories appeared Piper began another series. This was his *Terro Human Future History* (THF). As with the first Paratime story, **Four Day Planet** just barely introduces the major idea behind the new series. It is a formula story about colonials being ripped off by big business but succeeding in overcome corruption to win out in the end. It has some nice touches in it but is more akin to Heinlein's 'juvenile' novels. That it was written in collaboration with J.J. McGuire may have something to do with this. Piper wrote one other story with McGuire, **Planet for Texans**, which is pretty awful as a story and appears to have more McGuire than Piper in it. It has no connection with Piper's other works.

In his THF series Piper really comes into his own as a writer. Heinlein may or may

not have been the first to write a future history series and others followed before Piper did, but none planned a series of such scope or as expansive as Piper's. It was his intention to write one novel for every hundred years of his history, with the entire history to span six thousand years. It is unlikely that he would have completed the project had he lived, but at the very least we would have had a better idea of where he was going with it. Instead all we have is a handful of novels and a few short stories.

Throughout all his work Piper uses his extensive knowledge of history, both for fine detail and broad outlines, especially in his THF. Take *SPACE VIKING* for instance. The background of this novel, a story of revenge, closely parallels that of Spain immediately following the discovery of the new world. We have raiders from the sword worlds pillaging the worlds of the Federation and returning with goods that will undercut the local products resulting in rampant inflation.

The *Cosmic Computer* finds a loose basis in the cargo cults of the Pacific Islands following WW2. Here the islanders made something of a living salvaging material abandoned at the end of the war. This is how the inhabitants of Poictesme live in *The Cosmic Computer*, and there is the additional parallel of the reverence in which they hold the computer of the title; they are convinced that its discovery will mean the end of all their hardship and the return of wartime prosperity. This is how the Pacific Islanders felt about the godlike Americans.

Turning from the broader scope, in *LORD KALVAN* there is a battle which is an almost blow by blow transcription of an obscure battle from the Wars of the Roses called the Battle of Barnet.

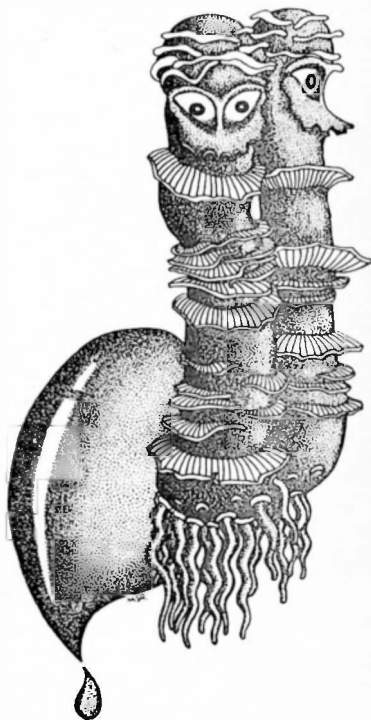
"He knew the grand sweep of history, but he also knew the small tales; the intrigues and petty jealousies, heroism and cowardice, honour and betrayals. This, I think, is why his stories have such a ring of truth. He was a story teller; a man who could keep you up all night with his books and tales. He was a cavalier."

— *Jerry Pournelle*

Piper's depth of historical knowledge adds a richness to his work not often seen. He subscribed to the Toynbeeian theory of history, to the extent that he adopted Toynbee's phases of history as the cycle for his THF. He admits as much in *Edge of the Knife*, a sort of prequel which has a

contemporary history professor having flashes of insight about events to come. These events outline the beginning of the THF.

It is difficult to appreciate fully, at first reading, the trouble Piper has taken over his THF. In *SPACE VIKING* some twenty planets and varying amounts of their history can be counted. Besides this scale Piper works equally well on the level of simple story telling. Piper is at his narr-



ative best when he combines an *Astounding* derived firmness of setting with believable characterisation and an emotive storyline as in *Cosmic Computer*. In a time when the alien was just coming into his own as a character in sf, Piper has aliens as fully developed characters in his stories. Take *Little Fuzzy*. The 'fuzzies' have existence outside the bounds of the story; they are 'people' with their own little quirks and take an active part in the development of the story.

Finally, Piper was writing about how he wanted to live. He was a 'cavalier'; through his stories, Piper could live in the

type of world he loved, in a facsimile of the past he knew and loved. A pioneering time where a man lived on his wits, a time that has died, if it every truly existed at all.

Piper left little behind in the way of personal records, he kept no diary and wrote precious few letters. So, it is in his books we must look for the man. Piper was a quiet, self-possessed man and this shows clearly in his books. A man who knew his limits and worked within them. A man who could rely on himself, be loyal to his friends and live with no aid except his wits. A survivor. Or is that the way he wanted to be? We shall never know for sure. All we can be certain of is that he was a quiet, retiring man with few friends and possessions of intense beliefs and unquestioned skills.

In November of 1964 Piper, meticulous as always, turned off the utilities to his flat, and taking a gun from his collection, shot himself through the head. A tragic loss in more ways than one. At the time he was heavily in debt with a broken marriage behind him and a gloomy future ahead. He mistakenly believed his career as a writer was finished. So, not wishing to be a burden on his friends, suicide seemed the only option.

Sadly he did not know that John W. Campbell was trying to get a cheque for several stories to him. Campbell was having trouble finding Piper and Piper didn't know because Piper's agent had died just prior and he kept all his records in his head. The many loose leaf binders containing Piper's extensive notes were never found, nor were the third 'Fuzzy' novel or a partially finished historical work **Only the Arquebus**.

Somewhere out there, we hope, is a gold mine just waiting discovery. ■

TIMESCAPE

Gregory Benford

Pocket Books, 1981, \$4.95, Cover art uncredited.

This book had rave reviews from Brian Aldiss, Norman Spinrad, Walter Miller and Anthony Burgess. The theme is not new — in the near future the world faces an ecological collapse, so the future scientists try to influence the past to correct things. Well, when my daughter Florence was 11 or so, about two years ago, she brought home a book from the library in some easy read series, called something like **The Boy Who Saved the Sea**, with exactly the same story line. But enough with quibbles.

If you are into novels in which the characters are properly developed, **TIMESCAPE** is the book for you. And if you like a nail-biting, cracking good yarn, with disbelief doing an out of body experience two cubits and a span above your left shoulder, **TIMESCAPE** is the book for you.

Those Noumenon readers who attended Brian's *soiree* with Anne McCaffrey a year or so ago will remember that she rolled her eyes and exclaimed how Greg was so physics based that she could not understand his explanations and justifications. But, have no fear, if you do not know what tachyons are or what a closed universe is, just let such words flow past as if they were lasers of hergenholm generators.

I am not enough of a physicist to judge how possible **TIMESCAPE** is, but to this Scientific American reader it seems very very plausible indeed, including a hidden but ingenious resolution of the "shoot your grandpa" paradox, with alternate universes hidden inside each other like so many Russian dolls. — TRCH

PUBLISHING INFORMATION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 32...

Wholesale Book Distributors:

(Most titles have not been seen and information comes from release sheets only)

EYES OF AMBER — Joan Vinge (Orbit): collection.

ROADMARKS — Roger Zelazny (Orbit): first UK edition (?).

THE SHADOW OF THE TORTURER — Gene Wolfe (Arrow): vol. 1 of series; first UK edition.

THE TOLKIEN QUIZ BOOK — Nigel Robinson & Linda Wilson (Star): non-fiction.

A STEP FARTHER OUT Part Two — Jerry Pournelle & Larry Niven (Star): first UK edition.

THE SONG OF PHAID THE GAMBLER — Mick Farren (NEL): first edition (?).

JANISSARIES — Jerry Pournelle (Orbit): reprint.

COSMIC ENCOUNTER — A.E. van Vogt (NEL): "first UK publication".

THE PRIESTS OF PSI — Frank Herbert (Orbit): reprint.

KING DAVID'S SPACESHIP — Jerry Pournelle (Orbit): first UK edition (?).

VOLKHAVAAR — Tanith Lee (Hamlyn): first UK edition.

SPACE WEAPONS, SPACE WAR — John Macvey (NEL): reprint (?).

NIGHT MASTERS — Tanith Lee (Hamlyn): first UK edition.

BEYOND THE BLUE EVENT HORIZON — Frederik Pohl (Orbit): first UK ed.: sequel to *Gateway*.

PUBLISHING INFORMATION

SF & RELATED BOOKS RECEIVED JANUARY—MAY 1982
Listed in order under their New Zealand publishers and distributors

Associated Book Publishers (NZ) Ltd:

TWO TO CONQUER — Marion Zimmer Bradley (Daw \$4.25): reprint; a *Darkover* novel; cover art by John Pound

HUOK OF THE STONE AGE — Lin Carter (Daw \$3.50): first edition; *Eric Carstairs* novel; cover and interior illustrations by Josh Kirby.

ZANTHODON — Lin Carter (Daw \$3.50): reissue; *Underground World* novel; cover and interior illos by Thomas Kidd.

IRONCASTLE — J.H. Rosny & Pjilip Jose Farmer (Daw \$3.75): reprint; cover & illos by Roy Krenkel.

HAIL HIBBLER — Ron Goulart (Daw \$3.50): first edition; cover art by Josh Kirby.

THE SPINNER — Doris Piserchia (Daw \$3.75): first edition; cover art by H.R. van Dongen.

THE YEAR'S BEST HORROR STORIES VII — Edited by Gerald Page (Daw \$3.75): reissue; cover art by Michael Whelan.

David Bateman Ltd:

SHADOWS OF SANCTUARY — Edited by Robert Asprin (Ace \$4.95): first edition; *Thieves' World* collection; cover art uncredited; maps by Jim Odbert.

THE NITROGEN FIX — Hal Clement (Ace \$5.50): first mass market edition; cover art uncredited; interior illos by Janet Aulisio.

TO SAIL THE CENTURY SEA — G.C. Edmondson (Ace 4.50): first edition; cover art uncredited.

BLADE 35: The Lords of the Crimson River — Jeffrey Lord (Pinnacle \$3.95): first ed.; cover uncred.

WARRIOR'S WORLD — Richard McEnroe (Ace \$4.95): first edition; 'sequel' to Philip Nowlan's *Armageddon 2419 A.D.*; from an outline by Niven & Pournelle; cover art uncredited.

PARATIME — H. Beam Piper (Ace \$5.50): first edition; collection of *Paratime* stories; cover uncred.

KENSHO — Dennis Schmidt (Ace \$4.95): reprint; cover art by Ben Venuti.

WAY FARE — Dennis Schmidt (Ace \$4.95): reprint; cover art uncredited.

BARD — Keith Taylor (Ace \$4.95): first edition; cover art by Don Maitz.

William Collins (NZ) Ltd:

THE MANY-COLOURED LAND — Julian May (Pan \$5.95): first edition; volume 1 of *Saga of the Exiles*; cover art by Stephen Bradbury.

CRUISER DREAMS — Janet Morris (Fontana \$5.95): first UK edition; vol. 2 in *Kerrion Saga*.

The Donning Company: (5041 Admiral Wright Rd, Virginia Beach, 23462, USA)

THEY'D RATHER BE RIGHT — Mark Clifton & Frank Riley (Starblaze \$4.95): first book edition; 8½x5½" illustrated paperback; cover and interior illos by M.W. Carroll.

MALL WORLD — Somtow Sucharitkul (S/blaze \$4.95): first edition; collection; 8½x5½" p/back; cover and interior illos by Karl Fofoed.

Gordon & Gotch (NZ) Ltd:

CONQUESTS — Poul Anderson (Granada \$5.95): first UK edition; collection; cover art by Chris Foss

THE STEEL TSAR — Michael Moorcock (Gran \$4.95): first edition; vol. 3 in *Oswald Bastable* trilogy; cover art by 'Melvyn'.

SYZYGY — Frederik Pohl (Bantam \$5.95): first edition; cover art uncredited.

Hutchinson Group (NZ) Ltd:

A BETTER MANTRAP — Bob Shaw (Gollancz \$22.25): first edition; collection; hardcover.

SF SPECIAL 33: *A Double Shadow* by Frederick Turner, *The Violet Apple* by David Lindsay (S&J \$28.75): special edition; hardcover.

Penguin Books:

SPLIT SECOND — Garry Kilworth (Pen \$5.95): new edition; cover art by Adrian Chesterman.

Solaris • *The Chain Of Chance* • *A Perfect Vacuum* — Stanislaw Lem (King Penguin \$12.95): first edition in one volume; cover art by Adrian Chesterman.

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