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 A GUESSED
 WEAR RED
 SUSPENSERS?

TO HOLD UP
 HIS CALVIN
 KLEINS.

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 ARE HONORED AND FULFILLED ON AN
 ISSUES NUMBER BASIS.

Next Issue....

"FANTASY AND THE BELIEVING
 READER" BY ORSON SCOTT CARD

AN INTERVIEW OR TWO

SOMETHING VERY GOOD I'M EX-
 PECTING

ALL THE REGULAR COLUMNISTS,
 DEPARTMENTS AND FEATURES,
 INCLUDING AS MANY REVIEWS AND
 COMMENTS ON MOVIES, BOOKS,
 MAGS, AND ETC. AS I CAN
 SQUEEZE IN.

BUT WHY DOES
 GEIS REALLY
 WANT MY OLD
 ZIP CODE?



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#79

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 FICTION REVIEW

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ALIEN THOUGHTS BY THE EDITOR

THE OREGONIAN 3-3-82

SCI-FI WRITER DIES

NEW YORK (AP) --- Philip K. Dick, author of 35 science fiction novels, including the 1962 Hugo Award-winning "The Man in the High Castle," died Tuesday in California at the age of 53, his publisher said.

Pocketbooks, which published Dick's recent works under its Timescape Books imprint, said the author suffered a stroke Feb. 18 and had been a patient at Western Medical Center in Santa Ana, Calif., since then.

In addition to his novels, which included "Solar Lottery," "Martian Timeslip," and "The Three Tigmata of Palmer Eldritch," Dick had published six collections of short stories.

His novel "Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said" won the John W. Campbell Memorial Award in 1974.

So sayeth the Associated Press. What is remarkable about this notice is that AP thought Dick's death of sufficient import to send out about 150 words and that the editors of THE OREGONIAN, Oregon's largest newspaper, decided to print it.

Phil Dick is not, I think, as well known as Heinlein, Asimov, Herbert, Le Guin, Norton, Ellison, and others. Yet he's given a rather large obit on a national level.

Now, either the AP is studded with sf readers and fans, and THE OREGONIAN is also, or science fiction has crept up in importance to a remarkable degree in the past few years. Note the mention of the Hugo Award.

The process of accumulating awareness of sf and its writers in the public massmind...its gradual acquisition of a subtle respectability...now has reached the point of feedback: each public notice of sf event reinforces its position in the public massmind and its status as a legitimate fiction form or media.

With the continuing dynamic success of the STAR WARS films and quality sf films as OUTLAND, the SUPERMAN films, ALIEN, and others to come---including BLADERUNNER, the film made from Phil Dick's DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP?



---and with the repeated best-selling DUNE books...science fiction and fantasy are more and more seen as great vehicles for making a lot of money. And in our society making huge amounts of money gives respectability and acceptance to virtually any activity or genre. [Socially taboo drugs and porno are still struggling; they have greater resistances to overcome.]

PRAISE HUGO, STATUS AT LAST....

A correspondent sent an ad that appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle for a run of Stanley Kubrick's A CLOCKWORK ORANGE.

The heading at the top of the large ad reads:

10 major awards
including the HUGO
for science fiction

This is astonishing! Are the ad media now recognising the importance of the Hugo and beginning to use it as a status credit? I think so.

This sort of use can only make a Hugo Award win more and more important to authors, artists, publishers, movie-makers, editors.... As the Hugo is recognized ever more widely as an important international award for sf, we can expect ever more savage infighting and campaigning for nominations and wins.

In these increasingly desperate times of low book sales, any tiny bit of leverage becomes increasingly important.

We'll have to be wary of attempts to buy votes, extensive hype, etc. in

our increasingly important field and in the increasingly important Hugo Awards process.

THERE IS A RISK IN GIVING PRINT TO

my political, geo-political and economic opinions and views in these pages. But only if I'm soft-hearted and fuzzy-minded as editor.

Speaking here of these matters will provoke and impell some in the readership to write letters-of-comment aimed at the letter column. And I will be tempted to print a few.

But this is SFR, not REG or CONSPIRACY NEWSLETTER (both defunct), and the primary function of this zine is to pay attention to science fiction and fantasy.

Only extraordinary locs on my mundane thoughts will see print. I rarely printed letters in REG and never in CONSPIRACY NEWSLETTER.

Some may argue---with justice ---that REG and CN commentary by me should not appear at all in SFR. I can only say that the readers have consistently cried for more and ever more Geis writing here, and I frankly have only a few things to say about sf and fantasy editing, publishing and writing, and that at present I'm dry. I now turn to the real world for triggers and raw material.

Time and again the readers have written that they find SFR (and REG and CN when they were being published) a provocative, interesting magazine even though they didn't agree with much or any of what is printed.

So I give vent now to that end. Here is a worldview, a slant, a way of thinking about mankind, the world, and the United States which hopefully will give you a jolt, which will force you to think of counter arguments, which will pop open that third eye of yours.

But mostly I'm doing this to please myself, to please my ego, and to fill up space!

MEANWHILE, BACK IN THE "REAL" WORLD, the published plans of the Selective Service to run two tests of its draft procedures---one in March using National Guardsmen as simulated draftees, and the other, more extensive test in the fall---suggests to me an ominous preparation for a real draft of 18 and 19-year-olds in 1983.

Combine this testing of facilities and procedures with the equally ominous war games being conduct-

ed in Louisiana (through March, I've been told) of the whole corps of the National Guard (rotating them in and out, a few states at a time for two weeks) in order to bring them up to 'war readiness', and I get the distinct feeling that the powers-that-be in New York and Washington have something planned.

Add the huge budget increases in Defense for 1982-3-4-5, and a strong "police action" aroma permeates the atmosphere.

Yet public opinion polls show 89% of the American people opposed to any military (American troops) involvement in Central America.

And that suggests that an "incident" will have to be manufactured---a provoked attack on Americans, another embassy seizure...something to overcome this reluctance to send American soldiers overseas and to make the people MAD!

A small war would relieve some social/economic pressures in this country, too...considering that an increasing number of respected, high-level financial experts are beginning to talk of a slide/crash into a true depression later this year. [More on the economy later.]

If you accept a depression in 1983, mass unemployment, mass bankruptcies...riots...foreclosures of houses, farms, building...a nice little war which requires a war economy, war controls, etc. might look damned good to a lot of people on a conscious and unconscious level. Baldly put, "Want a good, high-pay job? Invest your son in our carefully managed Central American War---only 20% chance of loss of investment.", is a bargain few parents would accept. But the choice won't be so clear or stark. Propaganda and media manipulation can do wonders.

And, of course, if you're convinced you're not investing somebody else's son...

THE RECESSION, AS IT MUST TO ALL MAGAZINES, HAS COME TO SFR...

...and it's a drag. As you will have instantly noticed, the color stock cover is gone. That \$450. luxury has become a burden too great to bear.

Well, we had the pretty colored covers from #37 to #42. Not bad.

SFR is now back to the 64 page self-cover format of numbers 26 to 36.

The reasons for this retreat are simple and dreadful: the postal service continues to raise its rates in all classes of "service" (sometimes raising 2nd, 3rd, and 4th class rates twice a year in

quantum jumps); incredible as it may seem, there is a percentage of subscribers to SFR who do not renew---probably (unreasonably) considering SFR a luxury compared to paying rent and buying food. And the new subscriber rate is not keeping up with the non-renewals. And bookstore are not ordering as many copies as before....

So we enter the recession/depression later than others in the field, and assume the hunkered-down position to outlast the storm.

Gone last issue was the logo-and-cover-art-only policy I adopted or a few issues. There was some billboarding on the cover of #42. This issue I'm increasing the size of the logo for greater bookstore impact and putting Names and Features on the cover, to somewhat compensate for the loss of the colored cover stock. Root, hog, or die! And so it goes.

THE PROBLEM WITH ARTISTS IS....

that they send me a lot of it. I'm grateful, even often delighted. But even I, who use virtually one illustration or cartoon per page, even I, I say, am overwhelmed with so much art that I have at least a year's supply on hand. It's so bad I can't remember it all. It's so bad it takes me ten minutes to go through it, looking at it, seeking a given piece I may vaguely remember.

The only recourse is this impassioned plea: stop sending me art! Please! For the love of God, Montessor!

WHAT WE HAVE HERE IS NOT YOUR AVERAGE, GARDEN-VARIETY RECESSION....

But before I examine what's going down today, let me treat you to

the Geis Analysis of what used to be going up, and why.

Go back, wayyy back to the Great Depression of the Thirties. We then had 2 and 3% interest rates. How come no boom? We had zero inflation. How come no boom?

Consider that in the Twenties there was a great credit expansion. A great boom as "new" money flowed through the economy. Nobody worried about the other side of the credit coin. It's called debt.

Banks, corporations, individuals ---all went into debt for what seemed at the time good reasons. But as with all booms [debt bubbles] the Twenties bubble burst as the interest burden became too great to bear.

Deflation set in: In order to pay off interest and/or debts, people and businesses had to cut back, had to sell some stocks, some property, some bonds, some other assets.

The prices of those assets naturally declined. Supply exceeding demand---lower prices.

At this time, too, the newly created Federal Reserve system (1913) clamped down hard on the money supply, afraid of runaway inflation and the inherent disaster that entails. No doubt they had the lesson of the terrifying inflation of Germany in 1922-23 in mind. The Federal Reserve clamped down on bank reserves and the banks had to cut back on loans. The "new" money stopped.

Deflation began.

Does this have a familiar ring to it? Especially when it is noted that in the Twenties multi-billions of dollars were loaned overseas by the big banks, and billions of foreign bonds were bought in this country....

Those loans and bonds turned sour and worthless very often, in the early Thirties.

And so as deflation worked its way through the economy, as bankruptcies mounted, businesses closed, purchasing power declined, prices declined, as assets shrank in value,



banks could not make any loans except to gilt-edged borrowers---and there were damned few of those!

So in the middle and later 30s nobody much dared borrow, even at rock-bottom interest rates. There were precious few prospects of making a profit.

The government under Roosevelt spent billions to stimulate the economy. The federal deficits were (for those days, in real dollar terms) staggering. Yet despite a recovery in 1936-37, the economy fell back into depression.

But during this period of Bad Times the economy became healthy in the sense that its debts were burned away. Banks were very highly liquid. Their debt-to-reserve ratios were at rock-bottom lows. Bankers were extremely conservative. The consumers were extremely conservative. Debt was anathema, credit was rarely used. Cash was king.

It took World War II to rip this country out of the depression. A war economy, forced mass savings, controls...all this was financed by about \$350 billions of national debt spent over four years---an incredible flood of "new" money.

After the war the forced savings came out of the banks to buy and buy and buy, creating a new, long-term boom. Every time the boom paused for breath---a recession---the government "primed the pump" with new debt and the boom was "managed" into another extension.

The "police action" in Korea was financed with debt---more boom. The war in Vietnam was financed by debt---more boom!

Except that increasingly all this "new" money was driving up prices. That was unpopular. So the government and the big banks began loaning billions overseas to "take the pressure off" the domestic economy. We in effect exported our inflation. This surge of money to Europe [mostly] was at first welcome, then disliked; it drove up prices there and caused economic and social dislocations.

Many countries---especially France---began cashing in their excess dollars for gold. There was no doubt about it by then---the dollar, at one time as good as gold, was losing value; we had reached the point of inflating the money supply that our assets backing the dollar wouldn't cover our debts.

The age-old response to that policy of inflation to keep the good times going was being put into effect---get the gold and silver while the getting was good.

[In order to keep inflating, our government had reduced the required gold backing for each dollar, and in the end eliminated any gold

backing.]

After suffering massive losses of gold, our government "closed the gold window" by refusing to buy our currency with gold. So much for ethics, promises, integrity.

After that (and concurrently) silver coins disappeared as inflation drove up the price of silver to past the coin designated value. It became profitable to melt coins into bars.

Then the arabs refused to be paid off in ever-less-valuable dollars any longer and got together and raised the price of oil a whole bunch. As we tried to compensate by inflating even more, they raised more.

Recessions came and went, and we bailed out with more and more and more massive infusions of debt.

Now the world was wise to our tactic of sending multi-billions overseas to keep the lid on our inflation. They sent them right back by buying U.S. assets---real estate, stocks, bonds, businesses.... Inflation crept upward, ever higher.

We ran ever-higher deficits, borrowed, borrowed, borrowed....

The dollar plunged in value. Until finally the common man finally got wise and he too refused to keep dollars, refused to save. He spent his money quickly. Or he demanded---and got!---interest rates high enough to compensate for the inflation/devaluation of the dollar.

And the time came in October of 1979, in Italy, at an international monetary conference, when the foreign creditors of the United States told the new head of the Federal Reserve, Paul Volcker, to stop the ever-upward inflation of the money supply or suffer a massive run on the dollar so cataclysmic that its value would shrink to zilch and inflation in the U.S. would reach 100% or more per year. It would be absolute ruin.

Volcker and the Secretary of the Treasury rushed home and began the "tight money" policy that has now

run 2-1/2 years. But the debt bubble had burst, finally. Inflation/devaluation had eventually created the forces of its destruction.

With the lid on debt creation, pressures began to grow. Because all that debt---govt, corporate, personal---had to be paid off. Interest had to be paid. In real, constant value or even (shudder) increasingly valuable dollars! No more ever-cheaper dollars being created to pay with.

And so, gradually, prices stopped rising as fast, as money became relatively scarce. Sales declined. Values declined. Prices of raw materials fell. Even wage floors cracked open. And foreign debts went sour.

And here we are today with a government on the federal level running 100-150 billion dollar deficits while local and state governments are forced, by law, to cut and cut and cut to maintain balanced budgets.

We have the debt bubble now in its final stages of existence. The pressures are now enormous as the debtors are willing to pay ruinous interest rates in order to keep on borrowing to avoid bankruptcy. They are selling assets to keep going. They are begging, pleading, threatening their debt holders. But the base is eroding. Lower sales, lower prices, lower production, lower wealth creation....

There may be one last-gasp rally in the economy in 1982. The govt. is hoping it deficits will save the situation.

But too much money is being destroyed via falling house prices, falling stock prices, falling production, unemployment, for the govt. spending to compensate.

The process will continue---until once again loan demand is low, the inflation rate is zero, and debt is a dirty word, and banks are flush with reserves once again.

Then...then the process will begin again.



There is a certain delicious Catch-22 irony in the current situation. The government is trapped in a no-win economic cul'-de-sac: its deficits are seen as reasons for disastrously high interest rates, yet if it cuts the budget in order to free up more savings for the private sector and in order to lessen the pressure on interest rates, it will have to cut government spending and increase taxes! The spending cuts and heavier taxes will hurt the economy more than possibly lowered interest rates will help.

The downhill roller-coaster ride will continue.

And no one in government (in public, at least) seems aware of the five trillion dollar debt structure whose death throes is primarily responsible for the current agony.

THE POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FALL-OUT WILL BE HEAVY

as voters short-sightedly blame "Reagonomics" for the deep recession and continuing travail.

Very, very few politicians will tell people there's no way out of this situation short of paying off the debts or reneging on paying.

Bankruptcies are 100% higher this year over last year, and will continue to escalate in the years to come. Huge corporations will go under. Millions of smaller businesses will die---and with them all will die their debts.

And the people and institutions who hold all that debt paper, once terribly burned by defaults and bankruptcies, will be triply-shy about loaning out good money in the future.

Republicans will of course lose heavily in the coming elections. The Democrats have nothing new to offer except promises and gobbledygook; their basic inflation strategy isn't workable anymore (not for at least five years, or longer).

The Democrats, in power, will either do what has to be done (but with "Compassion") or they will resort to war, impose total controls on the economy, and effectively destroy our republic.

Yet--- In the depths of the Great Depression, with 25% unemployment, there was 75% employment. Some fortunes were made. New industries rose and prospered.

The intelligent will always live well off the unintelligent, as a rule, because they see reality, see key interrelationships, see how to succeed. They adapt more easily to changed environments...if they are not too emotionally tied up in moralistic and/or character/personality knots.

SELECTIVE ANTI-COMMUNISM RAISES ALL KINDS OF QUESTIONS

in my mind. Why is our government so chummy and cooperative with China, say, and Yugoslavia, and even Russia, and most east bloc socialist countries...and yet is so frothy at the mouth about socialism in Central America?

I'll venture a guess. As David Rockefeller, former head of the Chase-Manhattan Bank and overseer of the Rockefeller family megafortune, has said, the big banks and transnational corporations can do business with any kind of government. There's no moralistic, idealistic anti-communism guiding their tactics---once a communist/socialist government is in place and in solid, permanent control of a country.

Ah, but a "young" socialist country like Nicaragua, and a country in transition from feudalism to socialism...those are situations where the owners of property will fight! The megabanks and the transnational corporations have heavy investments and large holdings in Central America and their ownership of these is at stake!

If they lose that ownership, and after a time it is clear the new socialist/communist state cannot be overthrown or defeated, then the big money will accommodate to reality and do what business it can with that country...and will try to wriggle in for "cooperative" exploitation of the natural resources and/or people.

The United States' foreign policy is based on that truth. The megabanks and world corporations control our foreign policy and use our power to protect their interests overseas. They pick our presidents, staff the key cabinet positions, and can make or break congressmen and senators.

But of course sometimes the American people balk. And sometimes power struggles break out among the elites. Compromises are made or actual coups take place. I believe the Kennedy assassinations were a coup. Johnson did as he was told, and our Vietnam policy was reversed, a war was begun.

The American people---after about ten years---got fed up and forced the powers-that-be to stop the war.

It's becoming obvious that an intervention into the Persian Gulf area is being readied. We'll see if the American people will buy the rationale offered for that move.

THE CORPORATION STRIKES BACK, MY self-published sf/sex novel, is

down to 75 copies left.

STAR WHORES and CANNED MEAT are sold out. They, too, were 500-copy self-published editions.

I was asked recently at a book store when a third Toi King adventure would be written. I have no plans for one at the moment. There is a plot forming gradually in the back of my head, but for 1982, at least, I'll be writing a series of partials with Elton Elliott and having a NY agent see if they can be placed.

STAR WHORES is slowly being typed into ms. form from the single-spaced text of the mimeo edition, and that, too, will be offered around.

I'm becoming more and more absorbed by fiction writing. After 22 years and 5 or 6 million words of published fiction you'd think I'd burn out...but not so. The flame does get low every few years, though.

STRENGTH CORRUPTS
BECAUSE WHEN YOU HAVE
IT, ITS EASIER TO DO THE
WORK YOURSELF THAN TO
DELEGATE.



TEN YEARS AGO IN SCIENCE FICTION — SPRING, 1972

BY ROBERT SABELLA

The Nebula Award winners for 1971 were: A TIME OF CHANGES by Robert Silverberg, "The Missing Man" by Katherine McLean, "The Queen of Air and Darkness" by Poul Anderson and "Good News from the Vatican" by Robert Silverberg. Silverberg was the first double-Nebula winner since Samuel R. Delany in 1967 ... THE TOMBS OF ATUAN by Ursula K. LeGuin was a runnerup for The National Book Award as Best Juvenile ... Science fiction writer Fredric Brown and British editor Ted Carnell died ... In an attempt to beat its hardcover publication, Isaac Asimov's THE GODS THEMSELVES was serialized in three parts over a two-month period. Two installments were in GALAXY and the third was in WORLDS OF IF ... The movie SLAUGHTERHOUSE - FIVE, based on Kurt Vonnegut's novel, was released to generally favorable reviews ... Harlan Ellison's anthology AGAIN, DANGEROUS VISIONS was finally published. The five-year wait was bemoaned by fans who have since come to consider it a brief interlude compared to the long wait for THE LAST DANGEROUS VISIONS.

JAMES WHITE

CONDUCTED BY DARRELL SCHWEITZER

SFR: How did you discover science fiction?

WHITE: While I was a schoolboy in Belfast. It was during the closing of the war, and the American servicemen who were stationed in Northern Ireland used to buy science fiction magazines at their PX, but then they always used to sell them to second-hand book dealers in Belfast. I always went down to see what was available and picked up quite a few American edition ASTOUNDING. There was a very slim sixty-four page British edition which I thought was the definitive edition, when I suddenly found out that it was being published at sixty-four pages four times a year and in America these stories were coming out at a hundred-and-forty pages every month. It did something to me and I became a fan and a collector eventually.

SFR: Did people look down on science fiction there the way they did in the United States at that time? In the

sense that science fiction was something you took home in a plain brown wrapper.

WHITE: Yes. In the case of the Bergey girls you had a beautiful unclad maiden -- well with a very flimsy life support system at least and a bug-eyed monster threatening her and the hero standing by to defend her honor, though why a bug-eyed monster would be interested in a human female, unless it had serious psychological problems, I don't know.

SFR: I would guess it was hungry.

WHITE: Well, the lady looked good enough to eat, but the man didn't. Is that what you mean?

SFR: Well, if she had such a flimsy life support system, there would be less of a shell to crack, so to speak. But seriously, did you want to be a writer from the beginning?

WHITE: No, I wanted to be an illustrator. I had done quite a lot of oil and water color illustrations of science fiction subjects from books I'd read, and when I met Walter Willis and we started a fanzine, I became the art editor and did linocuts for the magazine, quite a lot of them. This wasn't because I was very keen or Walter was very keen -- it was just that we couldn't afford enough type to fill a page. Each page had at least half of it an illustration.

SFR: Any temptation to do something in the manner of Earle Bergey?

WHITE: No, I was a pure-minded young fan who just wanted to draw space-ships on covers.

SFR: How did you eventually get into writing and how long were you trying before you sold anything?

WHITE: I was very fortunate in that I sold my first story, but how I started to write it was that at that particular time John Campbell was on his atomic doom kick and every story

in ASTOUNDING had the Earth descending into mutations or things vaporized or something like that. Everything he published was downbeat, with the result that I felt impelled to write an upbeat story of the kind that I would like to read. So I tried to do a story of the kind I had liked to read in the old days of ASTOUNDING. It was a story called "Assisted Passage" and it sold the first time out to Ted Carnell's NEW WORLDS in 1952. It was published in 1953. He liked it and asked me if I had any other ideas and that's how I got started.

SFR: Did you send much to Campbell?

WHITE: My third story I sent to Campbell and it was accepted, and I think I sent my fourth through to my sixteenth to Campbell and they were all rejected. But I didn't have another story in ASTOUNDING until about twelve years later.

SFR: Was this because Campbell was dictating what the stories would say? Did you get the feeling that he wanted stories to either echo or argue with his editorials?

WHITE: At that time I don't think I was well enough informed to decide, but I'd send him a couple stories and I'd just get a letter back with two or three lines on it saying, "This doesn't fit with our editorial policy". Then I got discouraged. Possibly if I'd kept on sending stories some of them would have clicked, but I got discouraged and Ted Carnell of NEW WORLDS was finding that my work for his magazine was popular. He asked me to do sequels to the Sector General stories which became very popular, and I just kept sending to Ted Carnell even though Campbell paid a lot more money at that time.

SFR: Was there a distinct difference between what the British magazines were publishing at this time and what the American ones were?

WHITE: There seemed to be. The Americans were much more technical and the idea seemed to be treated as hero more than the actual characters, while the British stories had much slower pace, and they introduced characters much more slowly. It was just a different style. There was an American science fiction style



and a British science fiction style and my stories seemed to fit into the British style better than the American. As well, my ideas seemed to develop into the novelet and long novelet lengths, rather than the short story which was preferred by most American magazines. I found that the American magazines had greater difficulty scheduling long stories than short ones.

SFR: How much of this different approach was Carnell's doing?

WHITE: That's a difficult one. Ted Carnell didn't always agree with the way I treated stories, but he did not ask to change things very much, except on one occasion. He seemed to think that the readers liked me the way I was, and so leave good enough alone, but on one occasion I wrote a story called "Second Ending", which was sort of a challenge to myself. I wanted to write a story about the last man on Earth which had an upbeat ending. It was about 35,000 words and I sent it to Ted, and he sent it back and said it should be shortened to about 20,000 words and a surviving island of humanity written into it, which seemed to not be the point of a last-man-on-Earth story. So this is one thing I had a basic disagreement with him on, and so I sent the story to Cele Goldsmith, who was editing FANTASTIC at the time and she took it and it was published as a two-part serial; later Ace picked it up. It got onto the short list of five for that year's Hugo. That was the year Heinlein's STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND won, and was a much longer story and a better one, no doubt. But anyway, getting onto the short list of five meant that it must have been a good story, but Ted just hadn't seen it that way. That was the only time we had a basic disagreement about stories.

SFR: What was he like as an editor overall? Did he shape stories and feed ideas to you or did he just take what you sent him?

WHITE: He didn't shape the stories the way John Campbell was reputed to have done. He was very critical of stories. He didn't like his authors to get careless and if he thought you were hurrying your writing, he said so. Very often a grudging acceptance from Ted Carnell was worse than a dozen rejection slips because he left you feeling like you had no skin left on your back. He accepted the story but wrote two pages pointing out its faults and said not to do this the next time. While it was very unpleasant to take, I think it did me a lot of good as a writer.

SFR: Did your fan writing affect your professional career at all?

WHITE: I wasn't a very prolific fan writer in any case, because I was illustrating most of the time, but when I started selling professionally -- it was just before I was married -- I hadn't a very well-paying job. So as the children began to arrive, my writing in my spare time became a sort of voluntary kind of overtime rather than just a profitable hobby. With being forced to write professionally in my spare time, the funning diminished markedly. I do occasionally write the odd fan piece, but not often anymore. I'm not in touch with what's going on in fandom anymore, except by meeting people at conventions. I like going to conventions.

SFR: The different British approach to science fiction seemed to drift further from the American in the 1960s. What did you think of what went on in NEW WORLDS after Carnell left?

WHITE: I didn't like it at all. I feel about what happened then a little the way I feel about some types of modern art, when someone can get thousands of pounds for sticking a bent nail in a block of wood and calling it "An Unknown Political Prisoner". I think someone is having me on. In the Moorcock NEW WORLDS you would get a page of words typed at random or cut from a newspaper and pasted up like a ransom note except that it didn't make that much sense. When you asked Mike what was he getting at, he'd say, "It's just how it affects you as a whole". I thought somebody was getting money for very little effort and they were making a fool of me. Some of the New Wave writing was very effective, I thought. It really came across to me, but a lot of it -- I think they were just chancing their arm. Do you understand that simile? But like most new movements, the best of it has been kept. It's a new wave that has washed up some very good stuff and the stuff that is no good has been washed back to sea. The literature as a whole has profited a little by it.

SFR: Did you every attempt to participate in any way? Did you ever submit a story to Moorcock?

WHITE: No, I knew I couldn't. It wasn't my style. And at that time I had switched from writing novelettes to novels and collections of novelets like the Sector General collections, so I really wasn't terribly interested in breaking into the Moorcock market. First of all

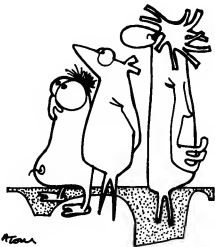
I knew I couldn't write the way they were writing, and I really didn't want to.

SFR: Did you feel that at that time your work was being ignored in favor of the more flamboyant stuff?

WHITE: Yes, I've had this feeling from time to time, but I grew up by being a very fanatical reader of science fiction in the so-called Golden Age of the 30s and early 40s. I wasn't reading then, but I became a collector and I read a lot of the old ASTOUNDINGS from 1934, 1935, etc. and I got to know what was being done then, the good stuff as well as the bad. This imposed a discipline on me. I felt that I couldn't write something which was substandard. I had all these heroes like Isaac Asimov and Lester del Rey and Ted Sturgeon, Heinlein and so on. They were all new and coming up and they were writing stories which were beautifully polished and had real characters. They were exciting and they stretched the imagination. I felt there was no point in doing something that didn't at least approach this level. So I was always trying to aim as high as I could. Even though I was writing for money in my spare time to try and help with the household's expenses, I had an ordinary job, so I didn't have to become so commercial that I just churned out work in order to get money. I always felt that I should try and make each story a little better than the last, and I had these old masters to remind me that there's things you can't get away with.

SFR: Weren't there also times when you wanted to do things the old masters didn't, and go in another direction?

WHITE: Yes, there are certain science fiction themes which are like measles and children. Everybody gets



them and they have to get them out of their systems. It's a very beneficial illness as far as the fans are concerned, because each patient has a different idea of how the disease should progress. So I've had my particular idea of how a time travel story should be and how a first contact story should be and how medical science fiction should be. In a story called "The Watch Below" it was basically a Heinlein "Universe" setup, but I put in a few different twists which made it completely different from Heinlein. But I freely admit that it was Heinlein that got me started on the idea. There isn't really anything new under the sun, but I like taking a story I really admire and thinking what would have happened if the author had gotten a different idea of how that story should have developed, a different ending and perhaps different characters. What sort of a story would it have been like? This is usually how I start to work. I end up much of the time by having a plot and a story which bears no relation to the original one except very generally. I like to do new work, not go over old ground no matter how fallow it happens to be.

SFR: You seem to have specialized in medical science fiction more than anyone else? How did this come about?

WHITE: Well, I always wanted to be a doctor but the family was too poor to send me to medical school and I just got an ordinary job, initially in the tailoring industry and then at an aircraft factory where because of my science fiction writing, I was able to get a job in the public relations department, writing and editing the company newspaper. But I always had this fondness for medicine and also for reading about aliens. The early stories of E.E. Smith were really what got me hooked on science fiction. The first one that really blew my mind was a magazine I found in the second hand shops, the October 1939 ASTOUNDING which had the first part of GREY LENSERMAN, and I read this and discovered that there were aliens who were actually good guys, no matter how visually horrifying they might be. This appealed to me and I think this part of the reason why the Hospital Station stories came about. I had this feeling of wanting to be a doctor and I had this liking for extra-terrestrials in stories. The two somehow merged together into the Hospital Station series.

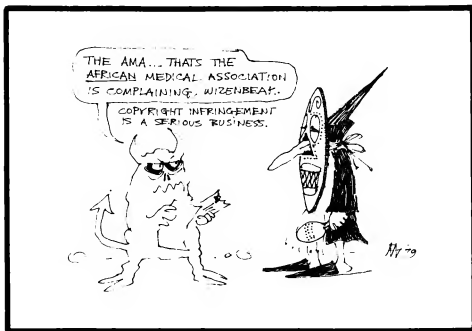
SFR: To what do you attribute the longevity of this series?

WHITE: I don't know. There was meant to be one long novelet called

"Sector General", which was published in NEW WORLDS in 1957, and Ted asked for a sequel and then another sequel and I thought with three novelets, perhaps Ace would be interested in publishing it as half of an Ace Double. Ace turned it down. The readers of NEW WORLDS still wanted more with this background and I did two more short stories. Then Ballantine accepted and published all of them as HOSPITAL STATION. That was to be the end. Then I got an idea -- I'm a pacifist at heart and I had this idea in my notebook for a long time, about an interstellar war, not viewed from the victor or the defeated side, but from the people in the middle who do the medical repair work created by both sets of combatants. The more I thought of it, the more this fitted

know why it's so popular, really. I have a nice feeling for it and I don't want the series to develop into a sort of kitchen sink/doctor-and-nurse romance-type situation. I only write a story if I have an idea for a really alien alien. Most of the stories are simply medical puzzles. They're partly medical and partly first contact stories where very often the alien is in no position to communicate because of its injuries or its illness. The doctors have to sort out a lot about its background and evolution in order to treat it.

This is a form which I personally find very interesting, and if I can get an alien that has never been used before, I write it up but it has to be a completely new alien for



into the Sector General background. So I did this story. It was a short novel called FIELD HOSPITAL. It was too short for book publication, so I did another introductory novelet called "Resident Physician" and joined the two together. These were published as STAR SURGEON. After that I thought, well, that's the series' finish, but Ted Carnell had left NEW WORLDS to edit NEW WRITINGS IN SF, which is an anthology series published by Corgi and he asked me to do a couple of short Sector General novelets for him. So the series was resurrected again and the five I did for him became MAJOR OPERATION from Ballantine. I thought, well, that's it. I can now talk about a Sector General trilogy, and the series is now at an end. But a few years ago Ballantine asked me if I would try and do another book on SECTOR GENERAL and I did it. I don't

me to want to write another story in the series. I suppose that's why it's popular. There are also a couple of characters in it who are very popular: O'Mara, the chief psychologist, who's very sarcastic and nasty, and obviously has a heart of gold but never shows it, and the empath, Prilicla, who's a very fragile insect intelligence. Though, honestly, I don't know why it's gone on so long. For twenty years they have been running now, and I've just been writing for twenty-eight years.

SFR: I think one of the reasons it's going on is that you're one of the few writers whose aliens are not clearly humans in costumes, and the backgrounds are not just human history repeated in costume.

WHITE: Yes, I suppose so, but there is the problem there that if you have a really alien alien, it won't be understandable to human beings.

So you have to give an alien at least one human attribute in order to have a channel of communication. And then you can begin to understand the differences. But if I was playing completely fair, and had a completely alien alien, nobody would be able to understand. So I feel a little bit embarrassed when people say "You do very good aliens". Actually, possibly the reason why my aliens are popular is that they have a little bit of humanity in them which enables you to empathize with them. I don't know.

SFR: I'd think any intelligent species would have something in common with us: will to survive, will to reproduce and if they were technological, a will to create and explore.

WHITE: We know from our own experience the technological and political cooperation that's required even to put a man on the moon, and if someone is going to send a ship out to explore among the stars, it presupposes that the culture it came from is highly technical and also cooperates among itself. Therefore the people who are going out to explore are not absolute baddies, because if they were hostile and warlike and just wanted to kill everything in sight, they could never have gotten to the stage of getting off their own planet. This is the way I like to think it would be.

SFR: What if they cooperate for the opportunity to kill everybody else?

WHITE: I don't think this is a good reason, because if they're cooperating to kill everybody else, it's much handier to kill each other. They're nearer by. I don't want to go along with that.

SFR: Have you written any more Sector General within the last year or so?

WHITE: I have a long novelet done in the series. My agent wasn't able to sell it to a magazine because it was an awkward length, and he suggested that I keep it and add two or three novelets in the series and submit it as another Sector General collection. This I intend to do, but it'll take some time yet.

SFR: Have you written the companion novelets?

WHITE: No. The big one is called "Operation Midgard". The alien is so large -- you know, the old Midgard serpent bit; it's supposed to stretch around the world with its tail in its mouth. It's not quite that big but it's too large to fit in the hospital so the job of treating it



is a large scale structural problem as well as a medical one. Then I've done another short novelet. I'll have to write another longish novelet or two short ones to get another book together.

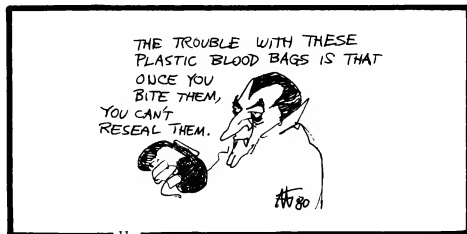
SFR: Have you ever considered doing something completely apart from the rest of your work such as a fantasy novel, and if you did, how would you go about it?

WHITE: I don't think I'd try a fantasy novel. Again, it's a case of literary measles, something you have to get out of your system. I have never done an alternate universe novel, and I'd like to try that sometime. But that would be the closest I would get to fantasy, I think. I tried one fantasy of the UNKNOWN type way back, and it was awful. It bounced, so I just stuck to science fiction.

SFR: How about a straight medical novel?

WHITE: I did write a book called UNDERKILL, which wasn't taken by a U.S. publisher. It was set in the near future, and I felt very strongly about the situation around me in

Belfast when I was writing it. I live in a very troubled area, Andersonstown, and I was getting very annoyed that I was trying to write nice, forward-looking science fiction, while all around the house this bloody melodrama was going on. The story I wrote was set in a hospital, in the intensive care unit. Now, my wife worked for three years in the intensive care unit of the Royal Victoria Hospital on the Falls Road in Belfast, which is the hospital right in the middle of the troubled area, and gets all the gunshot wounds and bomb blast victims as well as the traffic accidents. Quite a lot of that story was based on her experiences. This was a very downbeat story and that's probably why it wasn't taken by the American publishers. They were used to nice optimistic Jim White stories. The story was published by a U.K. publisher, and by the Germans and the Italians, and I got record advances for it, but I thought later that the U.K. and Germany and Italy are the people most troubled by urban guerrilla warfare and they would probably understand what I was getting at more than the Americans. The Americans may have violence but you do not need urban guerrilla warfare as



much.

SFR: Did any of your own experiences go into it?

WHITE: Some of them, but pretty well disguised. I don't want to preach in a story, but in that particular story -- again like the Sector General stories, it was a medical detective story -- the situation was an intensive care unit, where in this future hospital the pain-killer used was a derivative of a truth drug security forces used, so the people weren't suffering, but while they were patients they were talking their heads off. Inside this particular ward the patients were talking and it represented in microcosm all the troubles of the world outside. By listening to them it became apparent to the doctor in charge that there was some sort of conspiracy going on outside, and there were extra-terrestrial forces causing it. That's how the story began to develop. But some of the descriptions inside the hospital are accurate so far as Belfast is concerned.

SFR: So you think the reason it did not sell in the United States was that you'd become typecast?

WHITE: I'd like to think so, but it is quite possible that the story wasn't as well written or well balanced as some of the other ones. I don't want to be big-headed, but when one is close to a subject, one isn't able to view it objectively the way you can self-criticize other stories of one's own.

SFR: At the same time, shouldn't this closeness to the subject give the story a greater conviction and intensity?

WHITE: It did. The people who rejected it in the United States all had complimentary things to say about the characterization and the background which was described, but they didn't think it was a Jim White type story. I don't mind characters suffering throughout a story, but I like the story to have a happy ending. This one didn't.

SFR: Do you think you could have sold it under a pseudonym?

WHITE: I don't think so.

SFR: What are you working on now?

WHITE: I am in the process of revising a story for Stanley Schmidt of ANALOG. When I'm writing a story I tend to run on a bit, and for a magazine publication there must be a lot of discipline when you're developing characters and that sort of

thing. While Stanley liked this story, it's far too long, so when I get back home I've got the job of trimming it down a bit and resubmitting it. After that I'll get on to the Sector General stories, and after that, "The Big One" as I call it, which I'd like to work on, but which needs a lot of research.

SFR: Can you say anything about the Big One? What is it?

WHITE: Well, no, I suppose you've met this with writers before. There is a time when you get an idea and it's in a very delicate state, and if you talk about it, and somebody says, "Oh, So-And-So did that", or "I think the idea is ridiculous", it is so unformed and, as I say, delicate, you're just going to destroy it utterly. At this stage when I'm trying to think up a plot, I want to wait until my brain child has developed a little bit of muscle so it'll be able to resist criticism. I think too, if you talk about plot ideas too much, you tend to lose the charge that makes you want to write them. Have you found this with writers?



SFR: Yes. I've found it with my own experience too. But there are some writers who like to talk things out. What are your actual writing methods like?

WHITE: Well, I have this full-time job in the publicity department of the aircraft factory at home. I'm responsible for writing the company newspaper and producing it, and also for answering historical queries and taking visitors around. At night when I come home, I often don't feel like going up to the roof space and sitting at a typewriter again, but I've schooled myself to go up and sit there, and I don't come down until I've done maybe five- or six-hundred words before supertime. My wife has been a considerable support in this over the years. She says my typewriter is the other woman because I leave her alone and when the children were growing up she had much of the responsibility with them because I was upstairs trying to earn more money. You know the old saying, "Behind every successful man there's a good woman"? She would say little things like, "A couple

hundred words before supper, Buster, or you won't get any". But what I usually do is write for three or four evenings a week, and either Saturday or Sunday write for most of the day. If it's raining on Saturday, I do it Saturday and go out with the family or take it easy on Sunday. In winter sometimes I write both Saturday and Sunday because there's nothing better to do.

SFR: Do you outline, or just plunge into it, or what?

WHITE: This is a funny question in that I've been asked it several times and there's no clear answer. My friend, Bob Shaw, if he was writing a story, could plot it out in advance and write a sentence or two about what was going to happen in every chapter. He would almost write it in his head. He'd put down this outline, and then as soon as he'd get the time, he'd start writing the story, and he knew how exactly it was going. Well, I work differently. I know where it's going to end, because basically a science fiction story is a problem story and you have an answer to produce, and so you start with the ending in mind, and you go back -- not too far back because you don't want the story to be slow -- but back far enough to introduce the types of characters and advance the action toward the conclusion you've planned. This is how I work. Sometimes I'm not sure how the characters are going to do it and during the writing of the story I find shortcuts for them that will get them to the conclusion. But I very often don't know what the middle of the story is going to be like. Jim Blish and I discussed this once. He said that the essential difference was that Bob Shaw used a map to see where he was going in a story, whereas I used a compass. I think this was very well said.

SFR: Do you ever find yourself stuck and unable to get from the beginning to the end?

WHITE: Very rarely. If I would find myself in that situation, I would backtrack and go on. I got into a bad habit one time of starting stories, not liking the beginning, and going back and rewriting until I had three or four starts and not getting at all into the story. Now I force myself to write on to the end, so that at least I have this untidy heap of material which I can cut and trim rather than a whole lot of alternative starts which aren't saleable.

SFR: Thank you, James White.

THEPornoNOVEL

BIZ

BY ANONYMOUS

For the past year and a half, I have worked as an editor for a company which publishes novels which many people would label pornographic. In that time I have edited novels on every forbidden sexual subject from erotic wives to incest to bestiality to homosexuality.

People who know what I do for a living refuse to believe me when I say it's a job just like any other job. It is. In some ways. But in other ways, it's like no other job in the world. First of all, I learned not to let everyone I know in on what I do every day of the week. Even those who are liberal minded about drugs, civil rights, freedom of the press and the rights of consenting adults will bristle with outrage when they learn that I am the prince of porn.

I get typed. They have my number. It doesn't matter that I am not what I do for a living. They just know that I spend every night engaged in endless orgies and they refuse to believe that I spend my evenings quietly, writing mysteries, science fiction and poetry while I listen to classical music.

They also refuse to believe that the people who read the books I edit are just normal run-of-the-mill people who work at the same occupations as everyone else. They can't believe that any more than they can believe that there is a market for sex fantasy novels in the first place. Surely the porno book biz must be dying.

I used to think so too. Now I don't. Not after looking at sales figures and not after talking to editors, writers and readers of sex novels.

I am convinced that screw novels will not vanish from the marketplace no matter how many films, picture books, dolls and gadgets are sold; no matter how far to the right or left this country swings; no matter how many laws are enacted; no matter how much visual pornography competes with them.

Why? Because people need them, and in some ways nothing can take their place, not even real sex.

Sex novels satisfy a yearning in people in much the same way as sword-and-sorcery stories do -- for however long it takes the reader to finish the book, he is the handsome

virile man who can do anything, who always satisfies the woman. He has the power. Porno books also allow the reader to play the part of the voyeur (an urge which lurks in everyone) in a way that is not possible in the real world, in a way that is much more satisfying. The readers can watch and at the same time identify with the characters. The characters can come their brains out forever, and so can the reader.

Not only can the reader identify with the characters but he can also shape them to fit his ideas of what they should look like, can mold them into a physical form that will be guaranteed to turn him on. The characters become more than real.

And that is where the paperback porno book triumphs over the films, sex magazines and picture books. It is the difference between looking at a picture of a steak and ac-



tually sinking your teeth into a perfectly cooked steak.

Picture books do not present coherent stories which is necessary to make sex real in the mind. And the models are there before the viewer -- there is no pretending they look any different. There is nothing left to fantasize about.

I feel that those who go after the visual pornography are like most people in that they do not have the ability to fantasize. They don't dream as readers do.

In talking to readers who have called me and in reading their fan letters (yes, I get both and from all parts of the country), I find that they have certain conceptions of sex. They see sex as more than grunting sweaty bodies, rutting like animals, more than something which takes a lot of energy and effort, which is not always satisfying, not always the best thing in life.

The reader-as-character does not have to worry about not having a planet-shattering climax because that is the inevitable outcome of any sexual union. The character never tires, and he is always able to do just the right thing to wring out the last bit of pleasure from the sexual act. He never does anything wrong and is always able to come at just the right time. And he is able to come time and time again, pausing only to switch partners or change positions.

In this way, porno novels deliver huge doses of satisfaction that visual pornography and real-life sex cannot.

That is not to say, however, that the numbers of readers have not been cut by the proliferation and easy availability of picture magazines, porno video cassettes, films and real sex. All of those things have lured people away. But, at the same time, those same things have sent people scurrying to the novels.

Most porno novels are not cheap, sometimes costing two or three times as much as a regular book, but they are quite a bit cheaper than picture books (\$7-\$15), video cassettes (\$50 and up), films (\$4 and up) and real sex (\$30, the price of drinks, or marriage -- plus some people are just losers when it comes to making a pick-up). And, as said before, many people just get more sat-

isfaction by experiencing sex through the medium of the mind.

All through this little article I have used the masculine pronoun in describing the readers of the porno books I edit. That's not the case in real life. I have received calls and letters from women readers, and I know that a great many women are on mailing lists to receive sexually oriented literature.

Like nothing else, working in this job has made me aware that women have sexual needs and desires that are just as strong as those of men. They too, have sexual fantasies that cannot be satisfied by real life.

I have been told that, contrary to what many people believe, women cannot get all the sex they want, any time they want. And the sex that they do get may not be physically or mentally satisfying.

For many generations, men have treated sex as their personal property, the woman being nothing more than the receptacle of their male-ness, making a woman climax being nothing more than proof of their sexual prowess. The old joke that learning how to fake an orgasm is part of becoming a woman turns out to be no joke.

Another factor which drives men and women to seek sexual satisfaction in the pages of a book is the sexual repression and suppression which goes on in many parts of the country, particularly in the Midwest, the so-called Bible Belt. If mail order sales are any indication (because it's hard to find stores in that part of the country) then there are just as many horny people there as in the big sinful cities. And they are all craving sexual satisfaction of some sort.

In some areas, especially in hundreds of thousands of small towns where everyone knows everyone else, sexual satisfaction of any kind outside the sanctity of marriage is frowned upon or even legislated against. And for many people, sex is the least satisfactory part of their marriage. In those towns, affairs and overt purchases of sexual literature immediately become common knowledge. The postal carrier works overtime there, carrying small packages sent by companies that bear innocuous names, but are really companies that specialize in delivering sexual fantasies ... dreams and pleasures that are otherwise forbidden.

Books, in many cases, are easier to get hold of in places where the Puritans still hold sway spiritually. Plus they last longer, are easier to shelf away in the back of



closets and, in extreme moments, the offending cover can be ripped off, the reader pretending to everyone that it's really a detective or science fiction novel. That's a typical school kid trick.

Getting beyond sexual gratification, though, porno novels provide a service to the entire publishing industry and to social libertarians on the whole. They act as a barometer of social liberties, as a thermometer of the moral climate of the country. As long as people are allowed to buy them, as long as stores can sell them, then most other books will be safe.

But when these self-righteous Moral Majority types go on a rampage with their cans of gasoline and books of matches, watch out. If this country ever falls into the hands of the book burners, porno novels will probably be among the first books to go up in smoke, not counting the visual pornography which will be easier targets.

By their own words, the book burners have said that they will not stop with what they consider blatant pornography. They're out to clean the entire house. If they burn TROPIC OF CANCER, CRY OF THE LOON and HOT PANTS DAUGHTER, then it is only a small step to torch STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND, TITAN and VENUS ON THE HALFSHELL.

But I digress. Pornographic novels are, for the most part, cheap-looking publications that are hurriedly written, competently at best, nearly illiterate at worst. I would be the last person in the world to claim that they are lasting or even serious literature. They are not. No more than any other book. But they do represent the thoughts of the writer, of the story teller. And to many people they represent sexual satisfaction and release, sometimes the only kind they can have without falling afoul of the law or the social mores of the places where they live.

Surprisingly then, the porno book biz is not an ailing industry, one of the few industries that can make that claim in these times of economic woes.

I will always have a job editing pornographic novels, though I may not always do that task. If not me, then there will be others.

Porno novels will never die a natural death, of that I am sure. And when it seems that they have been murdered by the moral climate, torched by spiritual misfits, look underground ... and there they'll be waiting for the return of more tolerant times to come into the open.

IF there is anything more desirable in all the world than to be a science fiction writer, it is to be a science fiction critic. True, the money is not as good, but that is no impediment, for the first requirement to be a good critic is that you despise money. The good critic is so free of the profit motive that he not only refuses the many offers of New York publishers to taint his poverty with cash advances, he also regards it as his special duty to call attention to the fact that large sums of money are invariably paid to the worst writers.

There are several ways to prepare yourself for a life of criticism. The first requirement, at least for



HOW TO BE A SCIENCE FICTION CRITIC

a beginner, is that you read something. Later, of course, when your reputation has solidified, you can offer profound criticism of other people solely on the basis of observing their names in the table of contents of certain anthologies. A handy guide is: If the writer's name appears in an anthology that has a theme or that is read by a lot of people, you can be sure that he writes trash, and your reputation will be enhanced by condemning him soundly.

A Guide to Schools of Criticism

However, as a beginner, you must prepare yourself more thoroughly. The first thing to do is decide which School you will belong to. Each critical School, like each Kung Fu School, has its own passwords and special handshakes, along with other secret rituals like Dorsal Scratching, Selective Obliviousness and the Indiscriminate Sneer. Following is a fairly reliable guide to the current Schools:

Pigeonholers. Not since the Renaissance has there been a more consistent system of identifying and naming everything in the universe as the system developed by the Pigeonholers. Furthermore, they have discovered that every book is inspired either by a god or by a devil -- usually by a devil.

The Pigeonholers' basic technique is to learn the names of the devils and decide which devil inspired the book or story at hand. Some of the most prominent devils are Hard Science Fiction, Heroic Fantasy, Sword and Sorcery, Space Opera and Analog

Story. Along with these, you must learn the names of the lesser demons which are quite numerous, but include such familiar faces as Cardboard Characters, Lead Prose, Lack of Motivation and Fascism. As a righteous Pigeonholer, you will of course despise all of these. And you will, through practice, become adept at deciding which devil inspired a story before you are more than three paragraphs into it.

From then on, you need not pay the slightest attention to anything going on in the book, for you already know what to say about it. If Heroic Fantasy inspired it, you can be sure that the demon Fascism is right behind, with Cardboard Characters easy to find on every page. If Analog Story is the devil responsible, look for the demons Lack of Motivation and Lead Prose.

One problem with this approach is that now and then, despite your best efforts, you will become interested in a story even after you know which devil inspired it. You may even notice some elements that make it different from other stories inspired by that devil. This problem is easy to handle. Here's my tip: Just say, "Not only is the story Heroic Fantasy, it is bad Heroic Fantasy for it keeps making pathetic attempts at being Science Fiction; and where-ever the author slackens his Fascis-

tic Philosophy, he spawns the most embarrassing sort of Puritanism. If he's going to write a bad book, he could at least make it consistent". Thus the writer who fits neatly within the categories and the writer whose work defies categorization can be damned with equal ease.

The main drawback of the Pigeonholer School is that your reviews quickly become repetitive and dull and you will soon want to find new things to say. When that happens, one of the next two Schools will probably be just right for you.

Ye Olde Modernists. Once upon a time there was a movement called "Modernism". The Modernists -- such people as Percy Lubbock, Virginia Wolfe and Henry James -- knew that the old Victorian ways were trivial and outmoded, that writers and critics were mindlessly imitating past masters. It was time for a fresh approach, one that was true for Today, for Now, for our Current Dilemma. They are all dead, but Ye Olde Modernists worshipfully preserve their ideas, for if it was good enough for James Joyce and T.S. Eliot, it is good enough for us.

Among science fiction critics, however, Ye Olde Modernists have a special reason for carrying on the cause. For Modernism is still, in its slow and clumsy way, respectable in the outside world. It is a tried and true critical technique which can be memorized and applied to anything. Unfortunately, you have to read some books, like FINNEGAN'S WAKE and TO THE LIGHTHOUSE and THE GOOD SOLDIER; fortunately, you do not have to understand them. All you have to do is see if a science fic-

BY ORSON SCOTT CARD

tion writer sounds like one of these writers, and if he does, you know he's acceptable. If he doesn't, then you sneer at him.

The sneering must be done circumspectly, however. An indiscriminate or gleeful sneer brands you as an enthusiast. You must adopt a pose of brilliant wisdom tempered by the utmost self-restraint. You must speak of science fiction as if you stood above it, looking down, calling it a field with promise, with undeveloped potential. You must be able to make frequent allusion to Modernist masterpieces. And you must never sneer at a book written by another Olde Modernist. This technique when properly carried out, is called "dishing".

The Fossil Waver. The advantage of becoming a Fossil Waver is that you do not have to read as much as Ye Olde Modernists do. All you have to do to be a Fossil Waver is to write an awful lot but never publish anything for real money, or if you do, make sure that everyone knows that you are only churning out trash because pleasing the masses is so easy, while you keep your virgin masterpieces untainted by vulgar eyes. Your philosophy must be late-sixties radicalism tempered with world-weary cynicism, and you must say "fuc-" and "shi-" whenever an ordinary person would suppose it unnecessary to say it.

Whenever anyone who is not a Fossil Waver publishes a book, you respond in one of two ways. If the book was written by an Olde Modernist, then you must sigh wearily and say, "Hasn't B----- got tired of writing the same old s-it over and over again? She has a great book in her, if only she weren't too much of a f-cking coward to write it". If the book was written by a new writer or by a writer known to be popular, then you must become, not angry, but livid. "When will science fiction readers stop masturbating with this f-cking garbage!" is always a good opening line.

The disadvantage of being a Fossil Waver is that no one will like you anymore except other Fossil Wavers, and most of them will think you are a dumb little -ucker, too.

Just Folks. If you still read science fiction for pleasure, this is the category that will probably appeal to you most. Here the pose is, "I just like a good story, I don't care about anything else". As a defense mechanism for popular science fiction writers who are sick of being dumped on by Pigeonholers, Olde Modernists and Fossil Wavers, this pose works quite well. But for the beginning reviewer, the pose leaves you with very little to say. It doesn't provide you with a ready-

made grid that you can lay over every story you read; it doesn't allow you to get by with skimming a book for the attackable errors. All you can really report on is your experience in reading the book.

If you are a good writer, then you can make your account of the experience of reading seem fascinating whether you liked the book or not. Unfortunately, if you are not a good writer your readers will find your personal responses singularly uninteresting. But if you are determined to join the Just Folks School, here is a hint: Just write a short outline of everything that you can remember about the book. Think of it as a junior high school book report. When you have finished writing this synopsis, then go back and add some modifiers. If you didn't like the book, where your outline says, "Then he jumped into the crocodile-infested lake", you will now say, "Then he stupidly jumped into the crocodile-infested lake". If you liked the book, then at the beginning or end of your review just say, "A real page-turner", or "I couldn't put it down".

Slide Rulers. If you know a lot about science and engineering, then you'll be a natural for Slide Ruling the books you read. This review technique consists of examining every scientific idea in a story and seeing if it works out with the known laws of science -- or at least the current trends. Ideally, you would build and test all artifacts described in a story. Since this may be beyond your ability, it is enough merely to notice scientifically implausible events. If you liked the story anyway, then say, "I really liked this story, despite the fact that it was scientifically impossible". If you didn't like the story, then say, "Why does a writer this ignorant of science bother to write science fiction?"

This particular approach is only open to sincere believers. If you ever catch yourself noticing that maybe it doesn't matter in a particular story whether the science is plausible or not, you will soon find it impossible to devote whole reviews to noting scientific flaws, and then you will have to go hunting for another School.

The Insiders. This approach is only open to those who have been fans for a very long time or who have worked as junior editors at various publications or who are themselves budding young writers. If you do not fit at least one of these prerequisites, you might as well skip this section, for like a Ph.D., your Insider Credentials cannot be faked.

The basic pose for the Insider is educational. The readers of your reviews are, of course, outsiders; you will tell them how it really is inside. You must speak of all the great old writers, like Asimov, Heinlein and Clarke, with awe; you must afford proper dignity to such lesser lights as LeGuin, Ellison, Bradbury, Silverberg and Niven. However, this does not mean that you will give them good reviews. As an Insider, you know better. You must always say that the great writer "is slipping" or "hasn't written anything really good in years" or "really ought to stop embarrassing himself with weak stories like these". It will help if you can drop in some gossip, like, "At our magazine we have even had to reject a story of his recently", or, "Word from those who have seen his latest book in manuscript is that it's actually good". If you have no gossip, then just say "I could tell you some hair-raising stories, but this isn't the place".

As an Insider, you must be sure to condemn every new writer who has not "paid his dues" -- i.e., who has not been to a lot of conventions or who is not publishing with your magazine. After all, as an Insider you are a keeper of the flame. If just anyone could be Inside, how would you be special anymore? The price of being Inside is constant vigilance.

How to Know if You Really Belong

One of the problems of joining one of the Schools is that it's sometimes hard to know if you really belong. None of them give out membership cards. But here are a few guidelines that will help you if you are in doubt:

1. If you always keep a copy of Camp Concentration on your coffee table and hide all your George R.R.





Martin in the back room when company comes, you are an Olde Modernist.

2. If you go to conventions and then stand around in the halls telling people how dumb the programming is, you are probably an Insider. To be sure, write a convention report. If someone publishes it, you are an Insider.

3. If you believe that anyone who makes money at science fiction has sold out to the establishment, or if you sometimes wish that you had died in glory in a peace rally in 1968, or if everyone you know calls Jerry Pournelle a Fascist, then you are a Fossil Waver.

4. If you tend to buy books because the cover looks interesting, you are definitely Just Folks.

5. If you believe that it means something to say that Mary Renault and Victoria Holt both write historicals or that Howard and Tolkien both wrote heroic fantasy or that Larry Niven and Barry Longyear both write hard science fiction, then you are a Pigeonholer.

If you are not presently a member of one of these schools, do not despair. Study the masters. Follow the hints I have given you. In time you will find that you are accepted, and you will be lonely no more. Re-

member, if one School rejects you rudely, that alone is almost sure to give you membership in another School. Just get yourself damned by a Fossil Waver, and you will quickly find yourself welcomed by an Insider or a Just Folks. Get yourself hated by enough Just Folks, and you will surely be able to parlay it into at least tentative acceptance by Ye Olde Modernists. If the Insiders and the Just Folks hate you, the Fossil Wavers will love you. So it goes.

Are There Alternatives?

If none of these Schools looks interesting or achievable to you, there are a few alternatives.

You might find a Cause, and review everything you read in terms of how it measures up to your Cause. For instance, if you are a feminist, you only have to find examples of male dominance or subservient self-awareness and, if the writer is male, you can condemn him as a sexist.

(If the writer is female, the offending passages are all satire and social commentary.) Other causes in times past have been ecology, racial equality and peace. This approach is similar to Pigeonholing in that you don't actually have to read what the author wrote; you only have to catch telltale signs.

Another approach is Debunking. Just look for a book that a lot of other people like and then explain why they are all fools for liking it. This allows you to feel smarter than practically everyone.

Still other reviewers have found success with the Personal Assault. This technique can be adapted for use by Fossil Wavers and Insiders as well. All you have to do is write a review that says deliciously vicious things about a well-known writer's character or family or private life. Even if your statements are libelous lies, as long as you have enough rhymes and alliterations to sound clever, you'll find a fan publisher willing to publish it, in hopes that the victimized writer will respond. Then the publisher will be able to put the famous writer's name on the cover of the next issue. And if the offended writer does not respond, the publisher can call his fanzine "hard-hitting" and "controversial". Don't worry about lawsuits. Either the writer can't afford lawyers, or if he can, he'd rather count his money and ignore you. If you can't think of anyone to attack, attack Harlan Ellison. He's planning to publish a collection of brilliant, acid-tongued letters called ANSWERS TO A-SHOLES and he'd love to have you inspire him to write another piece.

But don't -- I warn you! -- don't ever approach a book that you mean to review with respect. The most you can ever hope for is a "good read" (if you're Just Folks) or a vindication of your point of view (if you belong to any other School). For if you willingly put yourself in the writer's hands, and try to experience the story as she presents it to you, you run the untenable risk of profound disappointment -- or the even more terrifying risk of letting a book change you. What would you do then? If you still, foolishly, wrote a review, you would have to write intelligently about your own soul, and people might not like you then. They might even sneer at you and say, "So that's what you like." How interesting. And you would be almost completely alone, not a member of a comforting community of fellow believers. If would be just you and the book you read, and with the glue they're using for bindings these days, books make pretty thin armor.

SMALL PRESS NOTES

BY THE EDITOR

WHISPERS #15-16 (MARCH, 1982) \$5.00

Published and edited by Stuart David Schiff, 70 Highland Av., Binghamton, NY 13905.

This double issue isn't strictly speaking a magazine. It's a book! I mean, when you get up to 178 pages, full-color covers, perfect binding... And when there are ten stories, seven articles and departments...you have a volume!

The fiction is by Ramsey Campbell, bell, Ray Russell, Michael Shea, William F. Nolan, Gerald W. Page, Joel Hagen, Frances Garfield, and Karl Edward Wagner.

This is the Ramsey Campbell issue of WHISPERS and features three stories by Campbell as well as an interview with Campbell by Dr. Jeffrey M. Elliot.

The "News" column by Stuart Schiff is a highlight of each issue, and this issue's twelve-page news-review-commentary on people, publishing, magazines, and sundry related items is a non-stop gem.

The John Stewart cover is a wonder of the grotesque. The back cover by Bok is strangely compelling.

THE CATCHER OF THE RYE

By Carl Brandon
Introduction by Terry Carr
Obsessive Press, Box 1624
Madison, WI 53701

What we have here is the true and funny story of how Carl Brandon was created, grew, thrived and died ---as the most successful and distinguished hoax ever perpetrated upon sf fandom. Way back in the mid-fifties.... That part is told by the prime player of the hoax, Terry Carr. The bulk of this book is made up of the writings of "Carl Brandon".

There is also a Carl Brandon Index listing all of Brandon's writings and where they appeared and who wrote them. Other authors of Carl Brandon's works were Bob Stewart, Dave Rike, Ron Ellik, Pete Graham, Miriam Carr, and Karen Anderson.

They fooled everybody! Except me, of course. I was publishing PSYCHOTIC then I knew. Well, I did! I did, too! I swear to God I suspected! Well, I would have tumbled if I'd thought about it enough!



Here is a delightful chunk of fannish history on the hoof, fully revealed after all these years. No Trufan should be without this publication.

In a covering letter with this review copy, publisher Jeanne Gomoll says: "Copies cost \$6. apiece, plus postage (\$1.00 US, \$1.50 foreign). There were only 200 published and all copies are numbered. I have a limited number of signed copies (by both Brandon and Carr), and I will send those out to whoever requests them as long as quantities last for no extra charge.

"Anyone who bought a copy at WisCon might be interested to know that a botched page was discovered --page 54, on which two paragraphs were transposed during layout---and I have since reprinted that page in a corrected form. Anyone who wants a replacement page has only to send me a postcard and I'll send them one. Then the defective book can have its staples removed, the new page inserted, and put together good as new."

OTHERGATES #5, 1982 \$5.00

Edited by Millean Kenin
Unique Graphics
1025 55th St., Oakland, CA 94608

OTHERGATES is a market guide covering the fields of Fantasy, Science Fiction, Mystery, Horror for the small presses, fan press, etc.

This is of greatest interest for writers and artists.

Quarterly updates are available. This is no small effort; there are hundreds of publications and their requirements listed. In fact, an academic researcher in the fields of sf, fantasy, occult, etc. would find this volume invaluable.

THE FABULOUS ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF PSYCHOACTIVE PLANTS or GREAT GRAND-MA'S PLEASURES \$14.95

By Michael Starks
Loompanics Unlimited
POB 264, Mason, MI 48854

This large (9 x 12) format hard-cover contains 194 pages and hundreds of old photos (mostly from Asia) which detail the history and uses and abuses, and the technical details of how-to, of:

Marijuana
Tobacco
Coffee
Cocao
Tea
Mate'
Coca
Cola
Khat
Fly Agaric
Kava Kava
Thorn Apple,

and is the reference book on these matters for anyone, especially a writer, and especially a writer of historical adventures.

THE LOMBROW ART OF ROBT. WILLIAMS

By Robert Williams
Rip Off Press, POB 14158, San Francisco, CA 94114.

A very good sampler of Williams' art, including many of his famous surrealist and bizarre paintings in full color.

He seems to be obsessed with death in its various guises, cars, sex...all the interesting things about life.

Costs \$10.95. Large format 95-page trade paperback.

THE BEST OF SOUTH AFRICAN SCIENCE FICTION - VOLUME ONE

Edited by Tony Davis
Published by Science Fiction South Africa, PO Box 144, Isando 1600, S.A.

Eleven stories, an introduction, and a "Brief History of Science Fiction South Africa" [their sf fan organization], and an explanation of the govt. book banning standards/criteria, and a list of sf books banned, including Ballard's CRASH, Moorcock's BEHOLD THE MAN, Heinlein's STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND, Dick's A SCANNER DARKLY, Spinrad's BUG JACK BARRON, many titles by Philip Jose Farmer, Brian Aldiss, and Harlan Ellison. And much and many more.

The stories in this volume are generally fair as stories; many betray small amateurisms and clumsiness; many are of great interest for their localized color/customs and "different" slant.

The U.S. price is \$3.00 post-paid.

SCIENCE FICTION VOICES #5: INTER-
VIEWS WITH SCIENCE FICTION WRITERS
CONDUCTED BY DARRELL SCHWEITZER

WILDERNESS VISIONS---SCIENCE FICTION WESTERNS, VOLUME ONE
BY DAVID MOGEN

SCIENCE FICTION VOICES #4: INTER-
VIEWS WITH SCIENCE FICTION WRITERS
CONDUCTED BY DR. JEFFREY M. ELLIOT

SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY AWARDS
BY R. REGINALD

ESSAYS ON SIX SCIENCE FICTION
AUTHORS BY BRIAN M. STAPLEFORD

FANTASY VOICES #1: INTERVIEWS WITH
FOUR FANTASY AUTHORS CONDUCTED BY
DR. JEFFREY M. ELLIOT

GREAT ISSUES OF THE DAY#1: THE FUTURE OF THE SPACE PROGRAM, LARGE CORPORATIONS & SOCIETY--DISCUSSIONS WITH 22 SCIENCE FICTION WRITERS CONDUCTED BY DR. JEFFREY M. ELLIOT

All of the above: \$2.95 each from:
The Borgo Press, PO Box 2845,
San Bernardino, CA 92406.

In SF VOICES #5, Schweitzer interviews Isaac ASimov, Leigh Brackett, Lin Carter, Lester del Rey, Edmond Hamilton, Frank Belknap Long, Clifford D. Simak, Wilson Tucker, and Jack Williamson.

WILDERNESS VISIONS examines the influence of the frontier myth in American sf.

In SF VOICES #4, Elliot interviews Charles D. Hornig, Bob Shaw, Frank Kelly Freas, and Brian M. Stapleford.

This first edition of R. Reginald's SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY AWARDS includes all the major awards histories, as well as such as foreign awards, sf film awards, the J. Lloyd Eaton Awards, the Jupiter Awards, the Locus Awards, the Milford Awards, the Pilgrim Awards... Twenty-

three different Awards are covered
from their beginnings to '80-'81.

The six sf authors essayed by Brian Stapleford are Edmond Hamilton, Leigh Brackett, Barry N. Malzberg, Kurt Vonnegut, Robert Silverberg, and Mack Reynolds.

Those interviewed in FANTASY VOICES #1 are Manly Wade Wellman, John Norman, Hugh B. Cave, and Katherine Kurtz.

Those passing opinions in GREAT ISSUES OF THE DAY #1 are: Gordon Dickson, Raymond Z. Gallun, James Gunn, Isidore Haiblum, James P. Hogan, Robert A.W Lowmides, Richard E. Lupoff, Larry Niven, Charles Sheffield, Jack Vance, A.E. van Vogt, Joan D. Vinge, Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, Roger Zelazny, Mildred Downey Broxon, Poul Anderson, Octavia A. Butler, C.J. Cherryh, Robert Silverberg, John Varley, Jack Williamson, and Robert Anton Wilson.

THE MEN FROM ARIEL

By Donald A. Wollheim
dust jacket painting by Michael
Whelan.

The NESFA Press
Box G, MIT Branch P.O.
Cambridge, MA 02139

\$13.00 plus \$1. postage.

This small book---limited edition of 1000 copies (less than 800 left)---contains 10 stories by Don Wollheim, including some pieces never before published.

These are a varied lot, all professionally done, all interesting and in the whole provide a look at

the mind of DAW, the canny and very successful editor of DAW Books.

The Whelan painting is excellent and intriguing.

THE PATCHIN REVIEW #4 \$2.50 mail
 Edited and published by Charles
 Platt, 9 Patchin Place, New York,
 NY 10011.

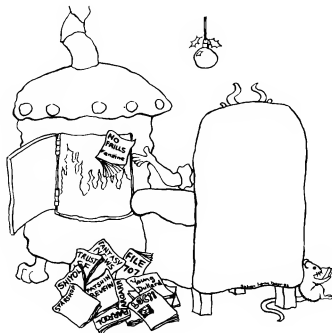
Charles Platt has a simple policy: "to promote and publish frank opinions and arguments relating to the writing, editing and marketing of science fiction and fantasy."

He does it remarkably well.

This magazine is an "insider's" meeting place, where (this issue) Norman Spinrad writes about "The Feminist Mistake," where David Hartwell suggests sf writers took a few wrong turns in the '70s, where F. Paul Wilson in "Literary Darwinism" advocates letting the readers determine the mix of sf, fantasy, of literary sf, barbarian sf, space opera, etc., while John Smith in "Vile Dross" suggests pure greed as the factor ruining sf today.

There are departments, too, as Cousin Clara gives advice to the alienated, and where Richard McEnroe gives an astonishing number of capsule book reviews of generally high value.

The magazine continues to be excellent but has dropped off from its first two issues of high dynamics and low blows. I suspect Charles is putting less and less personal time and writing into it.



ONCE OVER LIGHTLY

SYZYGY

By Frederik Pohl
Bantam, Paperbk, \$3.50.

The time is December, 1981, and nut cults are predicting disastrous "Jupiter effect" earthquakes as a result of the straight-line alignment of the major planets that comes about every 179 years. The major potential for real disaster, however, comes from the politicians, land speculators and outright criminals who are financing the hysteria in hopes of cashing in on it in a big way. Most of the disaster conventions are observed -- large cast of characters, only two or three of whom are anything short of despicable; a modest amount of sex; italicized interludes explaining all the possible sources of disaster; an insider's view of corruption in business and politics; etc. In SYZYGY, however, Pohl has managed to turn the genre upside down, or maybe inside out or sideways, without any loss of excitement or suspense. In fact, if anything, there's more suspense here because, unlike the standard disaster novel, you don't have any idea where Pohl is taking you until you get there. And for the straight science fiction readers, he's bracketed the whole thing with a neatly integrated short story about a Jupiter probe whose instrumentation conked out immediately after registering an inexplicable massive temperature rise. (Incidentally, if anyone wants to see what Pohl was writing 35 years ago, take a look at PLANETS THREE, a \$2.50 Berkley paperback collection of three short space operas from the pulps of the forties.)

THE SCIENCE FICTION HALL OF FAME VOLUME III

Edited by Arthur C. Clarke and
George W. Proctor
Avon, Paperback, \$3.95.

An obsessed time traveler goes back to search for the historical Jesus and ends up not finding but becoming Him ("Behold the Man" by Michael Moorcock); A boy and his telepathic dog survive in a grim post-

atomic world (Harlan Ellison's "A Boy and his Dog", which is noticeably better than the movie of the same name); human society adjusts to "invasion" by a host of invisible and immaterial beings who can and do take over the minds of any human anytime they wish ("Passengers" by Robert Silverberg). These are just three of the sixteen stories in this nearly-700-page book containing all the novellas, novelets and short stories that won Nebulas in 1965 through 1969. For quantity, quality and variety, this collection is hard to beat.

A GREATER INFINITY

By Michael McCollum
Del Rey/Ballantine, paperbk, \$2.50.

Slightly expanded and greatly smoothed out from three recent "Analog" novelets, A GREATER INFINITY is a new and somewhat different paratime adventure. Here, the timelines are not neatly parallel but twist and turn in all directions, touch only occasionally in the vicinity of planetary bodies, and sometimes even run backwards. Narrator Duncan MacElroy, after being attacked by what looks like a Neanderthal with a laser weapon, is snatched away from our own timeline and suddenly finds himself the key figure in all-out war between two paratime empires, each holding several timelines. He is so much of a key figure, in fact, that a party of the Neanderthal types from the future spent several years in a timeline where time runs in reverse just to come back and try to kill him. Since by the end of this book we still don't know for sure just why he is so important, except for a remarkable ability to be "in the right place at the right time", one can only assume more books are planned. I hope so, at any rate, since A GREATER INFINITY so far strikes a very nice balance between the more mundane, adventure-oriented paratime stories of the late H. Beam Piper and the frantically-paced, new-twist-every-five-pages "Imperium" series by Keith Laumer.

THE COATTAILS OF GOD

By Robert M. Powers
Warner Books, \$15.95.

This non-fiction account of how we may someday go to the stars covers more than just the possible configurations of interstellar space-ships. There is also the already successful search for extra-solar planets, a discussion of the mathematically-possible "wormholes through hyperspace", and an outline of the search for ways of extending the human lifespan, including a drug already tested on flies which has the potential of tripling our lifespan but the possibility of turning the subjects into semi-vegetables. These and other subjects are explained in a light, almost Asimovishly clear and open-minded style. For the seasoned space buff, a lot of the material may be familiar, but for others it's an excellent introduction to a lot of science-fictional concepts that are on their way to being factual. And for those who want to dig further, there's a 27-page bibliography.

SPECIAL DELIVERANCE

By Clifford D. Simak
Ballantine/Del Rey, \$12.50

Edward Lansing, a New England college professor in the near fut-



ure of what may or may not be our own world, is suddenly and mysteriously transported to another Earth. Like most of Simak's worlds, it at first appears peaceful and pastoral. The discovery of an abandoned city, doors to other dimensions, a massive energy barrier called Chaos, and more, however, indicate that a highly advanced civilization once existed here. Lansing is joined by five others from five different Earths -- a pastor and a military man, both of them nameless and fanatical; two young women, one a poet and one an engineer; and of course, an intelligent robot. Most of the story is simply their trek through this world in search of the reason for their having been put there. Like much of Simak's recent work, "Special Deliverance" is restrained -- perhaps too restrained this time -- and has little physical action. Even so, the mystery of the world itself and the search for the reason they are there keeps you going and makes for a very pleasant, almost nostalgic, few hours.

TWENTIETH CENTURY SCIENCE FICTION WRITERS

Edited by Curtis C. Smith
St. Martin's, \$65.00

A massive companion volume to the equally massive TWENTIETH CENTURY CRIME AND MYSTERY WRITERS, this book contains brief biographies of over six hundred science fiction writers along with bibliographies of their work, short critical essays, and, in some cases, comments by the writers themselves. On the debit side, there are odd omissions as well as odd inclusions. For instance, Art Toft, who wrote science fiction extensively in the thirties and the seventies, is not included, while British philosopher Bertrand Russell, who could at best be described as a dabbler in science fiction, is included. And Joe Hensley, better known for his mysteries than his science fiction, is in this volume rather than the mystery writers' volume. And many of the bibliographies -- Ross Rocklynne's, for instance -- seem far from complete. Still, the accuracy of what is included seems reasonable (there were only two minor errors in the "DeWeese" entry), and it is fascinating to browse through.

THE VAMPIRE TAPESTRY
By Susy McKee Charnas
Pocket Books, Paperbk, \$2.75

Though the man known -- in this lifetime -- as Dr. Edward Weyland, an anthropology professor at an east-

ern college, is a vampire, his story is definitely science fiction, not fantasy. He is not human but he looks on humans as his prey. He is not supernatural but is as subject to injury and death as anyone. He is not immortal but does have a lifespan measured in millennia rather than decades. He does not sleep in a coffin each day but does periodically retreat into remote hiding places to hibernate for long periods and when he awakes he must painstakingly discover the state of his prey -- humanity -- and then fit himself back into the pattern. He remembers no childhood and has never met another of his kind. Made up of four connected novelets, THE VAMPIRE TAPESTRY follows Weyland through the last months of this lifetime as he becomes more and more emotionally entangled with his prey and is eventually forced to retreat into hibernation. The only flaws in the gripping narrative are the links used to connect the four stories, which would have been even more powerful had they been allowed to stand alone. Despite Stephen King's front cover quote, the book is not "scary", but it is fascinating, which is better than scary any day.



"Cheer up, my ass how would you like to spend your entire life AS A SPACE FILLER?"

SPECIAL EFFECTS IN THE MOVIES
By John Oulhane
Ballantine Books, Paperbk, \$9.95

If you've ever wondered how Hollywood makes all those impossible things appear to happen so realistically, this is the book for you. It covers not only the well-known and moderately interesting (like STAR WARS and the like) but the less well-known and absolutely fascinating. There is, for instance, the mushroom cloud made for an early film about the atomic bomb, THE BEGINNING OF THE END, made while actual photos of the bomb were still secret. With only word pictures to go by, special effects man A. Arnold Gillespie ended up using the same device he'd seen used years before to make one of Tarzan's mechanical crocodiles bleed underwater. The same technique was used later to make the dramatically

boiling clouds in CLOSE ENCOUNTERS.

In addition to 170-odd pages of that kind of insight, as well as detailed descriptions of front and rear projection, stationary and traveling mattes and dozens of other techniques, there are biographical sketches of many special effects people like Ray Harryhausen and Douglas Trumbull, a bibliography and an index. Unlike many of the glossy picture books on movie or TV art, this one has only black and white photos, but it's still twice as interesting as most of its competitors.

FRANKENSTEIN LIVES AGAIN

By Donald F. Glut
Donning, Paperbk, \$4.95

REVIEWED BY GENE DE WEESE

Despite the fact that this is in roughly the same format and from the same publisher and editor as Starblaze, the Starblaze logo does not appear on this book, which I hope is intentional and not just an oversight. Starblaze publishes a lot of excellent fiction, both new and old (SHROUDED PLANET and THE DAWNING LIGHT by Silverberg and Garrett, for instance, or the upcoming BLAKE'S PROGRESS by Ray Nelson), but FRANKENSTEIN LIVES AGAIN is as close to a total loss as anything I've seen recently. (I should have been suspicious right at the start, when I saw that the two quotes extolling the book's virtues were credited one to "Famous Monsters" and the other to Forrest J. Ackermann and that, according to the biographical blurb, Ackermann is Glut's agent.)

Basically, FRANKENSTEIN LIVES AGAIN is about someone who: 1) Believes Shelley's original novel was fact. 2) Goes to the Arctic to dig the monster out of the ice and steal it from the band of Eskimos who have been worshipping it for the last hundred years or so. And 3) Haul the frozen monster back to Castle Frankenstein in Ingolstadt to revive it. The story aside, the major problem is that, despite all the references to Shelley's original "Frankenstein" this reads very much like a bad novelization of one of the Frankenstein movies. The Lionel Atwill character and the torch-bearing villagers are all there, being even more predictable than in the movies, not to mention being terribly anachronistic, considering this is supposedly set in the present. All the way through, you keep thinking, "He's got to be kidding", but apparently he isn't. And this, according to the cover, is only Volume 1.

AND THEN I SAW....

BY THE EDITOR

GALAXY OF TERROR (R)

used a lot of money to build some damned good alien sets and spaceship sets, along with appropriate equipment...and then skimped on the script. The result is a pathetic, derivative sf space terror/horror movie which misuses Ray Walston, Edward Albert and Erin O'Brien.

They play some of the crew of a space cruiser sent by The Master to investigate the deaths of the crew of another of The Master's ships on the planet Organus in another galaxy.

Ftl drive is used. The graveyard of spaceships on the surface of Organus is tantalizing. The huge, alien pyramid that requires exploration is fascinating.

But the plot becomes muddled and in spite of the gory deaths of all but one of the crew (including one rape of a lovely young woman by a monstrous caterpillar which melts off her suit first) the film disintegrates into a metaphysical fear-is-thy-worst-enemy mess and an incoherent testing of the new Master.

Weep for what might have been. See it on cable if you must.

HUMANIDS FROM THE DEEP (R)

plugs along in the ruts of formula as humanoid flesh-eaters (mutated and evolved with lightning speed from--was it radiated salmon?--do a JAWS number to a small, isolated fishing town on the coast of Washington.

The only saving grace is the several buxom, bare breast scenes and the climactic night-time battle by townspeople against a score of the creatures at dockside.

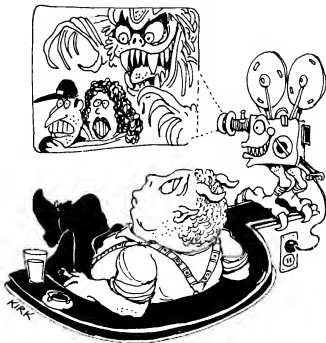
Doug McClure plays the hero fisherman.

There is a horrendous final ALIEN-like scene in which a girl, impregnated by one of the humanoids, gives birth to one of the things: it rips its way out of her belly.

Gaaaah!

SHARKEY'S MACHINE (R)

starring Burt Reynolds, and directed by Burt Reynolds, betrays his lack of directing talent and his inferior story sense. He may get a bigger slice



of the pie as director/star, but his bad decisions created a cliché-ridden police movie which is impossible to believe and impossible to like. That limits the size of the pie.

As a narc detective busted to the vice squad who cannot resist investigating a contract/drug killing, and who easily cons/lures his fellow vice detectives and lieutenant into the depths of this Mafia-politics-police corruption case, Burt asks too much of the audience

During this case he falls for a \$1,000.-a-night call girl named Dominor. He has confrontations with a Mafia lord. He has life and death battles with a corrupt cop and the cop's chinese martial arts cohorts. He has a final chase & shootout with Henry Silva who plays a drug-addict Mafia hit man.

And there are a few memorable scenes, a few good dirty-dialogues, humorous bits.

But the film is lopsided, trite, unbelievable. It doesn't hang together, so it hangs separately.

The supporting cast: Charles Durning yells and screams a lot as the vice squad lieutenant; Bernie Casey is quietly effective as a vice detective; Brian Keith is almost invisible as another vice detective. Earl Holliman as a Mafia-controlled candidate for Governor is adequate.

DEATH HUNT (R)

pits grizzled, wilder-ness-wise Lee Marvin as a sergeant of the Royal Mounted Police vs. Charles Bronson as a solitary dog-loving trapper unjustly accused of murder.

The time is 1931 and the place is the Canadian Yukon territory.

Bronson kills only in self-defense and is brave, compassionate and cunning.

The chase by the mounties and deputies after him is icily realistic. There is laconic man-talk humor, bloody death, betrayal, bravado, all the good stuff.

Angie Dickinson is inserted in the middle of this film for her name in the advertising and to add a white woman for a bed scene with Marvin.

But this is a "man's" picture.

There quickly develops a mutual admiration society between Marvin and Bronson, and the ending is about what you'd expect.

Great scenery.

HELL NIGHT (R)

features chipmuck-cheeked Linda Blair reduced to a run-of-the-mill horror thriller role, complete with low-cut dress and endless (it seems) screaming.

This movie---hopelessly derivative---concerns itself with four pledges to a sorority and fraternity who must spend a night in a huge, isolated, empty-for-twelve-

years mansion. There had been a horrible multiple murder...

And some malicious frat/sorority members had rigged the house with speakers, "bodies", etc.

Yep...the long-ago murderer and a supposedly murdered son still live (like animals) in the old mansion and its labyrinthian basement and grounds.

And they don't like intruders!

One by one the pranksters, and then the pledges are messily murdered. There is one survivor---Linda.

Be warned: the youthful audience laughed in many of the wrong places, and mocked the stupid plot---rightly.

There is no nudity, only average state-of-the-art grue.

MANION OF THE DOOMED (R)

is a 1975 horror effort about a mad surgeon determined to replace his daughter's blind eyes with those taken from: her fiancé, a housekeeper, a hitchhiker, a real estate saleslady, two low-class laborers. But alas, rejection sets in and her sight rarely lasts more than a few days...and her eye sockets become more and more ravaged...

Finally, the surgeon sacrifices his wife (her mother) to obtain a final set of eyes...

There is a final, grisly retribution.

Don't waste your time with this dud. Richard Baseheart is wasted as the father/surgeon, and Gloria Grahame needed the work.

No nudity, but very effective, convincing empty eye sockets in the kept-alive-but-prisoner victims who finally get their revenge.

PATERNITY (PG?)

is a Burt Reynolds movie---clever, funny, well-acted, but somehow ultimately dumb.

Burt plays a highly-paid manager of Madison Square Garden. He likes kids very much but doesn't want to get married. His solution is to pay a healthy young waitress to bear his child and then sign it over to him...and go away. She has a potential music career, and agrees.

All the obvious comedy/humor is milked from this situation, and the plot progresses into love and those complications.

In the end, of course, love wins, but the Reynolds character has behaved so badly and so irrationally, that you wonder where his smarts, sophistication and integrity went to.

Burt Reynolds has a strong tendency to choose charming son-of-a-bitch roles for himself. When he plays honest-to-god heroes (THE LAST YARD, HOOPER) he makes better pictures---or at least more satisfying pictures from the audience's point of view.

A funny, worth-seeing movie is PATERNITY, but it left a slightly bad taste in my mind.

POLYESTER (R)

is a comical nightmare of domestic travail played straight by Divine---a gay/transvestite queen of middle age---whose philanthropic cur of a husband owns a porno theater and who leaves, whose daughter is a promiscuous tramp... Altogether, this satire follows Divine's destroyed life into alcohol, overeating, and despair.

But Divine is met and seduced by Tab Hunter (now about 50 years old) for ulterior motives, and Tab, too, betrays her. Poor, poor Divine, like all the masochistic, dumped-upon heroines of millions of historicals and domestic fiction, nevertheless survives the humiliation, the terrible blows of fate and men and relatives, and with chin and tits up, carries on to a hopefully better day to a relatively happy ending.

Throughout, Divine plays the wife as a full-fledged woman, and everyone plays it straight, too. No nudity---especially not of Divine!--!--but some four-letter words.

Oh--I just remembered---her son is a repulsive foot fetishist who gets his compulsive jollies stomping pretty women's feet. He is arrested, and maybe rehabilitated. So, too, is the daughter changed to the good.

A funny film, if savage mockery of everything we hold dear is your thing. It is one of mine.

ROLLOVER (R)

cast Kris Kristofferson as a hot-shot big-league banker and he didn't carry it off.

Hume Cronyn, now, as the conspiratorial, "Elder Statesman" head of a top New York bank...is superb. He projects an arrogant high-risk cynicism so well.

Jane Fonda is okay as the widow of a recently-murdered corporate executive who had stumbled upon a mysterious secret account in Cronyn's bank. Billions upon billions of dollars are being inconspicuously accumulated in that account---and the money is owned by a huge Arab investment entity.

Kristofferson and Fonda fall in love---unconvincingly, dutifully---and collaborate in uncovering the secret account and its purpose.

Underlying it is surface story is a U.S. economy and banking system so vulnerable (illiquid) that a sudden massive withdrawal of a few billions will result in a chain reaction of bankruptcies.

Alas, when the Arabs learn that the secret account has been discovered they call their loans, sell their holdings in the U.S.

This triggers an economic collapse of unparalleled magnitude.

The movie is clumsy, and to unsophisticated folk the financial talk will seem impenetrable and boring. But people come out of the theater sobered and nervous, talking about how something like that could happen.

As indeed it could, one way or another, because this economy is floating on a vast sea of debt, and is extremely vulnerable...and becoming morose every year.

CHAC (R)

was made in a remote part of Mexico and used Indian actors exclusively.

It is about a drought and a tribe's desperate attempt to find a sorcerer who can perform the right rituals and bring rain.

The acting is remarkably good, the photography superb, the violence stark and vivid, the magic elaborate and precise.

Mostly, though, the film is one of character, custom, superstition (this is set in the present day) and faith---or lack of it.

The interest and fascination for me was in the life-style, dress, customs, society.

AGUIRRE: THE WRATH OF GOD (R)

follows an ill-fated expedition through the mountains of Peru, into the Amazon basin, to discover and conquer (in the 16th Century) the legendary golden city of El Dorado. It is led by Francisco Pizarro. Attacked by Indians, bogged down, Pizarro sends a few dozen men on rafts to find help, food, El Dorado...and report back.

Alas...

The majority of the film is what happens to that small exploratory party. There is a steady deadly attrition by the cannibalistic natives (who shout among themselves from a village beside the river, "Food is floating by! Food is floating by!").

There is a revolt led by a nobleman played by Klaus Kinski which raises a complaisant accompanying nobleman to self-proclaimed "Emperor" status. The plots and sub-

terfuges and executions and assassinations all flow from the deranged, paranoid mind of Kinski. He's a fine actor of evil men.

The scenery is often stunning and stunningly photographed.

The arrogance of these white men and of their religion is equally stunning--and horribly unrealistic, as it turns out...for that century.

The film was made by Germans, directed by Herzog, and is excellent.

ATLANTIC CITY (R)

Shows us Burt Lancaster as a little-account, never-was very small beer under-world numbers runner who on the side services, cooks for a semi-crippled woman in the run-down-but booming Atlantic City just as new gambling casinos are going in.

He is silver gray of hair, thicker of body...aged. Ah, how sad. A desperate life of small humiliations, lies, yearnings for the pretty, toothsome wench who lives in the apartment next to his.

The wench in Susan Sarandon [who played Brooke Shield's mother in PRETTY BABY (also, as here, directed by Louis Malle)]. She is training to be a card dealer, working as a waitress.

And then returns to her life her shitty husband who had run off with her sister. Now the weirdo sister is 9-months pregnant and the husband has stolen about fifteen thousand dollars worth of cocaine....

From there all these lives are intertwined, endangered...as the mob hunts for the thief and wants its money from the piecemeal sale of the dope.

This is a movie of character, of small, desperate selfishnesses and heroisms, of survival and love and sad, expected betrayals. It has symbolism, contrasts, shocking realism, beauty.

Hey, it's a damned good film! Burt Lancaster deserved an Oscar for this performance. Susan Sarandon has her best work ahead of her. Excellent supporting cast, especially including Atlantic City.

CALIFORNIA SPLIT (R)

is a Robert Altman film starring Elliot Gould and George Segal as excellently realized addicted gamblers. Their lives revolve around betting, around staving off creditors, around excitement and a bit of danger.

They are only alive when they are betting. And yet---when George

Segal has a phenomenal winning streak in Reno, winning over eighty thousand dollars in one night---he is empty, emotionless, sad. He and Elliot split their winnings and go their separate ways. Joined in desperate low-scale betting and fringe living, they are forced apart by success.

They won, but lost. Segal, at least, had to face the real reasons behind his life-style and character. Gould was not affected.

THE PHOENIX (TV)

is THE FUGITIVE tricked out in a clever plastic fantasy disguise. Instead of a doctor on the run from the authorities who want him for a murder he didn't commit, we have an alien resurrected from a tomb/life-support system which had kept him in suspended animation for 1,000 years and who is wanted for "examination" by the authorities.

Instead of a doctor seeking the elusive real murderer (a one-armed man), we have the alien seeking a woman alien who also is in hibernation. He is opposed by another alien who...

Well, I'm not sure about that motivation.

Part of the problem with this series is that all the mystical, fantastic and science fictional elements are not provided and explained often enough for a casual viewer to know what's going on and why.

The alien (Judson Scott) has remarkable mental powers--reading minds, for one, levitation and telekinesis, for another, power over animal minds for a tihrd...whatever is needed by the writers at the moment.

He also can instantly speak and comprehend English moments after revival, can drive a car.... He can absorb knowledge like an ever-thirsty sponge...speed-read and assimilate books at about one book per five minutes....

A super man. Whenever cornered by the FBI/CIA he resorts to his powers, sometimes by clutching at a magic medallion he wears around his neck and which glows with power.

But under all the magic science claptrap and supernatural effects, we have THE FUGITIVE, the man on the run with a quest.

A different adventure each week, a new clue to the location of Myrra (or whatever her name is), and a different guest cast except for Richard Lynch who plays Preminger, the ever-pursuing govt. man.

Judson Scott is a good actor and was cast because he has a lean, long-haired blond ascetic look about him which lends some credence to the idea that he is a human-like alien who lived on Earth among the indians of Peru long ago.

But, alas, the plotting is routine, the sf and fantasy elements are incoherent and self-serving, and I doubt if THE PHOENIX will last much longer. It's a dead loss against DALLAS and even as a time-filler to use up the hour isn't worth a repeat look.

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THE VIVISECTOR

BY DARRELL SCHWEITZER

THE ANTIQUITY OF THE FUTURE

THE SWORD OF THE LICTOR

By Gene Wolfe

Timescape Books, 1981, 302 pp., \$15.50

THE BOOK OF THE NEW SUN, the overall work of which the present volume is the third part, is going to become a classic, I think, not because it is wholly new and original as the jacket copy alleges, but because it is the apotheosis of a particular tradition.

It is impossible to extrapolate when writing about the distant future, the year Two Million rather than the year Two Thousand. Obviously, everything our epoch has produced will have long since passed away. There may be traces left, but only faint ones. Are there echoes of ancient Minoan social customs in daily life in the Bronx? More to the point how much is life in the Bronx rooted in the customs and worldview of trilobites? So much for extrapolation. What remains is visionary imagination.

The first great vision of this sort was that of Wells, in THE TIME MACHINE, particularly the last few chapters. This was almost Old Testament quality, archetypal: the tired, barren world, the sun flickering out or fading into darkness, all life coming slowly to an end. Magnificent, but a little limited in story possibilities. Therefore most subsequent writers have restricted themselves to a time when the Earth and Sun are dying, but there are still some people around. It follows that such an era will be utterly strange and will seem magical, so it isn't surprising that most of the works of this type are at least borderline fantasy. They are created like fantasy, out of image and metaphor, rather than out of idea like science fiction.

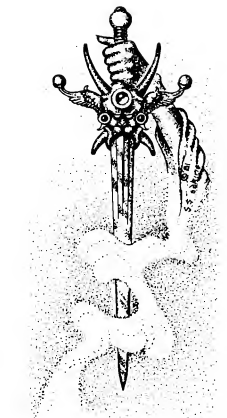
Such futures tend to be antique. Civilizations are old, layered with millennia of traditions and history. Usually technology is at a low level, simply because if technology is assumed to have continued to progress all that time, the writer will not be able to present it convincingly and the characters will seem too godlike for there to be many story possibilities. (As a Bronx subway rider would seem to a trilobite. Of

course the other Bronx subway riders take all this for granted, but, alas, the story is being read by trilobites.) So the future tends to be crumbly and this conjures up images of ancient civilizations known to our day, the Egypt of the Pharaohs, the Roman Empire etc., the only difference that the setting of the story is removed by futurity rather than antiquity. It is a very specialized metaphor, with its own resonances and meanings.

You might call this the Dying Earth tradition, because Jack Vance's THE DYING EARTH is the best-known work of the type. (This may be about to change.) There are earlier ones. William Hope Hodgson's THE NIGHT LAND is an important, pioneering work filled with magnificent visions but sadly hobbled by a grotesquely illiterate style. (Imagine Doc Smith writing Malory.) I suspect it is a more important influence on people who have heard about it but haven't read it than people who have, because the sensitivity to language required to write a good visionary fantasy almost precludes the ability to read Hodgson for enjoyment. (Seriously, a translation of THE NIGHT LAND into English might be a workable commercial proposition.)

More widely read are Clark Ashton Smith's Zothique stories, in which, as the sun dies, the world's last continent is filled with demons, wizards and decadently ornate prose. These are very clearly fantasy, as have been most Antique Future stories since. THE DYING EARTH is right on the edge, making a few noises about scientific explanations for the wonders. Robert Silverberg's NIGHTWINGS is clearly science fiction but it feels like fantasy.

Gene Wolfe's THE BOOK OF THE NEW SUN (comprising THE SHADOW OF THE TORTURER, THE CLAW OF THE CONCILIATOR, THE SWORD OF THE LICTOR and the as yet unpublished THE CITADEL OF THE AUTARCH) is squarely in this tradition, again right on the borderline between science fiction and fantasy, centered on image rather than idea. The reason I think it will prove to be the climax of the tradition, or at least one of its high water marks, is that Wolfe



has given the Antique Future a texture and wealth of detail it has never had before.

His future has mythological depth. It fits into a mythological framework which allows the metaphor of its antiquity to make sense. The action takes place at the end of an era. After the sun dies, there will come a New Sun, and the world will be created anew. This time may not be very far off. As a result, the characters and their society are completely permeated with a set of beliefs invented by the author to the extent that medieval Europe was permeated by Christianity. This is no mean feat. Most authors never achieve it, and their futures are filled with decidedly 20th century people wandering through what may well be a Hollywood back lot. Wolfe has managed to make the Antique Future feel right. Further, he uses details extremely well. Among the ruins and even among the fossils known to the characters there are echoes of past ages, all of which are still far ahead of our time. There was a great, galaxy-conquering, space-faring age. A couple of the characters seem to have returned

to Earth (or Urth, as they call it) on time-dilating ships, after an absence of thousands of years. And there is one detail I particularly like: in a vast gallery of ancient pictures, there is one, described by the narrator as "an armored figure on a desert landscape" which is very clearly at least a copy of one of those photos taken by Apollo astronauts, showing a blank-faced figure in a spacesuit with more of the moon reflected in the suit's visor. This one tenuous thread ties the whole vision to the here and now. Strange as it is, Wolfe's Urth is our future, not never-never land.

Embedded in the main narrative are samples of the literature of this imagined epoch, two exquisite fables which may be the best specimens of short myth-fantasy since early Dunsany and a play, which isn't very good, but is rich with the lore of its time and doubtless means more to the audience before which it is performed than to us.

The main narrative is less interesting than the setting. It is quite weak on plot. Some readers will find the work a complete waste of time on this basis. An aside: there are, in my observation, two kinds of readers: Type A reads slowly, carefully and is capable of appreciating image, texture, the resonances of language, etc. This type reads everything on the page. Type B doesn't really read at all, but merely skims for a broad outline of story events. This is sometimes called "reading for the plot" or even "reading for content". Type B readers can tolerate things which Type A finds excruciating: *THE NIGHT LAND*, Doc Smith, Fenimore Cooper. Type A reads what is on the page, all of it, and recognizes the absurdity. Type B misses all that and just notices that the plot is rather interesting. Type B readers will find little of interest in *THE BOOK OF THE NEW SUN*.

This is not to say that I'm being elitist to the point of sneering at people who want a plot. No, let's admit it: those long, gorgeous, tapestried classics like *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* and the *GORMENGHAST* trilogy are greatly enlivened by strong plots. Wolfe's work is weakened by the absence of one.

THE SHADOW OF THE TORTURER began well enough with our hero, a young torturer, betraying his guild and being sent out into the world to find his fortune. All well and good. This promises a "plot" in terms of character development. The book seems to be about the hero's growing realizations, perceptions and struggles for identity in terms of his birth and upbringing. In "main-

stream" (i.e. genre literary fiction) nowadays, this is about the only plot there is.

Unfortunately, Wolfe doesn't focus on the character. The hero remains unchanged through incident after incident. Details and wonders pile up. There is little dramatic tension. The hero has no particular goal, just an excuse to travel. When he comes into conflict with someone, this almost seems a distraction. There is a sequence in *TORTURER* in which a brother and sister make an elaborate attempt to steal the hero's sword. This is the most plotty part of the book and also the least interesting. The hero executes the brother and the sister pops up here and there throughout the following two volumes making trouble for him. There are also constant encounters with a mysterious doctor and a giant. And since the work is being written retrospectively by the hero after he has attained the status of Autarch (emperor) we know that somehow he succeeds to the throne, but this contributes little to the ongoing story, because few of the incidents have anything to do with it and the idea never seems to have occurred to the hero at the time. There is also some to-do about a subversive political movement to which the hero is naively attracted.

So you can't say that there is no plot. There are several but they are all little plots which fail to embrace the scope of the character and the narrative. The only one that comes close is that which occupies about half of the first volume. The hero begins his odyssey by falling in love with a highborn female prisoner, to whom he later slips a knife so she can kill herself and escape future torment. This haunts him throughout the work, particularly since he shares some of her memories as a result of a necrophagic ritual in the second volume. (Yes, the subversive movement gains knowledge of the past by devouring corpses under the influence of a certain drug, which enables them to share the brain-contents of the deceased, a la planarian worms.)

You may wonder then, how Wolfe gets away with it. This sounds like a recipe for a boring work. The only thing I can say is he gets away with it superbly. Indeed, when you break all the rules, you must do it superbly or go down to defeat. True, the books drag in some places, and some parts are more interesting than others, but the overall vision, the character, and the interesting episodes are more than enough to keep the reader going. Consider first that Wolfe has managed to write a sympathetic account of a young tor-

turer's coming into manhood. The fellow has the deepest respect for his work, too. He regards it as an art and says his chief interest is in seeing it done well. (There is even a witty aside in which the art of torture is compared to the art of literature -- quite convincingly.) Wolfe's ability to draw us into the torturer's point of view and make us understand is quietly amazing. Then again, the whole three volumes are quietly amazing as each scene is made real, each bit of strangeness comes to life. The story is alternatively beautiful, touching and bizarre. You hardly notice that it lacks tension, that its direction seems arbitrary.

There are only a couple things I would consider to be failures of execution (Oops! A word fraught with meanings in this context!). The first person narrative tends to leave out things the narrator takes for granted. There is a certain logic for this. *THE KORAN*, after all, does not mention camels. But then, it is read by Arabs or at least by people who know that Arabs ride camels. But *THE BOOK OF THE NEW SUN*, being as the author puts it in one of his appendices, translated from futurity, does not share such a frame of reference. As a result we don't know what many of the animals are and have to imagine horses, camels, etc. This is the "call a rabbit a smerp" syndrome, whether by design or otherwise. The salient details can be worked in unobtrusively. What I particularly don't like is finding out on page 146 of the third volume that the stars are visible in the daytime. The writing is very visual and centered on imagery. Such a revelation tells the reader that he has internally visualized every scene up to now wrong. All we've been told previously is



that the sun is reddish and perhaps a little dimmer than it was in the past.

Still, this is a rich, fascinating work, impressively imagined and beautifully written. It should be read slowly and carefully, not merely so you can keep track of everything but because the individual parts are so good for their own sake. If I don't seem to focus much on THE SWORD OF THE LICTOR in this review, that is because THE BOOK OF THE NEW SUN is not a tetralogy. It is a four-volume work. Each volume is like a serial installment and especially since there are no synopses at the front of each, you absolutely must start at the beginning and read them in order. The volumes can't even particularly have self-contained climaxes. Things just continue between the next set of covers.

If the Book Club ever does a one-volume edition, it'll be one hell of a bargain.*

THE BEST OF JOHN SLADEK

Pocket Books, 1981, 220 pp., \$2.50

Great stuff. Sladek is one of the true and original lunatics of science fiction. He is one of the funniest writers in the field. No science fiction humor anthology should be without a Sladek story.

More specifically, this is a selection of stories taken from the

* Except for rare book collectors. Note for collectors: I predict that the first edition of THE SHADOW OF THE TORTURER is going to be one of those instant rarities like NINE PRINCES IN AMBER. It was published with great stealth in a period in which Timescape Books had no publicity or promotion. It was virtually out of print on publication. By the time the later volumes had appeared, the work had begun to attract attention and a lot of them were grabbed by people who had missed the first book in hardcover. Later Amber books are common enough, but I saw an ex-library copy of NINE PRINCES going for \$100.00 recently. In ten years the same should be true of TORTURER, to some inflationary equivalent. Scour your local bookstores. If you can find a copy still on the shelves, grab it. If Wolfe keeps a crate of them, he'll have enough to retire on. To make things particularly difficult for the latecomers, all the people who have the first volume will refuse to part with it. It's that good.



two British collections, KEEP THE GIRAFFE BURNING and THE STEAM-DRIVEN BOY. The stories are mostly from NEW WORLDS and other organs of the "New Wave" (remember that?) but Sladek's work always differed from the surrounding material, which tended to be either opaque or intensely (sometimes clumsily) serious. He is a "serious writer" in that the stories have real content and reveal an outlook on life, the universe, things in general, etc. but the salient characteristic of this outlook is that nothing is taken seriously, least of all literary conventions. Most of the stories are parodies (some avowedly so, brilliantly distilling various major science fiction figures down to their essentials), but the parody has a life of its own and develops a weird sort of logic. There is, for example, "The Face", in which a human face is found growing in the ground. The face never speaks or does anything, but political chaos, religious movements and more result from its presence. This is all told in a mock serious manner as if this were an account of intensely dramatic historical events. There is also a story about what happens when an astronaut, giving a speech at a small town festival, doesn't give the usual sort of speech. And there's an 18th Century pastiche in which a thinly-disguised Doctor Johnson flabbergasts a time-traveler by already having imagined the wonders of the 20th Century. (But when he actually goes there, he is horrified.) "Is There Death On Other Planets?" may be the ultimate time/space epic, all distilled into nine pages. "Space Shoes of the Gods" explains some of the Earth's mysteries. And so on. Sladek begins at the point of reduction-to-absurdism. What follows might be called a Higher State of Consciousness.

THE LURKING FEAR

By H.P. Lovecraft
Ballantine, '82, 182 pp., \$2.25

THE CASE OF CHARLES DEXTER WARD

By H.P. Lovecraft
Ballantine, '82, 127 pp., \$1.95

Two more reissues of the old Beagle Books editions of Lovecraft. THE LURKING FEAR is largely derived from the Arkham House catch-all volume DAGON, and mostly consists of early and minor works. The title story, which even Lovecraft thought hokum, is hysterically bad. Connoisseurs of the implausible will relish the scene in which one of the investigators of a haunted house leans out a window and his face is chewed off, but this is done so deftly that no one else in the room notices. In "The Unnamable", the narrator, a horror writer, is derided by a friend for climaxing stories in unnamable, unmentionable vagueness. Sure as an eldritch gibber, an unnamable, indescribable Thing appears, everybody runs off shrieking, but between yawns the reader concludes that the friend was right all along. There are also several better stories (some not from DAGON), including the famous "The Outsider", a bleak parable of alienation; "The Hound", which is florid as all hell, but a remarkable tale of depraved thrill-seekers and an eldritch curse; and the novella "The Shadow Over Innsmouth", a major work showing Lovecraft at the height of his powers, and his characters slowly turning into squamous, bug-eyed frog-things. This one too is about alienation and the loss of self. The resolution, in which the protagonist accepts his fate and looks forward to his new life, is strangely beautiful.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD is one of the best things Lovecraft ever did, his only novel that doesn't suffer from grotesque structural flaws. It

is also the subject of one of the great publishing horror stories of all time. In the 1930s, Lovecraft submitted a collection of his stories to a few publishers and was turned down. But they asked him if he had anything in novel length. Then as now, novels sold better than collections, which would only be issued after a writer had built up a following through novels. Lovecraft had **WARD** in hand-written manuscript, but never bothered to type it up or send it in. After his death, it was believed lost and only survived through the diligent efforts of his friends and admirers. It was a very close call for what must rank among the top ten supernatural novels of the 20th Century. It's about a young man who resurrects his sorcerer ancestor from the dead, only to be murdered and impersonated by him. Then the festivities really begin, as opposed to the way things happen in, say, "At the Mountains of Madness" where the whole story builds up to merely stating the premise. All the classic Lovecraftian themes are there: alienation and the loss of self, cosmic horror and the escape from the strictures of time. Great stuff. It was ludicrously filmed once as **EDGAR ALLAN POE'S HAUNTED PALACE** with the plot changed to a simple case of possession. Those who saw the film might want to read the book to see what the story was actually about.



PKD: A PHILIP K. DICK BIBLIOGRAPHY
Compiled by Daniel J.H. Leveck
with annotations by Steven Owen
Goderksy
Underwood-Miller, 1981, Paperback
158 pp., \$7.95

An impressive work of scholarship, indispensable for anyone whose interest in Philip K. Dick is more than casual. This book contains listings for all books and stories by Dick, plus non-fiction, verse, secondary materials, etc. While no such compilation is ever totally complete, this one can be called exhaustive -- every edition, story appearance, translation, etc. is listed. Production values are lavish. There are 190 cover reproductions. It must have been a formidable task simply to gather all that stuff together. If you are a Philip K. Dick completist, this is just the guide you need to keep you occupied for the rest of your life.

SMALL PRESS MAGAZINES

Reviewed By
Darrell Schweitzer

Science fiction small press magazines are less common than fantasy ones, and rarely successful, because they have more competition for material from the regular markets. But every once in a while someone produces one that makes me wonder why its contents weren't sold to **ISAAC ASIMOV'S SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE** or **ANALOG** for three times the money. **RIGEL** is one of these. Editor Eric Vinicoff must be a very good editor indeed to maintain the standard of quality he does in face of the competition. Quite simply, his first issue is the strongest new entry in the small press field in many years. It is better than the first issue of **GALILEO** in all respects, save that it has a two-color cover. And look where **GALILEO** went. I don't expect **RIGEL** to remain in the "small press" category much longer. Vinicoff has produced a magazine fully as good as any of the standard newsstand digests and at a competitive price. It wouldn't matter if he did it at five bucks a copy.

The magazine is in an 8 1/2 X 11 inch format, on good paper, with fair-to-good illustrations and several

strong features: Alan Dean Foster on media, Debbie Norkin on books (she is candid and concise), and an author interview, Ben Bova this time. But the fiction is what makes it. The lead novella, "Strength of Stones, Flesh of Brass" by Greg Bear (since incorporated into his Ace novel, **STRENGTH OF STONES**) deals with living cities which slowly creep across a planet's surface, falling apart for want of purpose. The cities had a moral sense, you see, programmed into them by utopia-minded builders. Unfortunately the cities decided their inhabitants weren't perfect enough and kicked them all out. It's an extremely good idea, replete with striking images. The story itself is at least adequate, although I do not quite believe the woman who manages to ignore the fact she's being raped. Otherwise, things move along in a gripping fashion. My only real objection is that the interplanetary setting is extraneous. Why go to another planet just to have an environment exactly like Earth? It could just as easily be taking place on the Earth in the future.

The other stories are much shorter, and tend toward humorous fluff. I'm not sure if this is an editorial policy or a trend in science fiction. (I suspect the latter.) The best of these is "Lux Was Dead Right" by Richard Lupoff, a thrilling and ironic saga of black holes, interstellar war, strange aliens and the rare book business. It all ties together. I kid you not.

David Bischoff's "The Way to the Heart" is about an alien invasion that brings along free beer. Cute, but I wondered where the people went? Dead drunk on the carpet? Condensed down and stored in the empty cans?

"Fishing Trip" by Tom Easton is another of his series about science fictional doings in a small Maine town. Overlooking the plausibility problem that creeps up when these stories start making references to one another (and the small town seems to have as many aliens, super-science wonders, etc. as Jules de Grandin's stretch of New Jersey had spooks), the story is rambling and formless, building up to an amusing anecdote, but without the components ever assembling themselves into a plot.

"Conservation of Mass" by Karl T. Pflock is one of those dumb little short-shorts in which, after wading through a page and a half of poorly-focused gunk, you find out that the planet being destroyed is (gasp!) Earth. This is the only really bad piece in the issue, and I'll say this for it: the idea might have worked if it had been written up into a story rather than just presented.

The one serious short story is "Time of Sea Change" by Marcia Mart-in, which is a readable but hardly memorable tale of dolphins develop-ing intelligence and deciding to do something about tuna nets.

Not a bad first issue at all. Watch this one, folks.

KADATH

Francesco Cova
Corso Aurelio Saffi 5/9
16128 Genova Italy
\$4.00 per copy or 4 for \$15.00.

KADATH #4 contains an article by me berating the Zebra Books WEIRD TALES for being stuck in the past. If the magazine were published on a large scale, the same criticism would hold, but it isn't. KADATH is the magazine equivalent of the deluxe limited edition. The English language version is limited to 400 numbered copies, of which the first 100 are signed by the major contributors. It is for collectors, and just the place for nostalgia, special tributes, etc. Issue #4 is a tribute to WEIRD TALES and in addition to my mold-stirring article, it contains two new stories by Manly Wade Wellman, one by Frances Garfield (Mrs. Wellman) and a reprint of a pamphlet by the late H. Warner Munn which should be new to most readers, and a bibliography of the works of Munn. The two Wellman stories are quite well written but, like most of his recent work, suffers from excessive simplicity of plot. There is little interplay between the characters. Somebody meets a Legendary Critter and there are only two possible endings: Either the Thing gets him or he gets the Thing. "Arimetta" is about a female forest spirit inclined to lethal fits of jealousy. The hero learned guitar-picking from John the

Balladeer, but doesn't seem to have shared that worthy's talent for surviving supernatural encounters (Ending #1). The spirit in "Lamia" seems to have gotten moldy over the years, and isn't at all like the lamias we meet in what seems like every third Clark Ashton Smith story. (No seduction power left. Ending #2.) One reads stories like this mostly for the background lore and for Wellman's ability to bring the settings alive. "The Sweet Grapes of Autumn" by Garfield has most of the same characteristics (Ending #1) but for a female protagonist. It's about a comfy old Southern plantation with sinister underpinnings.

Actually, you could almost say that this is the Southern Fantasy issue, not the WEIRD TALES issue, since all three stories are set in the American South and deal with its lore. It's always nice to see American fantasy (I mean much more than just fantasy by Americans), even if one has to read Italian magazines to find it.

The Munn item is "The Affair of the Cuckolded Warlock", which was published in a 250-copy edition in 1975. It's a commencement address from a sorcerers' university, outlining the deplorable downfall of a learned mage who committed "the heinous sin of sympathy". It's all very witty and works by subtle innuendo; the only problem is that it builds up to a climax which is either too subtle for me or just not there. I didn't get it in 1975, and I still don't. The story is otherwise better than I remembered it.

Next issue will be a special Occult Detective issue. Wellman has a John Thunstone story. Brian Lumley has a Titus Crow. Just the thing for the right sort of reader.

PANDORA -- the magazine of "role-expanding science fiction and fantasy", tries to pass itself off as a kind of DANGEROUS VISIONS of the little magazine world, publishing, so its advertisements claim, stories "the establishment magazines wouldn't touch".

Well, I hate to say it, but now that I have read the eighth issue, I have more faith in the establishment magazines than ever. There is nothing whatever "dangerous" in the magazine, I can't say I'm surprised. Such claims exist to be disbelieved. What surprises me, though, is that despite the avowed feminist orientation of PANDORA, there is very little "role expansion". The stories don't explore the relationship between the sexes in any meaningful way, nor are they about alternate social setups.

The only story of any interest at all is "The Princess, The Fencing Master, and the Unicorn" by Jim Aikin. This, we are assured, is a story only PANDORA could print. It's about a transvestite and a unicorn. There is nothing in the rules, you see, requiring that the traditional virgin be female. The story is a lot more interesting to hear about than to read. It is not humorous, but done completely straight (no pun intended) in a bland, lifeless (and I might add) totally unerotic way. There is a Nice Princess, who learns fencing from a Nice Man who also happens to be a transvestite. Unfortunately this Wicked Man wants to force the Princess to marry him. He can't be killed because of a charm he wears. To counteract this, the Doddering Old Wizard needs three hairs of a unicorn, gotten by traditional methods ... It all ends happily, even for the transvestite. The Princess likes him that way.

The setting is a standard-issue medieval costumeland. Aikin writes in a featureless, but vaguely competent manner, but the story, like much mediocre fantasy, has no dramatic power because it simply never intersects with human reality.

The reason only PANDORA could print it and no one else, is that it isn't good enough to sell elsewhere. Simple as that. In this day and age, when the allegedly prudish and arch-conservative ISAAC ASIMOV'S can publish stories about homosexual incest, the sex life of the Frankenstein monster, ministers who get laid and talk dirty, etc. etc., the mere idea of having a transvestite in a story isn't going to raise any eyebrows.

"Brother Computer, What Say Ye of Salvation?" by Ralph Roberts is a heavy-handed satire on the Moral Majority. If it had been done in half as many words, with characters



that were less than total caricatures, it might have sold to ANALOG as filler.

The other stories in the issue are blatantly sub-professional, containing common and obvious narrative flaws. One even dredges up (and does nothing interesting with) the hoariest cliché of the modern slush pile: the electronic game which seems to be (or turns out to be) real. These things are what Adam and Eve stories were twenty years ago.

But it is a semi-prozine, you might say. It should be judged by different standards ...

Don't give me that. I don't believe that small press magazines are a kind of affirmative action program for writers who aren't good enough for the big markets. They are specialized markets, which do not suffer much competition from the big markets because of what they print, not because of the level of quality. If PANDORA actually stuck to its alleged goals, it might carve a niche out for itself, the way WHISPERS has. Right now, forget it.

FANTASY BOOK #3 -- shows a marked improvement over the first issue. The packaging is much better. There is some very good Fabian art. Also, the work of Walter Lee (never heard of him) is quite attractive. The fiction is still a bit uneven, but the best is quite good by any standard. The editors seem to know what the best is too, because the three items listed on the cover stand well above the rest.

"The Dance of the Dwarfs" by John F. Carr is an excerpt from a forthcoming novel. It is clearly science fiction, in FANTASY BOOK, I suppose because parts of it take place in an underground community based on Tolkien's Moria, and also simply because it's a good story and the editors didn't want to pass it up for the silly genre considerations. Carr's future is a super-scientific hedonistic one, rather like Sucharitkul's Mallworld, only handled more seriously. His protagonist is a spectacularly nasty talk-show host who humiliates the self-styled "King of the Dwarfs" and suffers their dread revenge. This is obviously an opening episode in what will be a fascinating novel. The hero is left surgically transformed into a dwarf, his features unrecognizable, his fingerprints and brainwave patterns altered so the world computer net won't recognize him. His studio has replaced him with a clone and denied that he was ever kidnapped by the dwarfs.

The book will obviously deal with further attempts to establish his identity, at least for a while. I've never read Carr's fiction before, but he turns out to be a forceful and inventive writer. One thing I particularly like: Where an inferior writer would just hope we believe that the hero is such an effective nasty interviewer, Carr shows us. I suppose it's a maxim of fiction that you can't have a character who has a barbed wit unless you can actually produce some of it. Carr can. The TV show scenes all but crackle.

"The Christmas Demon" by James Hemesath is a routine sort of story, I suppose, but better done than most. A runner caught in a snowstorm gets picked up by a very strange motorist. He can never rest easily afterwards.

"The Return of the Mad Santa" by Al Sarrantonio (apparently this was intended as a Christmas issue, though it is dated February) is a delightful piece of lunacy. Every 800 years all that selfless goodness gets to be too much for Santa, and he has regrettable lapses, while the elves scramble like mad to cover up. The story is witty, vivid and extremely readable. It soars over the silliness of the premise.



DRAGONWRITER
OF PERN....

Several of the other stories are basically okay, of fully professional quality (as I would expect and demand from a magazine like this), but no more than that. There's an eldritch chess match in David Kaufman's "Mr. Hancock's Last Game". "The Pegasus Suit" by Frank Ward has the Greek Gods making a comeback through the ads in comic books. C. Bruce Hunter's "A Shade of Jealousy" is a typical revenge-of-the-murdered-spouse tale.

On a lower level are a couple of turgid short-stories, and a few stories which misfire for a variety of reasons. Lil and Kris Neville's "Milk Into Brandy" is an attempt at a nostalgic mood piece of the sort Bradbury used to do well. It might have worked if it had focused on one emotionally powerful incident rather than running all over the place like syrup. "The Summer's Garden" by Eric G. Iverson, is High Fantasy, centered on a nice image, forming a superficial allegory and told in a

redundant style:

"Rand was a veteran of many campaigns, who had won his belt of knighthood for his heroism in the war ... He was a warrior and a fighter...." (Page 45)

I should think that after the first is stated, the second would be obvious.

"The Carrot of Doom" by Edward DeGeorge makes several common mistakes. The setting is so vaguely defined it could be anywhere from 11th Century England to 19th Century Romania. (In fact, a battle in the Borgo Pass is mentioned.) There's a vampire in it, a Count, of course. (Why aren't these vampires of other orders of nobility, earls, dukes, etc? But then, Robert Bloch once asked why there are so many mad doctors and not enough mad dentists. He never got an answer.) The hero is a magician, who happens to be a cat-man. How he came into this world and why the peasants take him for granted is never explained. The spirit of the vampire seems to have escaped his stake-impaled body and settled in ... you're not going to believe this ... a carrot. This is a story about a cat-man magician battling a blood-thirsty carrot. At one point there is an attack of ravenous eyeballs on spindly legs, like something out of a Mike Gilbert cartoon. All silliness aside, the hero magics himself out of trouble much too easily. This is not a parody, alas. Unlike Sarrantonio, DeGeorge does not soar over the inherent absurdity. There is an old saying which fantasy writers need to keep in mind: If anything can happen, no one cares what does.

The issue's one reprint, a fantasy "classic" by Arthur J. Burks, is simply terrible. It's from THRILLING MYSTERY, 1935, and involves a mad scientist and giant iguanas. Some people might enjoy it as camp. I didn't.

FANTASY BOOK is worth getting. Not all the stories are good, but then neither were all the stories in WEIRD TALES. What I want a small press magazine to be is a fairly reliable source of high-quality material or a sort not adequately covered by the newsstand magazines. FANTASY BOOK fits the bill. I expect there will be at least something worth reading in every issue from now on.

PANDORA, Sprouing Inc., 3721 Barcelona Street, Tampa, FL 33609, \$2.50, \$4/\$6.00. Irregular.

FANTASY BOOK, POB #4193, Pasadena, CA 91106. \$3.00, 6/\$16.00. Bimonthly.



LETTERS

LETTER FROM A.J. BUDRYS
824 Seward Street
Evanston, IL 60202
February 14, 1982

'I've had thoughts similar to yours about the onset of audiovisual pulp, especially with the day shortly upcoming when every home can have hundreds of channel-equivalents, and most will. That'll produce a quantum jump, not just a major evolution of the present situation, in which we're already seeing a decided trend toward action dramas in prose science fiction. However, I don't think writing AV-like prose is going to be the only successful response.

'Having recently translated ROGUE MOON into 54 minutes of teleplay, I've had some of these technical questions answered to my satisfaction. ROGUE MOON was written with a camera and microphone; there are no internalizations whatever. So, except for the fact that it would have needed a 90-minute slot to be translated literally, it went

pretty damned smoothly, proving its credentials as technically the kind of story you're prescribing for the future. What really gets driven home, though, as you watch the long declarative speeches convert into very brief dialogue and a few camera directions and set decorations, is how wordy you're forced to get in writing "pictorial" prose for a reasonably sophisticated story. When you don't have that screen in front of the audience and you want to control what they see and hear, you're into word after word after word. I'm convinced that any kind of sparse, conventional narrative, unlike what I used in ROGUE MOON and initially baffled everyone with, is limited to telling sparse, conventional stories. That spells trouble.

'There are just so many times you can ingeniously limit yourself to AV-like stories. Invention flags and then the only place left to go is beyond the bounds of locales and plots already so familiar to the reader that you don't have to use a lot of words to describe them. What I'm saying is that while some writers will be able to do AV all of the time, and some will be able to do it some of the time, most will not be able to sustain it most of the time. I'm not talking doctrinaire ideas on what ought to be written, and I'm not talking artistic integrity. I'm talking laziness and burnout -- gaffia -- as the thing that will ensure the continued production of a great deal of non-AV prose.

'Where's it going to go? The easy answer is that most of it will never see the light of day, being swamped off by the publishers' lists by the no doubt copious supply of AV, and leaving a lot of readers without access to it. But it may not prove to be so. Try this scenario:

'There's no technical reason why publishers can't feed word-processors output almost directly into their type-composition machines. All it takes is some interface software, which no doubt any number of people will be happy to create and sell, if they haven't already. For writers who prefer working with a pencil and legal pad, there can really be paper-to-disc interface services. Zip, you've eliminated the salaries and overhead of compositor crews. Now: At the present time, books are centrally manufactured and shipped to distribution centers as common carrier freight. But there's no reason why you can't set up an automated book-manufacturing machine locally -- in a distributor's warehouse, say -- and feed it information by landline or microwave. Zap, there go the long-haul trucks and the freight tariffs. Suddenly, the

only noteworthy manufacturing cost remaining as an increment of retail price is the paper. And you can get the public to accept even cheaper paper than we're using today, if the product doesn't have to stand up to long-distance shipping and long-term storage. So if you think fortunes are being made in publishing today, what's it going to be in the (near) future? Distribution costs drop, tight demographic marketing becomes possible, and segmented demographics come into play -- i.e., you can sell to small segments of the total market, "manufacturing" and "distributing" in down time, and make a small fortune which is larger than today's large fortunes. In other words, you get the AV sales and the other sales too.

'Chaos in the industry? You bet. Ups will become downs, entirely new kinds of fraud and defalcation will be invented, and never go anywhere without your shit-detector and your stab-repellent. But you sure ain't gonna starve. And the chances are there will be more breadth to the kinds of things that can be written at a profit, not less.

BUT IF ITS RIGHT
WHY DID
MEL BROOKS
WANT TO
PUT IT IN
HIS STUPID
MOVIE ?



'Is this a likely scenario? How not? Publishing today is hideously expensive because the business side hasn't changed since the nineteenth century when it was not possible to separate the information that publishers sell from the packages in which the information is bound. That day is over. Let the distributor become the manufacturer -- his business is local freight distribution, not information, and he's set up to do it. Do you want to bet we're not already edging toward that day? There's been a persistent rumor for years about some

writers talking to publishers about furnishing the composition codes right in with the text keystrokes, and do you suppose no one's thinking about where that could lead? With the keys to Fort Knox dangling before his eyes? Can you think of a likelier scenario for an industry that's being forced to attempt books with fifteen-dollar retail price tags for a routine category novel and prices nudging \$20.00 for a major title and books being broken up into trilogies and tetralogies and the same proportions applying to paperbacks -- which are also pricing themselves out of all natural bounds and creating enormous production headaches for reasons that have nothing to do with selling information?

'How soon? Damned soon; almost as soon as the 200-channel home, because the technology's well within the state of the art and the industry's almost entirely free of outside regulation; is free to develop without clearing it through fourteen bureaus and eighteen volumes of a statute.'

((The many editions of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, printed in strategic areas around the country to insure next-day delivery, are an existing distribution system that could be copied in part if not in whole.

(University Microfilms International, which has royalty contracts with hundreds of small-press publishers (perhaps thousands), has plans afoot to set up or license printers/copiers/computers in libraries (perhaps bookstores?) which would be able to print facsimiles of back issues or (possibly) the current issue when keyed into the proper computer memory via phone link with the company's central computer library...for a fee.

((It's obvious---and economically vital---that all that expense in handling and transport of books and magazines should be wiped out by computer memory and copier-printers connected by phone or other electronic link.

((The home cable link could eventually be used to "buy" print-out copies of the old and rare or the new by some kind of credit card system. It's all coming and it will revolutionize our society and culture in ways we know not yet.))

LETTER FROM BUZZ DIXON
8961 Yolanda
Northridge, CA 91324
February 24, 1982

'The quarterly arrival of SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW is always a well-

LETTER FROM ED BURNS

3247 51st Ave. Dr. West
Bradenton, FL 33507
March 17, 1982

I was saddened to learn of the death of Philip K. Dick. These lines from VALIS came to mind:

"There is no answer; there is only a dead animal that just wanted to cross the street. We're all animals that want to cross the street only something mows us down half-way across that we never saw!" Chap. 14)

'Then in Chapter Six of A MAZE OF DEATH we are told that:

"All death comes as a result... of a deterioration of form. due to the activity of the Form Destroyer!"

'The Form Destroyer has not won -- for Dick's works always pointed toward a transcendent significance. Indeed from his interview with Daniel DePrez in SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #19, we have his words:

"... I often have the feeling -- and it does show up in my books --- that this is all just a stage."

'I believe that Dick's life and works illustrate the struggle for unity that Dick called Ubik. Ubik was invented by a "number of responsible half-lifers" threatened by the Form Destroyer, Jory. This struggle for unity is called the transcendent function by Carl Jung -- whom Dick has called the greatest of the human thinkers (in OUR FRIENDS FROM FROLIX 8). Dick illustrated Jung's myth of modern man in which the individual has the choice

"between becoming conscious enough to create 'objective existence and meaning', or become unconsciously the slave of the state and those who know how to manipulate it, and thus going down to his unknown end 'in the profoundest night of non-being.' Page 336, JUNG HIS LIFE AND WORK by Barbara Hanna.

'Dick says as much in his interview with Charles Platt in SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #36. Dick cites the greatest menace of the twentieth century as being the totalitarian state, then continues...

"Essentially, I'm pleading the cause of those people who are not strong".

'The something overlooked that Dick wished to acquaint people with was the archetype of unity and totality -- the Self. In which ...

"Our God is reborn -- not outside as such, but in each of us. Slumbering not under snow over the ground-surface but within the right hemisphere of our brains." Page 223 from Dick's essay in SCIENCE FICTION AT LARGE.

'I would like to end with the conclusion of Dick's SOLAR LOTTERY:

"Don't feel bad about it. It's only the physical part of John Preston that's dead, and that part is not really very important."

".... Its blind eyes gazed out over the group of people, not seeing them, not hearing them, not aware of their presence. It was speaking instead to listeners far off, watchers far away. 'It isn't a brute instinct that keeps us restless and dissatisfied. I'll tell you what it is: it's the highest goal of man -- the need to grow and advance ... to find new things ... to expand. To spread out, reach areas, experiences, comprehend and live in an evolving fashion. To push aside routine and repetition, to break out of mindless monotony and thrust forward. To keep moving on ...'"



come day at my house; I've never been disappointed by any issue of your zine (indeed, I picked up an early fifties version of PSYCHOTIC and some mid-sixties SCIENCE FICTION REVIEWS that I didn't have and was pleasantly surprised with the high level of readability and intelligence in all of them. You've been publishing PSYCHOTIC/SFR/REG/TAC/SFR for nearly thirty years now -- longer perhaps? -- how about writing an overview of what changes have been wrought in science fiction, fandom and the world in relation to them during that time?)

'Back to the issue at hand: I really liked the Fabian cover. Excellent use of shading to represent depth, an intriguing juxtaposition of symbols, good technique.

'You made some good observations re fiction techniques (TV style vs. literary style). I don't think the observations are 100% true, however.

'Consider Delaney -- long, artistic, symbolic, deliberately-paced novels -- who sells quite well, thank you. Consider LOGAN'S RUN, the prototype "movie as literature" book, a rather disappointing novel, wouldn't you say?

'The fast-paced action of the current crop of movies and TV shows is not new (look at the old pulps) and certainly does not automatically exclude quality writing (look at Bester's first two novels), but to cite it as a virtue above and beyond all others ain't necessarily so.

'Remember, whatever grabs a reader's attention and doesn't let go is good. Stephen King and Peter Straub allow slow, leisurely build-ups to their stories, never rushing headlong to the heart of terror but gradually spiraling towards it in an ever tightening circle.

'Indeed, Straub is an excellent refutation to the TV/movie style of writing. He's never direct, very leisurely paced, extremely literate and artistic, but always engrossing.

'In fact, even in films the "movie style" of story doesn't always work and sometimes decidedly non-cinematic films are highly successful. MY DINNER WITH ANDRE -- 90 minutes of two guys sitting down to dinner and carrying on a conversation -- has been enormously successful. Various cult films -- screened repeatedly on TV and in revival houses -- eschew traditional cinematic forms.

'Remember, the form is not the content.

((In the context of a shrinking audience for written fiction in the future, I think we should (some of us) try to give the

audio-visual consumer an alternative-in-text, but in a form that new reader can easily handle. Yes, we should fight like tigers to keep our existing readership by providing that readership with better written sf and fantasy, and to that end I suggest more bed-rock story elements, more powerful fiction dynamics.

(It may be that easy-to-read and no-interiors (or as few as possible) story-telling technique and book/magazine formats are a lost cause, inherently doomed. But I think we should try. Otherwise we'll be ever more isolated and ghettoized---as readers.

(The form is not the content, and the content is not the form! I suspect that most ideas in sf can be presented effectively in a variety of styles and techniques; the writer chooses which for emotional/status/monetary reasons.)

'Falwell and his "Moral Majority" has come under such diverse attack that I'd almost feel sorry for him and defend him if he wasn't such a flaming asshole. Don't worry about "hillbillies" becoming engrossed with this clown. My brother, Bob, who is in Greensboro, N.C. studying to be a Baptist minister, tells me the real hard-core Southern Christians see Falwell as a shuck and a leech and are not inclined to help him. Most Southern Christians are very active in their local churches (indeed, fundamentalists nationwide tend to support their local churches extremely well) and prefer to do the Lord's work through those churches instead of sending money to some stranger in another part of the country; a stranger wearing \$600 suits, to boot.

'I suggest you get THE BEVERLY HILLBILLIES out of your mind and remember Gordon Dickson's axiom: Primitive does not mean stupid. The popular media, from Li'l Abner on down, has tried to pass Southern in general and hillbillies in particular as being slow-witted and unsophisticated. I cite Thomas Wolfe and Manley Wade Wellman as two bright examples of pure "hillbilly" who are remarkably sensitive and intelligent. The Southern lawyer in ABSENCE OF MALICE is a lot closer to the truth than the DUKES OF HAZARD.

'Re your comment to Charles Platt's letter of comment re David Gerrold (I think we need a map and compass to find our way through that one; consider -- this is a letter of comment on your editorial comment to Charles Platt, etc., but I digress): You say it's possible to turn out quality work under severe restrictions. Would that it were so.

'I can cite grievous and bitter personal experience. Both are shows I'm currently working on, one as a scriptwriter only, the other as a creator (neither, or maybe just one, of these shows might make it to Saturday mornings next fall, so don't be surprised if this is their first and last public mention).

'One is called ROXIE'S RAIDERS. It's about a band of secret service agents cleverly disguised as a band of circus freaks. Actually, we never use the perjorative term "freaks" but how else can you describe characters with hands the size of shovels or faces of silly putty?

'This is meant to be an action-adventure show with a touch of comedy -- in other words, no camp, far-out stories. The network has been stressing "plausibility" in each show.

'Now -- get this -- this is how all the shows must operate. Roxie -- our daring 20-year-old heroine -- gets a secret message telling her where the instructions for her next mission are hidden. It's never explained why the instructions aren't delivered with the initial message or why she has to sneak off by herself to find these instructions (supposedly no one knows she's a secret agent ... but I digress).

'Our plot must be patterned after the old thrilling serials of the thirties ... only we can't have the villains deliberately trying to hurt anyone. We must use real locales and events in history ... only we can't use names for fear of libel. Our plots must be logical and believable ... except given the restrictions placed on us and the utter vapidity of our characters, a troop of determined Boy Scouts could expose and slaughter our "heroes" in less than fifteen minutes.

'In addition, we've got five regular characters (each with an annoying personal schtick that must be

performed at least once every act), three animals, a "guest star hero", a villain and his henchmen, plus our "emotional interest", some wimp innocent bystander who tugs at the heartstrings of Roxie and gives her an emotional stake in the story (as if patriotism and saving one's own ass wasn't enough).

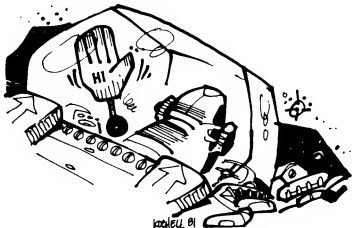
'Add to this other incidental characters, a rigorous and stifling plot structure and a host of other garbage that must be strung together in a 21: minute plot.

'As every writer who's approached this show has said: It ain't gonna work. The ROXIE scripts have been uniformly dismal and disappointing, boring and bad. And these are scripts written by people who like animation and who have turned in quality work for films, magazines, comic books and prime-time television.

'(Why, you ask, if it's so bad does the network still show interest in it? Well, the network presented our "concepts" to a research company which reported they "tested" well. I remind you the networks hired a fortune teller last year to make predictions on the ratings of various shows and rest my case.)

'SKANNER, the show I created then watched be raped and mutilated, was meant to be a 21st Century version of Sam Spade or Philip Marlowe. The future was gritty but real -- advances and benefits for humans in certain areas, drawbacks and problems in others.

'By the time the network got through with SKANNER, he had (a) a beautiful secretary who was first an alien then not an alien according to network fiat (b) a sidekick robot (c) two kids who hang around with him (d) a cop who started out as a cyborg rival but ended up just a normal person who likes Skanner (e) a black cook buddy who's really heroic and happens to act a lot like a popular character on a prime



time TV show (f) eradicated any and all "downbeat" (i.e., realistic) depictions of the future in favor of a Disneyland "Big Bright Beautiful Tomorrow" look.

'I mention all this because when I turned in my first six-page version of SKANNER, several other writers here saw it and liked it very much. So much so that they came up with thirty or forty possible story ideas almost immediately. The latest SKANNER presentation -- twenty pages -- is so limited that we've been able to come up with a grand total of three story ideas -- none of them very original, good or exciting.

'It's only possible to do quality work with restrictions when (a) the restrictions are known up front and (b) the writer/artist is given complete freedom to create within those restrictions. Neither SKANNER nor ROXIE'S RAIDERS will ever reach an even mediocre level; both are doomed to disaster.

'(And please, those of you who want to write for TV and can think of dozens of great story ideas for these two shows, please, I repeat again, please don't send your ideas to me. Even if the shows are picked up, by the time this letter is published the scripts will have been completed and the animation begun. Anyway, I'm only a staff writer and have no authority or power to buy scripts or recommend writers.)

'Re Darrel Schweitzer: "Born again" means public acceptance of Christ as one's savior. The salvation through this public confession can be described in the following analogy: If someone is drowning (living in sin) and you throw them a rope (witness to them about Christ), they can accept the rope (proclaim Christ as their Savior) or reject it. Salvation means different things to different people: To born-again Christians it means a public faith in Christ and belief that this faith will save you from the consequences of your sins. It does not mean one is immune from temptation or incapable of sinning. Bravo your editorial comment to his letter.

'As for Darrell's second letter, white male villains (non-denominational) are the preferred villains in TV today.

'Anytime you use an ethnic villain, you're required to show at least one virtuous ethnic character (series regulars not included).

'Indeed, one would think the perfect villains would be Nazis -- they're white, hateful bigots who like hurting people and are almost unbearably beautiful. (Indeed, the first -- and best -- season of WON-

DER WOMAN had her fighting Nazis in WWII.) However, on Saturday mornings at least, you can't have Nazis. Why? Because Nazis deliberately hurt people and even the nastiest Saturday a.m. villains are never allowed to even want to deliberately hurt someone.

'Re Ronald Lambert: The types of laws he wants for publishing already exist for television. It is specifically against the law for networks to influence or dictate to producers and artists how to do their programs. All the networks can do (legally) is allot commercial time.

'However ... there are far more producers, writers, etc. than there are available programming hours. So a network is allowed to pick and choose among the shows offered them; pick and choose those most likely to be seen by the most people and hence bring in the greatest advertising revenues.

'Now the networks can't tell producers what to do, but they can make suggestions. Naturally, these suggestions are like whims of iron. Co-operative studios (those that toe the line) get shows on the air, unco-operative shows (those that stand for aesthetic integrity) don't.

'He who plays the piper calls the tune, Mr. Lambert.

'Actually, the most chilling thing about his letter was his remarkably accurate prediction of "no-frills" super-market books; I'm sure you're aware of those already on the market. They're just a novelty today, but they're not that unthinkable.

'In closing, a compliment to the overall intellectual and visual package of SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW; very nice on all levels. I always skim through SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW upon arrival for the cartoons and artwork.

'The cartoon on page 56 is one of the funniest -- and nastiest -- you've ever printed.'

((Those no-frills genre books that Leisure is publishing---and they're set to publish four a month now---have one devastating premise: push the reader's buttons and nothing else much matters.

((Since the books cost only \$1.50 each, the lack of a cover painting doesn't matter all that much (after fifty years of sf, romance, western and historical romance covers, covers are "all the same" anyway) and to a certain percentage of readers all that is



required in the story is the presence of the usual sf, western, romance, or historical furniture. It may be a terrible thing to say, but I suspect that beyond a certain level, for most readers "quality writing" is counterproductive and wasted. They don't want depth of characterizations and its inevitable ambiguity and (for them) puzzles and need-to-understand and think-through. They want cheap thrills in the genre of their choice. Why is that a bad thing, and why is it so terrible to give that to them?))

LETTER FROM PIERS ANTHONY JACOB
February, 1982

'Mostly these days I just read and absorb, but this time a remark in SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #42 letter column sparked a chain of thought. But first let me back up and catch up on a remark in SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #41. You inquired whether I have written any readable novels yet, and my answer is yes, of course I have -- but I was unable to find a publisher for them, so had to go commercial. I thought you understood that. That commercial course has put me comfortably in that top 5% and my income has not fluctuated much in the past few years. Mean-

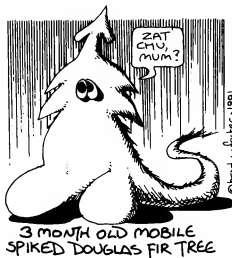
while, from your comments in SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #42, it is evident that you have stopped reading my novels, and thereby deprived yourself of the very type of fiction you profess to crave. Why don't you try MUTE or TAROT and see if it isn't so?

'Some issues back, you gave a user report on the solid bicycle tires. On your recommendation, we invested in same, and now have them on two-and-a-half bikes. They are okay; the ride is a little harder, but the security of no flats and the convenience of not having to pump them up every few days is gratifying. So thanks, Dick; we are satisfied users.

'Now, the remark that started my chain of thought. It was in the letter by Vincent Perkins, who finds my imagination riotous and my expression crude. Now, by training and inclination I am actually one of the most meticulous writers; incorrect syntax and inappropriate expression annoy me to the point of pain. What am I doing, I wondered, to give an opposite impression? And I realized that I am in fact writing at a break-neck pace, to commercial standards, so that inevitably precision suffers. I suspect this is true of many writers, and this may be part of what the critics mean when they decry the descending standards of the genre. It is as if I am running a marathon -- I run for exercise, though I do three miles at a time, hardly a marathon, but it means this kind of analogy comes readily to mind; every so often I make my distance in under 21 minutes, and that pleases me immensely -- so here I am, running this figurative marathon, and every so often some bystander or short-hop runner comes up and paces me a few steps and lo! he is fresh and clean and bouncy and strong, while I am tarnished with sweat and my breath is rasping and my feet land heavily.

'He may chide me for being crude, for not being as pretty as he. But he is running perhaps fifty paces while I am midway through a marathon. How much fiction do most writers turn out regularly? One novel, of 75,000 words, per year? Two? The equivalent in stories? I turn out a third of a million words a year, every year, and last year I delivered to my publisher about 480,000 words of fantasy. (Yes, I can identify it, if you're interested: JUX-TAPOPOSITION, CENTAUR AISLE, OGRE, OGRE, and NIGHT MARE. The first is about 135,000 words, the others each just over 115,000.) Few genre writers deliver as much fiction as I do, and I'm not sure that any of those match the sales my novels achieve in print. At the moment only CENTAUR AISLE is in print, but it has been seven weeks on the B. DALTON bestseller list, peaking at number

5, right between the mainstream best-sellers -- well, here, I'll quote the top ten: 1. SIMPLE SOLUTION RUBIK'S CUBE 2. AZTEC 3. BRAIN 4. NEVADA 5. CENTAUR AISLE 6. ANSWER AS A MAN 7. GHOST STORY 8. COMPANY OF WOMEN 9. SIMPLE SOLUTION/CUBE PUZZLES 10. AMITYVILLE HORROR II. That was for January 8, 1982. No, I'm not saying that the sales of my novels mean criticism is irrelevant; damn it, I'm one of the critics! I don't like seeing junk at the top. But if it does have to be junk there, then I am ready to compete, showing that I have mastered commercial writing. I think that gives me as solid a basis to criticize it as exists; I have proved I understand it. But this is a corrupting thing, because I discover I like hauling in money for superficial and perhaps hurried entertainment, and I don't like going broke on meaningful writing. Despite the manner I chided Gene Wolfe



for an awkwardness in his prose, I have a certain envy of it, for that is the only such awkwardness I perceived in the whole novel. I believe I could match that level -- but not when I'm turning out a third of a million words per year. So I absorb Vincent Perkins' critique with a certain regret. I prefer always to do my best, but the immediate rewards of formula writing are virtually overwhelming, and I just can't quite bring myself to give them up right now. At such time as I get really fed up with compromise, and really secure financially, I may quit it and write what pleases me, and Vanity-publish it. We'll see.

'Yet for the moment there are other compensations. I get letters of adoration from children, ages 9 and up, begging me to write more

Xanth novels and sequels to other ones. It seems I am making quite a number of the less-critical readers happy, and that touches me. Today is the 21st of the month; I have answered 24 fan letters and turned down an invitation to a convention, so far this month. As I ponder it, I suspect that that may be more important than the literary excellence I long for. I am not being facetious; I would like to know how other writers feel about this matter, about God or Caesar, and whether they would sell out similarly, had they the opportunity. I do not for a moment condemn those who pursue God. But I rather wish I could have both.

'That's it, my thought for the day. Tomorrow I return to the sheer joy of greed, because damn it, Caesar does pay well.'

((I'm very hard to please, as a reader. I've read so much over the years... In a very real sense I'm advocating writing that in practice I cannot read. Almost everything I pick up is leaden, dull, drab, slovenly, low-tensioned. Even the "commercial" writers are not producing the exciting, grabbing, riveting fiction I like to read. They slop around in their formulas and I hate them for it.

((I'm becoming depressingly aware that really good "pulp" writing is rare... and apparently very difficult to write.

((I'm glad you're making so much money with your novels; God knows you've paid your dues and worked your butt off. I'm sorry to see you apparently sinking into the guilt trip and apologizing for your success. Please don't ever try for "literary" success. Most of the great writers wrote "commercial junk" in their day--Hugo, Balzac, Scott, the Brontes, Shakespeare, Dickens, Stevenson, Baum... Your novels may last as long as theirs. Or longer.))

LETTER FROM DARRELL SCHWEITZER
113 Deepdale Road
Strafford, PA 19087
January 30, 1982

'First of all, I'd like to mention that the Curse of the Typo has struck again. A crucial "not" has been left out of a sentence in one of my letters, rather distorting the meaning of what was intended. On page 30 of SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #42, third column, end of the second paragraph, the last sentence should read:

"I am not saying that Feminist tracts or Anti-Feminist tracts or save-the-whales, anti-pollution, anti-(or pro) Communist tracts should not be published, but when editors refuse to market them as fiction, this is not censorship."

'One more apparent contradiction bites the dust. The point is that much of what is perceived as censorship is really editorial decisions. When the author's obsessions overwhelm the fictional values of an alleged novel, and the editor refuses on this basis to buy the work, this is not censorship. If the author's obsession happens to be popular, the work gets published anyway. Hence THE FEMALE MAN, the Gor Series, the last three Heinlein novels. Or the later books of H.G. Wells for that matter. But they only sell to people sharing the obsession or interested in the author's Thought, not to story readers.

'An awkward statement in "The Vivivector" I should clarify is this business about publishing explosions (page 41, first column): "in each case (with the possible exception of White) it centered around the author himself and closely identifiable imitators". What this actually should mean is that to my knowledge, ONCE AND FUTURE KING had no imitators. It just sold very well in a time when very little fantasy was published in this country. It didn't have anything to do with the creation of the Fantasy genre. To this day most people who read it probably aren't aware there is such a thing, or if they are, they don't know they're reading Fantasy, any more than people who read FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON know they're reading science fiction.

'Middle of the next column: I should point out that Dunsany's early collections, which established his reputation, aren't novels. The sentence seems to say this.

Everytime I read my work in print I always find things like this. It is an entropic effect. The Thought occurs in the mind with perfect order and clarity, like the structure of a snowflake, but it begins to melt when put down on paper, even more so when it gets into print.

By a remarkable coincidence, I have just been reading a large amount of the kind of SF you're calling for in your editorial. The stuff was published quite widely at one time.

'I read some of those phonebook-sized FANTASTIC ADVENTURE QUARTERLYs from the early World War II years. I got a couple just as curiosities.

700-plus-page pulp magazines make good conversation pieces. Then I became interested in Robert Bloch's Lefty series and now have a stack of these things about two feet high. (That's five issues. Equals 15 issues of FANTASY ADVENTURE QUARTERLY itself.)

'It was my first prolonged plunge into unabashed pulp fiction. I've read a lot of pulp science fiction before, and science fiction pulps too, but those were mostly (by pulp standards) kinky and unclassified things like WEIRD TALES, ASTOUNDING, UNKNOWN, the Merwin STARTLING STORIES.

'FANTASTIC ADVENTURES and its companion, AMAZING, in this period were pure pulp magazines. They're



quite different from most of the other science fiction magazines of the same period. Some of the writing is unbelievably awful, notably that by John Russell Fearn under a variety of pseudonyms (I am led to conclude that the current interest in him on the part of some British fans is either sheer nationalism, or the most misty-eyed case of nostalgia on record), but a lot of it is fairly polished. FANTASTIC ADVENTURES paid high. The editor, Ray Palmer, knew what he was doing, and could get what he wanted. What he wanted was just different from what everybody else wanted.

'The stories were very much the sort of thing you're calling for. They start at once. There is no introspection, no lecturing, no long description, although everything is

fairly visual. The layout man automatically broke the text up about once a page for the benefit of those with short attention spans. (Actually, most pulps did this.) Everything is clear. The stories get going, something happens, something else happens, and the story stops as soon as the conflict is over. The level of writing, in terms of technical expertise, is far higher than that found in the science fiction magazines of the middle 30s.

'The difference is that the stories have no human elements at all. It isn't so much that the authors were incapable of characterization. I get the distinct impression that any kind of probing of human emotions, any attempt to get across what a character might feel or perceive, was simply regarded as beyond the scope of pulp fiction. The characters are identified by speech tags and other labels, in finest pulp style. (I suppose I should clarify: I have of course read "pulp" fiction before, and a lot of it. Edmond Hamilton's serials from WEIRD TALES in the 30s, THE FIRE PRINCESS, THE LAKE OF LIFE, etc. But that sort of thing didn't dominate WEIRD TALES, which was a very "literary" sort of magazine.) The stories consist of action and nothing else. There is no atmosphere. The imaginative content is minimal. Another rule seems to have been that one should never, never stimulate the mind of the reader. So there's nothing which stays with a reader after the story is done. The regular science fiction magazines at least had idea content consistently. Human values may have been weak, but the reader was left with thought.

'Guess what? Although the Palmer-edited AMAZING and FANTASTIC ADVENTURES were shunned by fans, they were the most successful science fiction/fantasy magazines ever published. During the war, when paper was scarce, and a publisher had to use his allotment carefully, these two were publishing issues nearly 200 pages long. WEIRD TALES rapidly shrank to less than a hundred. Obviously, the publishers felt that the extra paper could more profitably be used elsewhere. The publishers of AMAZING and FANTASTIC ADVENTURES knew where their goldmine was.

'While I was reading all this stuff, I paused to watch DARKROOM, and there was this episode in which Billy Crystal played a dim-witted but sympathetic wimp who gets a magic makeup kit and is able to become characters out of old movies. More by happenstance than anything else, he foils some gangsters and lives happily ever after.

'I made the connection. The DARKROOM episode would have fitted

perfectly into FANTASTIC ADVENTURES, 1942. Pulp fiction was prose television.

'Ultimately, I found FANTASTIC ADVENTURES unsatisfactory for the same reason I watch very little television. While it is easy to consume (read/watch) there is nothing to it. There is nothing for the intellect, nothing for the emotions, just a kind of shadow-play with one-dimensional figures who have nothing to do with human realities. It is easy to say that the FANTASTIC ADVENTURES stories didn't depict life as it is. In real life pain hurts. People have more than one identifiable trait. All women aren't beautiful and ready to fall passionately (but vividly) in love with the square-jawed Everyman. Emotional relationships are tangles. There are no easy answers to problems. You could say that the pulp writers had no powers of observation, but I suspect that observation was not regarded as part of the pulpster's stock in trade. The readers probably liked it that way. Anything which stirred up the emotions was disturbing. Anything which stirred the intellect was hard to understand. So these were to be avoided, and the magazines were an incredible success. (AMAZING in this period allegedly sold about 150,000 copies. FANTASTIC ADVENTURES may have been a little less, but the way the publisher lavished paper supplies on it during the wartime rationing, surely indicates that it did nearly as well.)

'You're absolutely right, Dick, when you say that it's easier to watch than to read. This is why you're the one that's courting oblivion, rather than the elitist "literary" writers. The kind of fiction you're calling for existed, with every characteristic you describe, and it flourished and it was even written with a high degree of skill, but that was before television. This kind of fiction has since transferred over to television. In the print media, it is already utterly extinct. You're not urging writers to adapt to the realities of today's market. You're trying to revive a dinosaur.

'Typically, Robert Moore Williams once wrote a moody, atmospheric story called "Robot's Return". He sent it to Ray Palmer, who turned it down saying, "This is beautifully written, but it's not pulp fiction." Well, Williams got the message and became one of the regulars of Palmer's AMAZING and FANTASTIC ADVENTURES. He became a pure pulp writer, and a fairly skilled one. He became the kind of writer you're calling for more of. But his odd, early story, the one that isn't "pulp fiction" can be found in ADVENTURES IN TIME AND SPACE. It is the only thing

by Robert Moore Williams that anyone reads anymore. Very little from Palmer's two extremely successful pulps is reprinted these days, whereas if you look in ASTOUNDING, UNKNOWN, or even WEIRD TALES (which was beginning to decline by this period), you'll find two or three stories in every issue which have been reprinted widely.

'The thing about pulp fiction, pure pulp fiction, the non-introspective, non-elitist stuff you describe, is that the elitist readers lose interest in it very quickly. Everybody else watches television. There's no audience.

'I think we have to just admit that text fiction is an elitist endeavor. We are not appealing to the broad masses. We are not trying to be accessible to everybody. The ability to read and appreciate rich text fiction is a talent, and most people don't have it. The ability to appreciate imaginative text fiction of any quality is an even scarcer talent.

'But it's the eccentric stuff, the stuff which stops to probe human nature, which has thought content and insight and individual personality rather than broadly defined, mechanical characteristics, that stays in print. This is a commercial thing actually. A classic is a good commercial property. I would rather own the literary estate of, say, Mervyn Peake, than unlimited reprint rights to all the stories published in FANTASTIC ADVENTURES. I'd rather own MOBY DICK.

'"Pulp" fiction can be produced by any skilled practitioner. The catch is that any skilled practitioner of pulp fiction can be replaced by any other such practitioner. This is why most of the highest-paid pulp writers, the contributors to BLUE BOOK and ARGOSY and (yes) FANTASTIC ADVENTURES are forgotten, but all the odd characters like H.P. Lovecraft and Clark Ashton Smith and Ray Bradbury, who did not write "pulp" fiction are reprinted again and again. A purely pulp writer, the sort you're calling for, can be replaced, and will be replaced by someone else in the next generation. Since his product is no better, there is no reason why it should be preferred. Since the product of pulp magazines in general was no better than television, and television does not require reading skill, the pulps died in the wake of television.

Science fiction didn't. It is precisely because science fiction of the sort you're calling for is no longer published, and because that kind of science fiction was never dominant, that science fiction didn't

go the way of the sports story or the western. Sure enough, AMAZING (and the successor to FANTASTIC ADVENTURES, FANTASTIC) declined markedly when the audience for pulp fiction went over to television. It wasn't until they metamorphosed into something more like the other science fiction magazines that they became more than marginal. During the same period, ASTOUNDING, GALAXY and FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION did rather well. Their audience wasn't captured by television. It was a smaller audience than that of the pulps in their hey-day, because they were elitist magazines.

'My point is that you can't compete with television for its audience. For the "pulp" audience, television and movies are better. Text fiction can only go for that portion of the public which is capable of appreciating those characteristics of text fiction which cannot be duplicated by films. No film could ever duplicate the experience one gets from reading the Gormenghast books, even though a very fine film might be made from them. A small percentage of the public will always be able to tell the difference. Therefore, Peake continues to sell, because no subsequent verbal technician can replace him. This isn't just true of Fine literature either. Edgar Rice Burroughs had something which pulp writers of subsequent generations were not able to duplicate. Otis Adelbert Kline tried, as did a lot of other people. They are forgotten. More to the point, the Tarzan movies and TV shows did not take away the audience for the Burroughs books.

'Of course, science fiction books and magazines are edited for college-educated English major types. (Except for those which are avowedly edited for Engineering major types.) These are the people who still read. They are not the television/"pulp" audience. By so slanting, the editors are able to avoid direct competition with television. You can't expect much from the non-book audience (i.e. those who read three or less books a year). If, say, Dave Hartwell at Timescape were to slant his line for this audience, would he sell more books? No, the audience would be watching television or movies, and he would alienate the reading audience. Instead, he publishes things like SHADOW OF THE TORTURER and TIMESCAPE which are capable of capturing a large portion of the reading audience, but are as far removed from the TV/non-book/"pulp" audience as possible.

'They are accessible to most readers, and within the smaller reading audience they are non-elitist indeed. They require that the readers be literate and possess some degree

of imagination and intelligence. They can never compete with television. There are few people who can't understand/enjoy television, except the severely retarded. There are lots of people who can't understand/enjoy books. This is just the nature of things. If this were forty years ago, they wouldn't be able to compete with pulp writing. But they will stay in print longer, and ultimately turn out to be stronger commercial properties.

'Pulp writing is extinct. It has no audience. There's nothing left but various forms of elitist writing. I'm optimistic about the future of such elitist writing, because I see no indication that TV and films can ever take its audience away. The people who flocked to see STAR WARS were not people who formerly read books. They were people who formerly didn't watch science fiction movies.'

((I see you've evaded my basic premise: text fiction writers can offer more sf wonders and 'content' than even uncensored cable TV, but we have to write better than we do now (mostly). I am saying there is a vast audience out there beyond the hardcore who will read books and magazines if we give them what they want and cannot get on TV. To do that we have to recognize that they are used to the visual story-telling style and we should adapt as much as possible to that style.

((Yes, we will always have our hardcore sf readership and our elitist literary readership, but that core will shrink...and shrink...

((I repeat: "We have to give people what they cannot get anywhere in the visual media, and we must make it as easy as possible for them to get us and read us."

((You've dressed up pulp writing as it perhaps existed in the 30s and forties in an evil-smelling suit of anti-intellectual (for morons only) clothes and handed it to me and said, "Here, this is what you want sf to return to."

((No. I want superior, effective writing which hooks the reader, intrigues him, involves him and rivets him with a strong story about people and issues which he now cares a great deal about. Superior "pulp" writing



did that. There are other styles and techniques which will do that, too. I think the fast paced, minimal-interior-thinking technique will appeal to a greater number of potential readers. A certain percentage of the new readership will "mature" into the more traditional and intellectual sf available.

((You argue against this effort because you don't much like TV, you're of the elitist school, from the academic/literary scene. You're willing to edit for an elite and eager to scorn the great unwashed masses. As I said last issue---that leads to a ghetto perhaps even smaller than we had before.

((Using the Ray Palmer AMAZINGS as a typical pulp example while ignoring the Shaver Mystery which hyped circulation to those huge levels seems dishonest.

((It may be as you say: "text fiction is an elitist endeavor. ... The ability to read and appreciate rich text fiction is a talent, and most people don't have it." I think not. I think that philosophy is elitist bullshit which springs from weak egos and perceived inferiority mixed with envy and jealousy.

((But we'll see what happens. That's the ultimate test.))

LETTER FROM CHRIS HULSE
1571 Happy Lane
Eugene, OR 97401
January 27, 1982

'Having read your editorial in #42 and Paulette's insertion concerning MERLIN, I felt compelled to dash off these short notes.

'Gershon Legman in his RATIONALE OF THE DIRTY JOKE examines this joke: his quoted version, in fact, almost word-for-word the same as Darrell Schweitzer's paraphrase. He dates this one back to 1735 (giving that version, too). On this theme of vaginal size, he says that the joke reflects "the fear that the penis is insufficiently large (this fear being projected upon the woman)." "The commonest insult", Legman says, "concerning the female genitals is that they are too big". So obviously, this joke has been around in folklore for much longer than it can be traced back; true for most jokes, in fact.

'Richard, as for your pitch for reduced interior narration in fiction, assuming you refer to all popular fiction and not just SF, then see FLETCH, or CONFESSION, FLETCH or FLETCH'S FORTUNE by Gregory McDonald.

They are perfect examples of what you want. Especially FLETCH, which won the Edgar Award. Each told in the third person; fast-paced, well-plotted and sub-plotted, strongly characterized through characters' actions and dialogue, all with absolutely no getting inside Fletch's head (or anyone else's, for that matter). They are marvels, indeed. The next time you want to make your point, wave FLETCH around as an example. You couldn't ask for a better fiction example of how to compete with the dreaded Tube, or the abhorrent Screen.

'Perhaps you have read them. I think back in the old ALIEN CRITIC days George Warren mentioned in glowing terms FLETCH -- so if George sez it's good, it is good. Feeling as you do, you ought to cough up two bucks and buy FLETCH, available on the Mystery rack at your local book shop. Take you about an hour to read it.'

CARD FROM ROBERT BLOCH
2111 Sunset Crest Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90046
February 2, 1982

'In the letter column, someone named Wilson Bob Tucker says, "You should be advised that the world is coming to an end".'

'I beg to differ.

'The world is not coming to an end. It has already ended, but nobody noticed.'

((I noticed, Bob. But I didn't think it mattered. I think I was right, too; the world has ended and it doesn't seem to have made a bit of difference!!)

LETTER FROM BOB BARGER
5204 Dayton Blvd, #6
Chattanooga, TN 37415
February 6, 1982

'The latest SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW arrived yesterday and was much appreciated. The first thing that caught my eye, as chance would have it, was Darrell Schweitzer's review of Zelazny's THE CHANGING LAND. It surprised me considerably. No one I have talked to who has read the book has understood it, and most have an opinion of the book that parallels Mr. Schweitzer's on most points -- but to be frank, I had rather expected Schweitzer, with his presumably well-read background in fantasy and science fiction, to pick up on many

of the subtle points of the book that most readers have apparently overlooked ... (and by overlooking them miss enjoying the book on the level it was apparently intended). But Schweitzer didn't mention any of these subtle points of the book, and I was vastly disappointed -- not so much for the fact that many Zelazny readers will continue to mistakenly consider this book to be one of Zelazny's worst, as for the fact that William Hope Hodgson fans (few and far between as they apparently are nowadays) will miss a book that should be of considerable interest to them. If a reader is both a Zelazny fan and a Hodgson admirer, then this book is an absolute must.

'First, I felt about the book as did Schweitzer in his review. And then, on page 119 of the paperback edition I read:

"... a horde of snouted, piglike creatures of considerable size, running on their hind legs, tore past with snuffling, panting noises. Some appeared to be carrying cushions and earthenware jugs. As they vanished in the distance, it seemed almost as if they had begun chanting.

"The little bastards are out in force," Baran remarked, "A few of them always manage to make it upstairs and disturb me when I'm in the library."

'What the fuck was this scene meant to be, I asked myself. It read something like THE THREE STOOGES visit THE HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND ... and, in a sense, that's what this book is.

'THE CHANGING LAND is a prequel to William Hope Hodgson's THE HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND, and any reader who has a familiarity with the latter can hardly help but recognize this -- Hodgson himself is a major character in the book, in fact, and this book is worth reading for, if no other reason, Zelazny's "explanations" of all the mysteries of Hodgson's book that Hodgson himself never revealed in his own work. But also to the reader who is familiar with and enjoys the stuffy English prose of the Hodgson original, this book is very humorous.

'Which perhaps brings up another point. Judging from many recent reviews, there are a lot of people who somehow think it a crime for Zelazny to write a light-hearted adventure novel or spoof (and THE CHANGING LAND must almost certainly be regarded as a spoof of THE HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND at least in some sense), simp-

ly because he has written such Modern Classics in the past.

'And that hardly seems fair, to either Zelazny or his readers.'

LETTER FROM ALMA JO WILLIAMS
JAMES A. BAKER INSTITUTE FOR
ANIMAL HEALTH
New York State College of Veterinary Medicine, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853
December 28, 1981

'If you have read Zelazny's "The Changing Lands", did you realize that he has incorporated the Cthulu mythos into it? And this last answer really blew my miniscule brain. One of his magician characters -- a good guy -- is weaving a counterspell over a magic mirror that the bad guy owns. His manner of constructing the spell reminded me of the construction of a computer program -- one false "statement" and the whole construct bombs! So I asked him this question and he said, "Yes, that Holtrun's spell was modeled on computer programming and that so far you seem to be the only one who has noticed this". WOW!"

LETTER FROM PHILIP MICHAEL COHEN
726 Golf Course Road
Aliquippa, PA 15001
February 25, 1982

'The Ian Watson interview in SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #42, is one of the more enjoyable you've printed. I think it'll add something to my enjoyment of future Watson novels. The footnote was needed. The chip butty as described by Langford sounds even nastier than Crotted Greeps Richard (chocolate cake in tomato soup, right)?

'John Varley is one of my three or four favorite science fiction writers, but I thought "The Persistence of Vision" was one of his worst efforts, its fine start spoiled by a tacked-on epiphany. (I think the same thing ruins the novel version of the Robinsons' STARDANCE.) Even having read the Panshins' SCIENCE FICTION IN DIMENSION, with its calls for transcendence, I couldn't understand how "PoV" could win a Hugo and a Nebula. Then Disch's poem "On Science Fiction" made it clear. It overstates its case, but I think it's dead right about one of the facets of science fiction's appeal. So when Neal Wilgus complains of its

winning two poetry awards, I think he doesn't give it its due. Perhaps, though, it's more suited for a William Atheling Jr. award? If such existed.

'I think you misinterpret Vincent Perkins; he doesn't say crudeness = vitality, but that crude vitality is better than polished emptiness. As his reference to Gene Wolfe seems to say, polished vitality (Wolfe, Vance, Cherryh) is better than either. Shoddy thinking hinders my enjoyment more than shoddy prose, which is why I can enjoy the crudeness of Rudy Rucker more than that of Anthony or Chalker.

'Your comment to Schiff, that nobody buys a small press publication for a four-color cover, is wrong. I bought SHAYOL #1 for its beautiful cover more than for its contents, and though that's exceptional, at least I'm willing to pay more for a zine with a good color cover than for one with a good plain black-and-white one.

"The Visivector" is good, as usual. Proof of Schweitzer's taste is that he agrees with my opinion that THE CHANGING LAND is the worst (dullest) book Zelazny ever wrote. To Hell with Dilvish, as I've said before. Right, too, about the lack of appeal of THE LETTERS OF J.R.R. TOLKIEN. I would note, though, that some of the letters are essentially mini-essays that reward skimming through the rest, and the whole thing might have a special appeal for Catholics.

'Better book reviews this month in "Other Voices", or at least fewer bad ones. I'm gonna have to look for those Silly Sci-Fi books.

'Again I found your choice and placement of the cartoons unusually good. Gilliland's cartoons start again, as he's recovered from a dip in quality; the predetermination demon on page 13 in this issue is a classic. Mohr (8, 11), Erichsen (14) and Allard (24) also deserve kudos.'

LETTER FROM RALPH E. VAUGHAN
POB #85152 MB116
San Diego, CA 92138
January 12, 1982

'I was very interested in the comments and news in #41 of SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW about so-called "backdoor" censorship. I have always felt that America may end up being the only country in the history of the world that will have an absolute dictatorship elected and approved by the people.

'Each special interest group -- from the feminists to the ecologists to the "Christians" to the militants -- want the government to enforce their particular view of the way the world should be. They are all busy handing the government little bits of power, and one day the government is going to have all the power.

'Publishers are engaging in self-censorship by publishing only "safe" books. Oatmeal is supposed to be good for you, but I would have to eat it day in, day out, especially at gunpoint.

'Living in fear is a hell of a way to live, especially when it comes to publishers, most especially when it comes to science fiction. Science fiction, at its best and worst, should stir up a hornet's nest. Science fiction is a revolutionary branch of literature and should not be afraid of stepping on toes ... unfortunately science fiction is not in the hands of the writers or the readers but in the hands of the publishers and the wholesalers.

'There have been several little-publicized cases, usually in the South though not always, where crates of books have not been allowed off trucks because they were not wanted on the stands by the powers that be. And there have been many cases where wholesalers have refused to distribute a book or magazine because of its controversial nature. And when wholesalers say no, they mean no. And you can forget about trying to distribute your own on the stands. Most wholesalers control areas in much the same way that Tammany controlled New York. In San Diego here, ARA controls the territory and any store which wants to carry a publication that is not approved by ARA runs the risk of having other publications cut off. Why should they give up NEWSWEEK and TIME for the sake of something like OWLFLIGHT or SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW? They won't.

'There is a tremendous amount of censorship going on that people never hear about and almost none of it is being done by the federal government -- they don't have to because people are doing it to themselves. They have let wholesalers dictate their tastes; they have let pressure groups dictate what is safe to read and what is not; they are convincing themselves that some types of censorship are required for their own good.

'There are some people in this country who think they know what people should read, which people should be slipped into prison for their viewpoints. They are not unintelligent. Many of them are quite intelligent.

'They have their freedom of speech, but do they have to have mine too?'



LETTER FROM GARY L. ADLER February 15, 1982

'After reading SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #42, I was rather distressed at the way both you and Darrel Schweitzer did not take the threat posed by the Moral Majority seriously. To be sure, groups like MM, FLAG and others of the "New Right" are far outside the mainstream of American Life. However, history has shown that small groups and often individuals have a way of conquering complacent majorities. One can argue that both Communism and Nazism were both political movements; but what about Trofim Lysenko and Savanarola?

'As science fiction fans, we should not be so quick to breathe a sigh of relief after the Arkansas decision by Judge Overton. This was just the first battle into what is likely to be a long protracted war with scientific educational control as the prize.

'In fact, according to the January 22 issue of SCIENCE, pp. 381-384 shows that the creationists are merely shifting the battleground. Rather than engage in court trials, they will instead force every local district to buy and use creationist books and materials.

'Before the 1980 election, I met with a leader of the New Right who told me that they would take on the tactics of the "Left" and make their bid to "Lead". As times grow harder and the weak need something (anything) to believe in, the sheep will indeed have their choice of people telling them how to recreate an America that never in fact existed.

'The threat posed by intolerant, antiscientific groups to Science Fiction is diffuse but present. As the MM has already indicated, they would like to control the books used in public schools. As many people become fans because of exposure during school years, this could cut the number of new fans entering the field.



'I believe that any attempt to ban a specific science fiction book should be met by the science fiction community. A good source of information about banning is the American Library Association's Journal of Intellectual Freedom, which lists individual banning attempts.

'I was surprised by the behavior of "born again" fans at Disclave. As I do not attend science fiction cons outside the New York area due to the cost, I can only say that nothing of the sort has ever occurred at a New York Science Fiction or Star Trek Con. However, we do have problems on the street with Moonies, Krishnas and Scientologists.

'In closing, I believe that there are always those who follow their hindbrain or R-complex. These people are weak-willed; anti-intellectual; and suspicious of all who do not follow their beliefs.

'It is our responsibility to fight back and meet challenge for challenge. If we do not, then we are to blame for our own situation.

((The attempt to ban books and control thought is self-defeating unless total dictatorial control is gained over a country. In our country as students become aware of "sanitized" school libraries and courses, those few with guts and intelligence and curiosity will get the banned material from bookstores, by mail order, from friends... There are always people terrified of words and thinking different, and always attempts to control words and thinking. In most of the countries most of the time such attempts are marginal and essentially ineffective.))

LETTER FROM GEORGE H. SMITH 4113 West 180th Street Torrance, CA 90504 February, 24, 1982

'I really don't understand why you should be so worried about the Moral Majority. They haven't done anything but talk and even that is being drowned out by the liberal howl. Don't forget that Jim Jones was an ACLU-certified, National Council of Churches, mainline Christian. That is where the real danger lies. There are more crooks, scoundrels, potential mass murderers and communists in mainline churches than in Sing Sing. When the Moral Majority takes 900 innocent black men, women and children off into the jungle and murders them, I'll worry about it. Until then, I'll worry about the National Council of Churches.

'Brunner is way off base with his fear of Europe becoming involved in a war between the United States and U.S.S.R. All the missiles are aimed at the United States and if we are A-bombed out of existence, it will be in a misguided attempt to defend Europe against Soviet aggression. The Europeans are natural born slaves. Let's get our army out of Europe and forget it. Later on perhaps we can work up a deal with the Soviets giving them a free hand in Europe in exchange for a neutral Middle East.'

((We'd better make that deal with Russia pretty quick---before the Europeans throw us out for the sin of having and making nuclear weapons. Once we are militarily out of Europe we will have no cards to play.))

LETTER FROM LINDA S. BLANCHARD
23509 Hedlund Avenue
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043
March 12, 1982

Editor, SEATTLE ASTRONOMICAL
SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
Editor, WORLD SPACE FEDERATION
(SEATTLE CHAPTER) NEWSLETTER
Organizer, World Space Federation,
(Seattle Chapter)

'I'd like to add one brief comment to the discussion of censorship in science fiction today. At least as far as the magazines go, of course there's censorship, blatant censorship. Perhaps it's not focused on major issues of the day (racism, sexism, political chauvinism), rather it discriminates against a mood. Ask any editor and they'll tell you they don't print down-beat fiction -- our times are depressing enough, they say.

'There are some thoughts that can only be expressed realistically with unhappy endings. A sense of futility alone shouldn't be the basis of rejections, and yet I have seen it happen to more than my own work.

'And then there's the "we don't print anti-science stories" brand of censorship ...'

((I think there's a difference between censorship and policy.))



LETTER FROM MILLEA KENIN
OWFLIGHT, Editor/Publisher
1025 55th Street
Oakland, CA 94608
February, 2, 1982

'In the same issue of SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW, Darrell Schweitzer says (in a review of FANTASY BOOK) that "within a month or so the magazine had become overstocked, as new small press magazines usually do" and (in a letter) "The shortage of publishable material in the magazine/fiction market is getting pretty severe".

'COME ON NOW!!! Since his reviews of small press zines do not indicate that he thinks that most of the material in most of them should never have been published, Schweitzer is contradicting himself.

'I'm editor/publisher of a year-old overstocked magazine (OWFLIGHT); a lot of stories I've had submitted to me -- including several I've accepted -- had been bought by magazines such as GALAXY which folded before publishing them, or were returned by commercial markets that had bought others by the same writers, because of overstock. Overall, the percentage of SFMA members among those who send stories to a penny-a-word, 1500-circulation publication is appallingly high; but there is no significant difference in the average quality of submissions between members and non-members.

'Of course, there is an interesting paradox in that, while pro Big Names don't submit stories to semi-pro zines (unless the editors are close friends of theirs), neither do rank amateurs. Every reader of IA/sfm knows you can send for writers' guidelines. Only hard-core fans (who, whatever their skills and talents, have been exposed to the genre long enough to know what you CAN'T get away with) and serious would-be pros know of the existence of magazines that sell almost entirely through specialty bookstores and mail-order subscriptions.

'This means that the general level of quality Schweitzer saw as a reader for IA/sfm was probably lower than what a small press editor gets, which may help to explain his assertion. Still, I'd bet that at least twice as many literately-written stories without glaring weaknesses are received by any prozine as it has room to print.

'I can give an example from my own experience (and this relates to the male/female/censorship controversy also currently being hashed around in SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW). A male author who has previously

sold stories to OWFLIGHT and since then to TWILIGHT ZONE and very widely in the small press, submitted to me (a female editor) a story which had been rejected by Scithers (a male editor). Though Scithers thought it was well-written, exciting, had well-paced action, believable characters and an interesting setting, he rejected it because it could easily be interpreted as sexist. Male chauvinist, that is, not female chauvinist. I suggested two changes which dealt with this problem, the author agreed to them, and it will appear in OWFLIGHT next year (yeah, I'm backlogged).

'If editors were hard up for good stories, they would suggest changes -- Campbell used to do it. Now, it's clearly a situation where editors receive enough competent-not-dreadful material that they don't need to consider anything with problems (or things that editor perceives as problems). Small press editors sometimes do, because they're doing it for love not a living, and so the best of the small press -- like DRAGONFIELDS and SHAYOL -- is as far above the average issue of the average pulp as a crudzine is below it.

'It's a buyer's market NOW, folks, and anyone who's starving along selling half-a-dozen stories a year knows it.'

LETTER FROM NICK SMITH
Editor/Art Director
FANTASY BOOK, The Magazine of
Fantasy Fiction
POB 4193
Pasadena, CA 91106
February, 1982

'I think you missed the point about high production quality vs. low selling cost. In your reply to Stuart Schiff, you said that "I don't believe the buyer cares that much (about typesetting and color covers)". As a science fiction dealer, in stores and at conventions for nearly ten years, I can tell you that you're wrong.

'It's true that there is a dedicated market out there that will buy anything that has typed pages, especially if they recognize the name of the magazine or the names of some of the writers. Unfortunately, that market isn't a very large one. There are a lot of readers (or at least part-time readers) whose attention must be obtained before they will plunk down their hard-earned money. One reason was one that you pointed out in your "Alien Thoughts": the marketplace is a heavily visual one. We are competing with Lucasfilm and TV for the time of the fan, as well

as money. And for every fan who walks up and says, "Oh, the new WEIRD BOOK is out, I'll buy it," there are ten more who have never heard of it, and who have no idea what's inside it. And the best way to get the attention of those ten is to get them to pick the thing up and read it. Unfortunately, that doesn't work very well in practice. Most magazines do not have hired goons standing in every bookstore and saying, "Pick up that magazine or I'll blow your head off," and anything more subtle in terms of coercion is lost on many people.

'There is an alternative, and it is something that we here at FANTASY BOOK have been trying to achieve. It is very sneaky. We make the magazine look nice. Typesetting! Pretty pictures in color on the cover! And for Ghod's sake, don't scare the poor potential reader away too quickly! (That last, by the way, was the reason for the relatively "unexciting" cover positioning in issue #2. A scary or gruesome back cover will discourage fewer people than a scary front one. Also, we liked the Vess piece.)

'I know the preceding paragraph sounds callous and calculating, but it isn't. It's just a matter of competing in the marketplace, and that's just what you told the writers they should be doing.

'When FANTASY BOOK was being readied, two of the questions we were asked by every potential distributor were: "Is it typeset?" and "Does it have color covers?" There are stores (and distributors) who are unhappy with several very good magazines, simply because they have no visual appeal. Without visual appeal, the casual reader is lost, the sales aren't as good, the store isn't as happy, and the distributor isn't as happy. These all lead to the relatively small sales figures listed in SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #42. And like it or not, as long as a magazine has a small press run, its price is going to be higher than it needs to be. Our original plan with FANTASY BOOK was to have a digest-sized magazine, with limited color, something like FANTASY TALES from England.

When we mentioned the idea to distributors, they uniformly said: "We can sell more if it's full size and has color." They were right. We're already selling a lot more than WEIRD BOOK or most of the other small press magazines. Eventually, we plan to make money at this, rather than just losing money forever. My personal feeling is that only a relatively successful magazine can offer writers a stable marketplace, and that a magazine that constantly loses money just isn't very successful.

'I like WEIRDBOOK, WHISPERS and

the others, Dick, and your suggestion about cutting costs and production quality will only hurt them, by making them even less accessible to the casual reader. And those casual readers, not the hard-core fans, make up a lot of the market. At my store, I run into a lot of people who say, "I just read a book by this neat writer named Zelazny (or Tolkien, or Burroughs). Can you suggest something I might like? Are there any magazines of this stuff?" A lot of these people have never heard of fanzines, and wouldn't know a semi-pro outside of a football game. But they're part of that 8% who still read, and by Ghod, I'm not going to abandon them to the digest-sized magazines.

'You were right about our logo, though, and we are working to make it more visible. It will still be a script logo, but much clearer and more readable. You'll see the new one on issue #4.'

((You're right, of course, that a color cover and typesetting and professional layout is necessary for a magazine aiming for wide professional distribution; you gotta compete--apl原因 on the color!))

((For SFR and most of the sf and fantasy small-small press, sales to the aficionados doesn't require the expensive formats. It all depends on who you're aiming at and how many.))

((To this day I don't see why certain newspaper issues of SFR sold better than the colored-cover issues. No rhyme or reason that I can see. Same cover artist, same interior mix of interviews, articles, reviews, etc. Some readers burn out, lose interest, then five or even ten years later write for current subscription rates to "find out what's going on." It's an amazing genre and fan/reader world.))

((It is also my conclusion that a publisher has to go for quality and a very high price or mass audience. This requires a commitment and a knowledge of everything involved. You really have to think big and spend some money to make a significant amount of money in science fiction. I was never willing or able to do that and have piddled along, half-fan, half pro, all these years. Go argue with basic character.))

LETTER FROM ARNOLD FENNER
8435 Carter
Overland Park, KS 66212
February, 1982

'Another good issue of SCIENCE



FICTION REVIEW -- snazzy Fabian cover, lots of interesting reviews (but a good rating for FUNHOUSE? Whew?), enlightening interview with Ian Watson. Good show throughout as always.

'Letters from the various fan/semi-pro zine editors were interesting. I truly sympathize with Paul Ganley and the financial strain WEIRDBOOK causes him. I respect Paul and admire the work he's done -- his efforts have always kinda been overlooked when you come to think of it. A real shame considering the consistent level of quality he's been able to achieve all these years. He's put some excellent material into print, not the least of which is a cover illustration (on #6, I think) by Frank Barbara that I consider to be absolutely brilliant.

'Stuart Schiff has the money and the rep to do as he pleases with WHISPERS, but I think that it's a mistake to measure quality by color covers and typesetting. The things that Tom Reamy accomplished with TRUMPET, sans typesetting and sans four-color, immediately come to mind -- as do Carl Bennett's with SCINTILLATION. Before FANTASY CROSSROADS folded, I think Jonathan Bacon was doing some marvelous things with duo-tone and two-color covers. It's not the mechanicals that equal quality, but rather how you use them. Stunning things can be done with black-and-white and two- or three-color processes.

'Stuart's right about there being a prejudice against black-and-white cover art, though -- but not really on the part of the reader. Dealers and distributors love four-color -- in many cases a color cover justifies their buying the magazine in the first place and allowing it a decent display space. A number of worthy projects don't get adequate support simply because a lot of dealers don't want to take the effort to sell what they stock -- if it does not sell itself many dealers don't want to bother with it.

'Jesus. \$1,000 for a cover. For \$1,000 I could get the Dillons or Hickman or Corben or maybe even Don Punchatz

'Anyway, I'm of the opinion that everyone should experiment to some degree with their magazines if they want to stay healthy. Nothing so radical that it frightens off the readers, mind, but enough of a change so that people say "Hey!" when they see a new issue instead of "Ho-hum." A genuine feeling of excitement -- a look-at-this! attitude -- can do more for a magazine's sales than a dozen color covers.

'And in response to Michael Ward: If SHAYOL breaks even, Pat and I faint. If it makes a profit of \$5 or \$10 we sacrifice puppies or neighborhood children to the God of Foolish Endeavors.

'No one can say we don't know how to have a good time.

'Take care, Richard.'

LETTER FROM POUL ANDERSON
3 Las Palomas
Orinda, CA 94563
February 13, 1982

'With all due and considerable respect for him, I am forced to declare that on matters of war and peace in general, and nuclear weapons in particular, it is John Brunner who is living in a dream world. Not only has the Soviet Union been steadily building up its nuclear as well as its "conventional" forces for more than a third of a century, it is quite prepared to use them. Its military leaders have repeatedly and in considerable detail discussed this in their journals; organization and deployment show that they aren't trying to bluff anybody; meanwhile, at home there is an excellent civil defense program.

'It is almost beside the point whether any nation can survive such a war. The fact is that the Soviet rulers are convinced that theirs can and indeed that it can and will win in a completely meaningful sense. The record of that government, from 1917 to the present hour, shows how peaceful it is.

'Some (I do not believe they include John Brunner) have therefore argued that the West should lay down its arms and let the Soviets in, hoping they will reform. I think history shows that this cannot happen, that the leopard neither wishes nor is able to change its spots. Moreover, that peace of the concentration camp would be short-lived at best. Only look at Southeast Asia, where that is happening which some of us predicted would happen if the United States abandoned Vietnam -- tyranny, genocide, famine, hordes of

refugees and ongoing war. A Russo-Chinese slugfest is only the most obvious early consequence of a surrender by the West. (Incidentally, those glowing reports the intellectuals are bringing back from China read very much like those the former generation of them brought back from Stalin's USSR. Like the Bourbons of old, that class has learned nothing and forgotten nothing.)

'No, it is our duty to maintain as much influence in the world as we are able, attempting to keep things from blowing up altogether and even exerting pressure on the Communist regimes to move in the direction of some liberty and common decency. We can't do that without appropriate armed-force behind us, including a nuclear arsenal.

'I don't like this any better than John Brunner does, but facts don't go away merely because someone chooses to ignore them.'

LETTER FROM IAN WATSON
Bay House, Banbury Road
Moreton Pinkney near Daventry
Northants NN11 6SQ, England
16 February 1982

'Chris Priest has pointed out to me in mild tones that readers of SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #42 might couple my remarks in the interview about Chris's stance during the "Science Fiction and Causes" debate at Leeds, with John Brunner's remarks a few pages later about "a small group of bigoted reactionaries" threatening to issue a writ of mandamus over the same business; and thus leap to the conclusion that Chris was one of these "bigoted reactionaries".'

'He certainly wasn't. Chris had nothing to do with mandamus-mongering.

'P.S. I loved the illo introducing my interview -- it looks just like me.'

LETTER FROM JOHN BRUNNER
The Square House, Palmer Street
South Petherton
Somerset TA13 5DB
United Kingdom
January 30, 1982

'I want to start a campaign. Please tell people: RUN, do not walk, to your nearest bookstore to acquire a copy of AFTER MAN, A ZOOLOGY OF THE FUTURE by Dougal Dixon.

I don't know who the publishers are in the States, and I got to the book late (it was published in 1981) when it arrived here this week. But it ought to be a non-fiction prize-winner on any and everybody's list. It turns what most of us regard as past-related into future-related with (almost) impeccable logic plus imagination of the best science fiction type. It's the only book I know which attempts to project evolution into the epoch following our own disappearance. Marvelous! Plug it! It deserves awards on top of awards!

'I also want to tell Sheldon Teitelbaum something about the Jerucon, which used my own name in its publicity. When Marjorie and I were first informed about the project (at Eurocon 1980 in Stresa, Italy), we were asked whether we would like to be invited. Now in my book, if we're invited to a conference/congress/convention, that implies payment of travel expenses and/or hotel expenses at least, plus -- in most cases, if not all -- some nominal fee for delivering a talk or lecture. Not until long, long (Oh Lord, how long?) after my name had been printed in the publicity was I told that if I took part it would be at my entire expense.

'No way, tovarim! I got caught that way before and bad-mouthed half around Europe on the grounds that I had broken my promise to attend a con. Doubtless the same thing is now happening again in another corner of the world ... but it's not true. Like many other established writers, I get far too many con invites to accept the lot without recompense. Verb. sap.

LETTER FROM DR. DEAN R. LAMBE
Route #1, Northlake
Vincent, OH 45784
11 February 1982

'The letters in response to the question of reverse-discrimination censorship were most interesting but I am puzzled by Darrell Schweitzer's comments. Schweitzer claims to know of no ... story being rejected because the heroine was successful or intelligent", yet many professional women writers felt that was the rejection policy at ASIMOV'S under Scithers, Schweitzer, & Co. It will be interesting to see whether these women find the new editor of ASIMOV'S more congenial.'

((Now that Scithers has taken over AMAZING (from all reports) his story decisions will be under closer examination than ever, it seems. An editor's life is DIFFICULT!))

OTHER VOICES

THE JOURNEYS OF MCGILL FEIGHAN, BOOK I: CAVERNS

By Kevin O'Donnell, Jr.
Berkley Books, April 1981, 214 pp.
\$2.25. ISBN 0-425-04730-X
Cover illo by Janet Aulisio

REVIEWED BY SUE BECKMAN

On April 1, 1983, a giant, ochre, multimorphous gastropod, that communicates through a sort of biological CRT, arrives on Earth, allegedly on a mission for the mysterious Far Being Retzgarlan. The forms this twenty-meter slug can take and its antics are 99 1/2% unbelievable, but nevertheless, it's a delightful character. It proceeds to abduct and swallow just-born McGill Feighan, excreting the infant intact four days later. Then offering no account of its behavior, it flashes, "My timetable quite tight is", and leaves.

Time passes, and McGill at age five, is discovered to possess The Talent (teleportation). His abilities grow unbridled, until with training at the Flinger Academy, McGill now in his teens, learns to safely fling anyone or anything (up to 918 kilos) to any place he can visualize. Flingers, the air traffic controllers of the future, enable the 693 member races of The Flinger Network to interact routinely. They also make possible the galaxy-wide expansion of The Organization -- the twenty-first century version of the Mafia. Gryll, head of the Organization, wants an explanation for the Far Being's interest in McGill. Gryll's henchmen pursue McGill as he pursues a solution to his postpartum puzzle.

McGill's quest takes him to Throngorn II, where two dominant species, one mammalian, the other reptilian, vie for cultural supremacy. Their habits, prejudices (warm versus cold blood) and social diversity are wholly convincing. I found myself siding first with one then the other species in a moving contest of moral propriety. Unexpectedly heavy stuff for a book geared mainly to entertaining melodrama.

McGill's adventures come fast and furious, with a few completely unforeseen twists. O'Donnell has a knack for creating gripping tension in a scene. Two outstanding examples are the grueling initiation ceremony on Throngorn II and the time McGill is psychically attacked one night in

his dorm room, and the staff telepath, like a house mother administering Pepto Bismol, relieves McGill's mental anguish with efficiency and care. O'Donnell writes with flair and facility, but also with sensitivity. His characters, alien and human alike, are utterly lovable -- even the bad guys.

O'Donnell's previous novel, MAYFLIES (Berkley, 1979), was more circumspect in its telling and not at all frivolous; it was a hard story, with plenty of ponder points. With CAVERNS, O'Donnell shows he can write for fun and still pack a message for punch. The only problem is the ending. Typical of a prequel, the author drums up a loud finish in place of a real conclusion. The hero is torn by indecision, but the reader knows he won't give up; he has to regain his sanity for the sequel.

Berkley will release Book II, REEFS, in October and Book III, LAVA in April.

THE JOURNEYS OF MCGILL FEIGHAN
BOOK II: REEFS; BOOK III: LAVA
By Kevin O'Donnell, Jr.
Berkley Books, Oct 1981 & April 1982
REEFS: 220 pp., \$2.25
ISBN 0-425-05059-9

REVIEWED BY SUE BECKMAN

Sure enough, McGill, now aged nineteen, pulls himself together for Book II and resumes his efforts to unravel the unique circumstances of his birth. Following his first torturous love affair (he gets an A for effort and a C- for technique), McGill is off to Delurc, where the giant gastropod made a stopover on its way to Earth. Delurc is a sea-shrouded world of enormous sapient fish who buy and sell information with a mania that would make the New York Stock Exchange look like a tea room. Extra-Delu City is a maze of transparent underwater domes -- a reverse goldfish bowl. McGill's aquatic hosts are anything but gracious and accommodating; the food is monotonous and almost everything is illegal -- even whistling. The author does a fine job of conveying the bleak and dehumanizing atmosphere of Delurc. It's an unforgettable dream-prison of a place.

THE BLUE FAIRY
SAID THAT TO
"DICHTOMIZE"
VICARIANCE WOULD
BE FATUOUS ?!



ME FATUOUS
??

On this adventure and the next McGill is accompanied by his young ward Sam, a precocious reptilian lad from Throngorn II. Sam is a typical youngster -- annoying and endearing. O'Donnell obviously believes kids will be kids, whether they're covered with skin, fur or scales.

On Delurc McGill comes a step closer to discovering the true nature of the Far Being, but his quest is far from finished.

In Book III, the subject of the Far Being's possible divinity is explored. This time, the adventures are set on Actu, a sulphur-choked planet of sentient, mobile, cacti -- yes, cacti. Actu is a theocracy and the spiny Actini monks are very curious about McGill's connection with the Far Being. In the end while some very convoluted but not entirely unexpected revelations are made, McGill seems bound for further journeys. I wouldn't be surprised to see a Book IV.

Throughout this series, the dialogue is natural and zippy, occasionally provoking a chuckle or three. The stories are given heft by thematic interests: in REEFS, it's cultural relativity (the Deluvian civil code might make sense to a psychopath; to each his own), and in LAVA, it's the absurdity of religious rivalries (the Actini do battle over whether it's more righteous to pray at dawn or dusk). But the rest of the complimentary things I can say apply only to Book II; REEFS and LAVA are worlds apart -- literally and literarily. As the hero grows from teenager to adult, he suffers all the sweaty-palmed insecurity we all remember -- and some we don't. The love scenes are sensual and intimate, without being crass. The exposition and review, especially symptomatic of a sequel, are usually unobtrusive. But the frequent blood and gore, though consistently excit-

ing, eventually overwhelms. By Book III, McGill has become a bit of a bastard, neglecting Sam, making overly vicious threats and killing remorselessly. I know -- the character grew. But I didn't like him anymore.

LAVA has more problems: There's a blunt hook at the beginning (unusual for O'Donnell), the plot is smoky and contrived and full of lumps to brief the new reader and it's almost empty of the clever, often poetic prose I had come to expect. And worse, Sam starts acting like a TV sit-com kid.

Still and all, the series is entertaining. It's full of imaginative aliens and in many a narrow escape, McGill outwits the best the Organization has to throw at him. Reminiscent of Heinlein's juveniles, he survives because he's smarter and quicker and has "God" on his side.

LORD DARCY INVESTIGATES

By Randall Garrett
Ace Books, Sept. 1981, \$2.50

REVIEWED BY BOB BARGER

John W. Campbell supposedly once said that science fiction mysteries could never be written -- much too difficult to write in a science fiction environment which many times is very different from the world we live in and are familiar with. Science fiction worlds inevitably contain a greater number of unknown and frequently unmentioned variables, than does the real world, thus complicating immeasurably the task of writing a mystery story set in a science fiction environment.

Asimov and Bester and Boucher, among some few others, later proved him mistaken. Yet, nonetheless, the

mere handful of writers who have succeeded in writing good science fiction mystery stories prove, by their small number, that good science fiction mysteries are damnably hard to write.

And yet, in a science fiction world, no matter how far removed from our world it is, the basic laws of the universe still hold true. The basic laws of biology, chemistry and physics do work in the same manner in which they are observed to work today (well, more or less...).

It therefore follows that in a fantasy setting, where the laws of science are, if not altogether different, then at least undiscovered and where magic works -- well, in a fantasy universe it would seem, at least to me, that writing a good mystery story would be even more difficult.

But by no means impossible, of course, since Randall Garrett has been writing the excellent Lord Darcy stories since around 1964 or so. LORD DARCY INVESTIGATES is the latest volume in this series.

Overall, the Lord Darcy stories are a milestone in the field of fantasy, taking place as they do in an alternate universe where Richard the Lion-Hearted did not die from a crossbow bolt in 1199. King Richard lived on to conquer France and to found the Angevin Empire, which at the time of the Lord Darcy stories also encompasses New England and New France and most of the rest of the New World. While he was at it, King Richard also sponsored research which discovered and codified the Laws of Magic.

Magic works in Lord Darcy's world. So does science and its accompanying technology of course, since Darcy's universe was our own until 1199. But science hadn't progressed far beyond alchemy (although there are steam trains and limited telegraph systems in England and on the Continent as well, lending a

comfortable air of Sherlockian England to the stories that is most appropriate). Magic, however, has progressed. Magic is an exact and very highly sophisticated art. In fact, magic is dealt with in the most exacting and precise terms; one is tempted to refer to it as a science rather than an art.

Lord Darcy is Chief Investigator for Prince Richard, Duke of Normandy. He, with the competent assistance of Chief Forensic Sorcerer Sean O'Lochlainn, investigate primarily questionable deaths or outright murders among the Empire's nobility.

The stories give a great deal of attention to atmosphere and detail (expected of course, since these are, but for the element of the alternate universe and the fact that magic works, mystery stories cut very much from the traditional cloth). Characterization is handled very well; after a couple of Lord Darcy stories the reader can't help but consider Lord Darcy and Master Sean as anything but old and valued friends. These stories also contain some of the most truly devious plotting in the genre of fantasy!

Lord Darcy, himself is no sorcerer. He does not possess the Talent, though his associate, Master Sean, does. Lord Darcy solves the crimes of magic not by the use of magic, but rather his unfailing ability to nab the bad guy (where there is one) which comes from his use of that which all men have, the Intellect. Lord Darcy's reasoning ability in this world of magic functions quite as well as did that of Sherlock Holmes in our own world of science -- though to be sure, the comparison of Lord Darcy with Sherlock Holmes is an unfair one. Lord Darcy and Master Sean are much, much more than mere fantasy equivalents of Doyle's characters!

Some of the stories in LORD DARCY INVESTIGATES are very good. Some are brilliant, including the wonderful "Orient Express" spoof, "The Napoli Express". It would seem that every mystery writer, even a fantasy one, must pay homage to the Orient Express theme, and the presence of "The Napoli Express" in this volume further highlights the fact, as I have stated above, that the Lord Darcy stories are very much traditional mystery stories. They are also very much traditional fantasy of the old Unknown type. Seldom does a writer blend two genres together as well as Garrett has blended fantasy and mystery together in the Lord Darcy series; these stories are damn good writing.

And as a last note, perhaps Lord Darcy and his world appeals to the little irrational hankering we all

WHAT A TRIUMPH! FLYING
UP MY OWN REAR END AND
COMING OUT
OF IT WITH AN
IMMELMAN
TURN!



NOW IF I
CAN JUST
GET MY
FOOT OUT
OF MY
APPENDIX...

have deep within our minds for a "simpler" and less technological world. (This desire manifests itself most often when Ma Bell's computer billing system sticks us for a handful of long distance calls we didn't make, or when we're filling out our income tax forms.)

These stories appeal to our desire for a less technological world and its assumed "simplicity" while at the same time revealing to us very clearly, although subtly, that Darcy's world is certainly as complex, probably even more so, than our own world. That in itself is no small achievement.

WELL, THEN, CAN I BE AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COMPUTERS?



TRY THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COMPUTER PEOPLE.

THE NOWHERE HUNT

By Jo Clayton
DAW Books, #457, uel665, 208 pages
Cover Art by Ken W. Kelly.

REVIEWED BY PAUL MC GUIRE

In this novel of the Diadem Series, a top agent of Hunters Inc. is sent to find and return the hive-queen of an alien race whose ship crashed on an unexplored planet. Aleyts, the agent, knows that three ships of scavengers are on planet after the same prize and that a fleet waits in space to prevent her escape should she succeed. Unknown, a greater danger is the three forms of alien life native to the planet, all of which are determined to kill the off-world "demons".

Most of the novel concerns a trek through the marshlands, a fog-bound area where practically everything is deadly and the searchers are constantly harassed by natives, a violent march as nightmarish as Henry Stanley's Congo River expedition.

The story is seen from two points of view, Aleyts' and the reptilian native, Roha. In counter-point to the heroism of the one is the bitter-

sweet tragedy of the other. To anyone who hasn't read other books of the series, parts of the novel may be confusing, but is well worth the effort since Ms. Clayton is as good at portrayal of alien viewpoint as she is at action adventure.

WE ARE ALL LEGENDS

By Darrell Schweitzer
Starblaze Books, \$4.95.

REVIEWED BY MARK MANSELL

Darrell Schweitzer is well known to various aspects of fandom for his incisive reviews, numerous columns and correspondence and for his rich, evocative fantasies which have called to mind the traditions of Lord Dunsany, Clark Ashton Smith and George MacDonald. Now he has produced a novel that will stand as an important work in the field, and which will help to enrich a field become diluted of late with endless amounts of Robert E. Howard and Unknown pastiches.

WE ARE ALL LEGENDS brings together Schweitzer's story saga of the tormented knight Julian the Apostate. Julian begins as a questioning, youthful knight, but loses his youth and his innocence in encounters with a woman who has sold herself to the devil and wishes to exchange Julian for her freedom, and with a beautiful vampire who gives him love even as she steals his life's blood.

Julian then feels himself eternally damned and his previous fear of God, so prevalent in the Middle Ages, heightens to the levels of theophobia and he searches desperately for an escape from the alternatives of heaven or hell. His quest leads him through lands of Jungian symbolism filled with horrors and madness. He finds that there may not be any true answers, but only illusion underlying illusion. Those partial answers he does find do not bring him comfort but instead reveal that madness, cosmic in proportions, is the basis of reality as he knows it.

Schweitzer writes with skill evoking powerful moods and beautiful imagery. There is horror and adventure aplenty written in a readable and compelling, yet often musical prose.

WE ARE ALL LEGENDS is a fine novel and an important one. Stephen Fabian's gorgeous cover and equally beautiful interiors enhance the text and guarantee that this shall be a sought-after item by collectors as well as by the aficionados of fantasy in the classic tradition.

CUJO

By Stephen King
Viking Press, \$13.95

REVIEWED BY ROBERT B. ROSS

Cujo is a 200-pound Saint Bernard, the family pet of Joe and Charity Chamber and their son, Brett. One day, Cujo chases a rabbit into a hole in the ground which leads to an underground cave. Cujo tries to follow the rabbit into the hole -- and gets stuck like a cork in a bottle. His bellowing irritates some rabid bats inside the cave and one of them gives Cujo a nasty bite on his snout. Cujo drags himself out of the hole and lumbers away, in the very first stages of rabies. The horror of CUJO comes when Cujo goes rabidly berserk and starts killing. (King hints briefly in the book that the spirit of Frank Dodd, a twisted killer from THE DEAD ZONE has to some degree moved into the dog's body.) But the dog Cujo, is not really what CUJO is about.

The story is about Vic Trenton, an advertising genius from Manhattan who packs it in, moves to Maine and starts up his own agency with his longtime partner, Roger Breakstone. (While in New York, Vic and Roger spent six years at the "Ellison Agency".) It is about Vic's wife, Donna, who didn't want to move to Maine, who has a growing, festering impatience and dissatisfaction with just being a wife, and mother to their four-year-old, Tad -- enough to have an affair with Steve Kemp, a wandering tennis player and poet. And it's about Tad, who sees something in his closet on some nights, something with glowing eyes and a bad smell, something that is the spirit of Frank Dodd.

I would have enjoyed this novel more if it had had no Cujo, no rabid dog. (Cujo keeps a woman trapped in a Pinto for 130 pages; not every page is devoted to this; the book does cut to other characters, other plot lines . . . but I think this is too much.)

By my calculator this book is roughly 140,000 words long. Now, King is very good at making even peripheral characters stick in your mind by virtue of their being three-dimensional, but he's also good at stretching a novel longer than it needs to be stretched. This tendency marred the last half of FIRE-STARTER (just ask yourself what actually happens in the last half) and it's even more apparent here.

FOUR REVIEWS BY NEAL WILGUS

STRANGE THINGS HAPPEN

By Robert Randolph Medcalf, Jr.
Quixsilver Press, box 171, Baltimore,
MD 21203
Paper, 31 pages, \$2.00.

This little collection of verse is a sideshow, really, with 30 variations on the theme of alien lovers. Here there be vampire women and ghost girls, demon lovers and devil worshippers, fire and ice and lizard ladies.

It's all good clean fun, you understand -- each poem an invitation to dally with another variation for ten or twelve lines, but it's all suggestive and never pornographic. And what is good "speculative poetry" supposed to be if not suggestive?

Bob Medcalf is a bright new talent in science fiction verse and an editor with lots of ambition and lots of one-shot poetry anthologies in the works. Try STRANGE THINGS HAPPEN and give his Quixsilver Press a boost.

WEIRD SONNETS

By Keith Allen Daniels
Owl Creek Press, Route #1, Trading
Post, Blueberry Hills, Beeville,
TX 78102
Paper, 23 pages, \$2.00.

Admirers of H.P. Lovecraft's "Rungi from Yuggoth" sonnet sequence will probably be the most interested in this slim volume of verse, but any one who enjoys fantasy poetry will surely get something out of it. Not exactly a sequence, these stark and powerful sonnets are a valuable addition to a sort of sub-myths which includes HPL's "Rungi", two sonnets also titled "Rungi from Yuggoth" in Alice Briley's FROM A WEAVER'S SHUTTLE and probably others -- with roots going back perhaps to Aleister Crowley's CLOUDS WITHOUT WATER, a collection of 113 strange sonnets first published in 1909.

This collection is not a sequel to "Rungi", you understand, but it belongs to the same loose tradition -- definitely Lovecraftian even though not specifically of the Cthulhu Mythos. With an introduction by J. Vernon Shea and fine illustrations by Karen Jollie, WEIRD SONNETS is a sign that a fine old tradition still flourishes.

ON THE SHORES OF ETERNITY

By Jessica Amanda Salmonson
Niginata Press, 2127 South 254th Pl.,
Kent, WA 98031
Paper, 12 pages, \$1.50

Poetry is tricky stuff. On the first reading I didn't like SHORES OF ETERNITY very much and would have given it a negative review at the time. Reading it again several months later everything seems different, the poems better and the things I would have criticised no longer seem a problem.

Well, there is a problem in that SHORES is too lightweight, too slim, too trivial. I expected more from Salmonson than the ten poems in this booklet, and more in terms of subject matter, too. Reprinted from places like MUSHROOM STEW, TREADERS OF STARLIGHT and FANTASY AND TERROR, there are several slight fantasies, a satire on TV, an homage to "Rhymersters" -- and little else. Hardly the kind of thing to expect from the firebrand Salmonson we're used to.

Nevertheless SHORES OF ETERNITY shows the promise of something better to come when the collected poems of Salmonson are pulled together. Pleasantly illustrated by Wendy Adrian Shultz, SHORES is a tantalizing taste of the poet Salmonson may become.

PEREGRINE

By Robert Frazier
Salt-work Press, Box 649
Dennis, MA 02638
Paper, 16 pages, \$4.00.

Bob Frazier is a reader of dictionaries and this is the key to understanding PEREGRINE, a sequence of poems that might otherwise be only marginally intelligible. The second poem in this collection, for instance, is titled "Dictionary Coincidence" and consists of five pairs of words which occur together in the dictionary and have similar or related meanings (i.e. star, stare).

Now if you look up "peregrine" in the dictionary you'll find that it coincides with "peregrination", a wandering, and "peregrinate", to travel -- and that "peregrine" itself means foreign, alien or strange in addition to being, of course, a falcon which is a hawk. And from PEREGRINE's context, such as it is, you can discern sort of a story about an astronaut/wanderer/peregrine who sometimes is being denied the freedom to travel and sometimes glories in the freedom travel brings.

The trouble with PEREGRINE (and much of today's speculative verse) is that even after repeated readings and trips to the dictionary the meaning remains unclear. I still don't know what most of the lines in PEREGRINE mean -- and more importantly, I don't really care. When poets stop trying to communicate and concentrate instead on opacity they're about as interesting to read as the dictionary. But not nearly as useful.

This is not to say that such stuff is not the wave of the future. Maybe it is. If so, poets have one hell of a job to do, educating their readers to comprehend. Good luck, Bob.



SOFTWARE

By Rudy Rucker
Ace, 211 pp., \$2.25, #77408-3

REVIEWED BY RALPH E. VAUGHAN

In SOFTWARE Rudy Rucker tries to raise questions about what makes up a living being -- the body (hardware) or the thoughts (software). To do this he sets up a human civilization on Earth and a robotic culture on the moon. Then he moves his characters across the interface between the two.

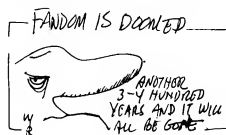
Rucker has a flare for handling the language, twisting and shaping words into new meanings. Some of the best passages in the book come when he uses words and phrases to make the reader feel the same drug state that one of the characters is experiencing.

Rucker also has the ability to write vividly at times when describing characters and cultures. But one cannot help but get the feeling that Rucker is less than enthused (or perhaps uncomfortable) when writing about ordinary human beings and the culture in which they live.

Though Rucker tries his best to animate the human characters, it is not until they step from the ordinary that they are imbued with vivid life -- the cult murderer who is about to eat a living brain, the anarchist who trades his fleshy hardware for electronic hardware, the ne'er-do-well who puts on a Happy Cloak and is able to talk to boppers.

But if Rucker's human characters and his vision of a future Florida are just words on paper, his robots (boppers) and the lunar culture that they have built sparkle with life. One can see, hear and smell them. They are alive in a way that the ordinary human characters are not.

SOFTWARE is not light reading, though there are some wonderfully light moments in it. Rucker forces the reader to think. Halfway through the book, you begin to wonder whether you, the real you, are the hardware (the meat) or the software (the chemically coded thoughts). If you're not sure by the time you finish the book, then I think Rucker has done what I feel he meant to do in writing this book.



AN ISLAND CALLED MOREAU

By Brian W. Aldiss
TIMESCAPE, 85353-5, \$2.25, 158 pp.

REVIEWED BY PAUL MC GUIRE

THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU was a powerful and brilliant novel by H.G. Wells; science fiction, adventure, allegory, satire, horror and social commentary combined. It concerned a madder-than-the-average scientist using vivisection to turn animals into men. In this "sequel", Aldiss uses not only the basic idea, but actually structures and paces his work after Wells, and at times achieves the same ambience. The problem with reworking a classic is that it is almost impossible for the new work to be very original, let alone itself a classic.

Joseph Silva novelized the screenplay of the '77 film. The mad scientist's henchman in Aldiss' 'Moreau' is named Silva. Aldiss also has beast-people named Bella and George. Bela Lugosi was a beast-man in the '32 film version and George was Wells' middle name. Not only can this novel be taken seriously, but it can be used as a party game. Describing the hideously deformed mad scientist of his novel, Aldiss writes:

"He might have started as pitifully as Frankenstein's monster; but he had turned himself into a Frankenstein -- a victor, not a victim."

The first four-fifths of the novel is little more than a pleasant way to kill time, but then Aldiss runs out of Wells and starts writing like Aldiss. He delivers an off-beat lyrical scene, (sort of bluish-lagoon). Not long after that, he serves up wonderfully realized incongruent context and clichés where the hero learns the true state of affairs which makes perfect sense if one assumes the world is insane. Since World War III is blazing away that assumption is one of the few things which is safe. Then he takes that cheerfully-given insanity and renders it into bureaucratized and shows how little removed from our own world is the island of Moreau, and how easy to understand. The twisted Catch-22 thinking begins to sound like things presented seriously as wisdom on the six o'clock news.

Having abandoned the style and themes of Wells, Aldiss at last achieves some of the depth and impact of Wells. His finale alone is worth two and a quarter.

SANDKINGS

By George R.R. Martin
Timescape/Pocket Books; 42663-X, 238 pp., \$2.75, Cover Art by Rowena.

REVIEWED BY PAUL MC GUIRE

If you learn to think like your enemy in order to defeat him, be careful that you do not become him. That is a recurring theme in literature. Harlan Ellison used it as a frame in "Repent Harlequin," said the Tick-tock man", and George R.R. Martin uses it for the same purpose in a very different story, "The Way of Cross and Dragon" that tells of a religion which worships Judas Iscariot as a saint and preaches the holy virtues of lies -- and damned if George won't almost convert you.

"Bitterblooms" is one of my favorite of "Railroad" Martin's stories. The plot line with its twist may be guessed early on, but that is not as important as you might think. As in so much of George's fiction, the point is not so much the story he tells, marvelous as it usually is, but the way he tells it. Martin is master of the writer's trade, combining words to create vivid images with emotional impact.

"House of the White Worm" is a story of the general type called "Dying Earth", where science and fantasy have merged into future-mythology. Clark Ashton Smith was the first I'm aware of to pen them; Jack Vance is the best-known for them; C.J. Cherryh most recent (with the very fine SUNFALL); and George R.R. Martin here writes one of the best.

"Fast Friends" is an example of storytelling at its finest. George creates miraculous space phenomena, firefly-like creatures (?) that move at the speed of light, and an energy being (?) that feeds on them. Then he invests them with importance by having it turn out that humans can merge with the latter to become yet a third kind of life-form (!), a true stargazer which can travel at speeds which makes the whole galaxy his natural habitat and range. All this is "simply" the set-up for the human story he tells. The hero's lover has become one of the star-kind, but since the merger is often fatal, the hero does not have the nerve to try. He has to find some way to learn the secret of transporting a ship faster-than-light since after many years he is still obsessed with his now fast-friend lover.

Not only does he solve the problem of faster-than-light travel, and does the solution combine all the story elements, but George has given us a clue to that solution several times. As if that is not enough, the solution is used only as catalyst

for the hero's resolution of his emotional problems. Would you believe the story is only twenty-two pages long?

"The Stone City" is an eerie tale reminiscent of Kaffka, about a spaceman seeking a berth from a more inhuman-than-average race of aliens. My only quibble is that not only are the flashbacks not really needed, (well-written, often fascinating, never-the-less unnecessary), but they are enough different in tone and style to make the story seem disjointed. George has used this method of intercutting between continuous narratives of "present" and "past" events several times to good advantage, "Fast Friends" for example, but it works against him here.

"Starlady" is a pretty good story, but ... Maybe it doesn't work as well for me because I found it hard to accept that after an interstellar empire has had time to be founded, flourish and fall, prostitution would have undergone no change except for clothing style and a few new slang words.

While a superb story, "Sandkings" is one of limited purpose, to scare the hell out of the reader. It succeeds. In a mysterious "pet" shop, a junior-grade sadist buys some ant-like aliens. They come in four colors which fight wars, will grow larger if given larger space, are said to be intelligent, and it is promised they will worship him. At first it seems that is the case, but they are not insects, and worship can become hate. One day they escape. What happens after that is as surprising and terrifying as any nightmare Stephen King has ever had.

THE WEIRDSTONE OF BRISINGAMEN, THE MOON OF GOMRATH, ELIDOR, THE OWL SERVICE

By Alan Garner
Ballantine, \$1.95

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

Alan Garner is known as a children's novelist in Great Britain, but his books make good adult reading. Unlike most of the modern fantasists, he uses present-day settings for his tales of wonder, myth and magic. The first two titles are sequels; THE WEIRDSTONE introduces us to Susan and Colin who have come to visit their Aunt and Uncle Bess and Gownther Mosscock, who are farmers and live in one of the rural sections which fill in the great gaps between the modern British cities.

Garner has drawn on Pictish and Nordic-British legendry to create his spells. The Mosssocks live close

to The Edge, an open pit copper mine formerly worked in Neolithic eras and thus retaining some of the old magics. Colin and Susan go exploring and are almost kidnapped by a strange lady in a car, who begins to recite Latin phrases (you just know it has to be an evil spell) to induce them to come against their will. The spell is broken by Uncle Gownther who comes on the scene. Susan notices that her "Tear", a small iridescent stone which is a family heirloom, has opaque. It becomes clear later and the children think no more about it.

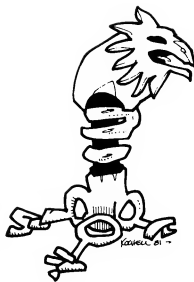
They continue their exploring at The Edge, are almost captured by ugly gollum-like creatures (Morthbrood), are rescued by a dwarf, meet the Wizard who identifies Susan's "Tear" as the magic stone Firefrost, which will awake the sleeping knights whom the Wizard, Cadellin, is guarding. He warns them that the woman who tried to kidnap them is a witch (The Morrigan) who is one of his mortal enemies from eons back. The adventures continue with a fearful trip through the old copper mines and finally involves Uncle Gownther as all of them flee cross-country to avoid the ancient forces of evil which have been roused by the children's coming.

This is highly recommended reading and is certainly NOT in the same vein as the many Tolkien imitators.

The second book, MOON OF GOMRATH, as with most sequels, does not have the spell-binding power of THE WEIRDSTONE. Too many new characters appear and there is no time for their development. It's O.K.

ELIDOR is the tale of four modern children who accidentally wander into the parallel universe of Elidor while playing in an inner-city abandoned church which is due to be torn down. They are made guardians of the four Sacred Treasures of that land -- a spear, a stone, a sword and a cauldron. They are then returned to their modern-day existence. The electromagnetic emanations from these talismans draw the evil ones from Elidor from their medieval existence to our world and the means whereby the children save not only the treasures but their own lives -- making a good 90 minutes of absorbing reading.

THE OWL SERVICE is again modern-day children drawn into the primal Welsh legend of Llew Law Gyffes, his flower-bride, Blouddewdd and her lover, Goronwydd. The story involves a father with several children of his own plus his newly-married



wife with her brood and the son of the woman who runs the hunting lodge in the Welsh hills where they are vacationing. There is quite a lot of bickering between the children as one might expect, and attempts by the father to get to know his step-children.

Frankly, all of that could have been stricken from the book with no loss of plot. The real magic comes in with the idiot gardener, the hired woman's son, the eldest daughter and a set of dishes on which owl faces mysteriously appear and disappear. There is an unsolved death which may be an accidental murder or else a sacrifice to the Welsh god, Llew Law Gyffes. Recommended.

DREAM DANCER

By Janet Morris
Berkley Books, N.Y., 1982
327 pp., \$2.75

REVIEWED BY RALPH E. VAUGHAN

Janet Morris has written a book of power and beauty. The universe she has constructed is vivid and vibrant; her characters actually breathe but it is her masterful use of the English language which makes DREAM DANCER more than just the first book in yet another trilogy.

The story follows a young girl from a backwater Earth as she becomes heir to the vast Kerrion Empire. Some very interesting developments happen along the way.

At best, most trilogies are uneven and unsatisfying; at worst, they are abysmal and disappointing. After reading DREAM DANCER I cannot believe that the Saga of the Kerrion

Empire will have the same faults. It will be interesting to see if Morris can sustain the craftsmanship of her prose, the magic of her words.

GUARDSMEN OF GOR

By John Norman
DAW Books, 304 pp., \$2.95

REVIEWED BY PAUL MC GUIRE

The novel begins with a huge battle between warships. Since this was well-researched, it is rather fascinating and although Norman is wretched at dialogue, generally well-written. His philosophy is that all men love killing and all women love slavery.

SPACETIME DONUTS

By Rudy Rucker
Ace, 1981, 196 pp., \$2.50

REVIEWED BY RUSSELL ENGEBRETSON

SPACETIME DONUTS is a dystopian novel with a typical discontented protagonist who sets out to change the system. The action takes place in an American city in the year 2165, but the characters smoke dope, listen to Frank Zappa and the Rolling Stones, engage in casual sex and otherwise comport themselves like any respectable member of the late 60s youth culture. A plot summary would sound even more ridiculous than the foregoing and would be an injustice because this is a truly whiz-bang novel.

Rudy Rucker plays around with concepts found in higher mathematics and quantum physics by applying them to imaginary inventions. He throws in a liberal dose of metaphysics, which is almost unavoidable when one writes about quantum mechanics. He also includes a couple of juicy sex scenes and some moderately graphic violence. Something for everyone.

The tone of SPACETIME DONUTS -- which oscillates from playful to serious -- is strongly reflected in the author's short foreword. He assures us, for instance, that his fictional use of miniature black holes is scientifically feasible thanks to Høyleflaffer's 2038 technique of magnetic monopole injection. Never mind that most of the technology here would be right at home in the Lensman saga, or that Høyleflaffer is also the name of a character on an album created by the twisted comedic genius of the FIRESIGN THEATER.

Another interesting comment from Rucker (which might or might not be

helpful to the reader) concerns a Rolling Stone concert he attended in Buffalo: "...the great thing was that the music was so loud you could not tell, after a while, what the song was".

THE DOME IN THE FOREST

By Paul O. Williams
Ballantine Books, Ltd., 5390 Ambler Drive, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada L4W 1Y7.
and
Random House, Inc., New York, NY. 1981, 214 pages, \$2.75.

REVIEWED BY W. RITCHIE BENEDICT

This new novel by Paul O. Williams, which is apparently part of a continuing saga, is extremely well done for this theme. 1100 years after the Big Atomic War, a semblance of civilization has re-established itself near what used to be St. Louis. A melange of city states exist with

constant fighting and quarrelling going on between them. The civilization is roughly equivalent to ancient Babylon. Ironically, the nuclear war was apparently set off by a meteor shower in the Middle East.

Unknown to the tribesmen Stel and Tor, another civilization is in co-existence with them. There is a dome in the forest beneath which is a community of survivors. They have kept functioning for centuries the technology inherited from the Old World, using genetic breeding to ensure against radiation damage to the last of the human race. Due to a malfunction of a detector, they still believe the outside is too hot for anything to survive very long.

But their small in-bred society is beginning to decay from shortages of fuel and supplies, and their remaining geneticist is believed by some to be a little mad due to his unorthodox ideas (he turns out to be one of the more sane personalities in this world). The people of the dome tend for the most part to embody cold, intellectual qualities which is one of the reasons they have survived so long.



A girl named Celeste, not believing the official propaganda, escapes from the dome and makes her way to one of the tribal city-states called Pelgarigan.

From this point on, it becomes evident that it is only a matter of time before both groups meet on a collision course.

The novel is complete in itself but mention is made toward the end of the book of journeys to other parts of the benighted continent. I suspect there will be further books.

THE DOME IN THE FOREST is a fully-realized science fiction novel and most successful in its purposes. I have read other novels that are more complex in makeup insofar as characters and plot, but I think this is a bit better than the average beginning writer is able to turn out. Mr. Williams may have a promising career as a science fiction writer ahead of him.

THE RESTAURANT AT THE END OF THE UNIVERSE

By Douglas Adams
Pan Books, 1980, pb, 95pp, \$3.25

REVIEWED BY ALLEN VARNIEY

This is the sequel to THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY, based on the hilarious 1978 BBC Radio series which seemingly has already developed a cult following. The series, you'll recall, began with the destruction of Earth to make way for a hyperspatial bypass and grew rapidly crazier from there. The first book adapted only the first four episodes of the 12-part (so far) series; this new volume takes up immediately where the first left off and barrels on in similarly weird fashion to a fairly satisfying conclusion.

Along the way our heroes (Ford Prefect, Zaphod Beeblebrox, Arthur Dent, Trillian and Marvin the Paranoid Android) visit Megadodo Publications, publishers of that entirely remarkable book THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE; meet the true Ruler of the Universe, the colonizers of Earth, and the leader of the loudest rock band in creation, Disaster Area; get thoroughly drunk at the establishment of the title (a nice set-piece that could almost stand on its own -- anthropologists, take note); and in general hop about the galaxy at a frenetic pace.

There appears to be very little overlap with the series here; the few incidents that have been adapted have been reordered and transmogrified into a semblance of structure.

There's even an ending, which is more than the series has yet provided.

If you liked the series and/or the first book, you'll like this one too, though the novelty has worn off and further installments might become pretty thin. And if you're not familiar with the story told in the first volume, you'll be lost in this one: caveat emptor. Otherwise, enjoy!

THE COVENANT OF THE CROWN

By Howard Weinstein
Timescape/Pocket Books, 191 pp, \$2.25

REVIEWED BY PAUL MC GUIRE

This STAR TREK book is science fiction junk food; when a science fiction writer says a ship in outer space "rose up on its tail" that is really too much. I know the TV series had the same kind of mistakes, such as the line dividing two space areas, but it is not too much to ask that a science fiction writer understand at least the basic nature of space.

This novel has a young princess, Mr. Spock and Dr. McCoy on an ice world searching for a lost crown while being chased by the Klingons.

Mr. Weinstein wrote one of the animated STAR TREK episodes, but the book is no better (or worse) than the majority of STAR TREK books.

THE EROTIC WORLD OF FAERY

By Maureen Duffy
Non-fiction, Avon Discus Books,
New York, NY, 401 pp., \$3.50
Illustrated

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

The cover blurb states succinctly ... "A visionary history of the erotic underside of literature from the dark ages to the science fiction and fantasy of our time." Since Ms. Duffy is British, the literature scanned is mainly British with an occasional aside to American recent science fiction and fantasy. She does an excellent job of explaining why the World of Faery was suppressed by the early Church and how the early eroticism of the Celtic pagan lays were camouflaged into the familiar stories and nursery rhymes we read and loved as children. For you Spenser fans, she dwells at great length on THE FAERIE QUEEN. She also devotes a whole chapter to sex

and the Brothers Grimm, rambles through PETER PAN and finishes in a daze of Asinow, Heinlein and Andre Norton, with an aside to Harlan Ellison. She also converses about the Art of Faery and has four pages of pictures with interesting footnotes. Highly recommended.

OPTIMAN

By Brian Stableford
DAW #406, 190 pp., \$1.95

REVIEWED BY MARK WILLARD

OPTIMAN is considerably different from Brian Stableford's last twelve or fifteen books. It combines the best features of the epic themes and freewheeling adventures of his mid-60s novels with the logically constructed backgrounds and realistic detail of his "Grainger" and "Daedalus" series.

The human race and the alien Veich are locked in a centuries-long space war. Humans have captured the planet Heidra from the Veich and occupied one continent; the second continent is home to the world's native race, the Sioconi, remnants of the Veich garrison and settlers and the Er'kresha, tribes of Sioconi barbarian nomads.

Across explored space, archaeologists have found the remains of the mapirenes and caskarenes -- extinct races who died out or destroyed each other some thirty thousand years previously in a conflict paralleling that of the Veich and humans. Evidence suggests that a large, possibly undamaged mapirene installation exists on Heidra, in the second continent's hinterlands and that it dates from the climactic point of the ancient conflict.

Remy is a human deserter, managing a mercenary force of other human deserters and Veich and Sioconi warriors, all of them in the service of a refugee Veich nobleman. Remy joins a human military/scientific expedition to investigate the purported mapirene base; the Optiman of the title is an expedition member. The Optiman is a test-tube product, or android or super-warrior, there to gain experience; he and others like him will soon be deployed against the Veich on other worlds.

From these complex beginnings, OPTIMAN spins into an action novel with an intricate plot, interesting characters and situations, visual grandeur and some pace-changing philosophical discussions. Several of the human characters are rather single-minded and shallow, but Stable-

ford is simply describing these people as they come, and how they interact with more complex characters such as Remy. The few weak characters (and a couple of annoying ones) are not enough to sabotage the book. It's a good vividly realistic adventure yarn, more thoughtful than most, and especially welcome in that it may mark a new direction in Stableford's writing that is a synthesis of the best points of the previous directions in his work. Recommended.

THE AFFIRMATION

By Christopher Priest
Faber & Faber, 1981, £6.25p, 213 pp.

REVIEWED BY ANDREW TIDMARSH

To test the hypothesis that the story of a book may be told in its own words -- I would quote brief extracts from this novel. By so doing, I would hope to demonstrate that it is the autobiography of Peter Sinclair, who, having undergone major surgery, writes in an effort to re-discover, perhaps to re-fashion his past.

Problems immediately arise. How old is the writer? 29. Yet, he remembers an incident that occurred two or three years ago, when he was 29. Where does he live? London; a cottage near the Welsh border; with his sister, Felicity and her family, husband and two children in Sheffield. Yet the operation was performed upon the island, Collago. Where? Collago lies within the Dream Archipelago (that has featured in other stories by Priest: *WHORES, THE WATCHED*: do not be misled), an immense group of islands that encircle the Earth, separating the warring states of Jethra and ... What was its name? I forget. Peter -- or ought I write Robert? -- has also forgotten: his age, the names of his parents, his country of residence, in short, his identity.

The novel is an affirmation of life, no more. To start, Peter -- the name that he prefers -- is confused by the simultaneous loss of his job, death of his father and disintegration of his relationship with Gracia. Impulsively, he makes contact with an elderly friend of the family who agrees that he might "borrow" his country cottage for a short period. In lieu of rent, Peter undertakes to redecorate the house, clear and re-organise the garden. He finds the works difficult. He clears and paints white one room downstairs, in which he lives, then is overcome, perhaps by lethargy, perhaps despair, perhaps by the realisation that he cannot answer the -- simple? -- question: "Who am I?" Fragmented memories of his childhood are recal-

led that, to comprehend, he must record, in writing. A first draft of his autobiography is discarded, a second prepared but considered unsatisfactory -- however, a third -- he would have us believe -- penetrates via the use of metaphor and allegory

He is interrupted before he can finish the sentence, the paragraph, the page.

Though he writes at length, Peter is unable to affirm his identity. He fails because caught between two worlds: which is real, which imagined? Having been "rescued" -- from himself -- by his sister, Felicity, boarded with her family, of a sudden he embarks for the Dream Archipelago. During the voyage he discloses to the reader that he has won the Lotterrie-Collago; his prize is a treatment that will indefinitely prolong his life; a consequence of the operation is a complete loss of memory; his response to a lengthy questionnaire



will underpin his rehabilitation. However, pressed for time, he substitutes his autobiography for any more objective description of himself. I -- myself a writer -- at this point foresaw that the novel would be shown to be a faithful transcription of that text.

To be brief: THE AFFIRMATION is an analysis of the nature of fiction, presented as fiction. Descriptions of the Archipelago resemble those of the Greek Islands that Peter had visited from London. The development of his friendship with Seri, an employee of the Lotterrie, who accompanies him to the hospital, resembles that of his relationship with Gracia. Perhaps Peter's autobiography resembles that of his creator? Plausible, yet contradictory answers are provided for this, and similar questions. The novel succeeds in convincing that reality and fantasy are indistinguishable. Though abrupt, its resolution is satisfactory because a logical consequence of the form the author has chosen to use. A technical tour de force; the best

novel that Mr. Priest has written; I shall pay it the greatest compliment I can by re-reading it.

CATACOMBS

By John Farris
Delacorte Press, \$13.95

REVIEWED BY ROBERT B. ROSS

Within the boundaries of Tanzania, deep within Mt. Kilimanjaro, lie the Catacombs. And inside the Catacombs are the perfectly preserved remains of a strange, alien, African culture much older than our own. They were much more sophisticated and technologically advanced than any civilization at present, and they have left an incredible legacy: Etched into hundreds of rare, bloodred diamonds is the formula for Firekill.

Firekill is "a spatial distortion achieved by combining the forces of electromagnetism and gravity to create unusually strong gravitational fields. A force field, if you will". The perfect anti-missile defense.

Jumbe Kinyati is the ruler of Tanzania. When he learns of the diamonds and gets his hands on them, he transcribes the entire formula and attempts blackmail. Inviting the defense ministers of both the United States and Russia to a meeting in Tanzania, he reveals some of what he knows about the ancient race called Zan. Their bodies still held in perfect suspended animation inside the Catacombs, they are panther-like, half man and half cat.

But Kinyati is not interested in that. What he wants from the U.S.A. or the U.S.S.R., are a few missiles. Just enough for him to take over or destroy South Africa. In exchange for these armaments, Kinyati will give the bearer the complete formula to Firekill. Kinyati sends the ministers home, giving them a thirty-day deadline.

Both America and Russia want the formula. Neither one wants to give Tanzania any weapons. Both employ their top agents to try and infiltrate Tanzania, and steal the formula. The Russians send Michael Belov and the U.S.A. activates a retired agent, Mathew Jade.

An interesting premise, which Farris turns into a sometimes interesting, sometimes confusing novel. There are too many characters. New chapters keep introducing new characters, new sub-plots, some of which are left dangling. Mathew Jade is supposed to be the main character; he is the hero of the book, but he isn't on stage any more than a half-dozen other characters.

The conclusion is exciting, but it does leave some unanswered questions, all dealing with the Zan. A frustrating book, but worth reading.

MYSTERIES OF THE WORM

By Robert Bloch, Edited by Lin Carter
Zebra Books, Kensington Pub. Corp.
New York, NY ISBN: 0-890830815-1-295

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

The subtitle reads "All the Cthulhu Mythos Stories of Robert Bloch", and the time span of these tales runs from 1935 to 1958. Lin Carter's Foreword explains succinctly Bloch's role in the Lovecraft circle, and tells of the "in" puns like putting Luveh-Keraph, priest of Bast as the author of BLACK RITES -- Bast being the patron saint of cats in the Egyptian god hierarchy and Lovecraft being fond of cats -- and retelling for the nth time, the interesting story of how the Trilogy of "The Shambler from the Stars", "The Hunter of the Dark" and "The Shadow from the Steeple" came to be written.

The time period for most of the stories gives the flavor of the 1930s and early '40s, except for "Terror in Out-Throat Cove" which was written in 1958 and which is definitely a modern addition to the Mythos. There are some little-printed stories such as "The Fane of the Black Pharaoh" and "The Secret of Sebek", which no one except collectors may have had access to. This book is a definite must for Lovecraft and Bloch collectors.

LILITH: A SNAKE IN THE GRASS

By Jack L. Chalker
Ballantine, New York, 1981
\$2.95

REVIEWED BY W. RITCHIE BENEDICT

This new novel, the first of a proposed quadriology (quadrology? -- quadruplets anyway) begins with a robot looting the memory banks of the Confederacy -- a quasi-empire/dictatorship. The robot comes from aliens whose purpose is unknown, but presumably hostile to the powers that be. The robot travels toward the Warden Diamond -- a planetary system of four worlds: Lilith, Medusa, Cerberus and Charon -- each different in an unpleasant way and populated by misfits from Earth.

A Lord presides over each world who is suspected of collaborating with the aliens and therefore must be terminated with extreme prejudice, as the CIA would say. An agent

could be sent to each world, but the problem is that once there, he could never leave again due to an organism which infiltrates the bloodstream. The solution is to impose the mind of one man over that of four expendables and send them each to a respective planet. That way, the main agent need never leave home to exert control.

Lilith is a world where technology does not exist, as such -- any metals soon decay and disintegrate. Consequently the furthest it has evolved is a sort of medieval hierarchy, with the aristocracy in control through highly developed psi powers.

Cal Tremon is sent to this world and must work his way up from the bottom until he can meet with the mysterious Lord who rules the planet. The social system is every bit as brutal as that on Earth centuries



ago -- it is a prison colony, just as Australia served the same use here.

Even the doctors on this world show a knack for innovation and experimentation -- on humans, that is, otherwise they would not be there. Of course, there also has to be a representative of the church -- a priest who is wandering around trying to convert the benighted inhabitants of a benighted world to a better life in the hereafter.

The ending is somewhat of a surprise to Tremon and his friends. Apparently the Lords and the aliens are not so much malign as a threat to the existing order. But will this be true in the forthcoming books? Is there something else behind them again, as seemingly implied by the

artificiality of the worlds of the Warden Diamond?

There are many familiar elements in this book: game playing; sword and sorcery; fantasy; science fiction, even Gor. But somehow it all hangs together and makes an interesting novel. It will be interesting to see how the remaining three worlds are developed.

SAN DIEGO LIGHTFOOT SUE and other Stories

The short fiction of Tom Reamy
Earthlight Publishers, \$5.39 Jackson, Kansas City, MO, 64130. Trade Edition \$14.95. Slipcased Edition \$25.

REVIEWED BY DAVID A. TRUESDALE

Although this book appeared in 1980 with a print run of 2,300 copies it has not been reviewed in these pages and there are at least 500 copies remaining.

Aside from two yet to be published stories ("Poriphee, Petey and Me" in THE FINAL DANGEROUS VISIONS and "M is for the Million Things" in NEW VOICES IV), this is all the short fiction we will ever see from Tom Reamy. This book, as well as Tom Reamy, deserves a much wider audience than just those of us who are devoted to fantastic literature, and, as Harlan Ellison states in his critical and insightful introduction, even the mention of science fiction while discussing Tom's work is to damn it and label it as such forever, when in reality extremely little of Reamy's fiction even concerned itself with the genre.

Tom was a fantasist, plain and simple. Just take a quick look at the 1976 Nebula Award winner "San Diego Lightfoot Sue" or "Under the Hollywood Sign" or "The Mistress of Widdriven" and see what I mean. They're all of them fantasies, ala Bradbury if you will, or yes, Harlan Ellison, too. But the undercurrent in most of these disturbing and sometimes superficially grotesque pieces of Reamy's (see "Beyond the Cleft") is a psychological twisting of the knife into those dark areas most of us would sooner leave quite alone. Tom dealt in his own unique fashion with fear, as shown in "Twila", wherein a small schoolgirl unleashes a nightmarish monster on the small Kansas town she and her simulacra parents now inhabit. "Under the Hollywood Sign" delves into the two-sided coin of fascination and fear of homosexuality and how one policeman comes to terms, in a review of most short fiction of Tom Reamy -- gripping and disturbing, oh, most disturbing manner, with his inner self.

And there are more, to be sure, like these. But Tom also wrote screenplays and there are several treatments included here, some uncompleted but showing much promise ("2076: Blue Eyes") and at least one ("Insects in Amber") which is very thin stuff and not very good at all, and which, incidentally, Tom hated as well.

But inasmuch as SAN DIEGO LIGHTFOOT SUE is a memorial, a testament to Tom Reamy, put together and published by those who loved him most, it shows much of Tom, his range and interests, from excellent award-winning work to merely fair adventure pieces, in a beautifully bound, long-lasting edition those who knew Tom, or his work, should not pass by. The dust-jacket and endpapers are by the incomparable Leo and Diane Dillon, and close friend of Reamy's, Howard Waldrop, offers a personal and touching reminiscence of Tom leading up to his winning the John W. Campbell award for best new writer at the 1976 World SF Convention in Kansas City.

Tom Reamy died of a heart attack on November, 1977, slumped over his typewriter while working on a story for Ed Ferman at THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION. SAN DIEGO LIGHTFOOT SUE and other stories, the short fiction of Tom Reamy, has helped to ease that great loss.



THE ISLAND OF DOCTOR DEATH AND OTHER STORIES AND OTHER STORIES

By Gene Wolfe
Pocket Books, 1980, 410 pp., \$2.95

REVIEWED BY ROBERT SABELLA

Although a very talented writer, Gene Wolfe has never achieved the same popularity as many of his peers. One explanation is that he is not an entertainer in the traditional sense of the word. His stories shy away from heavy plotting with never a hint of slambang action or rapid pageturning. His stories are tapestries wherein the reader experiences the fullness of his fascinating worlds and their inhabitants. His writing is very measured and can be extremely slow-paced at times. Most science fiction readers shy away from this literary side of the genre, which is not unusual since

most readers in general would rather be entertained than enlightened.

For those readers who do enjoy a taste of the literary, a careful reading of Gene Wolfe's fiction will prove rewarding. THE ISLAND OF DOCTOR DEATH AND OTHER STORIES AND OTHER STORIES contains nearly all of the author's better-known stories. My favorite is "The Island of Doctor Death and Other Stories" in which a lonely boy immerses himself in reading fantasy only to find his whole world gradually being enveloped by it. Many readers will empathize with the boy but even those who cannot will surely be moved by his story.

There are several other stories nearly as good: "The Hero as Werewolf" is about the struggle of humans to survive in a world dominated by superhumans; "The Death of Doctor Island" is set in an asylum in the form of a tropical island whose computerized brain performs the role of psychiatrist; "Seven American Nights" concerns a foreigner's visit to America during this country's decline. In all these stories we are treated to real people struggling to survive in well-defined environments.

There are fourteen stories in all totalling 410 pages of thoughtful science fiction, making this anthology one of the treats of the past year. It is recommended for any serious science fiction readers.

THE SUNBOUND

By Cynthia Felice
Dell 18373; c. 1981, First Printing
April, '81. 366 pp., \$2.50

REVIEWED BY STEVE LEWIS

Let me choose my words carefully.

This is the finest science fiction novel I have read in the last five years.

No, it's not without flaws, and yes, there are a lot of books I just haven't gotten around to reading yet, -but -- if I had to come up with a convincing argument that characterization is not inherently incompatible with the rigors of writing science fiction, right now here's the work I'd point to first.

It's a long book, but there's not a page that's wasted. There's a lot of background to go with it, but in essence the story is this: Allis, an Earthwoman, is kidnapped by aliens and taken with them into space. She has received a token of love from one of their co-captains as he lay dying -- a communicator stone which gives its wearer the power of telepathy.

The stone cannot be transferred from one person to another except as an act of love, and the alien gypsies dare not abandon it -- it is beyond their powers to reproduce one. But Allis herself is rejected by them, as unworthy of their captain's love; in fact, Milani, the other co-captain, was herself Daneth's lover on board ship. Allis has the stone, however, and she will soon have Daneth's child, a rare event now for the radiation-ravaged race of gypsy stargazers.

As Allis eventually begins to learn her new powers, she also discovers that trust is gained even more slowly. For each step she takes forward, at times it seems she falls two steps back.

Being able to read minds is not the key to social acceptance and leadership one might imagine. There are subtleties of "human" relationships here that were simply undreamed of in the days of pulp science fiction. Realized here are the endless contradictions rife in "human" character.

And, as you've well noticed, the word "human" is in quotes, deliberately so. If there is a flaw in Felice's story, it is that her aliens are not alien. They are as identifiably human as any other man or woman found on this planet. Foreign, perhaps, from a faraway land, but not otherwise alien.

Yet Felice is that rare writer who not only understands emotion and its uses in producing a story, but she also knows how to translate it as raw, unformed feelings into words as well.

And as if that were not enough, what she does here in addition is to seamlessly blend an honest sense of romance into a world filled with the wonders of high technology -- a combination much harder to find than it may sound.

This is a marvelous, mind-expanding book!

MY EXPERIENCES IN THE THIRD WORLD WAR

By Michael Moorcock
Savoy Books, 1980, 176 pp., £1.50

REVIEWED BY ANDREW TIDMARSH

This volume contains three stories, original to this book, that describe the experiences in The Third World War of a Russian intelligence officer: a Jerry Cornelius story, "The Dogme Division", that has not been reprinted since its publication in the fanzine SPECULATION in 1968;

the cartoon-strip adventures of "Jerry Cornelius: The English Assassin", words by Moorcock and M. John Harrison, pictures by Mal Dean and R. Glyn Jones; "Peace on Earth", Moorcock's first adult SF story, expanded prior to publication by Barrington J. Bayley; "The Love Beast", a story Moorcock supposes has not been reprinted for years for good reason; and "The Real Life of Mr. Newman: Adventures of the Dead Astronaut".

The important stories are "Going to Canada", "Leaving Pasadena" and "Crossing into Cambodia". In his introduction, Moorcock warns that the narrator of these pieces is not himself. He also writes that he currently holds the "belief that any large scale future war will be averted (if it is averted) simply from fear, from the knowledge of the irreversible consequences of engaging in such a war". The three stories analyse one person's reaction to the outbreak of the Third World War. The narrator seems not to be frightened. He does not describe the realities of the war. Instead, he represents the conflict as a conflict between himself and a woman. In the absence of orgasm, the conflict is unresolved. The war goes on. The pieces are exquisitely written. Moorcock examines the struggle between good and evil, order and chaos. He allows his reader to judge which is morally right, which morally wrong.

Also of interest is "The Dodge Division", an essay disguised as a piece of fiction, in which Jerry Cornelius functions as the author's clean-shaven alter-ego. The piece may have been written to explain, indeed, to justify the "New Wave". It repays attention because it contains such passages as the following:

"Jerry wondered why there should be the need for a new fiction. Were there really new ideas circulating? New subject matter? Probably. But even if there were not, it was always better to try to extend the range of fiction ... Most of the books published in England were already dead before birth. It was disgusting, really. One would have expected a certain development in the field"

I wonder, what development has there been in the field since 1968? I would answer: little. THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS, THE INVESTIGATION OF Stanislaw Lem, IHALGREN, Disch's sadly-under-rated 334, Wolfe's BOOKS OF THE NEW SUN.

Given the bankruptcy of the publishers, this volume will be a collector's item.

RED SONJA: THE RING OF IKRIBU
By David C. Smith and
Richard L. Tierney
Ace Books, 246 pp., \$2.25

REVIEWED BY PAUL MC GUIRE

Sonja is a sword-wielding drifter, not as brutish or brutal as most of her male compatriots, but little different. Marvel Comics wanted a woman counter-point to Conan. Roy Thomas based Red Sonja loosely on a character called Red Sonja in a little-known R.E. Howard historical tale. Smith and Tierney based their novel on the comics and it falls somewhere between Marvel and Howard.

Action-adventure fantasy often seems as if it is plotted like one orders a Chinese dinner; one from Column A, one from Column B; the evil arcane wizard, the dispossessed king, the young loyal knight, the mysterious man with the covered face, Alan Hale, the magic ring, the wandering warrior, a slithering-slimy abomination, assorted boogie men, dungeons and dragons. The writing here is competent, but simple. Although lacking RBH's special moody passion, and having even less depth than he did, it should be quite satisfying for all those desiring more of his style of blood and guts escapism.

At least five more Red Sonja novels are forthcoming.

THE SENDAI

By Williams Woolfolke
Fawcett Popular Library/Fiction,
New York, NY; January, 1981, 288 pp.
\$2.75 ISBN 0-445-04628-7

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

Sendai -- the word is unfamiliar to most people, but well-known to those in the fields of virology and cell culture. Sendai virus was first isolated from mice in the Sendai district of Japan. It is in the same family -- paramyxovirus -- as measles and canine distemper. The cells infected with it will tend to coalesce, forming "giant cells" -- one membrane, many nuclei. Inactivated Sendai virus is used to promote cell fusions for DNA recombinant experiments. Inactivated Sendai will also induce cells to produce a lot of interferon. This last phenomenon is NOT what this book is about.

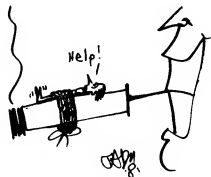
The Laryll Clinic was set up for the invitro fertilization techniques for use in women who are physiologically unable to allow sperm to fertilize their ovum. Unfortunately, the death rate of these infants is

high. Dr. Rudy Gerson, an Ob-Gyn doctor, has several patients whom he has sent there, experience this disaster. A med school friend of his who works in research there, hints that the babies are not dead but are part of a monstrous experiment. The friend dies of a seeming heart attack. Rudy and another friend, Mary from Philly, take on the establishment single-handed, complete with freaks.

The guiding light of the grotesque, Dr. Bradford, is a former student of Rudy's father. He and his female counterpart, Dr. Gaby Latioler, are the archetypal cold-blooded scientific fiends.

Only one thing puzzles me: Although the monsters were nicknamed Sendai in honor of the virus apparently, Sendai virus was not used in their production.

This is a fast-moving potboiler and except for a few minor liberties, most of the scientific procedures are correct.



THE CITY OF THE SINGING FLAME

By Clark Ashton Smith
Pocket Books, 1981, 240 pp., \$2.95.

REVIEWED BY RUSSELL ENGBRETSON

This is the first mass-market paperback of Clark Ashton Smith's fiction to be published since the early seventies, and it should be read by anyone interested in fantasy who hasn't encountered his work before.

THE CITY OF THE SINGING FLAME contains the title story and a dozen others, most of them falling into one or another story-cycle.

C.A. Smith possessed a large vocabulary and to the dismay of the reader he used most of it. Still, his jeweled style enhances his writing more often than it detracts. Many of his stories reach excruciating levels of weirdness.

One of the best is "The Dark Eidolon", which is included in this collection.

CHILDREN OF THE ATOM

By Wilmar H. Shiras
Afterword by Marion Zimmer Bradley
Illustrated by Lela Dowling
Pennyfarthing Press, San Francisco
1978, Trade paperback, \$5.95, 221 pp.

REVIEWED BY PATRICIA SHAW

CHILDREN OF THE ATOM was one of those books that expressed the feeling of an age, and spoke to everybody trapped within that age. First published as a series of short stories in ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION in 1948, 1949 and 1950, Wilmar Shiras' stories of the genius children in hiding struck a chord -- or a raw nerve -- in everyone intelligent enough and different enough, to read science fiction. When "In Hiding", the lead and possibly best story, was reprinted in a Doubleday Book Club anthology called CHILDREN OF WONDER, along with classics like "Rocking Horse Winner", Shiras' story became synonymous with the mutant-genius genre. The book, CHILDREN OF THE ATOM, was published in 1953 and the title was indicative of the spirit of the times.

Gifted children, in those days, were simply not normal. They were a breed apart, either in the mold of Dilton Dooly in the funnies, with his bow tie and short pants and five-dollar words and obvious immaturity, or they were mutants created by radiation, homo superior, or they were children in danger of execution or brainwashing, but human was the one thing they were not.

By the same token, there were only two categories of personality, "normal" and "not-normal". Shiras took great care to make her hero, Timmy, almost painfully well-adjusted; the eccentric kids of today, the single-talented kids, the wild kids, hardly existed, except as problems to be cured.

Marion Zimmer Bradley, in her afterword, is acid about the treatment of the bright girl in that period; one story exemplifying this attitude perfectly takes place at "Richard Nixon High School", where the nonconforming English teacher is desperately searching for a mind to enlighten, but contemptuously dismisses the "girls who get straight As by docility and rote memorization"; he wants a boy. He gets one, who promptly betrays him.

Shiras' mutant children today seem like today's gifted children, lacking only Rubik's cubes to be totally familiar. Their gifts and their conversations, their enthusiasms and projects, are an accurate if exaggerated reflection of the bright young polymaths who fill today's classes for the gifted, show up at science fiction conventions,

fix their hair before the science fair opens -- they are our children, happy, noisy and having fun. They could have been us.

FUZZY BONES

By William Tuning
Ace Books, 375 pp., \$2.50

REVIEWED BY PAUL MC GUIRE

To my knowledge, the most lovable alien race in science fiction is The Fuzzies created by H. Beam Piper. In LITTLE FUZZY a sunstone prospector discovered the furry humanoids and came to believe they were sapient. The Zarathustra Company (there's a joke there somewhere) owned the planet since it was believed to lack intelligent life, and they were willing to play dirty to keep it that way, but lost. The Fuzzies gained equal status in the Federation and the planet was opened up. In FUZZY SAPIENS (original title: THE OTHER HUMAN RACE), Piper wrote a low-key entertainment about the hectic early days of colonial status on the world. He took political hassles, organizational problems, and a medical mystery and turned it into a fascinating adventure. (Piper's Fuzzy novels are available in a single volume from Ace titled THE FUZZY PAPERS).

Since both novels covered about a half-a-year's worth of events, there is ample "space" for continuation of the Fuzzy saga, but can any one equal, or even create an acceptable facsimile of Piper's special ambience? Mr. Tuning does an amazingly fine job of it.

This story begins about six months after the events of FUZZY SAPIENS. Although nothing seems to have happened to the main characters in the meantime, the planet has been hit by the expected population boom of immigrants following the breaking of the company's stranglehold on land and economy, or so we are told.

Be warned -- like the original novels, we sit in on a lot of casually held business and other meetings, which make the novel slower moving and more talky than post-Star Wars space opera, but this is probably much more what empire building is all about.

And what about the Fuzzies? It is that aspect of the novel, where they came from, and how to reverse a rapidly declining birth rate, which brings surprising results. Fuzzies are much more than ambulatory teddy bears and maybe more than human.

FANE

By David M. Alexander
Pocket Timescape, c. 1981, #83154-2
First printing, August 1981
311 pp., \$3.50

REVIEWED BY STEVE LEWIS

One of the things that the initials SF stand for, and more and more so all the time, or so it seems, is Science Fantasy. Here's a prime example.

Fane is a world, and it's one where, because of its magnetic field, magic works -- and machinery doesn't. It has been settled by three groups: descendants of (1) the original colonists, (2) a gang of convicted criminals marooned there, and (3) the Ajaj crewmen of the ship that landed them all there but which never safely took off again. Native to the planet are the four-armed (but not forewarned?) Fanists, mysterious humanoids who tend to avoid the new inhabitants of their planet.

Some time later, well-defined boundaries between (1) and (2) have developed. Members of (3) serve them both. There is a wizard and his hapless nephew assistant. There



is an opposing sorcerer and the beautiful girl he forces to help him. There are bloodstone rings with the power to enhance magical prowess. There is revolt.

The plot itself is fairly tight. (Or in other words, it hinges on coincidence at every turn.) It is well enough written. What irks me is that anyone could have written it and it would have come out about the same.

A lot happens, and nothing happens, if you follow me. On a world where anything can happen, and usually does, it takes a skilled writer to tell his story in such a way so as to make it appear he's coming up with something of more than passing interest.

I will say this. (I've said it before.) Most of fandom seems to like this sort of Silly Fiction a lot more than I do.



THE PHOENIX LEGACY

By M.K. Wren
Berkley Books, 1981, \$2.75 each.
Published in three volumes.

REVIEWED BY KEITH SOLTYS

The combination of science fiction and the family saga may be the next publishing phenomenon. Science fiction readers always have been partial to long books and the format of the family saga utilizes a scope that is natural to science fiction. A few authors have tried it, notably Matha Randall and F.M. Busby, with varying degrees of success.

Up until now such books have been packaged and marketed as science fiction. But THE PHOENIX LEGACY by M.K. Wren takes a different tack. It's packaged to look like the historical romances which fill supermarket and drugstore paperback racks. In this case it would be a mistake to judge the book by its covers.

Although published as three books, THE PHOENIX LEGACY is not a trilogy but rather one long novel. The individual titles are SWORD OF THE LAMB, SHADOW OF THE SWAN and HOUSE OF THE WOLF.

It's set in the thirty-third century as mankind stands on the brink of a third dark age. Wren has set up a feudal society, the Concord, complete with Lords, slaves and a rebel underground, the Phoenix.

The central character, Alexand Woolf, is the son of a Lord and thus in line for a Directorship on the ruling Concord Council. His brother, Richard Woolf, becomes one of the Phoenix's leading agents, known as the Lamb. Alexand is also in love with the lovely Lady Adrien Eliseer, whom he cannot marry for political reasons.

The plot may sound formulaic but the novel does work, thanks to the detail of Wren's setting. Wren has scattered "lectures" by Richard Lamb throughout the book which give a wonderfully logical and detailed history of the Concord. They can be skipped but they do add greatly to the feeling of reality.

The central characters are developed with some skill. Alexand's affair with the Lady Adrien occasionally borders on cuteness but Wren nonetheless makes you feel for their plight. Most of the other major players come vividly to life.

The novel isn't a complete success. Wren's prose sometimes tends to the purple, ruining some crucial scenes. I found the plotting in the last part of the story spoiled by a technological deus ex machina that really should have been avoided.

But I kept reading anyway and

thoroughly enjoyed myself. THE PHOENIX LEGACY is a very good novel and might have been a great one with a little more care.



THE JAWS OF MENX

By Ann Maxwell
Signet, #AE1037; c. 1981, First printing, Sept. '81, 248 pp., \$2.75

REVIEWED BY STEVE LEWIS

I'm much impressed with Ann Maxwell's uncompromising approach to science fiction.

She seems utterly unyielding in giving the reader an honest portrayal of what alien beings on alien worlds would have to be like. A lot goes on in her stories that will either leave you completely cold or will fill your mind with wonder and amazement -- and with probably only half a comprehension either way. Her stories are not written for the casual reader.

Take Menx, for example. An attempt at any ordinary sort of synopsis would be foolhardy -- and I'm no fool -- but here's a planet where the gods of the local inhabitants are real and insane, and the entire cultural system is built around a solution designed simply to "cope" with such a problem.



When Menx is discovered by the planets of the Concord, an immense clash of cultures is inevitable -- neither quite capable of understanding the other -- and the reader, poor sap, is left square in the middle.

The story itself is that of a quest, of sorts. A mystery tour. It's easy to find yourself caught up in the swirling mists of its multi-colored complexities, a story told on the thin edge of hysteria, with prose as tormented as a Gothic heroine's heart.

In a lot of ways it's like watching your favorite afternoon soap opera -- not much seems to happen at any one time, and the dialogue is filled to overflowing with deliberate ambiguities and veiled hints of what may be to come, something like oracular molasses -- but, like me, you may find it an experience you can't quite tear yourself away from.

THE RED MAGICIAN

By Lisa Goldstein
Timescape/Pocket Books, 156 pp., \$2.25

REVIEWED BY PAUL MC GUIRE

This novel uses fantasy to better tell a mainstream story. The life, death and rebirth of the European Jews is seen through the odyssey of one young woman. At thirteen, the protagonist is bored by the small, timeless village which is her whole world and dreams of exotic places as Singapore which are little more than names to her. When a wandering magician arrives, this changes. He prophesies fire and death and incurs the wrath of the sternly traditional rabbi, also a magician. The early encounters of the two are played within a medieval-like ambience of golems and the Kabbalah.

When the stranger leaves, life returns to normal. The emergence of the protagonist into womanhood and love is aborted by the horror of the Nazi holocaust. Surviving that real, human evil leaves her in a state almost of living death. Again the magician appears, hoping to lead her back to her village and then on to a new existence. But first, they must face the rabbi and once more do battle while allegorical avenging ghosts hover waiting to destroy all three.

The book has much of death, but is about life. There are finely-written scenes of the supernatural, but its power is in the wisdom of its theme, the ability of the human spirit to triumph.

THE HUMAN HOTLINE

S-F NEWS BY ELTON T. ELLIOTT

REMEMBER THE ADDRESS FOR THIS COLUMN IS: ELTON T. ELLIOTT, SFR, 1899 WIESSNER DRIVE N.E., SALEM, OR 97303.

MAGAZINE NEWS:

AMAZING:

According to reports, AMAZING is in the process of being sold. The buyer is TSR (Publishers of Dungeons & Dragons and other games/hobbies), George Scithers to be editor.

In an exclusive wide-ranging phone conversation, Mr. Scithers stated that TSR and Arthur Bernhard, previous owner of AMAZING, have "not completed all the arrangements" for the sale, but that "some money has changed hands and papers have been signed".

AMAZING is now quarterly. The next two issues, roughly June and September, will contain current AMAZING story inventory. Mr. Scithers' name will appear on the November masthead. Mr. Scithers stated that as soon as the magazine is on "solid footing" with a planned "bi-monthly schedule" TSR will "consider going monthly -- eventually" and that TSR plans to increase the 128 pages (plus cover pages) to a possible 176, or about the same number as ASIMOV'S and ANALOG.

Scithers maintained that AMAZING will continue to be sold on the newsstands and that TSR has "no plans to change the basic digest format" and that the new owners do not plan to endanger the newsstand base of 14,000 sales per issue by starting a large subscription campaign. He said it costs about "eight dollars per subscription" including mailing costs, etc. He believes a "bigger budget"

will lead to "improved distribution". There are plans to move into the bookstore and hobby store markets as well, areas where TSR has had phenomenal success with their game line.

Recent reports from Gary Gygax, head of TSR, put the income from Dungeons & Dragons sales alone at \$20 million. (Dungeons & Dragons has been attacked recently by fundamentalist groups as "an occult game which leads its players on a path towards the devil".)

AMAZING will pay 6¢ per word for short material and 4¢ a word for long material. The rates are flexible -- short-shorts will be paid more than 6¢. No foreign rights will be purchased. Their permanent address for editorial submissions:

George Scithers
POB 110
Lake Geneva, WI 53147

An address good for the rest of 1982: George Scithers
POB 8243
Philadelphia, PA 19101

Editor Scithers reports he is still getting left-over manuscripts from ASIMOV'S magazine. Please send all of that material to the ASIMOV'S address (given in the section on ASIMOV'S elsewhere in this column) in New York. He will forward manuscripts but it takes longer. He will be buying more science fiction than fantasy but the "subject matter for fantasy is unlimited".



He declared that AMAZING's current editor, Elinor Mavor, has been doing "an incredibly good job with limited resources" and he professed no knowledge of TSR's rumored interest in buying GALAXY and GALILEO, but said if "I had been asked I would not recommend it".

An irony: The last story he bought for ASIMOV'S was by Gene Wolfe, as was the first story purchased for AMAZING.

ANALOG:

Davis will return to dating by month and year only on their magazines and will continue publishing thirteen times a year. The extra issue will appear in the fall, probably dated as a special Holiday issue. Its first issue will be May -- no April issue, but no issue was skipped -- the "April" issue was dated March 29 and Davis retained the original numbering system (the May issue would've been dated April 26).

ASIMOV'S:

The first issue under the new dating process is April. The extra issue will appear in the fall and carry a Holiday date. Address for submissions: 380 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10017

FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION:
Remain monthly.

FANTASY BOOK:

Quarterly. I have received the third (listed as bi-monthly) and the fourth issues. Editor/Art Director Nick Smith, reports "FANTASY BOOK, while technically bi-monthly, has been coming out every ten weeks, due to production difficulties. We may only have five issues during 1982, since we'd rather have five good ones than six OK ones. Since there isn't any good term for an 'every ten weeks' magazine, I don't know what our official statement will be", but it would probably indicate quarterly, at least for the rest of 1982.

Subscriptions: \$16.00 for 6 issues; \$17.25 in Canada; \$22.50 overseas. Address is: POB 4193 Pasadena, CA 91106

Scheduled for the August issue (#45), on sale June 1, 1982:

Short fiction by: Katherine Kurtz, Alan Dean Foster, Charles L. Grant, Jack Wodhams, Kris Neville, Al Sarrantino, Boyd Correll, Brenda Gates Spielman and an excerpt from THE DOOR INTO SHADOW by Diane Duane classic "The Midah", plus a fantasy classic by L. Ron Hubbard.

GALAXY & GALILEO:

There have been several attempts and rumored attempts to buy these magazines. (See AMAZING article elsewhere in this column). The latest by David Chandler has apparently failed. Dell and GALILEO are still in litigation over Dell's distribution of GALILEO.

ETERNITY:

The publishers have reportedly encountered production problems, but a new issue reported under way.

INTERZONE:

A new quarterly British magazine. Subscriptions are \$10.00 a year U.S. and Canada, to: INTERZONE

9 Patchin Place
New York, NY 10011
In Britain 5
28 Ducket Road
London N4 1BN
England

INTERZONE's first issue is to appear in February, 1982, featuring such authors as: Brian Aldiss, J.G. Ballard, Barrington J. Bayley, Angela Carter, Thomas M. Disch, M. John Harrison, Michael Moorcock, Josephine Saxton, John Sladek and others.

INTERZONE has a unique editorial process. It is, according to a press release, "edited and produced collectively by a team which has a wealth of experience in editing, magazine production and publishing. None of the collective wants or expects to make money and all profits will go to pay authors and artists. Even with a comparatively low circulation, our rates of payment will be competi-

itive with magazines selling 100,000 copies! This will help guarantee quality".

INTERZONE's editorial collective: John Clute (novelist and critic), Alan Dorey (Chairman, British Science Fiction Association), Malcolm Edwards (past-editor of VECTOR and FOUNDATION), Colin Greenland (Writing Fellow at the SF Foundation), Graham James (editor of MATRIX), Roz Kaveney (reviewer and publishers' reader), Simon Ounsley (BSFA Council Member) and David Pringle (present editor of FOUNDATION).

OMNI:

Monthly.

QUEST STAR:

Has suspended publication with issue #13, reportedly killed by too many production, staff and business problems.

RIGEL:

Quarterly -- third issue is out and fourth on its way. According to Editor Eric Vinicoff, it sold between 1500 and 2000 copies and is doing "very good ... growing steadily" with "highly favorable response" from the readers. For subscriptions:

RIGEL

Aesir Press
POB 2523
Richmond, CA 94802

\$6.00 per year U.S.A.; \$9.00 foreign. Single copies \$1.75 plus \$.50 postage/handling (\$1.00 for foreign).

SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST:

Announced bi-monthly, but its schedule seems to be quarterly.

PUBLISHING NEWS:

Simon & Schuster has purchased Ace/Grosset & Dunlap. Their previous owners, Filmways, were purchased by Orion Pictures. (Filmways had a large stock of old movies which Orion wanted.) Orion did not want Ace/G&D, so they looked for another buyer. Both Warner and Berkley were rumored to be bidding along with Simon & Schuster.

I contacted David G. Hartwell at Norwescon, where he had just heard about the sale -- he had "no comment". Hartwell's Timescape imprint has been the principle purchaser of science fiction for Simon & Schuster. Now with the addition of Ace to the Gulf & Western-owned Simon & Schuster fold, Ace is the largest purchaser of science fiction. No word yet on how Ace's program, edited by Susan Allie-

son, or Hartwell's Timescape imprint (which recently postponed several scheduled titles), will be affected by the purchase.

CBS has sold six of the seven Fawcett imprint lines to Random House: Crest, Gold Medal, Columbine, Coventry, Premier and Juniper. The unsold seventh imprint is Popular Library which the Carter P.T.C. had ordered CBS to divest. It will be sold to another buyer, rumored price more than \$10 million down and more than \$15 million over the next three to four years.

Random House, which owns Ballantine/Del Rey was itself sold recently by RCA to S.I. Newhouse Publications for over \$70 million.

Random House plans to run Fawcett as a separate line with its own distribution. The sale did not include Fawcett editorial personnel -- some will be hired, others not. No word on how the science fiction lines at Fawcett would be affected. It is rumored they lost over \$9 million the first quarter of this year.

Quick Fox, which published HERMES OF THE SPACEWAYS by Bill Harry in March, has been purchased by Putnam's.

Dodd Mead has been bought by Thomas Nelson.

Playboy Press is reported for sale.

Avon is reported for sale.

Dell is reported for sale. Dell is rumored considering bringing back a science fiction line, but not until their problems with the previous science fiction line, edited by Jim Frenkel, are resolved.

One author who has had problems with Dell is Richard Lupoff. He has four books they contracted for which he has been unable to extricate: a novel, CIRCUMPOLAR!, and a trilogy, The End of All Being, comprising SUN'S END, GALAXY'S END and TIME'S END. He said four publishers are interested and he expects to get control of the books shortly. He feels that "Dell has no legal or moral claim to the books". He views it as "one individual versus a multi-million-dollar corporation".

A settlement has been reached between Dell, Gregory Benford and other authors involved. (See report in SFR #41).

New Media Irjax, the distribution company in Florida has filed for Chapter 11. New Media Publishing, owned by the same people as N.M.I., has reportedly not been affected.

AUTHOR NEWS:

Julian May has sold the third and fourth books, THE NONBORN KING and THE ADVERSARY, in the Pliocene Exile series to Pan Books in England. The second book in the series, THE GOLDEN TORC and THE NONBORN KING, have sold to Del Rey. THE NONBORN KING has just been turned in to Houghton Mifflin.

Frank Herbert has sold another Dune novel to Putnam --- for \$1.5 million dollars.

Gene Wolfe has signed to do another book in his Book Of The Sun series.

Robert Silverberg has sold a sequel to LORD VALENTINE'S CASTLE, plus a short story collection and non-sf novel, to Arbor House for a reportedly six-figures-plus advance.

Gregory Benford has sold a new novel, AGAINST INFINITY, to Pocket. The contract is similar to the one which earned him a reported \$200 thousand so far. An earlier book, ACROSS THE SEA OF SUNS, also sold to Pocket, will not appear pending further revision.

Stephen King has sold a new novel to Doubleday.

The story in SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW # 42 about THE DANGEROUS VISION was inaccurate, and I retract it -- more details next issue.

Houghton Mifflin published an anthology in April, SPECULATIONS, edited by Alice Laurence and Isaac Asimov. There are 17 stories written by different authors; according to the press release "their names are concealed by a code and it is up to you to figure who wrote what".

Glen Cook has just sold to Pocket KING WITHOUT A THRONE. He has also sold them an as-yet untitled second novel, both in the Bread Empire series. Parts of THE BLACK COMPANY, a fantasy novel, will be in FGF. Warner will publish STARFISHERS in May, the second book in the Starfishers trilogy. The first, SHADOWLINE, is already out, and the concluding volume, STAR'S END, will appear in August.

Elton T. Elliott has sold a biography of Forrest J. Ackerman to Starmont House. The title is MR. SCIENCE FICTION.

DEATHS:

Philip K. Dick died on March 2, 1982. Thomas M. Disch announced at Norwescon '82 the formation of a Philip K. Dick Memorial Award.

BOOK NEWS:

ACE:

April:

(Michael Bishop & --- UNDER HEAVEN'S
(Ian Watson ----- BRIDGE
Phyllis Gottlieb ----- EMPEROR,
SWORDS, PENTACLES
Tim Lukeman ----- RAJAN
Trevor Hoyle ----- THROUGH THE
----- EYE OF TIME
(Jack Dann & ----- FASTER THAN
(George Zebrowski (Editors) --- LIGHT
Keith Roberts ----- PAVANE
E.C. Tubb ----- THE WINDS OF GATH
(Dumarest of Terra #1)
Robert Silverberg---THE SEED OF EARTH
Greg Bear ----- LOST SOULS
Edgar Rice Burroughs---THE LAND THAT
---TIME FORGOT
Edgar Rice Burroughs ---OUT OF TIME'S
-----ABYSS
Edgar Rice Burroughs---THE PEOPLE THAT
---TIME FORGOT
Harry Harrison -----INVASION EARTH
(Trade pb.)

May:

(Larry Niven & ----- DREAM PARK
(Steven Barnes -----
(Jack Dann & ----- UNICORNS!
(Gardner Dozois (Editors)
Trevor Hoyle ----- THE GODS LOOK DOWN
L. Sprague de Camp-----THE QUEEN
----- OF ZAMBA
James H. Schmitz---THE TELZEY TOY
---AND OTHER STORIES
E.C. Tubb ----- DERAILED
(Dumarest of Terra #2)
Robert Silverberg ----- COLLISION
----- COURSE
Bob Shaw ----- ORBITSVILLE
Roger Zelazny---THE ISLE OF THE DEAD
Barry N. Malzberg---THE CROSS OF FIRE

June:

Info not available.

AVON: (April):

Isaac Asimov-----ASIMOV ON SCIENCE
(Non sf)----- FICTION
James Blish -----CITIES IN FLIGHT

May:

Stanislaw Lem---RETURN FROM THE STARS
Piers Anthony-----VISCIOUS CREATURE

June:

Info not available.

ATHENUM:

May:

Roberta Smoodin ----- PRESTO!

BANTAM:

April:

Allyn Thompson---THE AZRIEL UPRISING
Samuel R. Delany-----THE EINSTEIN
-----INTERSECTION
Frank Herbert-----HELLSTROM'S HIVE

May:

Warren Norwood---THE WINDHOVER TAPES:
---AN IMAGE OF VOICES
Parke Godwin-----FIRELORD
Frederic Brown---HONEYMOON IN HELL

June:

Samuel R. Delany---THE JEWELS OF APTOR
J. Michael Reaves---DARKWOOD DETECTIVE

BERKLEY:

April:

Kevin O'Donnell, Jr. ----- LAVA
Barry B. Longyear ---- ELEPHANT SONG
Poul Anderson -----SHIELD
(Glen A. Larson &---THE LIVING LEGEND
(Nicholas Yermakov
(Battlestar Galactica #6)

May:

Stephin Goldin---PLANET OF TREACHERY
Keith Laumer ----- THE ULTIMAX MAN
Philip Dunn -----THE CABAL 2
Joseph Payne Brennan ---THE SHAPES
---OF MIDNIGHT
Robert Aickman--- COLD HAND IN MINE
Robert Bloch ----- PLEASANT DREAMS
Richard Matheson----- I AM LEGEND
J.G. Ballard ----- CONCRETE ISLAND

June:

Elizabeth A. Lynn --THE SARDONYX NET
Keith Laumer ----- BOLO
John Silberback (Editor)----- THE
---COLLECTED FANCIES OF AVRAM DAVIDSON
Janet Morris -----EARTH DREAMS
(Final volume of Dream Dancers Trilogy)
Future Berkley Titles: LYONESSE by
Jack Vance, a trilogy; DARKCHILD by
Sydney Joyce Van Sycoc; HART'S HOPE
by Orson Scott Card.



DAW:

April:

Tanith Lee---THE SILVER METAL LOVER
Marion Zimmer Bradley---SWORD
----- OF CHAOS
A.E. van Vogt -----THE DARKNESS
-----ON DIAMONDIA
E.C. Tubb -----THE COMING EVENT
(Dumarest of Terra #26)
A. Bertram Chandler---THE BIG BLACK
----- MARK
Egon Friedell---THE RETURN OF THE
-----TIME MACHINE

May:

Donald A. Wollheim (Editor)---THE
--- 1982 ANNUAL WORLD'S BEST SF
Jo Clayton -----MOONGATHER
Clifford D. Simak -----THE GOBLIN
-----RESERVATION
Lin Carter -----RIC OF ZANTHODON
Lin Carter-----WHEN THE GREEN STAR
-----CALLS
Dray Prescot (Kenneth Bulmer)---FLIERS
----- OF AMTARES
(Prescot #8)

June:

Info not available.
Starting in April, DAW has gone to
six titles per month.

DEL REY HARDCOVERS:

April:

Stephen R. Donaldson -- THE ONE TREE
(Covenant #5)
(There are over 4 million books in
the Covenant series in print)

June:

Frederik Pohl-----STARBURST

July:

Terry Brooks-----THE ELFSTONES
----- OF SHANNARA
(Also available in trade paperback)

DEL REY PAPERBACKS:

April:

Piers Anthony -----BLUE ADEPT
David Eddings -----PAWN OF PROPHECY
Richard Bowker -----FORBIDDEN
-----SANCTUARY
Craig Mills---THE BANE OF LORD CALADON
Frank Herbert-----THE HEAVEN MAKERS
John Wyndham ----TROUBLE WITH LICHEN

May:

Philip K. Dick -----BLADE RUNNER
(Movie tie-in, complete stills from
--- the film)
Juanita Coulson -----OUTWARD BOUND
Robert F. Young---THE LAST YGGDRASIL
James White-----THE DREAM MILLENNIUM
Jack L. Chalker-----THE WEB OF THE
----- CHOZEN
Barbara Hambly ----TIME OF THE DARK
Juanita Coulson---TOMORROW'S HERITAGE

June:

Brian Daley -----TRON
(Movie tie-in with stills from film)
Lawrence Watt-Evans -----THE CYBORG
-----AND THE SORCERERS
E. Hoffman Price-----THE JADE
-----ENCHANTRESS
Lester del Rey---THE MYSTERIOUS PLANET
Jack L. Chalker-----DANCERS IN THE
-----AFTERGLOW
(David Gerrold, --THE FLYING SORCERERS
(Larry Niven

July:

James P. Hogan -----VOYAGE FROM
-----YESTERDAY
Carole Nelson Douglas---SIX OF SWORDS
James Kahn ----TIME'S DARK LAUGHTER
Jack L. Chalker---AND THE DEVIL WILL
---DRAG YOU UNDER
Lester del Rey---OUTPOSTS OF JUPITER
(Jack Williamson)---STAR BRIDGE
(6 James E. Gunn
Terry Brooks---THE SWORD OF SHANNARA

DOUBLEDAY:

April:

Charles L. Grant---NIGHTMARE SEASONS
Ardath Mayhar -----WARLOCK'S GIFT
Isaac Asimov-----THE COMPLETE ROBOT
(The Asimov title will be released
on April 9 and will contain all of
his robot stories with the exception
of the two Robot Novels, CAVES OF
STEEL AND THE NAKED SUN)

May:

Richard Purtill-----MURDERCON

June:

Terry Carr (Editor)-----UNIVERSE 12

FANCETT COLUMBINE:

April:

Julian May ----THE MANY COLORED LAND
(Trade paperback)

LEISURE:

April:

Lin Carter---BEYOND THE GATES OF DREAM

May:

Lin Carter -----TOWER AT THE EDGE
----- OF TIME

NOTE: The above 2 titles are
listed as "inflation fighters". Along
with TIME OUT OF JOINT by Philip K.
Dick (a March 1982 release), appear
without cover artwork, have a uniform
cover logo design and cost \$1.50.
If this format catches on it will
mean artists will be locked out of

assignments. Even art directors may
go. This is another consequence of
financial tightness in the publishing
industry. This type of packaging may
be more common; next may come "generic
authors", house names that will
churn out a novel a month for a thous-
and dollars.

PLAYBOY:

April:

Jacqueline Lichtenberg---MOLT BROTHER

May:

John Cleve ----- OF ALIEN BONDAGE:
-----SPACEWAYS #1
John Cleve -----CORUNDUM'S WOMAN:
-----SPACEWAYS #2
(The start of a monthly sf series
blurb "High Adventure for Adults")

June:

John Morressy -----KINGSBANE
John Cleve -----ESCAPE FROM MACHO:
----- SPACEWAYS #3

July:

Charles L. Grant (Editor)---TERRORS
John Cleve -----SATANA ENSLAVED:
--- SPACEWAYS #4

POCKET/TIMESCAPE:

April:

Joe Haldeman ----- WORLDS
John Sladek ----- RODERICK
(First of trilogy)
Glen Cook ----- THE SWORDBEARER
Jack Vance -----THE DYING EARTH
R.G. Austin----- LOST IN A STRANGE
-----LAND
(From Pocket/Archway -- a "choose
your own adventure" novel)
D.M. Thomas----- THE FLUTE PLAYER
(Washington Square Press title)
(Roger Zelazny ----- COILS
(6 Fred Saberhagen
(A Trade pb. from Pocket/Wallaby)
WHAT IF VOLUME 3 edited by Richard
Lupoff scheduled for April has been
postponed.

May:

Lee Correy -----THE ABODE OF LIFE
(A Star Trek novel)
(George R.R. Martin----- WINDHAVEN
(6 Lisa Tuttle
Robert Holdstock--- WHERE TIME WINDS
----- BLOW
Jack Vance ---THE BEST OF JACK VANCE
Theodore Sturgeon's SLOW SCULP-
TURE has been postponed.

June:

Adam Corby -----THE DIVINE QUEEN
Russell M. Griffin---THE BLIND MEN
----- AND THE ELEPHANT

Norman Spinrad -----THE IRON DREAM
Marta Randall (Editor)----- NEW
----- DIMENSIONS 13
Robert Holdstock----- EARTHWIND
Charles L. Grant-----THE NESTLING
(A Pocket Books release)
The Washington Square Press
trade paperback edition of Russell
Hoban's Nebula-nominated novel
RIDDLEY WALKER has been postponed.

TOR:

April:

Poul Anderson----- COLD VICTORY
(Second book in the Psychotechnic
League future history series)
(Includes an introduction and
added material by Sandra Miesel)

Harry Harrison----THE QE2 IS MISSING
(Non-SF suspense novel)
Jessica Amanda Salmonson -----THE
-----SWORDSWOMAN

May:

Alfred Bester ----- THE DECEIVERS
(Gordon R. Dickson -----PLANET RUN
& Keith Laumer

June:

Gordon R. Dickson-----THE OUTPOSTER
Philip Jose Farmer-GREATHEART SILVER

July:

Poul Anderson ----- STARSHIP
Fred Saberhagen-----DOMINION
Starting in August Tor will publish
three SF titles every other month,
two in the off months.

MOVIE/TV NEWS:

BLADE RUNNER, starring Harrison
Ford, is set for July 1982 release.
The film was adapted from Philip K.
Dick's novel, DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF
ELECTRIC SHEEP, and is directed by
Ridley Scott, director of ALIEN.

POLTERGEIST is a Steven Spiel-
berg Production. He is joined by co-
producer Frank Marshall, the producer
of RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK. The di-
rector is Tobe Hooper who gained not-
oriety as director of THE TEXAS CHAIN-
SAW MASSACRE. The special effects
are done by Richard Edlund who won
an Oscar for his work on STAR WARS
and George Lucas' Industrial Light
and Magic special effects company.

The movie stars Jobeth Williams,
Craig Nelson and Beatrice Straight,
set for a June 4, 1982 release.

STAR TREK 2, retitled THE REVEN-
GE OF KHAN, is scheduled to open
in June of '82. The movie stars (in
addition to the regular cast) Ricardo
Montalban as Khan and Paul Winfield.

Leonard Nimoy has signed to do
STAR TREK 3. He will, according to
rumors, suffer a "death" along the
lines of Han Solo in THE EMPIRE
STRIKES BACK. It is reported that
towards the end of the movie engine
trouble develops on the Enterprise
which necessitates the Vulcan touch
in the engineering area, an accident
happens and

Also reports have Khan turned
into an android, causing Dick Gies
to say that if they show his innards
to be metal he'll "puke right there
in the theatre".

Is Paramount concerned about a
possible "Trekkie" boycott of the
film? No, according to Paramount
publicist, Eddie Egan, who told me
that "if every single 'Trekkie' boy-
cotted this film, it wouldn't affect
the box office".

CONCLUDING WORDS:

Next issue I will have a commen-
tary on what the growing tendency to-
ward monopoly in the New York Pub-
lishing industry means to science fic-
tion and to publishing as a whole.

Again, thanks for the cards and
letters. See you next issue.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #35 Inter-
views with Fred Saberhagen and Don
Wollheim; "The Way It Is" by Barry
Malzberg; "Noise Level" by John
Brunner; "Coming Apart at the
Thames" by Bob Shaw.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #36 Inter-
view with Roger Zelazny; A Profile
of Philip K. Dick by Charles Platt;
"Outside the Whale" by Christopher
Priest; "Science Fiction and Politi-
cal Economy" by Mack Reynolds; In-
terview with Robert A. Heinlein;
"You Got No Friends in This World"
by Orson Scott Card.

\$1.50 per copy from #37 onward

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #37 Inter-
view with Robert Anton Wilson;
"We're Coming Through the Window!"
by Barry N. Malzberg; "Inside the
Whale" by Jack Williamson, Jerry
Pournelle, and Jack Chalker; "Uni-
ties in Digression" by Orson Scott
Card.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #38 Inter-
view with Jack Williamson; "The
Engines of the Night" by Barry N.
Malzberg; "A String of Days" by
Gregory Benford; "The Alien Inva-
sion" by Larry Niven; "Noise Level"
by John Brunner; SF News by Elton
Elliott.


SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #39 Inter-
view with Gene Wolfe; "The Engines
of the Night"-Part Two by Barry N.
Malzberg; "The Nuke Standard" by
Ian Watson; "The Vivisector" by
Darrell Schweitzer; SF News by
Elton Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #40 Inter-
view with Robert Shekley; 4-way
conversation: Arthur C. Clarke,
Harlan Ellison, Fritz Leiber &
Mark Wells; "The Engines of the
Night"-Part Three by Barry N.
Malzberg; Darrell Schweitzer;
SF News by Elton T. Elliott

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #41 Space
Shuttle Report by Clifford R. Mc-
Murray; "Chuck's Latest Bucket" by
David Gerrold; Interview with Mi-
chael Whelan; "The Bloodshot Eye"
by Gene DeWeese; "The Vivisector"
by Darrell Schweitzer; SF News by
Elton T. Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #42 Inter-
view with Ian Watson; "One Writer
and the Next War" by John Brunner;
"The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweit-
zer; "The Human Hotline" by Elton
T. Elliott.

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ALIEN CONCLUSIONS

I promised to list the ad-
dresses of the artists...out of
space. If any other editor
wants an address, drop me a line.

LAST MINUTE NEWS from Elton: TSR
has just bought SPI. To sf and
fantasy gamers, that's news!

BACK ISSUES

THE ALIEN CRITIC SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

NO OTHER BACK ISSUES ARE
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EDITORS, PUBLISHERS AND FANS.

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FEATURED CONTRIBUTIONS

THE ALIEN CRITIC #5 Interview
with Fritz Leiber; "The Literary
Dreamers" by James Blish; "Irvins
Binkin Meets H.P. Lovecraft" by
Jack Chalker.

THE ALIEN CRITIC #6 Interview
with R.A. Lafferty; "The Trench-
ant Bluegeon" by Ted White;
"Translations From the Editorial"
by Marion Z. Bradley.

THE ALIEN CRITIC #9 "Reading
Heinlein Subjectively" by Alexei
and Cory Panshin; "Written to a
Pulp!" by Sam Merwin, Jr.; "Noise
Level" by John Brunner; "The Shav-
er Papers" by Richard S. Shaver.

THE ALIEN CRITIC #10 Interview
with Stanislaw Lem; "A Nest of
Strange and Wonderful Birds" by
Sam Merwin, Jr.; Robert Bloch's
Guest of Honor speech; The Hein-
lein Reaction.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #14 Inter-
view with Philip Jose Farmer;
"Thoughts on Logan's Run" by Will-
iam F. Nolan; "The Gimlet Eye" by
John Gustafson.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #15 Inter-
view with L. Sprague de Camp;
"Spec-Fic and the Perry Rhodan
Ghetto" by Donald C. Thompson;
"Uffish Thots" by Ted White.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #16 Inter-
view with Jerry Pournelle; "The
True and Terrible History of Sci-
ence Fiction" by Barry Malzberg;
"Noise Level" by John Brunner;
"The Literary Masochist" by Rich-
ard Lupoff.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #17 Inter-
view with George R.R. Martin; In-
terview with Robert Anton Wilson;
"Philip K. Dick: A Parallax View"
by Terrence M. Green; "Microcos-
mos" by R. Faraday Nelson.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #18 Inter-
view with Lester del Rey; Inter-
view with Alan Burt Akers; "Noise
Level" by John Brubaker; "A Short
One for the Boys in the Back Room"
by Barry Malzberg.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #19 Inter-
view with Philip K. Dick; Interview
with Frank Kelly Freas; "The Note-
books of Mack Sikes" by Larry Niven;
"Angel Fear" by Freff; "The Vivi-
sector" by Darrell Schweitzer.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #20 Inter-
views: Theodore Sturgeon, and Joe
Haldeman; "Noise Level" by John
Brunner; "The Vivisector" by Dar-
rell Schweitzer; "The Gimlet Eye"
by John Gustafson.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #21 Inter-
view with Leigh Brackett & Edmond
Hamilton; Interview with Tim Kirk;
"The Dream Quarter" by Barry Malz-
berg; "Noise Level" by John Brunner.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #22 Inter-
view with John Varley; "S-F and
S-E-X" by Sam Merwin, Jr.; "After-
thoughts on Logan's Run" by William
F. Nolan; "An Evolution of Cons-
ciousness" by Marion Zimmer Bradley.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #23 Inter-
views: A.E. van Vogt, and Jack
Vance, and Piers Anthony; "The
Silverberg That Was" by Robert
Silverberg.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #24 Inter-
views: Bob Shaw, David G. Hartwell
and Algis Budrys; "On Being a Bit
of a Legend" by Algis Budrys.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #25 Inter-
views with George Scithers, Paul
Anderson and Ursula K. Le Guin;
"Flying Saucers and the Stymie
Factor" by Ray Palmer; ONE IMMORTAL
MAN--Part One.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #26 Inter-
views with Gordon R. Dickson and
Larry Niven; "Noise Level" by
John Brunner; "Fee-dom Road" by
Richard Henry Klump; ONE IMMORTAL
MAN--Part Two.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #27 Inter-
views with Ben Bova and Stephen
Fabian; "Should Writers be Serfs
... or Slaves?"; SF News; SF Film
News; The Ackerman Interview; ONE
IMMORTAL MAN--Part Three.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #28 Inter-
view with C.J. Cherry; "Beyond
Genocide" by Damon Knight; ONE IM-
MORTAL MAN--Conclusion; SF News;
SF Film News & Reviews.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #29 Inter-
views with John Brunner, Michael
Moorcock, and Hank Stine; "Noise
Level" by John Brunner; SF News;
SF Film News & Reviews.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #30 Inter-
views with Joan D. Vinge, Stephen
R. Donaldson, and Norman Spinrad;
"The Awards Are Coming" by Orson
Scott Card; SF News; SF Film News
& Reviews.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #31 Inter-
view with Andrew J. Offutt; "Noise
Level" by John Brunner; "On the
Edge of Futuria" by Ray Nelson.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #32 Inter-
view with Andrew J. Offutt--Part
Two; Interview with Orson Scott
Card; "You Got No Friends in This
World" by Orson Scott Card; "The
Human Hotline" by Elton T. Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #33 Inter-
view with Charles Sheffield; "A
Writer's Natural Enemy--Editors"
by George R. R. Martin; "Noise
Level" by John Brunner.

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