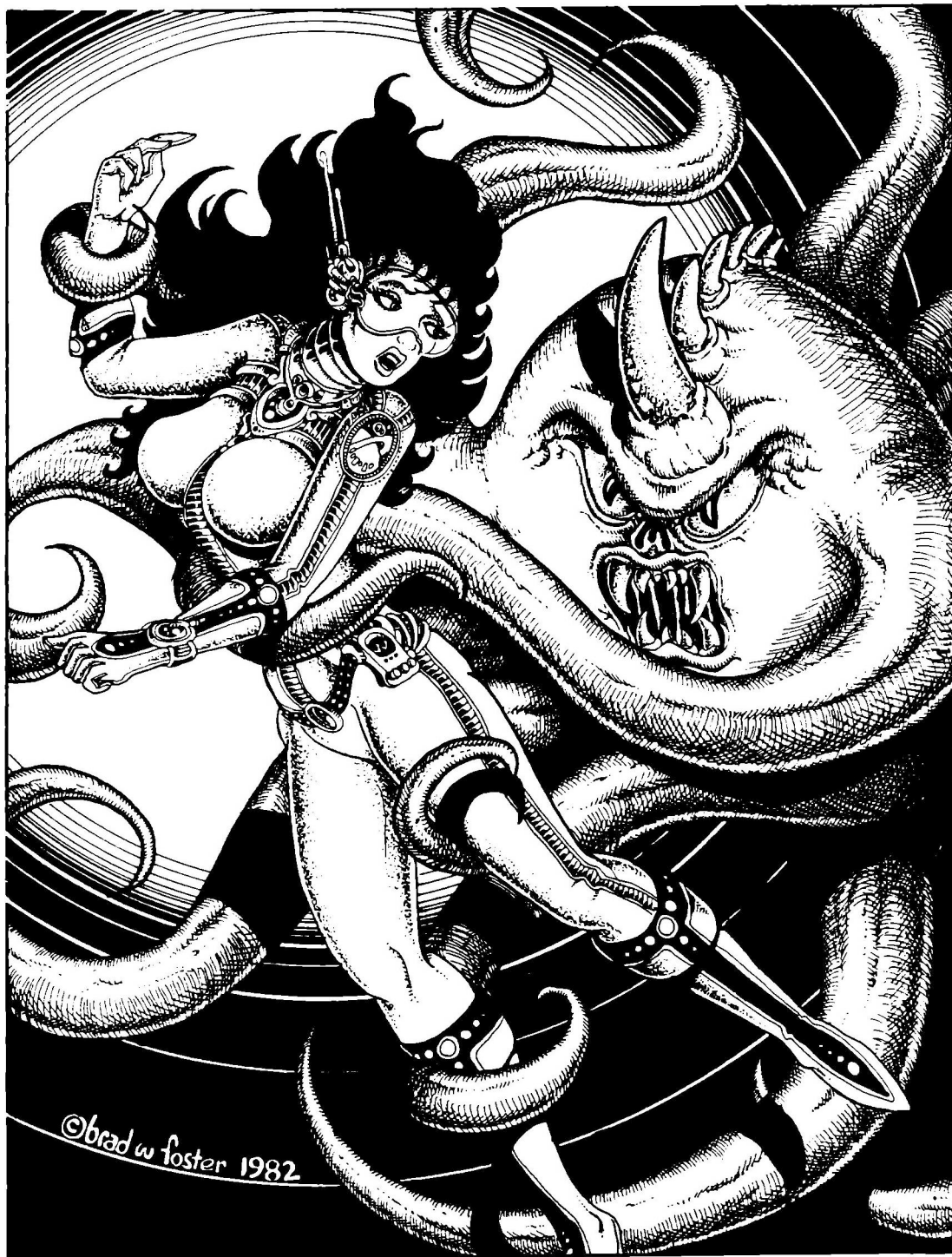


SCIENCE FICTION

SUMMER
1983

REVIEW

NUMBER 47
\$2.00



SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

(ISSN: 0036-8377)

P.O. BOX 11408

PORTLAND, OR 97211

PHONE: (503) 282-0381

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MAY, 1983 ---- VOL.12, NO. 2
WHOLE NUMBER 47

RICHARD E. GEIS---EDITOR & PUBLISHER
PAULETTE MINARE', ASSOCIATE EDITOR

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY
FEB., MAY, AUG., NOV.

SINGLE COPY --- \$2.00

INTERIOR ART-----

TIM KIRK---2,4,47,50,62
ALEXIS GILLILAND---3,5,6,7,10,11,12,
13,17,22,23,24,25,26,27,28,29,31,
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SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW is published at 1525 N.E. Ainsworth, Portland, OR 97211

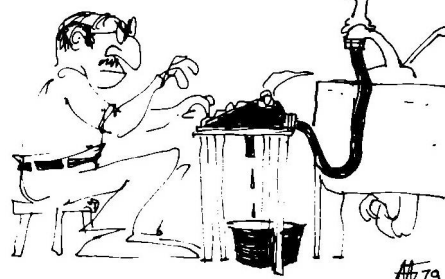
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW, POB 11408, Portland, OR 97211

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Next Issue.....

THE TREASURE OF THE SECRET
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CREATING FRIVOLOUS LITERARY
THEORIES By Darrell Schweitzer
THE ARCHIVES By the editor
OTHER VOICES By the reviewers
THE VIVISECTOR
By Darrell Schweitzer
RAISING HACKLES
By Elton T. Elliott

BUT WHY DOES
GEIS REALLY
WANT MY OLD
ZIP CODE?



ALIEN THOUGHTS

BY THE EDITOR

THE OPENING SENTENCES OF THE MOST WRETCHED NOVELS....

That's the goal of a contest dreamed up by English professors at San Jose State University.

It's called the Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest, and is in its second year. Bulwer-Lytton was a 19th Century English writer whose novel, PAUL CLIFFORD, began:

It was a dark and stormy night; the rain fell in torrents---except at occasional intervals, when it was checked by violent gusts of wind which swept up the streets (for it is in London that our scene lies), rattling along the housetops and fiercely agitating against the scanty flame of the lamps that struggled against the darkness.

That is remarkably awkward and inept, granted, but it does set the scene.

And I rather suspect that, had poor Bulwer-Lytton only chopped that monster up into a few shorter sentences, he'd have escaped this kind of immortality.

In the interests of fair play, what say the readers of SFR who are so inclined send in their nominees for Worst Opening SF or Fantasy novel of the past year, to SFR. I'll be happy to publish the most terrible. I be de judge.

NOW FOR THE GOOD NEWS. I HAVE A JAW-DROPPING ANNOUNCEMENT.

Secretly, behind locked doors, by the light of full moons only, at midnights, after a virgin has been sacrificed, on a stone alter...er, altar, Elton Elliott and I have collaborated on a novel. A novel partial [opening chapters, middle chapters, two final chapters with outlines of intervening chapters] titled THE SWORD OF ALLAH!

This arcane ms. was sent to an agent name of Joe Elder.

Joe looked upon the words and found them Good. He sold the novel to Fawcett.

This pleases me. You can tell it pleases me by the shoe marks on the ceiling where I've been dancing.

It pleases Elton, who plans to dance on the graves of certain fantasy-lovers. I keep telling him to be magnanimous, but....

So the next few months will be



a laboring in the trenches as the other chapters are written, edited, rewritten....

Oh, you want to know what THE SWORD OF ALLAH! is about? About 100,000 words, I think. Or more. It is also about a mad Arab dictator, a mad scientist, a keen-eyed, courageous CIA agent, a woman Vice President of the USA who becomes President, a power-mad, greedy billionaire out to control the world, his beautiful young equally ruthless wife---and the end of the world as we know and love it.

We have found a way to destroy the world never before presented in fiction just this way.

Well....we destroy half the world. Somebody has to survive! The doomsday is 1991. [written 1-15-83]

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES of selling (and now having to complete) THE SWORD OF ALLAH! is that I'll have very, very little time to read sf and fantasy novels for review. I have been pecking away, a few pages at a time every few days, at lunch, at Orson Scott Card's new fantasy, HART'S HOPE. I delved into the first chapter of Chelsea Quinn Yarbro's new THE GODFORSAKEN and wanted to read on and on... But duty and a June 1st deadline compel me to return to the typewriter for the sweaty process of chopping words out of granite. [My brain is solid stone, sometimes.]

Regrets abound. There isn't enough time for everything. Priorities rule. Guilt accumulates.

So it goes. [2-4-83]

FUNDAMENTALLY SPEAKING, THE ECONOMY IS SLIDING INTO THE DUMPER

Yes, yes, it's time for another dose of Geis's Gloom & Doom, a potion guaranteed to depress anyone who has the courage and masochism to read on...

What is the world economic status? Continuing default by debtor countries and their private debtor companies. A continual face-saving desperate "rescheduling" of that debt to keep those loans technically alive by the huge US and European banks and other debt holders.

They have persuaded the US and European governments to vastly increase the resources of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund so that these entities can make emergency loans to the debtor countries so that these debtors can at least pay interest on the defaulted 600 billions of dollars in debts. If everything goes well, the World Bank and the IMF and the on-the-hook banks will pour about 80 billion dollars more into those ratholes, all in a desperate attempt to keep the debt structure from collapsing.

With luck and lying and devious manipulation, the teetering debt structure will remain standing for about another year. But it's that next required 80-100 billion dollar injection of new debt into a constantly deteriorating political and economic situation which will be impossible.

Already there are food and job riots in Brazil, and if the savers of Brazil begin, in fright, to withdraw their money from Brazilian banks [a real likelihood reported in THE WALL STREET JOURNAL] those banks will possibly trigger Brazil into a real default which no one can deny.

The continual worldwide deterioration of trade is caused by these debtor countries no longer being able to buy the manufactured goods of Japan, Europe and the US. This has caused, is causing, and will continue to cause loss of business and jobs. Loss of income. Loss of tax revenues. In turn local, state and [eventually] federal governments are having to cut back on jobs and services and spending.

To counteract this export earnings erosion, the US government has resorted to running 100 billion dollar deficits [1982] and 200 billion dollar deficits this year, with 300 billion dollar deficits in prospect for 1984. But there is a limit to how much new debt even this country can handle, and 1984 should see that limit reached.

The current recovery is already showing signs of dying on the vine as continuing layoffs and plant closures are scheduled and new unemployment claims continue to hover in the

490,000 per week area. Very soon the pool of people who can afford a new house and a new car will be used up, the cost of living will increase due to higher prices, higher taxes, and retail trade will resume its fall or continue stagnant.

Virtually every hard-money economist and financial observer sees a terrifying resurgence in inflation next year and a collapse in the world economy.

Not I. Inflation requires too many people to be too ignorant of the consequences of inflation. This generation has been educated too well for that to happen. People with money, with savings, have learned to protect themselves and the "inflation game" played by the government cannot be played any longer. Very soon after inflation rears its head again people will start going into debt heavily, will refuse to buy long-term bonds, will buy things as hedges, will put what savings they have in shorter and shorter term instruments. Interest rates will skyrocket, inflation will skyrocket briefly---and the structure will collapse as bankruptcies accumulate at a horrendous rate.

That is what will happen if the government tries to desperately pump up the economy with pure debt money. The Treasury has been selling its debt to the public and whoever wants it, which sucks most available savings out of the economy and starves private business of funds for retooling and expansion (if there was/is orders on the books requiring that, not likely as international trade shrinks).

If the Federal Reserve decides to "eat" a big chunk of new Treasury bonds, notes, bills instead of selling them to the public, in order to reserve some savings for private business use and to drive down interest rates [they hope], it will be creating pure inflation money out of nothing and that pressure of spend-



ing will insure a surge of inflation. There's really no way out. Once the debt reaches a certain weight on the backs of the world's debtors, a counter-cycle of debt liquidation sets in, and attempts to re-inflate to protect bad loans and investments will only make the situation worse.

So: any surge in inflation will trigger a further contraction in business and profits, worldwide.

SIGNS: If the price of oil sinks below \$27. Everyone is trying to keep the price stable at \$29-\$30 now, but the pressure of lowered demand for oil and the desperate need to sell oil to get money to live on and pay debts will force some price cutting.

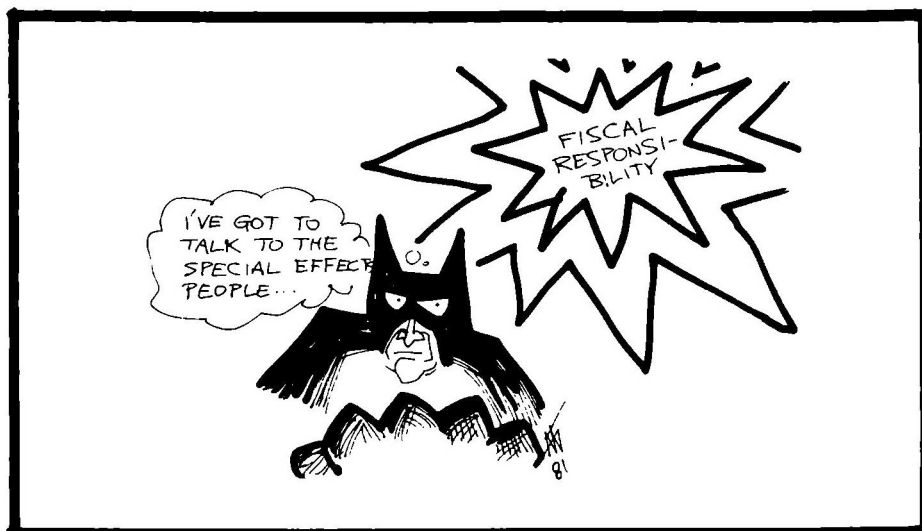
will also collapse, and we won't see 10-12% Treasury yields again for forty or fifty years.

THE HUGO NOMINATIONS ARE KNOWN---

Thanks to Mike Glycer's FILE-770 which arrived today [4-11-83] in time for me to make my own deadline for this issue.

I see I've been nominated for Best Fanwriter again, and SFR for Best Fanzine. Thankee, folk, for the votes. Nominations and Hugoes put sparkle in my eyes and zest in my bloodstream.

The nominations below are a bit preliminary in that the official



Watch railroad carloadings. They are at 15 million tons per week now. If they sink below this figure---look out!

Watch new car sales. The car makers are betting on an big increase this spring and producing cars on that basis, building up inventories. If sales stay at current levels, GM, Ford, Chrysler and the smaller mfgs will have to lay off workers again, a very bad psychological event, as well as bad economically.

Watch to see if the rate of one bank failure per week continues or worsens.

Watch long-term US bond rates; if you can buy a 20-30 year US Treasury bond yielding 12% or more, buy it! The current extraordinarily high real interest rates cannot continue for long. They are caused by a desperate demand for savings and a desperate fear of inflation/devaluation. When the debt structure collapses and demand dies and inflation fears die, interest rates

list won't come out until after a period in which possible withdrawals are allowed.

BEST NOVEL:

COURTSHIP RITE by Donald Kingsbury.

FOUNDATION'S EDGE by Isaac Asimov.

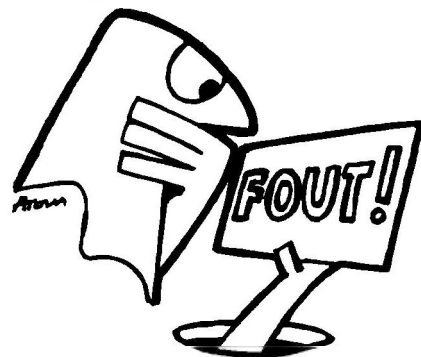
FRIDAY by Robert Heinlein

PRIDE OF CHANUR by C.J. Cherryh.

SWORD OF THE LICTOR by Gene Wolfe.

2010 by Arthur C. Clarke.

[Significantly, BATTLEFIELD EARTH by L. Ron Hubbard did not get on the ballot.]





BEST NOVELLA:

Another Orphan by John Kessel
 Brainchild by Joseph H. Delaney
 The Postman by David Brin
 Souls by Joanna Russ
 To Leave A Mark by Kim Stanley Robinson
 Unsound Variations by George R.R. Martin

BEST NOVELET:

Aquila by Somtow Sucharitkul
 Fire Watch by Connie Willis
 Nightlife by Phyllis Eisenstein
 Pawn's Gambit by Timothy Zahn
 Swarm by Bruce Sterling

BEST SHORT STORY:

"The Boy Who Water-skied to Forever" by James Tiptree
 "Hike at the Mike" by Howard Waldrop
 "Melancholy Elephants" by Spider Robinson
 "Spider Rose" by Bruce Sterling
 "Sur" by Ursula K. Le Guin

BEST NONFICTION BOOK:

FEAR ITSELF: THE HORROR FICTION OF STEPHEN KING, ed. by Underwood-Miller.
 READER'S GUIDE TO FANTASY, ed. by Baird Searles, Beth Meachem, M. Franklin.
 THE WORLD OF THE DARK CRYSTAL by Brian Froud.
 THE ENGINES OF THE NIGHT by Barry Malzberg.
 ISAAC ASIMOV: THE FOUNDATIONS OF SCIENCE FICTION by James Gunn.

BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST:

Kelly Freas
 Don Maitz
 Rowena Morrill
 Barclay Shawl
 Darrell Sweet
 Michael Whelan

BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION:

BLADERUNNER
 DARK CRYSTAL
 E.T.
 ROAD WARRIOR
 STAR TREK II: THE WRATH OF KHAN

BEST PROFESSIONAL EDITOR:

Terry Carr
 Edward Ferman
 David G. Hartwell
 Stanley Schmidt
 George Scithers

BEST FANZINE:

FANTASY NEWSLETTER, ed. by Paul Allen and Robert Collins
 FILE 770, ed. by Mike Glycer
 LOCUS, ed. by Charles N. Brown
 SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE, ed. by Andrew Porter
 SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW, ed. by Richard E. Geis

BEST FANWRITER:

Richard E. Geis
 Mike Glycer
 Arthur Hlavaty
 Dave Langford

BEST FAN ARTIST:

Alexis Gilliland
 Joan Hanke-Woods
 William Rotsler
 Stu Shiffman
 Dan Steffan

JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD:

Joseph H. Delaney
 Lisa Goldstein
 Sandra Miesel
 Warren G. Norwood
 Dave Palmer
 Paul O. Williams

AND THEN THERE ARE THE OTHER AWARDS which have sprung up of late.

The Libertarian Futurist Society has been awarding a privately minted gold coin to the winner of its Prometheus Award for Best Libertarian Novel of the year.

The novels nominated for the 1983 Award are:

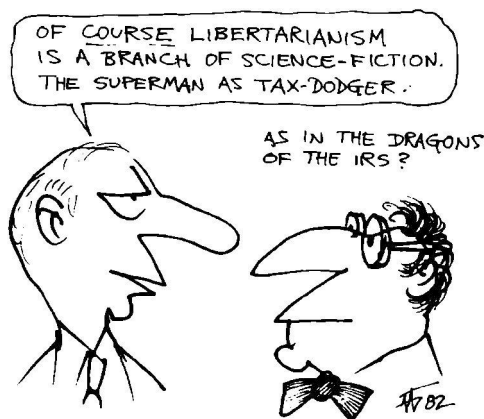
VISCOUS CIRCLE by Piers Anthony
 VOYAGERS by Ben Bova
 THE PRIDE OF CHANUR by C.J. Cherryh
 THE DIVINE INVASION by Phil Dick
 THE MORPHODITE by M.A. Foster
 FRIDAY by Robert Heinlein
 VOYAGE FROM YESTERYEAR by James Hogan
 FIRST CHANNEL by Jacqueline Lichtenberg & Jean Lorrain
 FIRE DANCER by Ann Maxwell
 THE MANY COLORED LAND by Julian May
 THE GOLDEN TORC by Julian May
 THE WAR HOUND AND THE WORLD'S PAIN by Michael Moorcock
 OATH OF FEALTY by Larry Niven & Jerry Pournelle
 WAR OF OMISSION by Keven O'Donnell, Jr.
 FIRST CYCLE by H. Beam Piper, expanded by Michael Kurland
 A ROSE FOR ARMAGEDDON by Hilbert Schenck
 CATCHING FIRE by Kay Nolte Smith
 THEIR MAJESTIES' BUCKETEERS by L. Neil Smith
 THE VENUS BELT by L. Neil Smith
 THE CALIFORNIA COVEN PROJECT by Bob Stickgold
 MASKS OF THE ILLUMINATI by Robert Anton Wilson
 EPIPHANY by Nicholas Yermakov

THE FIRST ANNUAL PHILIP K. DICK AWARD was given to Rudy Rucker for his novel, SOFTWARE. At the same time a Special Citation was given to Ray Faraday Nelson for his novel, THE PROMETHEUS MAN.

Judges were Ursula K. Le Guin, Norman Spinrad and Thomas M. Disch.

THE CANADIAN SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY AWARD FOR 1982 was given to Phyllis Gotlieb for her novel, JUDGEMENT OF DRAGONS and for "Lifetime Contributions to the field of science fiction."





THERE ARE THE BALROG AWARDS, TOO, BUT I SEEM TO HAVE MISLAID THAT INFO.

HOWEVER, LET ME ANNOUNCE THE 1983 SFR AWARD FOR AN SF NOVEL WRITTEN BY ANYONE LIVING IN MY HOME. THE WINNER IS RICHARD E. GEIS. MR. GEIS WILL RECEIVE A PAT ON THE BACK AND A CHEAP BOTTLE OF WINE. TOUGH LUCK, ELTON; YOU LIVE IN THE WRONG HOUSE.

A SPECIAL CERTIFICATE WAS GIVEN TO MR. GEIS FOR HIS LIFETIME CONTRIBUTION TO SCIENCE FICTION AND SF FANDOM. THE CERTIFICATE WAS ACCEPTED BY ALTER EGO WHO SAID MR. GEIS SHOULD HAVE BEEN CERTIFIED YEARS AGO. ALSO ON HAND FOR THE CEREMONY WAS MR. GEIS'S CAT KOOKIE, WHO SAID "MEOW" AND JUMPED ON MR. GEIS'S LAP.

A SPECIAL MENTION WAS GIVEN TO PAULETTE MINARY, ASSOCIATE EDITOR OF SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW, FOR EXCEPTIONAL EDITING, TYPING AND PROOF-READING AND REVIEWING.

MR. GEIS TOOK A LIBRIUM AND DESCENDED INTO THE DEADLY ARCHIVES TO FINISH THESE PASTE-UPS. HE HAS NOT BEEN SEEN SINCE. SEARCH PARTIES ARE BEING FORMED. THE WEATHER IN THE ARCHIVES HAS BEEN SO BAD THAT NO ONE HAS DARED VENTURE INTO THE TREACHEROUS SENTENCES WHICH MAKE UP THIS ENTRY AND FROM WHICH MR. GEIS CANNOT SEEM TO EXTRICATE HIMSELF. AN ABSURDIST ENDING FINALLY BROUGHT HIM TO SAFE HARBOR WHERE HE LAY GASPING WITH DELIGHT AT STILL BEING ALIVE.

SPEAKING OF THE UNSPEAKABLE...THE IRS....

I have just discovered to my horror that after deducting my pro writing income, my pitiful interest income, etc., from the total of my taxable income for 1982, I profited mightily from SFR to the tune of \$500 per issue, about.

This is a sharp drop from the approximately \$1000 I used to clear. The depression has hit me, too. Let's hear it for the Depression!

Costs and overhead must be cut to the bone! No, not that bone! So, as the terrible prospect of assuming a real amateur status stalks my future, and that of SFR, a word to the subscriber is sufficient: I have discovered that

I can save \$190 per issue by returning to newsprint. Remember SFR before issue #26? That's what SFR #48 will look like. A word to the wise for the bookstore managers and owners, too, come to think, if they read these pages, too: adjust your next order if you think you'll sell fewer of SFR in the newsprint incarnation.

And you want to know the ulti-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 62

BALROG AWARD

=NOMINATIONS 1983=

BEST NOVEL NOMINEES:

- 1 THE ONE TREE by Stephen R. Donaldson. (Ballantine)
- 2 CRYSTAL SINGER by Anne McCaffrey (Del Rey Books)
- 3 HAWKMISTRESS by Marion Zimmer Bradley (DAW)
- 4 WARLOCK UNLOCKED by Christopher Stashell (Ace)
- 5 THE CITADEL OF AUTARCH by Gene Wolfe (Timescape)
- 6 SWORD OF LICTOR, VOL. 3, by Gene Wolfe (Timescape)

BEST SHORT FICTION NOMINEES:

- 1 "All of Us Are Dying" by George Clayton Johnson from TWILIGHT ZONE MAGAZINE (May 1982)
- 2 "Fire Watch" by Connie Willis from ISAAC ASIMOV'S SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE (February 1982)
- 3 "The General's Wife" by Peter Strauh from TWILIGHT ZONE MAGAZINE
- 4 "An Act of Faith" by Galad Elflandsson from HECATE'S CAULDRON
- 5 "A Pattern of Silver Strings" by Charles DeLint from YEAR'S BEST FANTASY STORIES

BEST COLLECTION/ ANTHOLOGY NOMINEES:

- 1 SANCTUARY ed. Robert Asprin (Doubleday)
- 2 STORM SEASON ed. Robert Asprin (Ace)
- 3 ELSEWHERE ed. Terry Windling and Mark Arnold (Ace)
- 4 STALKING THE NIGHTMARE by Harlan Ellison (Phantasia)
- 5 HECATE'S CAULDRON ed. Susan Shawartz (DAW)
- 6 SHADOWS 5 ed. by Charles Grant (Doubleday)
- 7 THE LAST INCANTATION ed. Clark A. Smith (Timescape)

BEST POET NOMINEES:

- 1 Barwood, Lee
- 2 Eng, Steve
- 3 Howard, Robert E.
- 4 Mayer, Frederick
- 5 Stearns, Stephanie
- 6 Zelazny, Roger

BEST ARTIST NOMINEES:

- 1 Canty, Thomas
- 2 Froud, Brian
- 3 Hildebrandt, Tim
- 4 King, Stephen
- 5 Morrill, Rowena
- 6 Murdoch, Daryl
- 7 Musgrave, Real
- 8 Rieniets, Judy King

BEST AMATEUR PUBLICATION NOMINEES:

- 1 ELDRITCH TALES ed. Crispin Burnham
- 2 FANTASY NEWSLETTER ed. Robert Collins
- 3 LOCUS ed. Charles N. Brown
- 4 PSYCHO II ed. Whispers Press
- 5 SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE ed. Andrew Porter
- 6 SHAYOL ed. Arnold Fenner and Patricia Cadigan
- 7 SPACE AND TIME ed. Gordon Linzner
- 8 WELL OF THE SOULS ed. Sally Smith
- 9 WEIRD BOOK ed. W. Paul Ganley
- 10 Whispers ed. Stuart David Schiff

BEST PROFESSIONAL PUBLICATION NOMINEES:

- 1 ELFQUEST COMICS by Warp Graphics
- 2 MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION ed. Ed Hermah
- 3 ISAAC ASIMOV'S SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE ed. Shawne McCarthy
- 4 ANALOG by Davis Publications, Inc.
- 5 SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST by Davis Publications, Inc.
- 6 MIRAGE ed. Vallejo (Ballantine)
- 7 TWILIGHT ZONE ed. T. Ed Klein

AMATEUR ACHIEVEMENT NOMINEES:

- 1 Crispin Burnham for ELDRITCH TALES
- 2 Miller Kenin for OTHERGATES and OWL FLIGHT
- 3 Alan Bechtold for founding and running science fiction workshops
- 4 Gordon Linzner for SPACE AND TIME
- 5 S.D. Schiff for WHISPERS PRESS and WHISPERS MAGAZINE
- 6 Robert M. Price for CRYPT OF CTHULHU

PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT NOMINEES:

- 1 Frederick J. Mayer for poetry and radio work
- 2 Robert Asprin for creating Syngery, Inc.
- 3 Lester del Rey for his books and publishing company
- 4 Donald M. Grant for book publishing
- 5 Andre Norton for fifty years of writing
- 6 Harlan Ellison for writing and encouraging new writers
- 7 Pendragon Gallery for fantasy and art shows
- 8 Ben Bova for writing fiction and non-fiction and editing OMNI and ANALOG

SCIENCE FICTION FILM HALL OF FAME NOMINEES:

- 1 BLADE RUNNER (1983)
- 2 STAR TREK II: THE WRATH OF KHAN (1982)
- 3 DARK STAR (1974)
- 4 E.T. THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL (1982)
- 5 ALIEN (1980)
- 6 THE THING (1951)
- 7 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (1951)
- 8 TRON (1982)

FANTASY FILM HALL OF FAME NOMINEES:

- 1 DARK CRYSTAL (1982)
- 2 FRANKENSTEIN (1931)
- 3 THE THIEF OF BAGDAD (1940)
- 4 DRAGONSLAYER (1981)
- 5 CONAN THE BARBARIAN (1982)
- 6 THE SEVENTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD (1957)
- 7 QUEST FOR FIRE (1982)
- 8 RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK (1982)

GEIS NOTE: I found the Balrog nominations info. Hope the print isn't too small. I don't have the time or the will to retype all these.

PHILIP K. DICK:

My friendship with Philip Dick was enjoyable, intermittent and alarming. It began around the time at which his recent novel, VALIS, begins -- early in 1974.

I ought to jump ahead here and explain that as I got to know Phil Dick my feelings about him so disturbed and unsettled me that I was no longer able to read his fiction. I have still not read A SCANNER DARKLY, CONFESSIONS OF A CRAP ARTIST and DEUS IRAE. I have read only the first chapter of THE DIVINE INVASION. On the other hand, just in the last few days, I've read VALIS and I've also read Phil's fascinating introduction to the 1980 short story collection, THE GOLDEN MAN. And I must have read almost every word Phil ever published up to 1974, often two or three times.

I'm getting to my first point in rather a roundabout way. Now that I've read VALIS I am able at last to put what disturbed me about Phil into words. I realize that my relationship, such as it was, was not entirely with Phil. I also had a relationship with Horselover Fat.

Phil, Horselover and myself exchanged 15 or 16 letters between 1974 and 1976. I've managed to locate some of them in a dusty bundle on top of the wardrobe. The rest no doubt lie mouldering in the Science Fiction Foundation archives, that treasure trove of my long and long-forgotten correspondences which no doubt will gather dust until the end of time.

Since the whole point of this article is to give some flavour of what Phil Dick was like -- though nothing like so vivid a flavour as his books will give you -- I'd like to read out a few bits of his letters. The first bit was written to me when I had just broken up with the American lady with whom I had been living for six years. This is Phil on marriage:

"I can still vividly see my then-wife Nancy and my little girl Isa and my best friend who was staying with us walk-

ing out the front door and getting into my car and driving away forever. I think it was the fact that they drove off in my car that unhinged me the most, although it may seem absurd. Perhaps you will understand, though. Often our identities are constructed around a marriage, so it can be said that when they walked out of my life my own soul was taken with them, leaving me a kind of empty husk sitting there in that living room. It took me several years to get my soul back; in fact it just now returned this year."

The warmth and wryness here, of course, are very much the same qualities that bring his stories to life.

Before I quote the second bit, I want to reproduce a short passage from an article I published in FOUNDATION 5 in January 1974; I was arguing here -- God knows why -- that no account of the science fiction tradition that ignores Charles Dickens is complete.

"Here is a typical inhabitant of Dickens' novels:

'His cold lashes would hardly have been eyes, but for the short ends of lashes which, by bringing them into immediate contrast with something paler than themselves, expressed their form. His short-cropped hair might have been a mere continuation of the sandy freckles on his forehead and face. His skin was so unwholesomely deficient in the natural tinge, that he looked as though, if he were cut, he would bleed white.'

-- HARD TIMES, Chapter 2

"And here, for comparison, is another passage:

'The door, meagrely, opened and he saw within the apartment a fragmented and misaligned shrinking figure, a girl who cringed and slunk away and yet held onto the

door, as if for physical support. Fear made her seem ill; it distorted her body lines, made her appear as if someone had broken her and then, with malice, patched her together badly. Her eyes, enormous, glazed over fixedly as she attempted to smile.'

"There is no mistaking the kinship between the two passages. The first has the more concentrated poetic force, but both writers, creating a kind of humanity in the very appearance of their characters, are undeniably using language -- highly charged with feeling -- to a very similar end, and with a similar use of imagery. Both are preoccupied by the less-than-human masquerading as the human, although the Dickens character is only metaphorically an android, whereas the character in the second passage, from Philip K. Dick's DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP?, is literally an android, though paradoxically described with more sympathy."

Here is Phil's response, in one of the first letters he wrote me, to what I said:

"I'm sure you will be amazed to learn that I, undoubtedly like many other readers but with far less reason, failed to recognize the quote from my writings. It was one of the greater lessons I've learned about my own work to discover that I myself wrote this passage, and indeed a thrill."

I quote a third passage just to show you that Phil's death would have been no surprise to him:

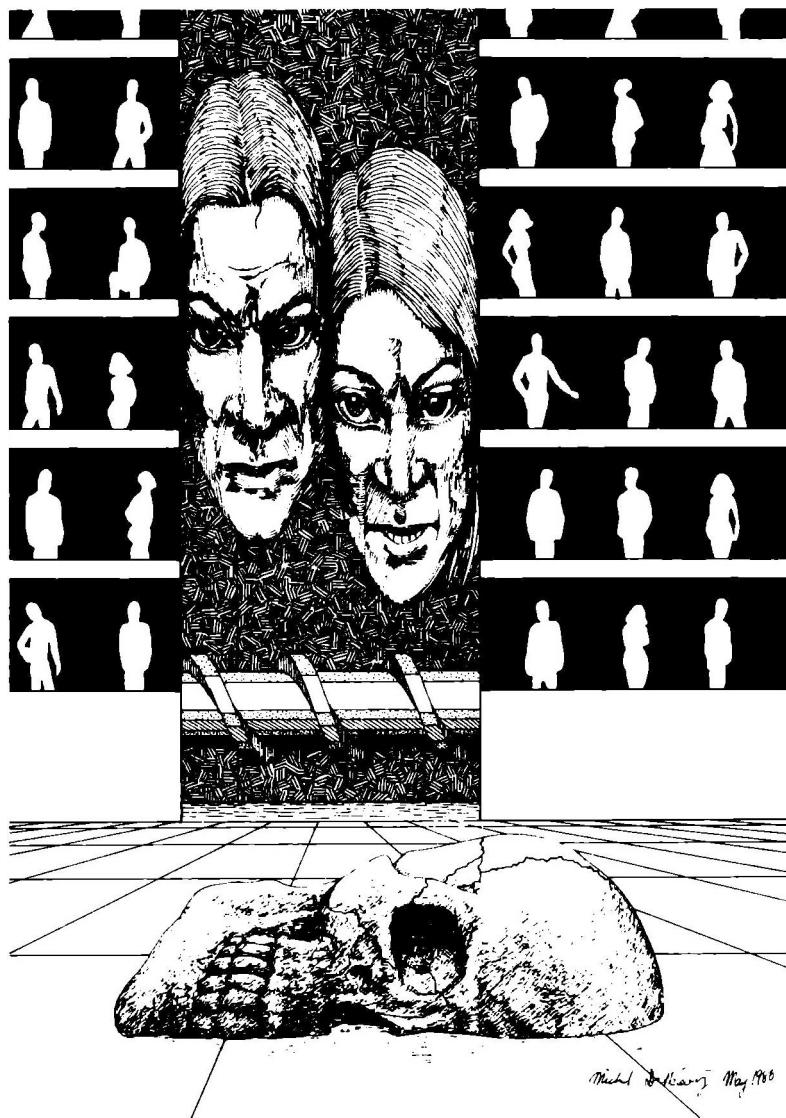
"Really, I do not want to dwell on my troubles, but to make the situation worse, and in a very serious way as I'm sure you will agree, my high blood pressure again fails to respond adequately to the various medications and in early December I began to suffer once more from dizzy spells ... They've diminished now, but for sev-

a cowardly memoir

eral weeks I couldn't walk very far. Specific medication for that did help a lot. They prescribe something which affects the balance center of the ear directly. But this is still a dreary indication of the unresponding underlying hypertension. Robert Heinlein told me on the phone in November, when I told him what my pressure reading now was, 'It could kill you.' Well, I knew that already. But I thanked him, since I knew he meant it in a concerned way."

So far, so good. The man revealed in the bits I've quoted so far is sensitive, vulnerable, generous and self-absorbed. By and large he isn't Horselover Fat, however. I've lost most of my correspondence with Horselover Fat. Malcolm Edwards was corresponding with Horselover at about the same time, and he probably has some letters too. Horselover was paranoid, slightly hysterical, hyperactive mentally, and much given to fear and to conspiracy theories. He talked a lot about how Richard Nixon's "dirty tricks" group -- the same group that pulled off the Watergate raid -- twice burgled his house; he spoke of the voices in his head; at the time he was getting a number of messages from St. Paul; he saw strange portents everywhere, and his life was a patchwork of meaningful coincidences; the death of his cats had powerful metaphysical implications, as did the illness of his son Christopher. You can get the flavour of Horselover's thinking at that time, 1974, by reading the piece he wrote for the book I edited, SCIENCE FICTION AT LARGE, which was entitled "Man, Android and Machine." He began writing this essay in September, 1974, knocked it off when God told him about his son's illness, and completed it in March, 1975. If you read it now, you will instantly recognize that it is an essay about the writing of the first draft of VALIS. And, of course, VALIS itself is the chronicle of Horselover's thinking, though its tone is a little cooler than that of the stuff that came hot off the presses from Horselover himself.

I've lost Horselover's more extreme letters, but the following will give you something of the edgy tone of his voice:



Michael Williams May 1986

"I read "Man, Android and Machine" over the other night ... it is sort of nuts, but also thought provoking. I still stand by what I said, except that such matters, being so difficult to communicate, sound sort of -- to be blunt -- irrational when set down in black and white. I think that Dionysus had me at that time, to some extent (I read a recent very interesting article about "Dionysus in America", and in all truth, he certainly did rattle and break down the prison walls here, and not in mere metaphor but actually. I guess I got drawn into the battle on his side, as witness the

somewhat intoxicated quality of the speech).

"My collaboration with Roger Zelazny (DEUS IRAE) will be released here in June, I understand. It is not going to be popular: a funny mystical theological novel. But my solo novel about drugs and the watchful police, A SCANNER DARKLY, which Doubleday will release as a mainstream (!!!) novel next January should do very well...

"I am proud of SCANNER and I hope you will like it. It's not like my other stuff ... 'a breakthrough', Doubleday told me on the phone, after they had read

by Peter nicholls

it. On the bad side of the news, I was in hospital in February in the Intensive Cardiac Care Unit for a mild heart attack, so it's a good thing I declined to come to the U.K. I am told now that it is my heart which is in most serious jeopardy, that I've got to lay off and take it easy or I may croak (as we say here).

"I'm not sure how one goes about taking it easy. My psychotherapist with a furious and grim expression on his face, yelled at me, 'You're to draw up a list of your wants, AND I MEAN THAT SERIOUSLY!' I said, 'Yessir, yessir,' meekly, and have been drawing up my list of wants. One of them is to not have people yell at me to draw up lists.

"But -- I am still at work on my in-progress novel, TO SCARE THE DEAD, trying to make my religious vision/revelation into something which I can communicate, and becoming more and more frustrated every day. One perhaps cannot express these things in words. I feel as if I have an aphasia, actually, a speech block. I try to tell people orally, or write about it, and what comes out appears nonsense. I know what I saw, but I can't name it.

"Ah, well. It's as if the gods were sitting around and having nothing better to do they said, 'Let's see old Phil get THIS down on paper.' And then revealed all the mysteries of the universe to me and sat back laughing. Gods must have the same kind of sense of

humor as cats. I appreciate the vision, but I wish I had also been given St. Paul's gift to express it"

This is not wholly Horselover, of course -- a lot of it is Phil's ever so slightly sceptical observations of Horselover.

My relationship with Phil was not restricted to letters. I finally got to meet him when he was Guest of Honour -- one of the 4 or 5 guests of honour -- at the Science Fiction Festival in Metz, France in 1978.

I was in the hotel lobby when he arrived, and I recognized him at once from his photographs. I was not ready though for his sheer size; he was bulky, tall, overweight and generally bearlike. He came through the door with a peculiarly terrified look. When I approached him and said, "Aren't you Phil Dick?" he literally shied away like a startled animal, and seemed about to deny it, or to run. I said, "I am Peter Nicholls" and he looked at me completely blankly for what seemed a very long time. It was probably around ten seconds. Suddenly his face, which had been frozen, became warm and animated and he gave me an enormous bearlike hug. I was to learn later that these lightning transformations of mood, which outwardly resembled the transitions from android to human, were typical of Phil.

The great event at Metz was the confrontation between Harlan Ellison and Philip K. Dick, which I'm proud to say I set up deliberately myself, thus ensuring for myself a minor niche in fannish history. Harlan had already told me that he had been furious with Phil for years -- it was something about a girl -- and that he refused to speak to him. (But Harlan had also said to me, "Didn't you get my letter saying what a shit you are and how I'm not speaking to you?" "No, Harlan," I said. "Oh, well, that's good," said Harlan, "then I don't have to worry about contradicting myself by being friendly now." Harlan's like that.) Phil had also told me he wasn't speaking to Harlan.

Anyway, I thought it was pretty silly that these two grown men, one very very big and the other very very small, should go on avoiding one another for three days, so I invited them both, independently, to join me for a drink in the bar at 6 p.m., told neither that the other was coming, and sat back to await the action, which exceeded my wildest dreams. Courteously,

and by turns, as if it were a formal duel, they abused one another in the vilest and most abusive language. It went on for exactly an hour. Nobody was listening at first, but by the time the hour was up there was an audience of 60 or 70 puzzled French people. I've never seen two people enjoy themselves so much.

It was the most proficient, colourful, prolonged and non-repetitive trading of invective that I have ever heard, or ever will hear. Harlan was a shade faster on the draw, Phil was a shade funnier; it was Harlan's New York versus Phil's West Coast hip; it was elaborate Jewish curses versus metaphysical lethalties. It was pure magic. Only yesterday I read for the first time Phil's introduction to THE GOLDEN MAN. He says of Metz: "It was the best week in my life. I was really happy for the first time."

Yet all was not entirely well. The first really bad sign was Phil's Guest-of-Honour speech. It had nothing of the verve and sanity and humour of his fight with Harlan. This is how Phil described it, retrospectively, in THE GOLDEN MAN:

"I delivered a speech which, typically, made no sense whatever. Even the French could not understand it, despite a translation. Something goes haywire in my brain when I write speeches. I think I imagine I'm a reincarnation of Zoroaster bringing news of God."

This is an understatement. The speech was disastrous and embarrassing, delivered in a strange metallic voice accompanied by a glassy stare. He couldn't stop talking and went on for over two hours, by which time most of the audience including myself had panicked through embarrassment and sneaked out of the theatre. It honestly seemed as if Phil had lost his marbles.

The following morning too, I had an enigmatic exchange with Phil which left me more disturbed than the occasion seemed to warrant. Phil beckoned me to his breakfast table, where he was eating with the woman he'd arrived with, and about whom he is so dismissive in VALIS. He was beaming, relaxed and cheerful and then suddenly, before my eyes, he changed into -- who was it? I don't know. Perhaps it was Horselover Fat.

"I have something vitally important to ask you," he said. "Did you successfully undertake sexual intercourse last night? I need to know how it's done."





I wasn't sure what he meant, or why he was asking, but even then it's difficult to say why the question seemed so alarming. It appeared so irrelevant, so inappropriate to anything we'd ever talked about,

and it was delivered with a profoundly enigmatic, glazed expression. I've got quite a few crude mates, perfectly capable of asking the same question with startling vulgarity, but never, I think, with such an affectless intensity. It was all very mysterious.

I never saw Phil again,* and I don't recall getting or sending any letters, either. This had nothing to do with any lack of affection, on my side at least, or with our embarrassing conversation over the hot croissants. The whole history of Phil's friendship with many people -- and perhaps of mine too -- is rather jerky and staccato: long, elaborate letters out of the blue, a sudden burst of activity, and then silence for a couple of years. It was my fault, too that the correspondence lapsed. It was partly laziness on my part, both intellectual and emotional. To make further contact with Phil on any level other than the completely trivial, I would obviously need to work out what the hell was going on in his brain, particularly after I'd met him, and seen how very strangely he often acted. Here was a great writer who had honoured me with his friendship, and I backed off because I was too lazy and too cowardly to make the attempt to get through to him. This feeling was just as dishonourable as the everyday feeling that makes you shift uneasily away from those people one meets on tube trains who mumble to themselves. With one part of my mind I thought, "Phil is a loony, and I can't handle it."

This brings me to my final question: Was Phil Dick sane? The question has no absolute answer, of course. Madness is a relative term as R.D. Laing and others have shown us. Madness in one situation may be perfect sanity in another, and it may be that Phil Dick read the situations of life a lot more accurately than I do. But of course, there is an answer to the question. The answer is in Phil's books, from the first in 1955 to the last in 1982.

I'm not quite finished yet. The May issue of LOCUS contained a great many reminiscences of Phil Dick by his friends and fellow writers. I want to quote a remark John

* It was at this point that crude mate Brian Aldiss interrupted Peter's talk to ask, "But what was the answer?" TAPPEN's vulgar readers will be disappointed to learn that no elucidation was forthcoming.

Brunner made in his short piece. Clearly, John was also disturbed at that same Metz festival by the way Phil appeared, but his conclusions were not identical to mine. John writes:

"I asked myself, how come a creative spirit of such brilliance is living in such an unhappy body? He was one of the saddest people I ever met. He was incapable of helping someone else to happiness except by giving orders ... the process of erosion had started before his death ... but in fact, it must have begun decades ago, and long before I met him it was half past repair."

Phil Dick himself had worries about his mind, but he expressed them with rather more humour than John Brunner. Of one of his stories in THE GOLDEN MAN, Phil Dick writes: "Either I've invented a whole new logic or, ahem, I'm not playing with a full deck."

In that same book, incidentally, Phil makes a passing remark that suggests a counter impression to Brunner's:

"Brunner, like me, has gotten stout. We all had endless meals together. Brunner made sure everyone knew he spoke French."

My hackles rise at John's obituary for Phil. Was Phil Dick really half past repair? In that case, who wrote those books? Were they the work of a man who wasn't quite right in the head? On the other hand, what right have I to criticize John for being too dismissive when, as I've just explained, my own worries about Phil Dick run parallel to John's.

Yet, surely John is wrong. The man he describes, whether he is Horselover Fat or Philip Dick him-



self, is not the whole man. He is certainly not the man who will come to be recognized as one of the greatest science fiction writers in history, and one of this century's most important writers in any field.

Phil saw himself more clearly than John sees him. He spells it out in VALIS, where Horselover Fat, the crazed ex-drug-taker and sometimes institutionalized mystic has to be reconciled with the quiet, sensitive, watchful, observant Philip Kendred Dick -- they have to become one person again -- before their mutual redemption is possible. For most of Phil's writing life, though not in his baroque and painful personal life, this reconciliation took place.

Phil Dick, science fiction's foremost chronicler of schizophrenia, paranoia, affectlessness, depression and the shifting labyrinths of the mind's perceptual mechanisms, often took madness as his theme. But his books themselves were not mad, not even VALIS. VALIS does lack some of the saving humour of Dick's earlier work, and it will not be remembered as one of his greatest books. But it is a book of the most incredible courage, as were all of his books.

Philip K. Dick confronted, and made his friends confront, many of the areas that most of us shy away from or pretend do not exist. He kicked away the props of consensus reality and confronted subjective worlds and series of worlds of the most vertiginous, deliquescent complexity. Yet he did all this coolly, compassionately, wisely and unsentimentally, and he never just abandoned himself to the subjective, to pure solipsism. If I were being a literary critic here I'd want to talk about the tone of Dick's writing; it is warm, conversational, and clearly addressed to a reader. The point here of course -- and I am not just splitting hairs -- is that if you evoke the presence of a readership by your very tone of voice, if you attest to some kind of common humanity outside yourself, then you are not just a solipsist, you are not floundering alone in a solitary universe. The thing about Phil Dick's intimate understanding of madness in his books at least, is that he is so transparently sane about it.

Think how amazing Phil Dick's story is! The man could hardly get through the week without some kind of disaster -- financial, moral, marital, medicinal or mental. He had giddy spells, he got into fights, he hallucinated, he alienated his friends; in the 1960s he used to drop acid and take large



numbers of uppers and downers, he cancelled firm arrangements, he made silly political gestures. (Do you remember the fuss when he opposed Stanislaw Lem's honorary membership of SFWA?) Phil Dick's life was a mess.

That such a man could publish 38 books in 27 years is incredible. That his books should have such wisdom and depth, such humour, colour and sharpness, is nothing short of a miracle. This is not just the conversational miracle of genius; it was a personal triumph of courage and dogged tenacity. He was one of the bravest of writers.

Phil thought that God had reached into his mind. To this day I am not sure whether he meant this literally or metaphorically. In older times, to call somebody mad was not done. One called them "touched by God" -- we still say mad people are "touched" -- like the wise fools, the innocents in Dostoyevsky's novels. I speak as an unbeliever, but there is no doubt in my mind that Philip K. Dick was a man who, in one sense or another, had truly been touched by God.

well as his novels -- was not so much derived from observation of external reality as it was a reflection of a long struggle going on inside Dick's own head. The distinction Peter draws between Phil and Horselover is a useful metaphor, but as he points out the two are always blended to some degree; there seems, in Peter's and others' accounts of Dick in the flesh, a much more clear division between androidal Dick and human Dick.

As Peter mentions, I too was corresponding with Phil/Horselover, chiefly in 1974/5, with the same eventual end. Peter fell out of contact after a disturbing meeting; I did so after receiving a series of letters (three, written on successive days and totalling 12 pages, maybe 7,000 words) which were simultaneously so formidable and so crazy that they rendered any satisfactory response impossible. I've always regretted that, and now always will.

THIS ARTICLE FIRST APPEARED
IN FOUNDATION 26

"The thinkers of antiquity did not regard death per se as evil, because death comes to all; what they correctly perceived as evil was premature death, death coming before the person could complete his work. Lopped off, as it were, before ripe, a hard, green little apple that death took and then tossed away, as being of no interest -- even to death."

-- Philip K. Dick
THE TRANSMIGRATION OF
TIMOTHY ARCHER

AFTERWORD BY MALCOLM EDWARDS

Peter raises, almost in passing, a critical point which I have not seen mentioned before, and which future critics of Dick should really take heed of: that the recurring theme in his work, the distinction between android and human -- the subject of his speeches as

OTHER VOICES

CRUISER DREAMS

By Janet Morris
Berkley Books, New York
1982, 296 pp., \$2.75

REVIEWED BY RALPH E. VAUGHN

This book, the second book in the three-part saga of the Kerri-on Empire, continues the adventures of Shebat the Enchantress, formerly the resident of a dusty and dying earth, as she becomes involved with the Byzantine intrigues of star-spanning empires.

As the middle book of a trilogy, there are certain things which CRUISER DREAMS must accomplish, and it does these things very well. It stands on its own while being part of a larger tapestry; it recaps the first book and does it rather painlessly; and perhaps most important, it must supply a continuity of quality and style to that which has gone before and the book accomplishes that very well.

Caught in the spell of Morris' imagination, the reader actually feels a part of the world described, and the writer does a better than competent job imagining a complete future.

The novel is not just a work of fiction. The lack of pedestrian language and characters makes the book read as if it were one huge prose poem, the sort of thing that it would be a pleasure to read aloud, just to be able to hear the way Morris has made an already-rich language even richer.

It would be tempting for a reviewer to compare this work to DUNE and all its offspring, but the comparison would not do justice to such a work. Morris' trilogy, at least thus far, is in a class by itself and deserves to be taken on its own merits.

After reading CRUISER DREAMS, one can only hope that Morris can keep the fire burning through the final book, EARTH DREAMS. If she can, then she will have succeeded in creating a literary experience that, hopefully, will withstand the tests of time and popularity.

MERCHANTER'S LUCK

By C.J. Cherryh
DAW UE1745; 208 pp., \$2.95
Cover art by Barclay Shaw

REVIEWED BY PAUL MCGUIRE

This realistic nuts-and-bolts SF novel is not just about the future, but is about people in the future. Along with the splendor of spaceflight is the sweat. Ms. Cherryh shows all of the grit without tarnishing the glamour, while telling a fascinating tale about characters readers will soon learn to care about.

The sleek luxurious vessel, Dublin Again, is the homeworld for the Reilly clan. Planets are just the place where cargo waits. The ship is filled with life and familiar routines. In it lives Allison Reilly, an impatiently ambitious bridgmember.

Stripped-down, dark and lonely, the Lucy is a sort of traveling one-man ghetto. It is sure not much, but it is all Sandor Kreja (a.k.a. Stevens) has ever had. He was born in it, and pirates murdered his family in it.

Sandor catches a glimpse of Allison. She is personification of beauty for Sandor and in a moment's bravado he says he'll see her at Dublin's next planetfall, Pell (a.k.a. Downbelow) Station. Having said it, he does it. Keeping pace with a huge liner by single-handedly running his battered ship through a string of

null-jumps is an extraordinary feat, and alters his life by calling attention to the fact that he is alive.

With Vanye in GATE OF IVARL, Ms. Cherryh displayed a remarkable ability to create complex "ordinary" characters and Sandor is definitely one of her best. A fearful borderline loser whose one virtue is that he won't give up, when given a chance he escapes the gloom of his past to blaze a way to a new life. In that sense, MERCHANTER'S LUCK is a story of transformation, not magical or mysterious but accomplished slowly through hard work. It is also about the power of misunderstanding and the courage of trust.

The Reilly clan decides to open new trade routes, outfitting Lucy with equipment and a crew headed by Allison. Deep in trouble at the time, Sandor has no choice but to go along into much deeper and more dangerous trouble, and an encounter with space pirates.

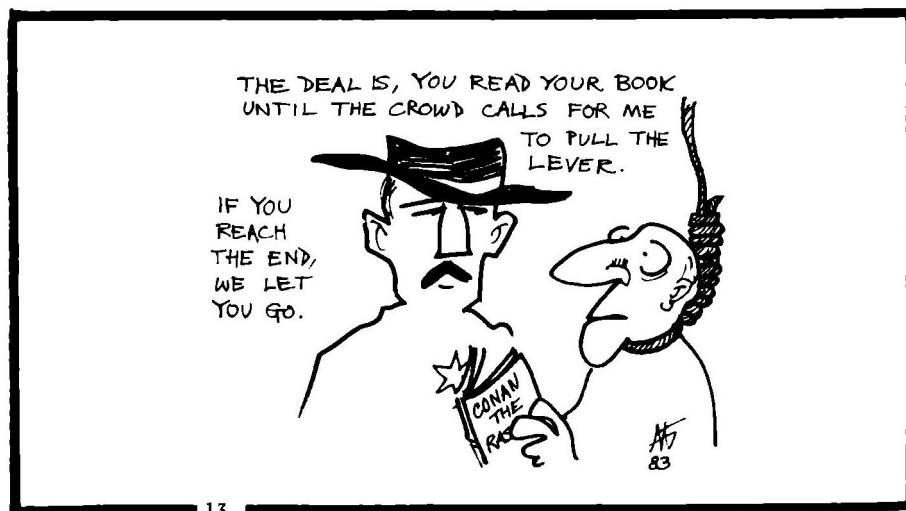
Filled with background details, customs and a past, MERCHANTER'S LUCK is another exceptional C.J. Cherryh novel.

STALKING THE NIGHTMARE

By Harlan Ellison
Phantasia Press, \$16.00

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

Again, many of the stories



have been published elsewhere. This book consists of short pieces and personal observations on H.E.'s life and times. One of the funniest was his four-hour job as a writer at Walt Disney studio, where he discovered at faster-than-light speed that "... nobody fucks with The Mouse!" Good book for Ellison collectors. The dustcover is well done by J. Mackenzie.

PSION: A NOVEL OF THE FUTURE

By Joan Vinge
Delacorte Press, New York
346 pp., \$12.95

REVIEWED BY SUSAN M. SHWARTZ

Hugo-Award winner Joan Vinge's most recent novel, PSION, is probably the best Andre Norton juvenile extant not written by Andre Norton -- and that's only the start of the book's attractions. When Cat, a juvenile delinquent, is picked up in the undercity of Quarro on a planet that is a crossroads for space travel, he expects only impressment into the Contract Labor forces, which provide a quick trip offworld and terms of indenture amounting to slavery for anyone unfortunate to fall into their clutches. However he is discovered to have psionic talents, which makes him a freak among "mind-blind" humans and a potential subject for experimentation by the enigmatic, embittered Dr. Siebeling, who regards him as a gutter rat and telepathic pickpocket. When Siebeling and Cat quarrel, Siebeling dismisses Cat, throwing him into Contract Labor.

Cat winds up exiled from the only friends and worthwhile companionship he has ever known, mining telhassium crystals in the Crab Nebula. Here, on a wintry world which supplies the scarce crystals that allow starships to function, he is confronted by the Spooks, aliens with awesome psionic abilities who may or may not be akin to him, and Quicksilver, the terrifying and gifted criminal who stalks the entire Federation. What he chooses will affect not only people like Siebeling who have hurt him personally, or the Federation which has never granted him a means of living, but also the few friends he has made -- the teleport and empath Jule t-Ming, outcast from her rich, aristocratic family because of her gifts, and Dere Cortelyou, psion and undercover agent.

If the story thus far reads like a cross between Norton's Ross Murdoch novels and her tales of refugees

from the Dipple on Tikil (CATSEYE, NIGHT OF MASKS, JUDGMENT ON JANUS), well and good. It's intended to. Vinge displays her skill in Norton-style story-telling, with its emphasis on troubled young people adrift in massive, dehumanized societies, people desperate for friends and some kind of home. Like Norton, Vinge is adept at conjuring up the psi-gifted character, not as a valuable and well-regarded member of society, but as a freak, an alien among his or her own. The struggles of such a character against loneliness, casual violence and bureaucracy are especially moving; it doesn't matter whether the protagonist is Troy Horan, displaced person from a ranch world, or the scarred Nik Kolherne, stack rat and victim of the Thieves' Guild, or Contract Labor sign-on Niall Renfro -- or Vinge's Cat.

What makes PSION a Vinge novel and not a Norton pastiche, are the qualities that made THE SNOW QUEEN memorable: the ability to create a believable, even a lyrically beautiful world, from unlikely and sometimes unlovely elements; skill in psychological revelation of characters; and an emphasis more on interior conflict than exterior violence. PSION is both immensely readable and immensely moving.

Where Andre Norton's juveniles tend to conclude with her young protagonists winning what they want -- meaningful work and affiliation with people they respect -- PSION concludes more uncertainly. Readers cannot be sure whether Cat will ever use his gifts, whether he will find more friends, information about his parents, or even comfort beyond a kind word of bleak satisfaction that he is a survivor and, like his namesake, lands on his feet.

As Cat himself would tell you, he has nine lives. PSION is the story of one of them. Now I'm waiting for the others.

SLEEPING BEAUTY

By L.L. Greene
NAL/Signet, 1982, \$2.50

REVIEWED BY DEAN R. LAMBE

At first "L.L. Greene" seems to offer a nice twist on the old corpse plot. TV newswoman Nancy Seymour has a quickly-fatal, incurable disease. A ray of hope is offered to the dying woman by her husband, Dr. Victor, and Dr. Stepp at North American Chemicals, for Stepp has been working on cryogenic suspension for many years. When Stepp promises to put the full facilities of NAC to



work on a cure for Nancy's rare tropical disease, the woman tearfully bids farewell to her lover, Bill and is frozen for the cause of science -- and the slim chance of resurrection.

And reborn she is, not centuries later in a cowardly new world, but a mere eight months after her great freeze. Little is changed save for her lack of a job, once her former network boss makes clear that she can't report the news so long as she is the news. Then Nancy is plagued by strange nightmares, and discovers that, not only is she not hot to jump into bed with her husband, but good old Bill turns her off as well. Are her hormones still frozen? What terrible effect of cryogenics is driving her mad?

Although there is action a-plenty, the plot heads for the porcelain bowl, and the non-SF explanation for Nancy's plight pulls more rabbits from hats and gods from machines than are acceptable in any genre. And I'm still wondering how the two behind this pseudonym could carefully research cryogenics, yet insist that liquid nitrogen is flammable.

SPACE

By James Michener
New York; Random House
624 pp., \$17.95

REVIEWED BY SUSAN M. SHWARTZ

We can probably say that James A. Michener is to mainstream fiction what Robert Heinlein, Arthur C. Clarke and Isaac Asimov are to science fiction: elder statesmen known for meticulous research, an ability to tell stories that keep readers turning pages, and above all, a talent for depicting human beings afflicted by dreams. To sum up: What these writers have is authority. What surprised me as I opened *SPACE*, Michener's latest book, is that they also have the space program in common. Michener was appointed in 1979 to the NASA Advisory Council and his acknowledgments for this book include NASA scientists, astronauts, specialists from the universities and engineers from the Jet Propulsion Laboratories. Now all these abilities and interests seem to have combined, fusing Michener's driven, conscientious dreamers with the monumental blend of genius, egotism and street smarts that denote the Heinlein individual or the analytical reasoning and humor of an Asimov character (human or robot) and taking Michener away from Toko-ri, Hawaii and the Chesapeake out into lunar orbit and many light years beyond.

Some reviewers have commented that *SPACE* is a fictionalization of Tom Wolf's *THE RIGHT STUFF*; they've also remarked ironically that it's a wonder Michener didn't start with the Big Bang, though he does get around to cosmology during the course of his story. Instead Michener starts with World War II, after which the United States acquired German rocketry experts like Wernher von Braun. Using an immense cast of characters, some actual, some fictional, he chronicles the U.S. space program from its abortive beginnings and the frustration during the Sputnik era on to the successful flights of the Space Shuttle and from there into a period of decline.

Among Michener's characters: Dieter Kolff, a self-taught German rocketry expert; Stanly Mott, "den mother" to the "Solid Six" group of astronauts; Rhee Soon-Ka, a Korean journalist who becomes the Oriana Fallaci of the space program, and the astronauts themselves. Chief among them are John Pope, whose straight-arrow conscientiousness resembles Senator John Glenn, and Randolph Claggett, a tough-talking Texan who is probably the most brilliant flyer in the group. These men and their formidable wives survive service at Patuxent Base, then leave flight test to become astronauts because of dreams they share: fast ships, far stars and a determination -- no, I am not going to say that they want "to boldly go where no man has gone before." Michener manages to restrain himself from saying that too -- true though it may be.

These people's dreams are enhanced by the explosion in American technology that culminated, as President Kennedy had hoped, in 1969, with the first moon landing. But they are opposed by equally powerful forces, among them U.S. reaction against space exploration and the military in the wake of Viet Nam as well as the now-pervasive and sinister anti-technological bias of the newly militant fundamentalists. This conflict, as Michener points out, is an old one, and is fought out in every generation. Sometimes, he shows, the "simpletons" (to borrow Walter M. Miller Jr.'s phrase), win out and then society sinks into barbarism or at the least, blind obedience. The United States portrayed in *SPACE* is the battleground for the clash between science and credulity. Michener's characters must choose between facing the space age or withdrawing into panic-stricken know-nothingism which

is so carefully manipulated by frauds like the fabulous evangelist Dr. Leopold Stabismus, who formerly defrauded people with accounts of little green men and still sells degrees in space science.

SPACE, like all of Michener's novels, is an absorbing blend of action, sex, accessible philosophy and careful research. Apparently one of the topics Michener has looked into is science fiction. In fact, he makes Randy Claggett, the hottest of the test pilots to become an astronaut, a classic SF fiend, who introduces scientist friends to the works of Heinlein, Clarke, Damon Knight and Stanley Weinbaum. And the passages during which SF writers complain that "we explained all that forty years ago" are among *SPACE*'s funniest. But Michener makes an important distinction between the writers and the astronauts. One group dreams; the second places lives on the line because of those dreams. *SPACE* tells of those risks too. Michener's use of "A Canticle for Leibowitz" as a metaphor for dreams, risk and the ongoing clash between knowledge and blind faith provides a moving resolution to one of the most poignant episodes in the book.

Definitely, *SPACE* is cut from the same "right stuff" that made Tom Wolf's book so fascinating. It's raucous, larger than life, richly exciting, yet tragically human and it makes me want to trade in my typewriter for 20/20 vision, flight training and an application to astronaut training. Granted, like most SF readers and writers, I've had that craving before. Now thanks to James Michener, mainstream readers may decide to share it.



THE HARP AND THE BLADE

By John Meyers Meyers
Starblaze Books, \$5.95

REVIEWED BY MARK MANSELL

I've always been wary of the term "lost classic" and so I approached this novel with a little grain of salt since I used to think that if it were a classic, it wouldn't be lost. Of course, I don't take into account the vagaries of the publishing industry or of the public's taste, so what do I know? That being a strange attitude for a reviewer to take, notwithstanding, I'll just tell you what I happened to think of *THE HARP AND THE BLADE*, originally published by Dutton in 1941.

It would be stretching things a bit to call this really a fantasy novel. There is a curse that a Pictish priest puts upon the Irish bard Finnian early in the novel, but whether it works by supernatural means or simply by coincidence and Finnian's conscience is up to the reader to decide. It is, however, a terrific adventure story.

Finnian, in exile in France during the period following the death of Charlemagne, finds himself allied to a warlord named Conan, who is at odds with an unpleasant rival warlord. That same warlord would also like to perform various painful indignities upon Finnian as well, which helps to personalize the conflict. In any event, there are battles, escapes, romance and enough wine consumed to float the Queen Mary.

As far as plot is concerned, it is straightforward (or, some might call it old-fashioned), in tune with the tastes of when first published. The style and treatment, though, is surprisingly modern. It's hard to describe exactly how, but it tastes as though written in recent years. I admit to being startled, after finishing reading the book, to looking to the copyright page and discovering the 1941 date. Myers is a fine writer and his *SILVERLOCK* is quite deservedly a classic in the fantasy field. *THE HARP AND THE BLADE* is quite enjoyable, and well worth reading -- it would also make a pretty good movie.

One niggler, however, with both this and the other Starblaze books I have read recently: They should really get a decent proof-reader to correct their typeset copy; there is no good excuse for the quantity of typos that have slipped by.



STAR TREK: THE WRATH OF KHAN

By Vonda McIntyre
Pocket Science Fiction, \$2.50

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

By now, most if not all of the *STAR TREK* fans among you will have seen the movie so there is little point in detailing the plot. However, Vonda McIntyre has explained a few points and inserted a few others which make the book more than just a readaptation of the movie script. For instance, we learn that the engineering cadet, later to be killed by a direct hit to the engine room, is Scotty's nephew; that Lt. Saavik's Vulcan-Romulan background was a very traumatic experience; that one of the reasons the technicians of the *Regulus I* Space Lab were tortured and killed was because they bought the wounded *ENTERPRISE* time from Khan's wrath by masquerading their computer game as the real Genesis information etc., etc. The book swarms with literary inferences from Dickens' *TALE OF TWO CITIES*, Lewis Carroll's works (mainly boojums and snarks), and Barrie's *PETER PAN*, to name a few. Great reading, even for non-*STAR TREK* fans.

BYZANTIUM ENDURES

By Michael Moorcock

REVIEWED BY J.E. RUDD

BYZANTIUM ENDURES is the tale of Maxim Arturovitch Pyatnitski, a Ukranian boy of extreme talents in languages and sciences. At the age of eight he invents a flying machine, at fourteen he attends St. Petersburg College, where three years later he astounds everyone with his visions of the future. Pyatnitski also spends some time in Odessa with his cousin Shura, sampling cocaine and life, and hob-nobs with Bohemians in Peter, among them Kolya, his great-

est friend and the English adventuress Mrs. Honoria Cornelius. Yet Pyat (as he becomes known) has all his glorious plans stolen and his story is told as memoirs discovered by Moorcock years later, when Pyat has become a decrepit second-hand clothes dealer in the Portobello Road market, ironically now known as "The Old Jew", for he is anti-Semite.

The characterization of Pyat is perhaps Moorcock's best to date as I found myself so absorbed by my reading that I forgot that this was a Moorcock book, and began to believe that these were the memoirs of Pyat, that it was Pyat who invented the laser and other mechanisms, Pyat that formulated Relativity. Only when Mrs. Cornelius made her entrance with her characteristic "Watcher, Ivan, you ole bugger!", that I remembered that this was the fictitious story of Colonel Pyat.

Often throughout the novel I was reminded of Gunter Grass' *THE TIN DRUM*. Pyat is Oskar, deformed not in body but in mind, for despite his intelligence, the narrator's hatred of the Jew comes above all else. And it is an unhealthy hatred for Pyat cannot admit to it. His relationship with his mother and the doubt about his father are similar in both stories, although the differences are obvious.

At the start of *BYZANTIUM ENDURES*, Pyat comes across as very much an innocent. At one point he asks his childhood friend and "sister" if she has a sweetheart. Esme tells him that she is waiting for someone. Technically, this sequence is excellently written. The reader knows that she means Pyat, but Pyat does not, or if he does, only in retrospect, now that over fifty years have passed. The narrator's character develops from a boy to a man, physically and mentally, finally to the rambling, insane old man who writes the story. Towards the end of the book he deviates from the current story to his diverse religious beliefs and pieces together for us the major details of his later life.

I finished *BYZANTIUM ENDURES* feeling that I had watched Pyat develop from a boy to a man, but at the same time sad at his misguided romanticism; feeling that Pyat's "memoirs" were merely wild exaggerations from pieces of the truth and an over-active insane mind.

I hope that Moorcock will continue to write as well as he has recently. For all the excitement that the Elric and Cornelius books gave us, his writing of *GLORIANA*,

THE WAR HOUND & THE WORLD'S PAIN and BYZANTIUM ENDURES shows how he is beginning to write now with more skill and he seems to be enjoying it as much, I hope, as his audiences are.

THREE TOMORROWS

American, British and Soviet Science Fiction

By John Griffiths

Macmillan/Papermac, 1980, £3.95.

REVIEWED BY ANDREW TIDMARSH

My acquaintance with Soviet science fiction is slight. The novel *ROADSIDE PICNIC* and the novelette, "The Second Invasion from Mars" by Boris and Arkady Strugatsky; the anthologies *PATH INTO THE UNKNOWN* (Pan, 1969), *VORTEX* (edited by C.G. Bearne; Pan, 1971), and *THE ULTIMATE THRESHOLD* (edited by Mirra Ginsburg; Penguin, 1978); stories scattered elsewhere.

My acquaintance with the Soviet Union is slight.

I turned to this book for enlightenment.

John Griffiths has visited the Soviet Union. He speaks Russian fluently. And he cites in this book the work of 30 or 40 Soviet writers.

He begins by defining the term "science fiction". In his words: "A science fiction story is one in which the suspension of disbelief depends on the plausible development of a central technical or scientific idea ..." He then "examines the evolution of the genre ... to a point where stories (that match) this definition ... (came) to be written". A recitation of familiar names: Francis Bacon, Defoe, Swift, Mary Shelley; William Wilson (in whose work of 1851, "A Little Earnest Upon A Great Old Subject" -- poetry not science fiction -- occurs the first use of the term "science fiction"); H.G. Wells. Chernyshevsky, Tsiolkovsky, Alexei Tolstoy, Zamiatin. He concludes that "conventional fiction ... does not give us all that we want". An opinion endorsed by Kingsley Amis and Robert Conquest: "There are kinds of ingenuity, kinds of invention, kinds of questions, ways of putting such questions, notions of possibility, effects of irony or wit, of wonder and terror that only science fiction offers and can offer ... Science fiction is the natural medium (for discussing social change)".

Griffith's subsequent comparison of American, British and Soviet science fiction is marred by this assumption. That science fiction is, somehow, different. That science fiction is the ideal medium for the diffusion of political opinion. Why?

For two reasons: First, science fiction has a specialist appeal. It is not universally popular. Indeed, it is widely despised because "juvenile" or "illiterate". Therefore, it might circulate without being officially controlled. And second, that science fiction is, essentially, a symbolic fiction. It allows more than one interpretation of itself.

(Witness, for example, the use made by Charles Manson of Heinlein's *STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND* to justify his murder of Sharon Tate and her companions, a use I would think condemned by R. Heinlein.)

Science fiction in the Soviet Union must serve as propaganda for the State. But, Griffiths argues, because science fiction is an art form (and writers of science fiction artists), a close examination must reveal an occasionally perversity. The novel *SNAIL ON THE SLOPE* by the Strugatskys or S. Snegov's trilogy, *MEN LIKE GODS*. Griffiths explains science fiction as political allegory.

I was not convinced.

THE MAN WHO WOULD NOT DIE

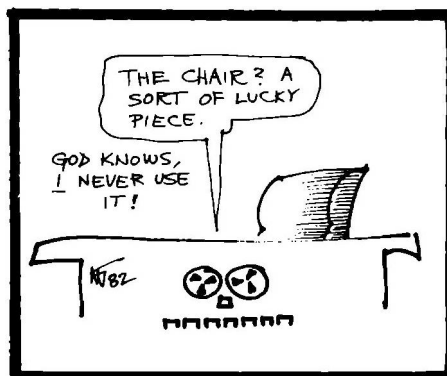
By Thomas Page

(Seaview Books, hardcover, 1981.) Signet Books, The New American Library, Inc., 1633 Broadway, New York, NY 10019. September, 1982; 278 pp.; \$3.50

REVIEWED BY PAULETTE MINARE'

This medical thriller offers love interest, intrigue and adventure. The supernatural aspects are treated so skillfully that they are readily acceptable. Through Thomas Page's vividly graphic writing, one lives along with his realistic, absorbing characters.

In the Clayton County Medical Center near Aspen, Colorado, the "Stendhal Holmes Life Support System" (LS System) capsule automatic-



ally performs all bodily functions and instantly destroys invading bacteria or fungi. It can restart the heart of a comatose patient after cardiac arrest, snatching him back from a "life-after-life" experience.

The salesman-demonstrator is a tall, blond, blue-eyed man with a brilliant smile, Daniel Forrester. Dr. Jameson, a staff doctor, finds his shady past life is near disclosure by Forrester, and therefore arranges his death in a plane crash. The hopelessly shattered body is placed in the LS System where his heart arrests; he is clinically dead. But the capsule repeatedly brings him back after varying periods of time, up to an hour plus. During these intervals, Forrester's surviving magnetic life force is ultra-diligent. He avenges himself against Dr. Jameson as he flies in the mountains, and in his own unique way causes him to crash to his death.

Forrester makes other momentous appearances -- always in response to emotions, moods, instincts or disconnected memory storms; this causes major disruptions in the lives of others. His overly possessive love is endangering the life of Kate, the love interest of his corporeal life -- since he can't have her in life, he intends she should join him in death.

The diverse ways in which Forrester brings about terror, shock and death; and the variety of methods used by the characters to combat him, keeps one's acute interest throughout the book.

Even after it is thought that Forrester's ghost has been laid to rest, there is an unusual twist at the end. Has he had the last laugh -- or smile?

THE RHYSLING ANTHOLOGY

Science Fiction Poetry Assoc'n
1722 N. Mariposa Avenue, #1
Los Angeles, CA 90027
Paperback, 36 pp., \$1.50

REVIEWED BY NEAL WILGUS

Although the Rhysling Award for best science fiction poetry has been around since 1978 when the SF Poetry Association was first organized by Suzette Hadin Elgin, this is the first year that the nominated poems have been published in an anthology all their own. Previously the nominees appeared in a "nominations" issue of the Association's Newsletter, STARLINE, which was not available to anyone but SFPA members. Now



the anthology serves double duty as a collection of the year's best on the one hand and as the nominations issue to be voted on by SFPA members on the other.

This is also the first year that Rhysling finalists have been chosen by a committee. Twenty-eight poems were nominated by SFPA members and the committee narrowed this down to twelve (although only eleven appear in the anthology). In the process the committee eliminated anything with rhyme or meter, all humor, most fantasy and all but the slightest of narrative verse. What's left is what some people in the field like to call "speculative verse," if only the label would catch on. A more accurate description is chopped prose.

There are two categories in the Rhysling sweepstakes -- short poems, under 50 lines, and long poems, 50 lines and up. Leading off this volume is Ray DiZazzo's short poem "On the Speed of Sight," a simple idea simply developed and

not half-bad for chopped prose. Another in the short poem category that fits this description is Marge Piercy's "Absolute Zero in the Brain," but why anyone thinks it's SF (or even "speculative") is beyond me. Just referring to Frankenstein doesn't get it, Marge.

Other short poems are more complex and less understandable. Kathryn Rantala's "Noah at Sea" is superficially a narrative fantasy about Noah and Grendel but the story doesn't go anywhere, leaving the reader perplexed. Also perplexing is "Ybba" by Elisa L.A. Hamilton, which seems to be a narrative too, about a robot that builds spaceships perhaps, but then again, maybe not. Other chopped prose short poems include "Their Terminals Have Said ..." by Andrew Joron and Robert Frazier, "Voyager IV" by Kathryn Rantala and "Of Appollo: 7/20/69" by Steven M. Tymon. My own vote in the short poem category went to Tymon's poem which, alas, does

not appear in the anthology because SFPA didn't have permission to reprint it. If you're reading this, Steve, please get in touch with the Association again.

In the long poem category the best included in the anthology is probably Ursula K. LeGuin's "The Well of Baln," although several that were eliminated by the committee struck me as even better. "Baln" is a narrative fantasy of sorts which is at least straightforward and understandable, which is more than can be said for some of the other long poems. "The Starfarers" by Gene Van Troyer and Robert Frazier, for instance, is largely unintelligible, though the authors seem very enthusiastic about whatever it is they're writing. Adrienne Marcus' "Paper Clocks" makes better sense but amounts to little more than musing over a faded rose in an old diary.

"The Grove" by Terry A. Garey is a narrative which is more or less intelligible but left too much out to be satisfactory. And "Saucer Station, Monday -- Friday" by Albert Goldbarth fits much the same description -- an understandable narrative that leaves you hanging because too much is unexplained. My vote for the long poem category went to "The Star Drifter Grounded" by Bruce Boston -- chopped prose, but a strong narrative, definitely science fiction and very much in the tradition of Heinlein's "The Green Hills of Earth," from which the Rhysling Award derives its name. "Star Drifter," Chris Pasanen's "Academic Necrosis" (which I nominated) and a number of other long poems were eliminated from the anthology by the committee, which to my view weakens this as a collection of the year's best considerably.

THE RHYSLING ANTHOLOGY is well put together, I should hasten to add. The artwork is excellent throughout and graphically everything works beautifully. A very brief Preface gives a very brief background on the SFPA and the Awards, and a listing of previous Rhysling winners brings the volume to a close. If the content was something more than speculative chopped prose this might be a dynamic little collection, in fact. As it is this will still be a collectors' item and perhaps on down the line the content will match the first-rate package.

The winners of the 1982 Rhyslins, by the way, were LeGuin's "Well of Baln" and DiZazzo's "Speed of Sight."

A BARNSTORMER IN OZ

By Philip Jose Farmer
Berkley SF, 278 pp., \$6.95 in Canada

REVIEWED BY DAVID PITT

Now, as every good fan knows, Farmer is very good at this sort of thing. His biographies of Doc Savage and Tarzan are interesting and scholarly, his "true story" of *AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHTY DAYS* is fascinating if a little far-fetched, and he hasn't let us down this time. The story of Dorothy's son is fun.

The book's subtitle is *A RATIONALIZATION AND EXTRAPOLATION OF THE SPLIT-LEVEL CONTINUUM*, and it describes the thrust of the novel. Farmer makes Oz and the surrounding areas valid and believable places. The book is partially, I think, an excuse to answer some questions. How was the Tin Woodsman's "soul" transferred to his metal body? How can the Scarecrow remain the same entity when it regularly changes its brains? How big a role did Glinda the Good play in Dorothy's tale?

Farmer takes L. Frank Baum, the author of the original Oz series, to task often. He is constantly referring to Baum's forgetting or neglecting to include details. (Although when Farmer twice mentions Baum's omission of the sound of displaced air in teleportation I think he's getting a little nitpicky.)

We are given an explanation of some of the wilder details in the Oz books, Farmer attributing them to Baum's desire to turn Dorothy's story into fiction.

The book is well-written and entertaining, and with a certain flair. ("Lightning challenged the earth to a duel by slapping it in its face.") Hank Stover, Dorothy's son, is a combination of hard logic and light fantasy. I think if he lived today he'd be a writer if not a fan of SF.

As I said, the book is fun. Once past the explanations in the first chapters, the pace picks up and becomes more action than talk. The plotting is skillful, although something concerning the invasion force's large number of a certain type of aircraft didn't happen, and I was sure it would. It has to do with another aircraft, a sentient one, and this, unfortunately, brings me to a fault in the book.

Somebody wants to invade Oz. Hank's loyalty is questioned repeatedly, mostly by himself and I thought the rest of the novel would be a resolution of that. It

wasn't. The situation is never solidly resolved.

Also, Hank's future in Oz is not established. Will he go home? Will he stay? Who knows? I think Farmer wants to write a sequel, which is fine by me. Maybe he'll include the scenes he had to cut from this book, especially those he mentions in the Author's Notes.

CYRION

By Tanith Lee
DAW Books, #499 for Sept, 1982
304 pp., \$2.95
Cover Art by Ken W. Kelly

REVIEWED BY DAVID A. TRUESDALE

This is not a novel, though one is given the distinct impression it is. There is no inherent harm in this, of course, except for the fact that at least some of the material is not new, but reprinted. One of the seven strung-together short stories was first published in Andrew Offutt's *SWORDS AGAINST DARKNESS V*, back in November of 1979 ("Perfidious Amber"), and was then reprinted in DAW's *THE YEAR'S BEST FANTASY STORIES: 6*, dated November 1980. Others may be aware of other reprints among the remaining six pieces, though I am not.

From Tanith Lee we have come to expect the unexpected as well as the beautiful, and none of either is in much evidence here. The prose is choppy, off-rhythm, hurriedly penned as if it were a first draft and, in some cases, hard to follow without a quick re-reading, which destroys reader flow and which, in turn, crumbles the concentration and ultimate absorption into the various fantasy(s).

And what about the fantasies? Are there intriguing moral dilemmas predicated by the situations, magics or evil machinations against which Cyrion must wrestle, or resolve in order to extricate himself? No. Time after time we see Cyrion thrust into an improbable situation and after ho-hummedly rolling his tongue around cliché dialogue -- be it with monster or human beguiler, an obligatory scene or two of alternate glitter and gore -- emerge the victor. After the first three stories I was tired, following the next four I was irritated and bored, and it took herculean effort to force myself through the final third of the book, a novella titled "Cyrion in Stone."

ANALOG'S CHILDREN OF THE FUTURE

Edited by Stanley Schmidt
Dial Press 1982, \$12.95

REVIEWED BY LARRY D. WOODS

An immortal living forever as a child; an eleven-year-old survivor of the apocalypse -- these and other entertaining and fascinating stories are collected in *ANALOG'S CHILDREN OF WONDER*. While the selections are limited to tales of youth and originally appeared in *ASTOUNDING/ANALOG*, several of the finest stories are here ranging from Padgett ("Mimsy Were the Boro-groves") to Sturgeon ("Mewhu's Jet") to Schmitz ("The Witches of Karres") and Shiras ("In Hiding"). Five other stories by Card, McCaffrey, Reynolds, Plauger and Palmer are included.

This volume is a worthy challenger to the leading anthology in this area: *CHILDREN OF WONDER* (1953).

THE NEW VISIONS -- A COLLECTION OF MODERN SCIENCE FICTION ART

Introduction by Frederik Pohl
Doubleday, 1982, 87 pp., \$14.95

REVIEWED BY ANDREW ANDREWS

Too many artists are unfortunately missing from the slick pages of *THE NEW VISIONS*, A Collection of Modern Science Fiction Art. While the meticulous reproductions of art by Frank Frazetta, Richard Corben, Mike Hinge, Larry Kresek and others are done with affection for this extremely thin and expensive edition of what are primarily SF Book Club book covers, there is no example or mention of literally hundreds of other artists and their works who would be more than at home in this otherwise fine collection.

Included are artist biographies and self-sketches.

But where are Barclay Shaw, Rowena Morrill, even Kelly Freas? Where are Vince DiFate, Freff, Leo and Diane Dillon, Karl Lundgren . . . surely these names could have added dignity to what may have been a complete edition. Sadly, it is not.



ONCE OVER LIGHTLY

BOOK REVIEWS BY GENE DEWEESE

YESTERDAY'S TOMORROWS

Edited by Frederik Pohl
Berkley, Paperback, \$9.95

According to Pohl's introduction, these thirty-odd stories are the ones that still stick in his mind after forty years of editing SF books and magazines and in most cases it's not surprising. There is, for instance, "Space Time for Springers," by Fritz Leiber, perhaps the best ever SF story about cats. Then there's "Into the Darkness," by Ross Rocklynne, an almost fable-like tale of sentient mobile stars. And Asimov's first robot story, a vintage Leigh Brackett adventure, plus Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., Arthur C. Clarke, Philip K. Dick, Robert A. Heinlein, etc., etc., even Paul Ehrlich of "Population Bomb" fame. And, as a bonus, there are Pohl's always fascinating anecdotal glimpses into what a writer/editor's life is really like. Considering the variety of material, some of the 200,000+ words may not be to your taste, but if you don't thoroughly enjoy quite a few of them, you just don't like science fiction.

FOUNDATION FOUNDATION AND EMPIRE SECOND FOUNDATION

By Isaac Asimov
Ballantine/Del Rey, Paper, \$2.75 ea.

REVIEWED BY GENE DEWEESE

For anyone interested in the series that was quite deservedly given a Hugo as the best SF series of all time, here is a handsome new edition, complete with Asimov's explanation of how it came to be written. (It has to do with Gilbert and Sullivan's "Iolanthe," in case you're interested.) As Asimov himself says, the entire quarter of a million words contains virtually no physical action, only thoughts and conversation about action that takes place offstage. But it doesn't matter. There are ideas and twists on practically every page as the two Foundations,

founded by Psychohistorian Hari Seldon, struggle to soften the inevitable fall of a galactic empire of twenty-five million worlds. And in every installment of that struggle, brains win out over brawn, which is an idea Asimov has been pushing in both his fiction and nonfiction for over forty years.

A ROSE FOR ARMAGEDDON

By Hilbert Schenck
Timescape, Paper, \$2.50

In the very near future, civilization is disintegrating at an exponential rate. Tempers everywhere are short, and long range rational thought is rapidly becoming unknown, all apparently the result of a worldwide "hostility resonance." The nature of this phenomenon, however, is discovered during a morphological study of an isolated island off the coast of New England, and in the end, a computer analysis of the study reveals a seemingly mystical key that can save the world, a key that the computer itself cannot even put a name to. As in Schenck's earlier *AT THE EYE OF THE OCEAN*, the characters here are fully and interestingly developed, particularly the two sixtyish narrators, Dr. Elsa Adams and Dr. Jake Stinson, who are about as far from being your standard hero and heroine as you can get. Much of the book is in fact, an engrossing character study of the two. In addition, it paints one of the most realistically frightening pictures of a collapsing civilization that I've ever read. Not a "quick read," maybe, but a good one.

THE SCIENCE IN SCIENCE FICTION

Edited by Peter Nichols
Knopf, \$14.95

If you've ever seen an SF movie or read an SF story and won-

dered if anything remotely like it could happen, this could be the book for you. Similarly, if you have a nodding acquaintance with various fields of science and are wondering if there are SF stories that make use of those fields, the references given here could point you to enough stories to keep you reading indefinitely. Time travel, hyperspace, robots, computers, mutations, natural disasters, Jim Jones-style cults and many more subjects are covered, mostly in clear and interesting prose, often well illustrated with everything from old pulp magazine covers to scientific charts and graphs. The only drawback is that one of the contributors, Oxford physicist David Langford, sounds a bit condescending and all-knowing in his chapter on "wrong science," and fails to distinguish between authors who made silly mistakes because of ignorance and those who purposely violated current scientific theories. Still, that's a minor complaint and shouldn't keep anyone from enjoying a book that is as useful as it is fascinating.

MISTS OF AVALON

By Marion Zimmer Bradley
Alfred A. Knopf, \$16.95

REVIEWED BY BEVERLY DEWEESE

Most readers know the story of King Arthur; however, Marion Zimmer Bradley, in *MISTS OF AVALON* has written an especially vivid, unorthodox version of this romantic tale. Bradley's narrator is Morgaine, a Druid priestess, and her England is populated by those who worship the Lady (the Earth Mother) and those few who are turning to the harsher, more intolerant Christianity -- a religion which equates chastity with good and sex with evil.

The story centers on the struggle between the two religions and the efforts of each to bring peace

to England -- by controlling King Arthur. As part of an elaborate Druid campaign, Arthur and Morgaine (Arthur's sister) are tricked into mating during the annual fertility rites and a child is conceived. Morgaine is so angered by this ruse that she renounces her position as a priestess. And when Arthur learns he has been a party to an incestuous union, he is horrified and rushes to marry Gwenhywfar (Guinivere), a model of Christian piety. Modred, the unwanted child of Arthur and Morgaine, is sent away, literally and figuratively. Soon after the marriage, Lancelot attaches himself to Arthur's court, and he brings even more tension; for Lancelot is loved by Morgaine, Gwenhywfar and Arthur. But none of them, of course, can admit publicly to his/her true love.

As the years pass, Arthur and Lancelot are seduced and manipulated by both Morgaine and Gwenhywfar. And their power plays affect many lives, often bringing unhappiness and pain. But the most tragic figure is Morgaine. Yet, though she is manipulated, shamed and frustrated, she remains an intense, appealing figure.

Bradley's many realistic, complex characters involve the reader; however, the most fascinating aspect of this novel is the depiction of the long struggle between Druidism and Christianity. There is little doubt that Bradley sympathizes with the Druids, whose religion, according to her, encouraged sensitivity, tolerance and respect for females. The most lyrical passages are those describing the priestesses and their shrine, a lovely island called Avalon, located just on the other side of this dimension. There is the feeling that the world lost much of value when Avalon slipped -- or was hidden -- from us.

In short, Bradley's Arthurian world is intriguingly different. Undoubtedly, the brisk pace, the careful research and the provocative concept will attract and please many readers. Her strong female characters are a delight, though a few readers may be annoyed by her many references to mothering. But this is a minor objection in an impressive book. Overall, *MISTS OF AVALON* is one of the best and most ambitious of the Arthurian novels, and it should not be missed.

IAN WATSON

OF GROUND, AND OCEAN, AND SKY

Ocean, Ground and Sky met together one day, to discuss the recent upheavals.

"New masterpieces are arising all along the boundaries of the old," declared Ground, shaking with anticipation. "Other books are going under. We three should get up an expedition to be present at the eruption of the next new work."

"Shall we take gifts with us?" asked Sky. "Such as gold, and incense -- that sort of thing?"

Ocean shook his wavy head.

"No, I imagine there'll be plenty of gold and incense."

"We ought to take something, though -- if only as a peace offering," said Sky. "There are such grindings and rumblings when a new fiction bursts forth. All the fault lines of the other writers tremble."

"When the engine of the imagination turns over," observed Ground, "there is always much screeching and vibration. Yet without this disturbance there would be no fresh deposits of the imaginary on the planet's surface. The older peaks would wear down after a while. Everything would go flat."

"Will this new arrival be a novel?" asked Sky innocently.

Ground did his best to explain to her.

"It isn't as cut and dried as that, my dear Sky. Novel, novella, novelette, short story -- the one category thrusts up into the next by a natural process of evolution. The Himalaya of the novel, with its sparkling crown of lucite, grows up almost of its own accord out of the foothill of the novelette -- quite rapidly too, in some cases. I imagine we will see a novelette born, or even a short story. But this will grow and grow, volcanically, with much steam and smoke, within a few weeks...."

Ground hesitated.

"And yet?" prompted Sky.

"And yet it may be a whole novel all at once -- or even the Pelion piled on Ossa, of a trilogy. A whole range of mountains may emerge instantly from underground."

"What shape will it take?" asked Sky. She was busily sculpting her clouds into castles.

Ground pondered for a while.

"It will be full of strata of relationships. These will fold over and under each other, cunningly."

"And what will the scenery be like?"

"Ah, there will be plenty of surface beauty for your eye. There will be exciting gorges and pitfalls, too. Adventurous crevasses and ledges to cling to. And perhaps some long meanders. Yet the folds underneath will change the meaning of what lies on the surface -- for those who look beneath the surface. Though, for those who do not look too deeply, the surface will be colorful enough."

A gale of petulance blew down from Sky.

"It isn't my fault that I can't see all the complicated folds under the surface!"

"Ah, but in this case everybody will want it to be known that they have seen beneath the surface. So there will be a convenient network of caves, with an easily navigable subterranean river."

"Excellent," said Ocean. "The story will flow easily then."

"This won't be too dense a product of the imagination," continued Ground. "Massive, but not dense. Rule One of Tectonic Success: He that rises to the surface must be twenty-five per cent lighter than the others."

"When shall we set out?" asked Sky, excitedly. Her hair blew out in long streamers.

"Right now," said Ground. And slowly he revolved himself on his axis, to bring himself closer to the source of the new eruption.

Ocean launched himself along a powerful current.

Sky blew in the appropriate direction.

The three friends passed by a number of older mountains, still massive, though now gone cold inside. They also passed an aborted

volcano, whose initial gush of lava had solidified in its throat after the first eruption -- though substantial puffs of steam still issued from vents around its sides. And they passed many hills and lesser mountains, still actively thrusting themselves upwards -- though already these were being jostled by the new disturbance.

"There! I can see it!" called out Sky -- since she could see further than Ocean or Ground, although Ground felt all the deep vibrations. "The earth's splitting open!"

Ground groaned in sympathy.

And from out of the hot bowels of the imagination there flowed a new hill. The surrounding hills and mountains all nodded to it, since it most definitely broke new ground. It expanded their territory.

"It's a novelette," said Ocean.

"Wait," cautioned Ground. "It is still growing. It's going to be a novel."

Presently Sky brushed across the new peak.

"Why, it's a hundred thousand words high already! A moment ago it was only ten."

Ocean reared up on a high wave.

"Fine exciting terrain, there."

"Good deep caves beneath," commented Ground. "Simple but convincing. Only a few of them are empty air pockets."

"It's ... stopped."

"No, it hasn't -- there's a sequel!"

Beside the first mountain there rapidly arose an even higher peak.

"Two hundred thousand words high, that one," marvelled Sky. She was quite out of breath at its height.

"But it's the same shape as the first one," objected Ocean. "It's just bigger, that's all."

"Going for the trilogy, now!" shouted Ground.

The third and highest mountain reared up and up, till it reached the very fringes of space. And this mountain looked quite different at first glance, but actually it was a mirror image of the second mountain.

Nevertheless, the incense arose from fumaroles all around, and a rain of gold filled a hollow between the two latest peaks, brimful!

But even as Ocean and Sky were politely applauding the new trilogy, Ground cried out. More seismic shocks had reached him.

"Another eruption? So soon? Surely the engine of the imagination will seize up with the heat!"

Even so, another eruption was already taking place, not far away.

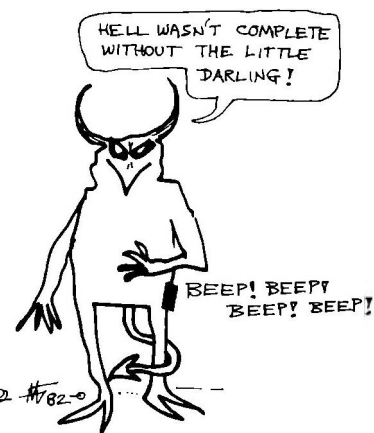
Another novelette appeared from nowhere and swiftly swelled into a novel of splendid girth, shouldering the new trilogy range aside.

Ground sensed disaster. Just in time he warned Ocean and Sky.

And a few moments later the whole crust of the world lifted off its roots, turned over and thumped back down again. Young mountains, foothills and even mature ranges tumbled. Catastrophic oscillations shook the land. Before very long, there was only one vast plain of debris.

Sky loomed over this flattened plain, searching in vain for signs of activity. Ground settled himself beneath it, patiently to await the advent of some future geological epoch. And Ocean flowed away. He felt bitterly cold. For a long time there was an ice age.

I DIDN'T FALL FROM HEAVEN...
I TOOK AN EARLY RETIREMENT
FROM ETERNITY.



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in microform.

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TEN YEARS AGO IN SF -- SPRING, 1973
BY ROBERT SABELLA

Spring is traditionally award time in science fiction and 1973 was no exception. The Nebula Awards for 1972 went to Isaac Asimov for *THE GODS THEMSELVES*, Arthur C. Clarke for "A Meeting with Medusa", Poul Anderson for "Goat Song" and Joanna Russ for "When it Changed" ... The National Book Award for Children's Literature went to Ursula K. LeGuin for *THE FARTHEST SHORE*, the concluding volume in her *Earthsea Trilogy* ... In a masterpiece of irony, the first John W. Campbell Memorial Award went to Barry Malzberg for his anti-space program novel *BEYOND APOLLO*. Needless to say, not all science fiction fans were pleased with the selection ... Lancer Books published Samuel R. Delany's controversial SF-porno novel *THE TIDES OF LUST* which became an instant collectors' item when the publisher folded and the book became unavailable.

JANET MORRIS

I'm sitting with Janet Morris in the Author Pit. They don't call it that, of course, but that is what it is, this sunken area with a rail around it, in the basement of the huge B. Dalton bookstore on Fifth Avenue in New York City. They put authors in the Pit and customers come wandering over with idle curiosity and stand at the rail like kids watching animals at a zoo.

It's Science Fiction Week at B. Dalton, so I'm in the Pit trying to promote DREAM MAKERS, and Janet's offering to autograph copies of her novel DREAM DANCER and we're being heckled by a literary snob in a dirty raincoat. "I've given up buying science fiction," he complains. "There aren't any writers who use solid, up-to-date science, and have good writing style, and strong characterization."

I don't have the stomach to start arguing with him myself. I can't take the situation seriously; it's too embarrassing.

But not many things in life embarrass Janet Morris, and she takes everything seriously that relates to her work. So she tackles the heckler. "There is one writer in the field today, who combines all those qualities you are looking for," she tells him.

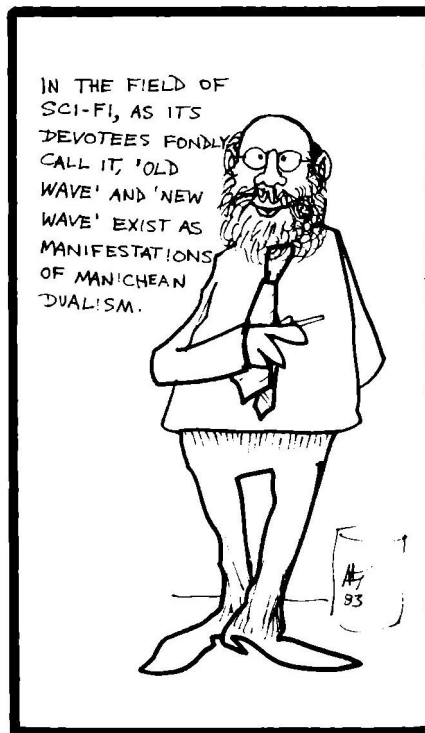
"Yeah? Who?"

"Me," says Janet Morris, as if it ought to have been obvious.

Now, this kind of salespersonship may sell a few extra books, but at the same time, it does rub some people the wrong way. Some men, in particular, don't quite know how to take it when Janet Morris comes on like a graduate from assertiveness training and lectures them on anything from particle physics to handguns. They don't like it when she beats them at pinball either. And there are some women who resent Janet Morris, too -- for not toeing the feminist line, for instance. Her first four novels (the "Silistra" series) starred some sort of science-fictional prostitute, for heaven's sake, who felt it was not only her function but her pleasure to be used by men. It seems

that Janet Morris doesn't believe in sexual equality, and doesn't reject all the old roles. She even refers to herself as a "girl" once in a while -- and she's only half kidding.

"There is a degree of satire in everything I do. But to some extent the Silistra books were meant as a kind of cultural antidote to



the overkill of women's lib., which was just cresting then, and which I felt was and is wrong. You can't stand out there in the middle of the street and scream for your rights, throwing a tantrum, which is often a woman's idea of her way of getting what she wants. It doesn't work in the real world."

"Also in Silistra, I was influenced by Ed Wilson and the whole

This profile will appear in DREAM MAKERS II to be published in June.

sociobiology thing. I was taking societal conditioning away and showing what was left -- the genetic reality, as I inferred it from sociobiology."

I asked her to give some idea of what sociobiology is about, since not all of us know.

"Well, Wilson says things like 'The urge to creativity may be inextricably linked to the desire to own and dominate.' That's a bottom-line quote. Silistran females are female in their thinking, they are never guys in girl-suits. And the males are fight-or-flight; they are always going after their edge in a particular way, which makes them almost walking genes. I was trying to crystallize human sexuality and show the degree to which it could influence decisions. They are not meant to be realistic characters that you could put into this world, or characters whose world-views would work in this world, but all of our world-views are influenced by the subconscious awareness of the kinds of thoughts that Silistran characters will voice, which no male or female can deny. Any woman who is honest will tell you that rape fantasies were her thirteen-year-old nightly exercise. It's not fun in the real world, but it sure makes a nice way to get to sleep when you're that age."

Doesn't she feel that, if rape fantasies are common, they are a result of social conditioning?

"No. On a genetic level, women want a dominant male, the one that is strongest and best capable of producing the child that will be most successful. That's somebody who's at least your equal. We still have the old hunter-gatherer instinct of, you run as fast as you can and the guy that can catch you and hold you down is the one. And if he's not at least strong enough and clever enough to do that, then you don't want his child."

But shouldn't we attempt to civilize our behavior above this primitive level?

"In order to deal with the promptings of genetics, one has to admit that they're there. To overcome something, you have to be able to pinpoint it without guilt or societal tsk-tsks or any kind of

A Profile By Charles Platt

negativity that is brought in from your conditioning. We have to take as a given that males are males and females are females, and the drives and the kinds of thought-proconditioning that come from those drives are different. I'm a humanist, not a feminist. I know I'm a female; I have no doubt about it; I'm very comfortable with it, and I'm perfectly willing to accept that females and males are complementary but different. I certainly would neither like nor encourage a society in which across-the-board equality is legislated or demanded against the indications of nature. Physical equality is an impossibility."

That doesn't mean, however, that Janet Morris herself is the stereotypical female, docilely submitting to men as a slave of genetic programming.

"A lot of times, if I don't hold back I'm there before the guy is, I've solved the problem. I'm more than capable of solving almost any problem that comes up in daily life and I'm a high-androgen female: I've had show horses and done a lot of traditionally male things, and now of course, we're into competitive shooting. I'm getting reasonably proficient with my handgun. Intellectually, I do a lot of homework and research and things interest me that don't tend to interest other women. Phil Klass said to me the other day that woman's proper study was man, and man's proper study was whatever caught his interest. By that definition, I'm a man. I like intellectual stimulation.

"My bedtime stories, when I was four and five, were Spenser's FAERIE QUEENE and such -- that's what they used to read to me. My father was at Harvard and his field was English literature. My mom had a master's in education. So by the time I was seven I'd been through all the myths of every society, Greek through Norse, Mesopotamian to Roman -- I was very interested in ancient legends and all the magical stuff.

"In my family, instead of an allowance I got a hardcover book a week. I started reading science fiction when I was about seven; I always liked it because in science fiction, it isn't easy to tell from the third page what's going to happen at the end of the book. There are so many more alternatives in science fiction -- when it's good. It isn't as good as it used to be, partially because people don't do their homework, and you don't have the Hugo Gernsbacks who are interested in promoting them, you just have derivatives -- people who've

never read anything but science fiction, and therefore they get their science from science fiction and they merely rewrite cliches."

She's critical of modern science fiction by female authors.

"I remember throwing THE FEMALE MAN by Joanna Russ in the waste basket. That was polemic, a treatise, not a story. The only living female writer who interests me -- let's not limit this to science fiction -- is Margaret Yourcenar. I think female writers generally tend to lack discipline and structure, and both discipline and structure are what I like in a story.

"I have a theory that there are authors, and writers. People who want to be known for doing something, and people who like to do it. And too many women in this field seem to fall into the first group. But then there are plenty of dreadful male writers, too.

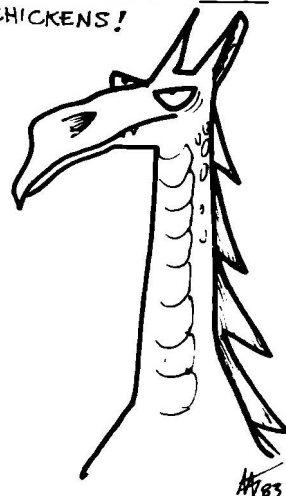
"Of the women writing science fiction, I think C.J. Cherryh is certainly the best. I concur with her main theme of romanticizing science, trying to put science back into science fiction. I think that the public's fear of science and technology is totally overblown and unwarranted. It tends to be worst in older people who are shell-shocked. Those of us who are comfortable with going into the future ought to open our mouths.

"Everyone's terrified of nuclear bombs now, and some people have found they can make a living lobbying for causes with which no one can disagree. Who can disagree with peace? So all these folks are out there making a living getting everyone to march for peace. The Soviets poured all the initial seed money into the European peace movement, to try to freeze the 'balance' of theater weapons in their favor. But people don't go after information themselves, they believe what they hear. This is, historically, the failing of democracy. You have mass rule and you have ascendancy of the mediocre. It's happening in science fiction too. You get a readership which is wider, editors who are only doing science fiction on the way to something 'more exciting' such as women's romances, and therefore you get mediocre science fiction.

"When I wrote the Silistra novels, I felt I was very brave and talked about issues that meant a lot to me and I assumed that everybody was smart enough to know when I was teasing them and when I was serious. But a lot of readers do

not see any more than you write on the surface. They don't read into it, to get at the subtlety.

WHICH CAME FIRST, THE
CHICKEN OR THE EGG?
WE WERE LAYING EGGS
BEFORE THERE WERE
CHICKENS!



"For instance, one of the things that was important to me, which I was developing there, was my intuition about what physics is and how it works, and the ability of mind to influence probability. In this last year, long after those books were done, John Wheeler codified all of those intuitions in his anthropic principle -- the participatory universe -- and has pushed physics almost to the boundary of metaphysics, with pretty much the same ideas: that you create your future as you go along, that you are co-creator of the universe. These ideas are so complex mathematically, you couldn't put them in a story of hard science fiction. It would take too long to define the terms. But I dramatized them as Silistran mind control.

"I've had letters from fifteen-year-olds who knew exactly what I was talking about, and forty-year-olds who couldn't handle it. Each time I write a book I find out which things are difficult for people, and I try the next time to make them simpler, to get my points across. But because I read more and more, the points get more and more complex. With twistor theory and space-time manifolds, it got to where I couldn't even find anybody to talk to about it. And then I knew I was in too deep. There were too few people reading in this area of science in the country."

I ask Janet Morris why, if her feeling for science is so strong,

she writes books which seem to have a fantasy flavor, and have even been published as fantasy.

"I'm sneaking up on people. People don't want to work; you have to spoon-feed them to some extent. This is true even in publishing itself. There are some powerful women in publishing who have said some frightening things -- like 'Fuck the science, what matters is if the boy kisses the girl,' or 'I never took physics in high school, so I just skip the technical parts.' It almost seems as if ladies generally don't, can't, or won't maintain the level of specialized concentration that I think is necessary to become premiere in your field. And yet they want to be there -- without doing the work."

Further to my question about the fantasy flavor of her books, I ask Janet Morris why, if clarity and communication are so important to her, she uses a stylized kind of writing instead of straight storytelling.

"Sometimes I want to write 'art' and when I'm feeling Homeric my stuff tends to come out with that 'ancient' feel to the prose. If I need to relax, I like to read the Iliad, so I have a soft spot in my heart for prose lines that are beautiful. To me, some of those lines were very beautiful.

"The other thing is, when you are dealing with higher math, and difficult concepts, and you don't think people are going to get them if you put them in such a way that you need 5,000 words to define your terms, you can convey it experientially, almost as poetry. Then people are going to have it whether they know they've got it or not, and they don't have to be afraid that they're not going to understand it.

"There's so much fear -- people are afraid to try to learn, because they don't want to fail. So if you start giving them information in such a way that it scares them, they're just going to quit on you. What I've given them, in a lot of cases, is experiential physics, without using the word 'physics' at all."

In addition to science, her novels also deal with political concepts.

"In DREAM DANCER I described a computerized referendum democracy. Everyone had to do ten to fifteen study hours to qualify to vote, so you had people who were voting on issues with which they were familiar. They'd seen all the pros and cons. At the same

time, anyone could lose degrees of their citizenship in the Athenian style. And if indeed they lost enough of their citizenship, from apathy and lack of participation, then at some point they would become non-citizens. Each person had a degree of government funding which they would lose if they opted out. I think that if we would allow everybody this kind of conditional government kickback, then maybe they'd have some incentive to participate.

"Our problem right now is that we have a system where the people who make our decisions for us have become a parasitic class who do nothing but have lunch and pass judgment on a basis of little or no information. My half-sister was Carter's speech writer on economic policy, so I know just how uninformed those people are about what's going on. If he was going to make a speech somewhere, he didn't even see it until the day before he went. He had no idea even of the subject he was going to talk on, let alone a chance to generate some point of view that he wanted to discuss. They really don't know.

"The ideal would be a democratic society in which everyone did their homework and was qualified to participate and vote on issues."

And she brings this kind of thinking right back home to the book business.

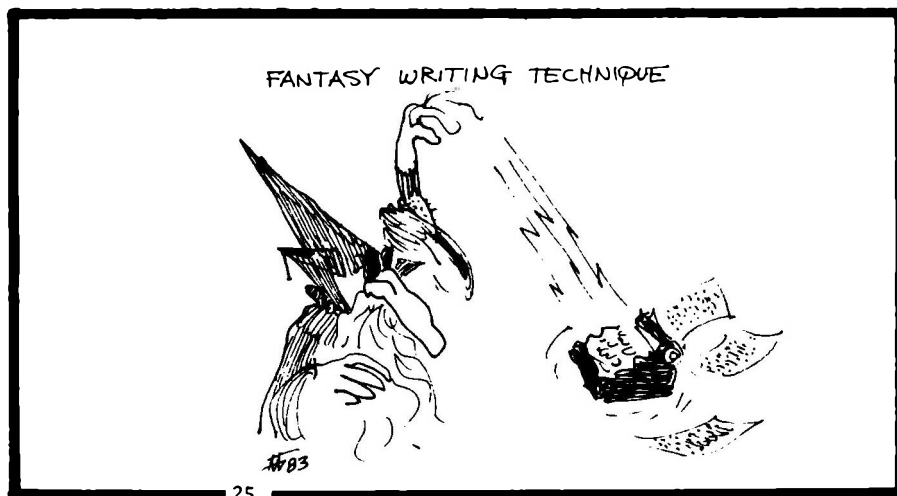
"Every time publishers find they can sell a bad romance or a Ken Follett novel to multitudes of people, the standards of publishing go down. But this is where democracy would really work, if the readers would just send back to the publishers every piece of trash that they bought and read. You wouldn't even have to demand a refund. If you just sent the bad ones back, eventually they'd get the idea."

Janet Morris was born in 1946 and lives with her husband Christopher, a rock musician, in a modern home hidden in the woodlands of Cape Cod. They're such a tight, cohesive couple, it's hard to consider them separately: He goes with her to the science fiction events, she goes with him to the recording sessions, he reads and comments on her first drafts, she critiques his demo tapes. They seem to share most things, including a fetish for technology -- they even have his-and-hers remote control TV channel changers. Outside the house is parked a custom-painted Ford van, for the music equipment; in the garage is a shiny black Jeep. Soon instead of the Jeep, there'll be a Porsche.

Life wasn't always so laid-back or so lucrative.

"I sold the first draft of the first thing I ever did, which was the first Silistra novel in 1976. I don't talk about what I was doing before then. There are a lot of things that I really can't discuss. Let's say I did a lot of on-site street research, getting into all sorts of trouble and then getting myself out of it, because you have to know what life is like to write about life. I went out and got on the wrong side of guns and knives and got into plenty of trouble, and boy, does that help you. I do not think you can lead a sheltered life and be a writer.

"We still try to keep a balance, but I'm exercising my hard-earned right now to privacy. I do go to science fiction events once in a while, and my meetings with the science fiction public have become less difficult than they were in the beginning. I was really offended by the reception that the Silistra books got among science fiction fans originally; I was shocked that those readers weren't bright enough to realize what I



was saying, and it never occurred to me that a young crowd like that would be so prudish, when the books were very well received outside the science fiction community, including THE NEW YORK TIMES. I held that against them for a while. These days, I'm better in control of it."

She now plans to write a fantasy trilogy based on a character she invented for the 'Thieves' World series of story collections. But her real obsession, just lately, has been a novel outside of fantasy and science fiction altogether.

"When I wrote the Silistra books, I couldn't say the things I wanted to say about sexuality in a contemporary format. I would never have gotten a publisher.

"With the DREAM DANCER series, the things that I wanted to talk about were very scientific really, and the politics were very experimental, which entailed a science fiction format.

"But what I'm doing now is writing a high-tech contemporary novel, dealing with contemporary politics. I feel it's time for me to stop hiding. In a sense, I've been hiding behind the fantasy and science fiction screen, talking about my real-life society indirectly, in a critical way."



One last thing I have to ask -- and this goes right back to my experience with Janet Morris in the Author Pit, and some of the things she's said about the science fiction audience. Has she ever been called an elitist?

"Yes, I've been accused of that, but historically, a society becomes known by the best and the worst; the mediocre is forgotten. And one thing I don't intend to be is forgotten. One doesn't want to have to apologize for one's intelligence in a free society."

Profile * CHARLES PLATT

This profile will appear in DREAM MAKERS II, to be published in June.

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By Douglas E. Winter

Charles Platt is uneasy with the idea of talking about himself, and seems reluctant to start the interview. He fiddles with the air conditioner, then sits down carefully at the far side of the dining table, angling his line of vision away from mine. I ask him why, and he responds with the anxious geniality of a man facing root canal work: "Well, I wanted my own tape, to hear what I sound like. I've never done this before, you see."

The devil gets his due, it is said, and an interview with the interviewer seemed a fitting close to the Dream Makers series. Berkeley Books agreed when I proposed the encounter, so I find myself sitting across the table from Charles Platt, trying to recapture that first impression of him gained several years ago, when a call to an anonymous telephone number in search of NEW WORLDS magazine led me to his door.

After a confused taxi ride through Greenwich Village, I found Platt's apartment, nestled in a shadow-land alleyway of parallel rowhouses, originally built as servants' quarters to an estate house long ago vanquished by urban expansion. E.E. Cummings once lived there, and the lower-case, cloistered atmosphere of an artists' colony was unmistakable.

At the last rowhouse, an elderly tenant waved me upstairs as if she knew my destination. My knock was answered by the clank of a security bar. The door rattled inward, and Platt jack-in-the-boxed out of its shadows. An unruly shock of chestnut hair topped his thin face, whose sharp and boyish features were emphasized by mischievous eyes. "Hullo, I'm Charles Platt," he said, and

without further ado, ushered me in.

At first, I assumed that his apartment was temporary quarters -- there was a Spartan and decidedly whimsical quality to its furnishings -- but later I saw it as a logical extension of his personality. Books lined three walls of the living room, while a stereo and a stack of records (Dave Edmunds and Nick Lowe albums prominent) stood at the fourth. Beneath one bookshelf were boxes and boxes of Weetabix, a British cereal to which Platt is addicted (and which, along with other eccentric foodstuffs, he will carry on his travels, and even on occasion, when invited to dinner). The apartment's principal feature was a word processor (then, still an innovative tool for a writer); its decor tacky Americana, ranging from a plastic 3-D Jesus plaque to souvenir plates inscribed with verses to Mother.

As this curious mixture of apurtenances suggests, locating Charles Platt may be easier than defining him. If we look to the public record (and by this I mean the charmingly opaque two-line summations of book jackets), we learn that Platt was born in Scotland in 1949 ... wait, this one says Tehran in 1944 ... no, here it says a small English village in 1945, the adopted son of Lord Platt.

When I ask about the discrepancies, Platt seems more concerned that I should actually own the books in question. "I can never take anything totally seriously," he says, as if the proposition were not self-evident; but the interview proceeds with candor and a fair modicum of seriousness. At one point, he seemingly apologizes, his expression deadpan: "I

BY DOUGLAS E. WINTER

promised myself that I would do those considerate things that would make an interviewer's life easier."

With the question of birthdate unresolved, it seems inevitable that we begin at the beginning. Platt was born in London in 1945 (and Lord Platt, a distinguished physician, was his uncle). At age five, his family moved "to the horrible, dull, little town of Letchworth, where I went to a peculiarly permissive-progressive school which left all its students with a totally unrealistic view of life. They all expected things to be extremely easy when they left school because things had been so easy when they were at school. Some of them became disillusioned and bitter; others just remained perpetually naive, which is what happened to me."

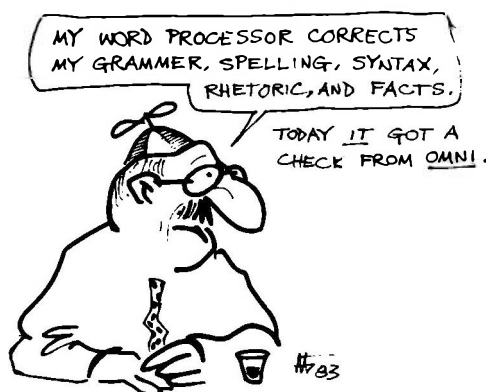
He describes his childhood as typical of a science fiction writer. "I was one of those people who read a book a day and believed in it in that peculiarly intense way that real science fiction fans have. I wasn't terribly popular socially. I was the youngest in my class -- didn't enjoy sports. My idea of recreation would be plotting a three-dimensional graph and cutting out the little templates and stacking them. I was also interested in astronomy -- anything which would entail getting away from being beaten up at school."

Writing science fiction was the inevitable next step. "I wrote comic strips when I was about 7 or 8, which I tried to sell to my friends at school. This didn't make me very popular or very rich, but I had big plans. I tried to sell a few stories when I was 18 or 19, sending them to NEW WORLDS, which at that point was a slightly more literate imitation of the American science fiction magazines."

In 1965, Platt entered university at Cambridge, intending to study economics, but he quickly dropped out and moved to London. "Almost coincidentally, Michael Moorcock took over the editorship of NEW WORLDS. I sent him my fourth story, which he liked very much and bought. And it was a cover story, a nice way to break into print." (Platt prefers to forget that his first professional sale was in 1964, to NEW WORLDS' companion magazine, SCIENCE FANTASY.) "It also turned out that I was living in an area of London about two blocks from where Moorcock was living which was very serendipitous, as Brian Aldiss would say." Platt became the de-

signer and later production manager for NEW WORLDS, writing little science fiction because of the workload. He supported himself by writing "ridiculous soft-core nonsense," and also played keyboards in several "obscure" rock bands. When Moorcock left NEW WORLDS in 1969, Platt took over as editor.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, NEW WORLDS was the focal point for a loose-knit group of writers who brought a brief and startlingly unwelcome "new wave" to science fiction. Platt is still possessed by the idealism of those times: "Largely as a result of NEW WORLDS, I discovered other literature which lacked the imaginative component of science fiction but nevertheless was equally challenging to the imagination."



"So I was woken up to the fact that most science fiction was not terribly well-written, and did not have any great insights into the human psyche -- which is something you ignore when you're sixteen years old, because at that age, you don't have many insights into the human psyche either. But as you mature, you begin to realize, with a little encouragement, the areas that are not covered by conventional science fiction. And I'd always been interested in anything new or experimental, so the idea of experimenting with fiction was just fascinating. I never had the built-in notion that there should be limits to things. There weren't any rules at school, so why should there be any rules in fiction? It always struck me as perverse that some of the older writers felt that you could speculate on almost any topic, but when it came to writing your speculation, you had to stay within very rigid stylistic limits. You should be able to do whatever you like, to try to extend your mind or imagination or tastes as far as they will go."

Was there a feeling of manifest destiny among the NEW WORLDS

writers, of bringing a real change to science fiction?

"No one would have said so, of course, because we didn't want to seem too pretentious; but nevertheless, there was. There was also a sense of 'us versus them,' which was happening in all the arts and in politics. The 1960s were the first time in history that youth had been given much power in anything, and I was youth at the time. We had our music, we had our clothes. I wanted us to have our literature, too. And NEW WORLDS was the focus of what was new in this respect."

"We didn't think that we were going to take over the world, but we did think we could push science fiction in our direction a bit. And to some extent we were right; although I never imagined that this slow slide back into conventionality would occur. I thought that innovation in music and writing was just going to keep on growing outwards and upwards. It never occurred to me that people would really prefer to go back to the same old stuff after they'd had a taste of more innovative and challenging material. People read science fiction to be surprised, so why would people prefer something less surprising?"

When asked what happened, he shakes his head, honestly bemused. "I don't know. I tend to draw analogies with music. Music is no longer a very potent force, but in the late 1960s a lot of people were drawing energy from it. The Beatles really did inspire people, taking this crass form of popular music and adding orchestras and doing what they liked -- breaking all the rules and getting away with it. And when that all fell to pieces -- when that band split up, and Jimi Hendrix died, and Bob Dylan had his motorcycle accident and came back giving us country music -- that was incredibly disillusioning."

"Then, of course, the anti-war movement was successful; and there is nothing like success to defuse things, because you no longer have anything to fight against. And a lot of people got scared. I think Dylan's retreat from all those angry lyrics of the 1960s was a classic case of someone just getting scared by what he had opened up. Also, you know, people get more conservative as they get older, and that's another thing I do not understand. So the decline of innovation in science fiction, I think, was wrapped up with all of that."

Between 1966 and 1970, Platt wrote four science fiction novels. "I never really had much of a sense of direction. So in addition to doing what I thought was a serious novel, *THE CITY DWELLERS* -- (composed of his first sale to *NEW WORLDS* and four other stories, forming a near-future chronology) -- "I had this tendency to do jokes. *GARBAGE WORLD* was the first joke; in fact, its original title was *TURD FROM THE SUN* -- just designed to be a totally anal fantasy, since I was known to have an interest in that kind of bad taste. And then *PLANET OF THE VOLES*, and other things equally embarrassing which I just couldn't resist." (Among the "other things" that Platt dismisses is one of his best novels, *THE GAS*, a post-apocalypse satire written for the renowned publisher of erotica, Olympia Press. A recent attempt to reprint the book in England saw copies seized by police as obscene.) Haunted by his failure to have written a critically or commercially successful science fiction novel, Platt rages against the thought of being judged solely on his early books: "They just sounded so much fun. I never imagined them lingering on years later to embarrass me."

Platt left England in 1970, resettling in New York City. The reasons for his move "are contained in any Beach Boys or Chuck Berry song -- you know, 'I wish they all could be California Girls' or 'Hot dogs and hamburgers ... back in the U.S.A.' All these national cliches of course, turn out to be true. People talk more bluntly over here, are less reserved. It is a country which, up until now at any rate, hasn't throttled itself with its own history. It's still willing to change abruptly and quickly, and I like change. And I also like cities, and I think New York is probably the most visually exciting city to be in, and I get recharged just be riding my bike around town."

He traveled extensively through America in the 1970s, and "wrote some undistinguished novels in order to finance an itinerant lifestyle." In 1972, he was appointed consulting editor, specializing in science fiction, at Avon Books. He compiled their "rediscovery" list of science fiction classics, and persuaded Avon to publish some new issues of *NEW WORLDS* in book form. He resigned when Avon refused to buy Philip K. Dick's *FLOW MY TEARS*, *THE POLICEMAN SAID* because they disliked its title.

Platt has since spent most of his time writing outside of science

fiction, producing a versatile assortment of books, including *OUT-DOOR SURVIVAL* (a guide for young people), *SWEET EVIL* ("a fantasy of Mansonesque decadence"), and three installments of the *Christina* series of "soft-core" erotica. He was New York columnist for the *LOS ANGELES FREE PRESS* (as well as *THE FETISH TIMES*), taught evening classes at two New York colleges, worked briefly as a magician, and most recently has authored numerous game and utility programs for microcomputers.

In 1977, he published his best and most serious science fiction novel, *TWILIGHT OF THE CITY*, loosely based upon *THE CITY DWELLERS*. It remains his most substantial work of fiction, "notable for using economic theory as a way of building the future scenario." Since then, however, he has published only one science fiction story. "I was very disillusioned

THIS BOOK IS AN ACCURATE
PORTRAYAL OF OUR OPERATION,
BUT WRITTEN IN A CHEAP,
LURID, SKIFFY STYLE THAT
ROBS IT OF PLAUSIBILITY.



because that novel was exactly what I wanted to write at the time and it didn't sell. I've never been very good at dealing with having my work rejected or unsuccessful, so I gave it a rest."

He continues to view himself as a science fiction writer however: "It's hard to stop. I imagine it's the same if you learn country guitar -- no matter what you go on to after that, you still think in certain guitar-picking patterns. So I always think of myself as a science fiction writer, even though I've hardly done any of it, because that's what I started doing. I still get ideas for science fiction books. I've got ideas for about twenty science fiction books at least. I write them down and store them away ..."

Platt's major writing influences have been "Alfred Bester,

the great innovator of the 1950s and J.G. Ballard, greater innovator of the 1960s," as well as the late C.M. Kornbluth and Algis Budrys (*MICHAELMAS* was the novel of the 1970s"). He remains interested in most forms of experimentation in literature, but holds little hope for a near-term return to innovative writing in science fiction.

"American publishing and, to some extent, British publishing have changed so much in the last fifteen years. Then, science fiction was obscure to most publishers and they let their hireling do whatever he liked or she liked; but science fiction is now considered big business if you get the right formula, and thus it is becoming more like television than a small press -- those being the opposite ends of the artistic scale. So it's going to be much harder to do anything too surprising. However, small presses are going to become more and more important. As time goes on, there has to be some sort of reaction against increasing conservatism in the big publishers."

The problem is compounded, in Platt's view, by the lack of effective criticism of science fiction. "Most of it is inarticulate -- and not much of it is very critical. Most of it is saying, 'Oh, here's another good book in *The Shadow of the Torturer Series*. Jolly good. How pleasing it is to see such fine writing.' Well, that is not criticism: That is the sort of response that one gives when one's pleasure centers are inoffensively stimulated."

"It's a miserable job being a critic. You don't get paid much. You have to think at least as hard as if you were writing a short story. Few critics' works are going to be anthologized, so you are really writing something which is almost disposable. So it's not surprising that few good writers bother to write criticism. Why should they? They're much better paid and better loved for writing fiction."

Nevertheless, in recent years, Platt has returned to science fiction, primarily as a critic, to tilt at the windmills of its writing and publishing establishments. He assisted in a brief revival of *NEW WORLDS* from 1978 to 1980, financing, editing and designing one issue himself. In 1980, Platt began editing and self-publishing *THE PATCHIN REVIEW*, a "little magazine" that "is the only truly radical, skeptical voice within the science fiction field." The magazine presents serious criti-

cism hand-in-hand with unadulterated gossip and satiric tomfoolery. Platt's editorial tone has led certain writers and critics -- not a few of whom have been the subjects of its barbs -- to contend that he pursues controversy only for the sake of controversy. He reacts with hurt surprise: "Any area of the arts gets stale unless people try new things. People are not going to try new things if they are constantly congratulated for doing the same old things."

"I am not in favor of newness for its own sake, but I do get bored if there is a conspicuous lack of innovation. Science fiction should be a literature of surprises. We all know each other in this field, with the exception of a very few editors and writers. We naturally tend to be tactful socially, and even in reviews that are published in professional magazines. This is bad. It leads to complacency, and complacency leads to repetition, low standards, bad habits that are never corrected. So, I think honesty is an antidote. I don't see what is controversial about that."

"Good heavens, this country has freedom of speech written into its Constitution. It's another reason I live here. The country I came from does not have that guarantee, so I feel acutely that it's very important to be free to speak your mind. I'm always surprised when other people want to qualify that. They say, 'Oh, well, yes, I completely agree -- except of course, in certain circumstances.' And that, to me, is not a small difference at all. That is all the difference."

His adamance notwithstanding, trouble seems to follow Platt. In pursuit of his vague ideal of honesty (applied selectively, as witness his revisionist approach to his own history), he holds no truck with tact or diplomacy: "You know, without wanting to sound too profound, sometimes the truth seems more important than a friendship." Indeed, a friend of more than ten years' standing became so upset by his DREAM MAKERS profile that he threatened to seek an injunction against the first volume. They have not talked to each other since 1980.

What practical effect does he hope his critical efforts will obtain? Where would he like to see science fiction in ten years?

"I'd like there to be less of it. Some politicians scream, 'Get rid of the welfare chiselers.' Well, in my case, I don't object at all to people on welfare, but

there are certain writers who are on a kind of 'science fiction welfare' -- they're conceptual parasites, serving no useful function in creative or literary terms. I would like there to be less of this repetitive, derivative fiction."

"There is also a great need for good rational fiction, because there is so much anti-rational fiction being published. There has been such a retreat from science just because some of the things that science achieved turned out to have unpleasant side effects. We now have people who are against nuclear anything rather than being selective. As far as I'm concerned, having gone this far, science is the only thing that can save us. So this is all the more important now, to see stories which are proper science fiction rather than just whimsical fantasy or myth or whatever you want to call it."

YOUR MAGIC MIRROR
ATE YOUR FLOPPY DISCS,
YOUR MAJESTY!



"It's a question of just doing the job properly; that is to say, of making it rational -- as opposed to fantasy, which is not -- and writing it well. And the fact that it often has not been written well does not mean that that's what science fiction is, it just means it has not fulfilled its promise."

What about Charles Platt? Where would he like to be as a writer in ten years?

"I always wanted to be about ten different things. That's the whole problem. That's why, you know, 'jack of all trades, master of none' and all that."

"Part of me still wants to be a rock star. I saw Pete Townshend in a movie recently, and realized

that he represented my ambitions as of about 1966 -- and what had gone wrong? There are numerous figures I could think of who represented my different ambitions of that period. So it's impossible for me to say. My financial needs are modest, so long as I have this nice rent-stabilized apartment, until such time as the building falls down -- maybe sooner than we all think."

"I like writing science fiction. I think it's important, and yet even now when it's a commercial category, it's still an awfully small pond to be a success in. Wouldn't it be more interesting to be writing movies or to be a success in some larger category? Wouldn't we all like to be Stephen King, for instance, who not only has had his work made into movies but can now actually act in his own short stories for the screen? Sure, but this is Walter Mitty stuff, this is not real."

"It's very difficult for me not to get diverted. Somebody wants me to write a series of six children's books, for instance. I've never done it before, so it's naturally intriguing. There's another possibility of adapting computer programs to run on other computers. Unfortunately, there's not enough time to do all these things before you die; and, as one passes the age of 35, you stop thinking about how much time has gone past and you start thinking about how much time is left."

Platt's renewed ambition is obvious as he discusses his interest in completing a new science fiction novel by early 1983. "Doing the DREAM MAKERS volumes taught me a lot about how people who write successfully do what they do. And then I began to understand a lot more about publishing than I ever had. So I now feel I have a much better shot at writing something which will please me, something which will please other people too, and will perhaps be moderately successful."

I have no doubt that Charles Platt will follow through, quelling the inevitable distractions, to write his novel. He is a difficult man to know, an easy one to misjudge; but he is scrupulous in pursuit of his ideals, which have never faltered. His Swiftian streak, the penchant for satire and the seeming pursuit of controversy, is the raw nerve end of a deep-seated determination to better science fiction. He has kept his dream, as befits a dream maker.



LETTERS

LETTER FROM MACK REYNOLDS
Apartado 252
San Miguel de Allende
Gto., Mexico
January 3, 1983

'Sorry I've been so tardy in replying to your letter of November 11th. I was in hospital in Texas recovering from surgery involving cancer of the esophagus.

'So far as I know, I am not being blackballed by editors and publishers. In fact, I just sold four books, for reissue to Jim Baen of Tor. And my things are going quite well in Europe.

'What's evidently happened is that the current fans want intergalactic wars, feudalistic empires of the future in which the protagonist slaughters dragons with his laser sword. In short, the current generation of fans wants fantasy not science fiction. They were weaned on STAR TREK, STAR WARS and such, and mistake space opera for science fiction. The type of yarn in which I've specialized, and which was quite popular back in the 1960s and early 70s, is currently out of style.

'I'm still writing, as ever, and occasionally still place

shorts and novelettes in the magazines, although the last ten of my novel lengths are still to be sold.

'I think that one factor is that the current crop of editors and publishers are not of the old breed of science fiction folk. All the great editors -- Campbell, Boucher, Gold, Pohl and Bova and Schmidt along with them -- were SF writers themselves and born into the genre. They were science fiction editors. Too many of the current crop are fresh out of school and possibly never heard of our field until the first job that popped up was with some publisher who needed a secretary for the SF editor. Six months later and our johnny-come-lately has inherited the job!'

((A few days after he wrote this letter, Mack Reynolds died. His problems are over, but the writing and editorial problems he experienced will continue. For a professional writer with courage, with something to say, the future doesn't look too bright.

((Who would have thought that Mack Reynolds, the most popular writer of science fiction a few years ago, could have accumulated ten unpublished sf novels? Are we to believe that the readers who so liked and purchased his novels suddenly, en masse, disappeared? Or is it more likely that some editors got sick of his writing, his politics, sociology, style, and decided he was therefore out-of-style and not writing what the newest readers wanted?

((The buyers of Mack Reynolds novels are still out there, waiting. And some smart editor, with a long view and some tenure (or expectation of tenure) will buy those ten novels from the Reynolds estate and make a lot of money over the years.))

LETTER FROM GREGORY BENFORD
1105 Skyline Drive
Laguna Beach, CA 92651
January 7, 1983

'Fascinating winter issue, from the Budrys romp to the Laumer and Carr interviews. It is good to see Laumer coming back after an incredible struggle and displaying the old verve.

'I am afraid Darrel Schweitzer mistakes me for a fantasy hater. For that matter, I think he mistakes Spinrad as well, and probably Platt. My arguments about the difficulty of using fan-

tasy notions in an SF context were set out in PATCHIN REVIEW and I need not repeat them here. I don't really disagree with Darrell about the long tradition of fantasy (though he stretches the argument a bit). Seems curious to see him labeling us "reactionaries" and then beating the pulp-it about how fantasy is old as the hills, goes back to Shakespeare, etc....

'Again he ventures the argument that critics of the avalanche of sludge fantasy are somehow "afraid" of the fantasy reading experience. Come now! There's plenty of sump-pump emotion in SF and dark visions, too. Reading fantasy is a different procedure, in a way, but not that far from reading any imaginative literature, including SF. LeGuin's mumbo-jumbo to the contrary, I don't think any elitist definitions define why people read fantasy (superior emotional range etc. etc.). Different doesn't imply better or worse.

'Similarly, his asking if I could write something equal to THE ONCE & FUTURE KING is apples and oranges again. T.H. White couldn't write TIMESCAPE and I couldn't do his work, either. What's valuable about writers is their differentness!

'I persist in thinking, though, that SF -- when it's good -- requires more actual thinking than good fantasy. Why? Fantasy can skate by on a higher emotional gloss, stylistic effects, mood, etc. -- all virtues which the SF audience isn't much tuned to, and won't accept as the main content of their reading. They want ideas and plot -- the two hardest things to do in fiction, even more important than constructing believable characters.

'I like to see all this talk about the glacial shifts in our field; they're healthy. I hope Darrell's editing ventures pan out as well as they sound, and welcome his ruminations. You do keep the animals stirred up ...'

((Here I go putting my foot in it again, but I suspect strongly that fantasy--the new fantasy genre with its medieval orientation, its supernatural aspect, and its string of "strong female characters" is aimed at, and bought, mostly by young women. I suspect that because science is a "man's work" category in our society, and because girls are subtly discouraged from entering it, science fic-



tion is also, subtly, a man's/boy's genre, and girls/women have adopted fantasy as "their" genre. And editors have picked up on this and tried to accent it, exploit it.

((Science is hard and cold and cruel and rigid and inflexible. It invokes a probably frightening, unknowable future. While fantasy is softer, warmer, more secure, knowable, limited, and because it is impossible-of-being-ever-real, not frightening. Fantasy deals more with human relationships. Science fiction deals more with wars and male dominance.

((Does that fly, or should I put it back in its cage?))

LETTER FROM DARRELL SCHWEITZER
113 Deepdale Road
Strafford, PA 19087
February 1, 1983

'To explain what I mean by fantasy writing techniques, there really are such things. Such as, for instance, basing the entire metaphorical structure of a story on a known myth or fairy tale. This is usually done best in fantasy. What Greg Benford was complaining about, when referring to THE SNOW QUEEN, was that Vinge had let the fairy-tale resonances dictate the plot, rather than science-fictional logic. This is an example of fantasy techniques influencing science fiction, not very successfully according to some people.

'Actually, we can see the beginnings of this sort of thing in the New Wave era. All those myth stories are essentially fantasies, however many transistors there might be. THE EINSTEIN INTERSECTION is fantasy. The fantasy boom of today has its roots in Delany and Zelazny and LeGuin as much as in Tolkein, I think.

'But to be more specific: Frequently in fantasy, and only in fantasy, the entire story can be based on a kind of literalized metaphor, which would be gibberish in science fiction, because science fiction represents a whole other form of storytelling. (In essence, Heinlein is right; science fiction is a form of realism. Fantasy, I would add, is not. It only incorporates the techniques of realism selectively, sometimes uneasily.)

'For instance, the plot of A WIZARD OF EARTHSEA has to do with the "shadow of pride." Quite literally. It is something conjured up by the hero in a moment of hubris, and it stalks him throughout the book. In the end, Ged stops running away, and faces what he has done, and absorbs the shadow into himself.

'Another very good example is Dunsany's conception of Elfland in THE KING OF ELFLAND'S DAUGHTER. It isn't quite a place, but something sensitive persons can glimpse in the twilight of evening and a few (perhaps aided by magic) can enter. The hero does and makes off with an Elfin princess, but later when she can't adjust to earthly things, and sails off to Elfland on the wind, the hero goes searching. But he can never find Elfland again because the Elf King has withdrawn his borders, leaving "a space that would weary the comet," in which you might hear snatches of forgotten songs or find things you'd lost long ago. But when the hero is elsewhere, "Elfland came racing back, as the tide

over flat sand," and in the end, when everybody gives in completely to a kind of pagan wildness, Elfland washes over the mortal country, separating it from Earth entirely.

'If you try to make science-fictional sense out of either case, you can't, and miss the point entirely.

'These are not just examples of ideas. You could make science-fictional ideas out of both instances. Perhaps psionic thought-projection (or a monster from the Id) in LeGuin, and other dimensions or time portals in Dunsany. But this would deprive the books of their meaning. In both, something which would be a mere figure of speech in either mainstream or science fiction becomes something much more through an a-rational (not irrational) structure to the story, which is a little akin to allegory, but not allegory. One of the few science fiction novels I can think of that has this characteristic is Zelazny's THE DREAM MASTER. Otherwise it is a fantasy technique. I would call the way the central concept of a book is realized, and the way a book achieves its meaning a technique. (In the same sense that satire has specific techniques of exaggeration, for instance.) Technique is more than just plot, character, scene structure, dialogue, etc.

((Oh, okay. I would call those elements fantasy structure or fantasy themes. But wotthehell.))

'In fact, there are techniques unique to science fiction, most of which were invented by Robert Heinlein, and have to do with integrating the background of an imagined future or whatever into the story in an unobtrusive manner, so that the events and characters seem natural to the setting. Mainstream writers frequently do badly in science fiction because they have not mastered these extra techniques. Then again, mystery fiction has specific techniques beyond the basic ones of narrative.

'The specific fantasy technique I mention is not new. You'll find it a lot in medieval romance. SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT is very much put together that way -- it is not quite allegory, but its meaning shapes the story in a specialized way -- for all that the narrative technique is that of alliterative verse rather than the novel.

'Guess what. I'm on the preliminary Nebula ballot. I haven't got the slightest chance of winning

(it's a fantasy story from the worst-circulated issue of AMAZING in history), but it would be nice for publicity purposes to be on the final ballot. Sigh.

'Arnie Fenner is right that my comments on F&SF's art are a little too sweeping. I guess I over-react because I automatically expect excellence from F&SF, and many of the covers have been less than excellent. The imitation Magritte art has become a home-grown cliché, though of course that is not the entirety of what F&SF publishes.

'As for the Davis magazines being art-directed by an Idiot, I don't retract that. Most of the covers still strike me as poor, though I think they've gotten the Idiot house-broken by now. Stanley Schmidt in particular, has been notably successful in getting ANALOG to look like a science fiction magazine again. But in the beginning, ANALOG probably suffered more than IASFM. The first "new" cover, April 27, 1981, shows an op-art bald Dracula with a fuzzy black sphere hovering over his head. It communicates nothing of what the magazine is about. The cover following has a dolphin on it. It could just as well be a cover for SCIENCE DIGEST. The July 20, 1981 cover seems to show a Pueblo Indian pissing over a ledge. The September 14, 1981 cover shows a large cigarette filter masquerading as a spaceship (I think). One of the contributors in that issue, very proud of being published in ANALOG, told me once that he rapidly became ashamed of showing off the issue to his relatives, who would take one look at the cover and just laugh.

'About the same time IASFM published a very distinguished issue, containing a Tiptree novelet later to be nominated for awards and the best Lafferty story in years, but all this was deftly concealed behind a bleary pink cover showing a vaguely-defined white sphere. That's all. My theory at the time was it was an embryonic golf ball.

'Really, these are among the worst and most grotesquely inappropriate covers in the entire history of the field. That first ANALOG cover may be the very worst in the entire run of the magazine, or at least going back as far as the Clayton issues. And I know the readers hated them, because I saw the letters they wrote, which were about 15-1 against. There were an extraordinary number of them too. You rarely get much letter response about covers.

YOU PULL THE PIMENTO OUT
OF THE OLIVE, COUNT TO THREE
AND THROW!



'Next to this anything F&SF ever ran is of course among the world's greatest masterpieces of painting. The post-Scithers IASFM has improved somewhat, though there are still serious lapses. The FOUNDATION'S EDGE issue looks like a copy of TV GUIDE. The covers mostly seem to be an attempt to imitate the random recycling of surrealist art in OMNI. Curiously the most recent issue I have seen (April, 1983) has a crude, cluttered attempt at a science fiction painting on the cover. It's no worse than what you'd expect on the cover of, say, a Manor book, but I would expect more from a major SF magazine.

'It seems to me that covers on books and magazines both have been deteriorating sharply in the past few years. The best thing I can say about IASFM covers is that they are better than they were in 1981, and recently they haven't been getting worse.'

LETTER FROM JOHN HERTZ
236 S. Coronado St, #409
Los Angeles, CA 90057
24 January 1983

'Actually, I liked BATTLEFIELD EARTH. I said so in a review for THIS HOUSE. It's a fine adventure story in the best pulp manner, the kind of thing Hubbard was always good at. I enjoyed watching the story roll on past the first good curtain line, where this kind of novel usually cuts off. It was entertaining and even funny, another characteristic of Hubbard's writing and one too rare in the pulp genre. Too bad you quit reading before you finished it. You would have liked the Galactic Bank.

'Andy Porter was quick to wail how terrible it would be if fuggheads praised EARTH because they liked Scientology. I don't hear anyone sounding off about fuggheads carping at EARTH because they didn't like Scientology. Including you, Geis. That column in last issue's "Alien Thoughts" was pretty cheap. As Darrell Schweitzer pointed out, when Hubbard got the idea he had come up with something that could save the world, he had the good manners to go off by himself and do something about it. He never wrote long preachy novels that stuffed his theories into fiction. There aren't any Scientology lectures in EARTH, either.



'''God!''', you said, "I wish I was thirteen again!" If the pleasure of reading -- or writing -- a book like BATTLEFIELD EARTH has to be given up then, it's a rite of passage I'm glad I never went through. Some things are worthwhile because they're tasty and fun. Predictable? Of course, EARTH was predictable. So is a hot fudge sundae. There's cold vanilla ice cream on the bottom, and hot chocolate sauce on the top, and the only question is how to get just the right combination into your mouth at each bite. EARTH had good humans, and bad aliens, and a terrific assembly of dangers and problems and silly gadgets. (It also had bad humans and good aliens, but they were just the cookie garnish.) The hero even had a horse he loved more than his girl! I'm convinced Hubbard dreamed up a semi-agrarian future just so he could work that in.

'The mundane world is still self-conscious about using its imagination and enjoying itself. The two together are almost too much for it to bear, and the increasing need to do both in daily life stirs a reaction that naturally falls on us. Mundane criticism constantly tries to impress on us that, even though we're stfnal, we can still be all right if we'll only be thoughtful. In our moods of susceptibility to this bullroar we feel embarrassed by pulp writing. We want to assure ourselves that we know how childish it is, and that those of us who are truly mature are beyond it. If anything

is childish, isn't it being so concerned about whether we're respectable? The mundanes know they are not on solid ground. They keep turning to circuses, to Zorba-the-Greeks, and by God, to us for refreshment. If we seek to be like them, we have only to decide that it's beneath our adult dignity to like to play.'

((I can't argue with you. I liked what I read of BATTLEFIELD EARTH up to the point I stopped reading. I stopped because I prefer fiction (now) to be more realistic and 'adult'. The same scene-by-scene plot could be written by a different writer, in a different style, and I might hail it the greatest novel ever written. A word here, a detail there, an attitude change elsewhere... I claim no superior 'taste' or status for my preference. BATTLEFIELD EARTH may be the best pulp-style sf adventure ever written.))

LETTER FROM LARRY NIVEN
3961 Vanalden Avenue
Tarzana, CA 91356
January 18, 1983

'I woke on a November Wednesday to the thunder of hail mauling our roof.

It was disorienting. I'd gone to sleep in Southern California! Things like that don't happen

here ... unless this really is the onset of the Ice Age. Hail and rain were filling the pool and spa and making piles of white ice all over the grounds and the golf course across the street.

'I lived four years in Kansas and I've seen bigger hailstones. But I never saw a hailstorm to top this one. There were still piles of ice here and there next morning.

'The hailstorm and following storms damaged a power plant downhill from us. We were without power for more than 24 hours. The house temperature dropped to the fifties. We lived by candlelight and lanternlight. The battery lamps held up well enough to read and cook dinner by. We wore three layers of clothing, and two to bed: the water bed lost heat too.

'When the power came on, Fuzzy leapt to her feet shrieking triumph. "POWER!" I told her they'd put her away if she could not shed this schizophrenic dream.

'We've been losing power intermittently ever since. I can't talk without my computer.

'We've got to build orbiting solar power plants, now. They'd collect sunlight that was on its way to interstellar space, convert the power to microwaves and beam it down, raising the Earth's heat balance. I never said that there wasn't an Ice Age on in Gil the ARM's time, or Beowulf Shaeffer's.

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'Putting in a new floor disrupted our lives more than the hailstorm. Installation involved everything out of the living room. Sofas and tables and bookcases and books wound up in the hall and the bedroom, blocking any path to anywhere. The TV set that gets the Z channel had to go too. Thus I missed seeing UP IN SMOKE, perhaps my last chance in this life. Jerry Pournelle keeps raving about it -- funniest movie he's ever seen -- particularly now that I've missed it --

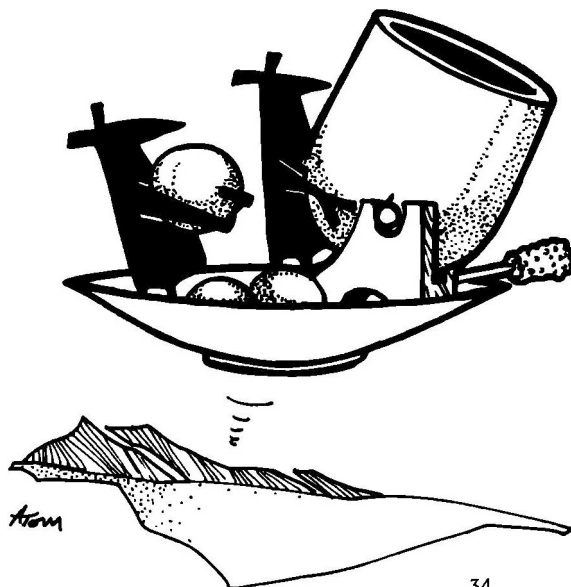
'I do like the floor, and so does Fuzzy.

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'RINGWORLD is getting popular.

'The Ringworld comic book project, years defunct, rose from the dead in 1982. The artist involved is Larry Todd, the creator of DOCTOR ATOMIC. Picture Doctor Zarkov (Flash Gordon's companion and forebrain substitute) as a drug addict: That's Doctor Atomic, the only hard-science-fiction character in the underground comics universe.

'By now Larry Todd and Kevin Dwayne both know more about the Ringworld than I do. This by no means uncommon. So do the people from Chaosium Inc. who are involved in making a Ringworld role-playing game. They've all quizzed me for details on known space, at the Chicago Worldcon and at the Octocon. There are inconsistencies and they had to be resolved.



We did the best we could.

'The comic book (Kevin still wants to pay off in Jamaica Blue Mountain coffee, and that's fine by me) went into temporary coma when one Robert Mandell appeared on the scene. It seems to have recovered: Kevin and Judy-Lynn Del Rey (Ballantine/Fawcett/Del Rey Books) have come to an agreement. Nothing is certain yet.

'Robert Mandell (ITC Entertainment) wants to make a Ringworld feature-length animated film, using Japanese animators, final cutting to take place in New York. This looks real. He's had the experience, cutting Japanese SF cartoons until a story line appears. Judy-Lynn wants to take me to the premier. If a Ringworld animated movie appears, the comic art should look like the movie art ... shouldn't it? It's all pretty diffuse. I haven't signed contracts for anything except the game. The game is real. Also, the game has been delayed

'Meanwhile, at ChiCon my primary Japanese translator, Takumi Shibano, showed me a bunch of Ringworld stuff from Japanese fans. The Teela Brown good luck charm he kept for himself, but he gave us Pierson's puppeteers done in felt which we hung on our Christmas tree; and two packets of sunflower seeds, which I have been afraid to plant. Slaver sunflower seeds.

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'Jerry Pournelle and I have gotten involved in some triple collaborations. I mean four such, with four different people, all at the beginning of their development. Maybe we're crazy. But if we don't know how to run a triple collaboration -- any more than anyone else does -- we're going to get plenty of practice.

'FALLEN ANGELS is a book Jerry and I have been wanting to write for years. We invited David Gerrold in because we need his kooky sense of humor ... evidently; by ourselves we have been unable to start it at all.

'The story involves a prox-mired future, one in which the space programs died all across the world, after a base was established on the Moon. The base is hanging on by its teeth.

'Then a couple of Angels crashland, far north, where the glaciers are marching (yes, the Ice Age has come into its own). They wouldn't have a chance without the underground. Sound familiar? But what's going to make it fun is that the underground is science fiction fandom.

'Steven Barnes and Jerry and I are writing of a colony on a world of a nearby star, and the monster that the prelim survey did not find (THE LEGACY OF HEOROT).

'Jerry and I and Alex Pournelle are writing a computerized role-playing game based on INFERNO.

'Jerry and I and Wendy All, the artist (and linguist, with some other talents too) are writing a comic book involving a civilization of evolved moles. She designed this universe long ago, with emphasis on the mole scientist, Avogadro. By now we've got a fairly extensive culture worked out.

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'THE INTEGRAL TREES is finished.

'The setting of this book, the Smoke Ring, is strange even compared to the Ringworld. I described it to some San Diego fans in July of 1981. I mailed copies of the manuscript off in December. Judy-Lynn says she can't schedule it for publication until March 1984.

'Bob Mills will auction the serial rights unless he takes my last letter as a declaration of war. He just sent me a form letter announcing that he's going to start taking 15% instead of 10%. I wrote back telling him he wasn't.

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'My five-year-old computer died last week. It's been revived like Frankenstein's monster, using parts from Marilyn's machine downstairs. From the way Tony Pietsch acted while he was trying to fix it -- the machine he built himself -- it's more than obsolete: it's like something dug out of an Egyptian tomb. He'd forgotten everything about this type of relic. It took him three days, and he had to keep going in after something else that had fouled up during repairs.

'I've just sent him a check for two new computers, duplicates of Jerry's equipment, as usual. In theory these should enable me to write like a literate jackrabbit. In practice ... I don't notice Jerry writing that much faster.

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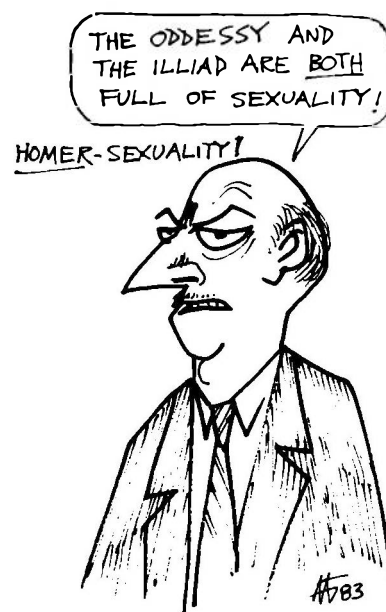
'This kind of summary- of-the-year is more traditional in December. I never do it anyway; but it's been an unusual winter.'

((Sometimes I get the premonition that the last writer on Earth will

be the man with a wood stove, a lantern, and a manual typewriter. At heart I don't trust computers. I've stood by and watched too many people try to use those computerized tellers on the outside of banks and savings & loans ... they push the buttons, curse, wait, wait, wait, wail, cry, scream, and never, ever, get their bank/credit card back.

((Thanks for the update on your writing.

((I don't think my writing system would fit with a word processor: I constantly make so many changes, and need to see the various former versions of a line so often, that a word-processor /printer would be a constant frustration.))



LETTER FROM CHARLES PLATT
THE PATCHIN REVIEW
9 Patchin Place
New York, NY 10011
January 29, 1983

'One of your correspondents doubts the existence of John Steakley. I met Steakley at the world fantasy con in October. Nice guy. From the South.

'If you change SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW, change it in the direction of fuller coverage of small press publications. To me, this is the most valuable part of the magazine, because I can't get this information anywhere else. You could write four paras on each magazine instead of two.

'I always enjoy your commentary, anyway. Even when you em-

bark on lunatic causes such as the defense of wife and child beating as "natural activities." What I object to, as you know, is the self-righteous stupidity of Darrell Schweitzer, and the vast amount of space he takes up. Had it not been for disapproval voiced by others in the room, I would have gone further in my preliminary attempts to strangle him at the Philadelphia convention. But Ginjer Buchanan (rightly) told me the SFWA suite wasn't the best place. Her sentiment -- that my timing was bad, even though the cause was a worthy one -- was echoed by others. I guess I'll have to wait till I next encounter DS outside a convention hotel. I trust I won't have to wait too long.'

((Anything man does is natural. Anything we do is human. Talking about 'inhuman' acts or 'unnatural' behavior is ridiculous. Some of us may not approve of some behavior, at this time, in this society, but let us, as sf writers and commentators, have the perspective to see mankind for what he is, truly, and accept him/us/ourselves.

((Anyway, I wasn't, as you know!, writing a brief advocating child and wife abuse. I was objecting to its exploitation and (I suspect) promotion by the agencies and individuals who profit from it.

((Darrell will just have to learn self-defense or carry a weapon, I guess. Either that or stop writing reviews/criticism.))

LETTER FROM DARRELL SCHWEITZER
113 Deepdale Road
Strafford, PA 19087
February 11, 1983

'While waiting out a blizzard I chanced to notice a typo in my review of EYE OF THE HERON. On page 41 of SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #46, third column, the line reading "It's about the problems besetting society" should read "... besetting a Pacifist society."

'Now the review seems a lot more coherent.

'Steve Gallagher's article is very ironic coming just now, when the best seller lists, both PUBLISHER'S WEEKLY and the NY TIMES, have been dominated by SF/fantasy for months in the hardcover category. In this week's PW, eight out of the fifteen hardcovers are SF/fantasy or related. This has been going on since the

summer. At one point it was seven out of the top ten.

'Uh, I don't think SF writers need worry about ghetto limitations anymore.

'All publishing is in the form of genre these days. "Mainstream" publishing no longer exists, and has not for perhaps decades. There are science fiction genre books, literary genre books, and bestseller genre books (such as what Irving Wallace or Judith Krantz or John Jakes might write). Most of the books on the bestseller list are bestseller genre books, often belonging to a subgenre like the generation saga. But it has become increasingly obvious that SF books can take on bestseller genre characteristics and do this, as Heinlein and Asimov especially have shown, without losing their SF characteristics. They can go all the way to the top.

'Pity the poor Literary Mainstream writer. His genre is getting closed out. SF consistently outsells "serious" mainstream, and consistently outnumbers it on the best seller lists.

'SF has the added feature that it tends to stay in print for decades, while best seller genre books do not. (Will anyone be reading Judith Krantz in 40 years? I bet they'll be reading Heinlein and Asimov.)

'The whole idea of an SF writer achieving success by "breaking out into the mainstream" is faulty. An SF writer can go all the way to the top within SF. In fact, a mainstream writer, who writes the kind of stuff critics call "literature," has a considerably smaller chance.

'"Breaking into the mainstream" results in the discovery that their ghetto is not nearly as roomy or prosperous as ours.

'As for why Stephen King used a pseudonym on an SF book, well, any successful novelist builds up the expectations of his audience. Suppose Tolkein had written a tough-guy murder mystery with explicit sex in it. Suppose Lin Carter, today, were to write a book comparable to Tom Disch's ON WINGS OF SONG. A pseudonym would be in order.

'It is admittedly difficult for a writer to cross over between genres, from mainstream into SF or SF into mainstream. But that's just the way things work. If Joyce Carol Oates were to write an unmistakable science fiction novel, and have it marketed as such, of course it wouldn't do as well

as her other books. She is a big name in her own genre. In science fiction she would be a beginner and would sell like a beginner.'

((There is something of a best-seller formula, too, of course. Publishers are doing more and more demographics research to better pinpoint readerships and special interests. If a distribution/access system could be put together which could alert every reader of his/her special interest books as they become available, it would pay a publisher to develop sub-sub-sub-sub genres.

((It's true that an author could and perhaps should write under different names for different genres. I have had word that at least one editor was prejudiced against a novel of mine which was non-sex because he associated me with sex novels. So in future it may be necessary or tactically appropriate for me to write under another name to overcome that 'taint'. I am beginning to understand how some actors feel at being typecast.))



LETTER FROM MARK PROSKEY
1217 West Albion
Chicago, IL 60626
February 7, 1983

'My opinion of the current science fiction scene (re 1982) evokes a feeling of deja vu. Arthur C. Clarke, Isaac Asimov and Robert Heinlein (in backward order of preference) are back with a vengeance. FRIDAY can be considered a summation of Heinlein's past "future" history (from what I gleaned from the excerpt in

IASFM ANTHOLOGY). Clarke and Asimov have written sequels to their own past "future" history series.

'A nice summation of science fiction lies in the opening of Jim Kornbluth's THE SYNDIC:

"No accurate history of the future has ever been written -- a fact which I think disposes of history's claim to rank as a science ..."

'To me that just means the past doesn't lie -- the future does.'

((I think a good working knowledge of sociobiology is indispensable to understanding past history (in spite of the warping and special-interest editing and censoring that goes on) and for a realistic view of the future. It's impossible to know enough science, geography, politics, psychology, sociology, etc. to track mankind more than a year or two into the future as far as specific event is concerned.))

LETTER FROM JACK R HERMAN
WAHF-FULL
Box 272, Wentworth Bldg.
Sydney University
Australia 2006
2 February 1983

'Thanx for SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #45 with the brilliant Brad Foster wrap-around cover. It is the best cover that you've had for some time and demonstrates that BF is one of the coming fanartists. How long before he is hugoed?

'I agree with your comments re the stupidity of the splitting of the fanzine Hugo into two categories. The arguments about what is a fanzine can go back and forth. I note there is no mention in the Amendment about "trading," for instance. To me, one of the major things about fanzine editors is that they trade, at least for decent zines, as you seem to. As it is now, a zine with a 900 circulation that is sold, but not for much, that has limited advertising and doesn't pay its staff, qualifies for a hugo even if it doesn't trade, publish LOCs or engage in any other fannish practise, so long as the editor keeps his fanzine income below his other income. To me, the fanzine hugo has never really been available to fanzines, but has been dominated by large circulation zines, some of which are or may have been fanzines. The change in rules which

institutionalises a hugo which you, Brown, Porter and Co can share around, doesn't make the voters any more likely to know one fanzine from another: larger circulation zines, or those with "names" will still win. If we want a fan peer award for fanzine work, it must be an expanded and improved FAAA Award.

((If LOCUS wins the Best Fanzine Hugo this year, for the fourth year in a row, you can drop STARSHIP and SFR from the equation: it will simply be The LOCUS Award. As LOCUS's circulation continues to rise, and as SFR's circulation continues to drift lower (because I don't advertise any more) LOCUS's lock on the award will tighten. And, let's admit it, LOCUS is a fine, well-edited fan magazine.))

'I disagree with your analysis of the economic situation -- we do have rather different philosophical bases for our views -- but even if it were heading down the gurggle-hold at an increasing speed, why try and panic the populace by sensationalising the whole thing. Isn't the press bad enough in beating-up the death throes of capitalism? Don't we have enough causes of anxiety already?

((You subscribe to a variation of the kill-the-messenger syndrome beloved of dictators, kings, and ostriches. If I'm right about the looming economic disaster then I shouldn't say anything about it for fear of spreading panic and despair? Would you feel that way about a man who saw a fire spreading in the basement of a crowded theater and who kept quiet for fear of scaring people and making them depressed?))

'Laumer certainly is portrayed in an interesting way by your writer: the angry old man of SF or somesuch. It is good to see the undercurrent of humour that is the main virtue of his fiction is also there in the man.

'A big bouquet to the malignant Elton T. Elliott: His movie reviews are spot-on (at least, for those I've seen and that's about half) especially his analysis of ET which has been overrated here as much by the mainstream critics as by the SF reviewers.

'Budrys does a good job of re-defining pulp. Unfortunately, he is working very hard against a negative connotation that the word has acquired as a result of its association with shoddy writing, lacklustre editing and quick-sell

techniques. Most people associate the pulp houses with the sort of image that has a couple of eccentric writers using the same outline for a story and rewriting it 3 or 4 times as historical fiction, then romantic, then western and finally put on Mars with blasters as SF. It may not be true but the myth may be stronger than the truth.

((If you examine the plots of some of the newer fantasy novels you'll find a very familiar sf plot: the boy/girl transported from here and now to a strange land of magic and king/tyrant politics and/or a terrible problem requiring a Quest. It's a matter of substituting high sorcery for high tech. And that isn't very far from a boy/girl brought to the wild west to confront a greedy land baron or outlaw gang. I see nothing wrong with that; there are only so many basic plots. It's all in how well the writer writes---pace, character, style, detail, plausibility...))

'Schweitzer sees two Heinleins: the competent writer and the closet didactic who comes out of the closet in his later book. While I admit that there is that problem, he had the wrong two Heinleins: No. 1 is the technician and engineer who is more interested in the backgrounds than in the very thin characters who act in them. He wrote a good series of future history and a number of good juveniles. Heinlein No. 2 is more concerned with metaphysics than physics: He wants to believe that Bridey Murphy really was reincarnated (see EXPANDED UNIVERSE) and that there is life after death. He started very early in RAH's career: BEYOND THIS HORIZON, and surfaces every so often, well so in places like THEY and ALL YOU ZOMBIES, not so well in FARNHAM'S FREEHOLD, ruining STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND, controlled in THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS and uncontrolled in I WILL FEAR NO EVIL. The two Heinleins are integrated well in TIME ENOUGH FOR LOVE but the metaphysician takes over too much in THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST. FRIDAY is no better than mediocre Heinlein #1 with very little of the second Heinlein. It does not stand up well when compared to earlier adventure works by the author but is OK: Mediocre Heinlein is better than most writers' best.

'Another few glitches to add to Brown's list: Why, when much of the armed forces are female and

the protagonist is female, does he have to fall back on the old "in defense of the poor woman" excuse when Friday murders the cop who was threatening Janet? What happened to the phone number the Boss gave Friday just before he died?

'I think your reply to Sandy Paris-Barger indicates that your thinking about sex roles and women writers is very retarded. "Wimpy" fantasy has a long history when compared to gore-filled fantasy, just as in mystery fiction there are schools of both gentle detection and of hard-boiled dicks. Women have little to do with it. Both men and women write in the divergent fields of SF and fantasy.

'Donald Lambert is a master of understatement: Not only has Nos- tradamus not been 100% accurate, he has only ever been accurate in retrospect. The most laughable of all is the suggestion that any of his centuries refer to Hitler. "Hister" is a name for the Danube. Enough!'



LETTER FROM JOHN SHIRLEY
110 Bis Rue Ordener
75018 Paris, France 259-9192
January 30, 1983

'Thanks for the SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW and thanks also for the announcement of the birth of my kids. Wife and twins are fine; the boys are looking more and more identical, are developing at the same rate, and show personality characteristics in common which makes one believe in the inheritability of character-traits.

'Dave Langford's John Sladek interview was superb. Langford also writes very intelligent reviews. You should publish him often.

'It's perhaps late for me to enter into the is-fantasy-worth-while controversy. I gotta have

my say, though, being a fantasy writer, of sorts. Most fantasy, especially sword and sorcery, is dross. It may be a good thing in that it provides a service, it gives a certain kind of reader a certain kind of escape. But it should not be given critical attention, or award recognition, unless it really transcends its field. The same goes for most so-called "high fantasy." But there are important exceptions. The exceptions are those fantasy novels which are meaningful. Brian Aldiss in PATCHIN REVIEW recently observed that the main trouble with current SF is that it has no core of real meaning. No deeply-felt theme motivating the author. Just a lot of distracting fooferah. Same goes for fantasy -- the fantasy worthy of recognition is that which is meaningful beyond simply distraction/escape. Anything by Michael Shea, for example -- this brilliant writer deserves all the recognition we can heap on him. And have you read THE PRINCE OF MORNING BELLS by Nancy Kress? A Timescape. Pure High Fantasy, but also high quality -- so high, in fact, this woman is a talent comparable to T.H. White. This book is not only meaningful, it's wonderfully entertaining. And it was her first!

'Of course, the aforementioned White proved one can write fantasy that is not "backward-looking" (though his ONCE AND FUTURE KING was set in medieval times, it is a very contemporary series and a relevant one). C.S. Lewis' brilliant Perelandra books were almost too packed with meaning. The century's most under-rated writer, James Branch Cabell (actually, it's tough to say who is the century's most under-rated writer ... so many possible candidates ... like me ...) wrote genuine High Fantasy that sparkled, fascinated and always instructed.

'It can be done.

'A late response to Orson Card: Your assertion to the effect that most critics are purblind sticks-in-the-mud is simply self-serving drivel. A few critics are so. Maybe too many who have been influential. But the best critics -- there are many good ones -- are "participatory" readers who are able to be, on another level, objective. A good critic is holistic, reads on several strata, and loves the prose he takes the time to deeply involve himself in criticizing. Check out Fielder, Bates -- or one of the originals, the great Samuel Johnson.

'Geis -- could I buy a few of

your used synapses? Mine are shot to hell.'

((Of course the superior writer who puts "guts" or "content" or "keen insights into the human condition" into his/her work will be praised and widely read. The critic who can appreciate and plant GOOD STUFF signs in such work is also to be praised and widely read.

((The trouble with so much genre writing is that it depends almost completely on the structure and genre elements to carry it along. The unique human element which can make it "real" is usually missing.))

LETTER FROM JEFF PARKER
735 North 116th, #D-13
Omaha, NE 68154
February, 1983

'This is a warning. You will not get away with it. I caught your intent in a comment in SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #46.

'It is obvious that you do not understand modern liberal economics. You must realize that a basic tenet of liberal economics is that need confers ownership. i.e. If I need a house, fuel to heat the house, a car to get me to work, medical services, etc. it is my right and the government's duty to provide for my need regardless of cost. To carry this to the underlying principle, the need for any product or service provides ownership.

'Thus the warning. You noted that you may stop supplying your wit, charm and SF news in SFR. You had better not. After all, I own you.'

LETTER FROM BRIAN FERGUSON
183 South Orchard Drive
North Salt Lake, UT 84054
February 7, 1983

'You mentioned in SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #46 that you are growing increasingly dissatisfied with "the present mix" in SFR. Fine. Change things. Experiment. Dissatisfaction is the father of progress. I subscribe to SFR not for any particular ingredient (with the possible exception of "Alien Thoughts"), but because I know Dick Geis will give me an interesting mix.

'My perspective of science fiction has recently received a jolt. My first published story, "Critique," is in the April TWILIGHT ZONE. (Why do they put out the April issue in January?) Of course I feel like a new mother and I want everyone to tell me how perfect the baby is. The thing I wasn't quite prepared for is the fact that of all the people I know, only one found the story on their own and called me. What good is fame and glory if you have to tell people?

'More important than personal egoboo is the larger issue this event raises in my mind. What is the significance of science fiction? Is it Important with a capital "I"? Is the world different because SF exists? As an English teacher I am painfully aware that very few people read. However, my friends and associates read constantly. Most are highly literate. Yet I can count on one hand those who even knew there was a TWILIGHT ZONE magazine. ("Really? Is it connected with the old TV show?")

'It is difficult for me to admit that science fiction is not Important with a capital "I". It transformed my life twice. The first time was in fourth grade when Heinlein's HAVE SPACE SUIT, WILL TRAVEL turned me into a would-be astronaut. The second was at age 14 when Kubrick and Clarke's 2001 introduced me to the world of philosophy. Yet, I suppose I must face the fact that those of us who love science fiction are but a minority within a minority.

'There is still a question remaining however. Is the world different because science fiction exists? Certainly science fiction has had a strong effect on some individuals, but have these individuals then had an effect on the world greater than their numbers would suggest? An interesting question. I suspect the answer might be yes. "What if?" is a very powerful concept. It may even be the "mother" of progress.

'Consider this -- Who is more likely to be a science fiction reader? A plumber or a nuclear physicist? A politician or a computer scientist? Am I oversimplifying? Perhaps. But then why do our bombs and computers work just fine while our pipes and our government clog up and smell?'

((Sure, sf is important. It changed my life in 1937, and my changed life resulting in my writing in PSYCHOTIC and REG and SFR has in turn (I am assured) changed the

lives of some of my readers. Everything has an impact in so complicated a skein of event/action/reaction that it's impossible to unravel in detail the "influences" that are most important. Your story may already have affected someone in a crucial manner that may never be realized. Take comfort in that, my son, and sin no more.))

LETTER FROM D. CAMERON
POB #23003
Minneapolis, MN 55423
February 16, 1983

'I am aware of your erotic SF novels. I have, however, only seen the advertisements, which means that I have not read them. I am wondering if the erotica is on genitalia and making love or sex? Or if you have extraordinary characters and situations which are not necessarily sexual or erotica or genitalia? I am looking for creative characters in SF, characters which are not related to 20th century America. Frigyes Karinthy was inventive in VOYAGE TO FAREMIDO AND CAPILLARIA. Philip Jose Farmer was somewhat inventive with the snake creature in the vagina, but this was inventive only in the use of a genitalia and not in character or story. Perhaps I am not making myself clear.

'I am looking for SF that is inventive in character and situation. The use of genitalia is not inventive in itself, nor is a different method of sex in itself. Are you or any of your readers aware of any inventive characters roaming the pages of SF that stand, not lay, above the erotic or humane din?'

((Uhhh.... How about Heinlein's last few books? He used sex in some strange computer/human combinations without being erotic.

((My sex novels are usually erotic to a degree. Or are at least intended to be erotic. But I'm not writing sex novels anymore.))

LETTER FROM HOWARD COLEMAN
411 Ridge Crest
Richardson, TX 75080
March 20, 1983

'Enclosed is my renewal for another two years of SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW. Many happy returns of the day. Filling out the resub led me to wonder just how long this has been going on, which

thought in turn led me to my dusty, slightly disordered shelves (um, archives, you understand, archives). As I slowly peeled away the layers of history, a fascinating (not to say bewildering) variety of covers and paper styles passed before me. I crossed the boundary between the New Series SFR and The Alien Critic. Shortly I encountered the Great MesoSeventies Extinction, a gap of (for me, anyhow) five years in which there was nothing. Then, SFR (Old Series) Number 41, dated -- 1970? Is there perhaps some ageing mechanism of inks which induces printed dates to change?

'Oh, I dug, heedless of the risk to life and psyche. Finally, the issue with which I took my seat on your personal rollercoaster. The first fanzine I ever saw: SFR Number 31, with a lovely green Fabian cover and, er, striking pink pages and a Fabian center fold, and, and ...

'And a date of June, 1969, for Christ's sake. This cannot be. It's bad enough when awkward dig-its start appearing in my age, but for my first copy of SFR to be fourteen years old is shocking. (Yeah, I know, you put out thirty issues before that. That's your problem, fella.) Just a little more of this, and I'll start to believe that I might someday get old. (No, Richard, at this point you chuckle, appreciative of the

little joke. You do not snort derisively.)

'Well, whatever the mistake, I'm sure it will be cleared up. At any rate, it looks as though SFR is no longer just a friend, but an old friend, and a valued one. Sometimes I wonder just how you manage to keep the issues coming, but I trust that you know that the effort and the results are appreciated.

'One thing is certain. As long as I have "Alien Thoughts" to read every few months, I will never succumb to terminal cheerfulness.

'Have I not been paying attention, or has it been a while since we've had a good brawl? I fear that, despite the best efforts of Mr. Elliott, he may not have started one. (Speaking of fights, that SFR #31 had in it the echoes of a really good fight, the New Wave Wars. Spun off some wonderful side battles, too. Gosh, there was even a letter from J.J. Pierce. Now, there's a name I hadn't thought of ... Where's that other parenthesis? Ah! There it is. Back to business.)

'Mr. Elliott seems perturbed more by a state of mind or a way of dealing with reality than by a fictional genre. Just as you fail to recognize a fantasy writing technique, I fail to recognize an outlook on life common to all fan-



tasy. Both purveyors and consumers of SF or fantasy can have very different perceptions of their universes and of their roles in those universes. On the average, as members of society, they tend to adopt society's world-picture. I think that the way in which our society as a whole views the future and society's ability to cope with that future has been pretty accurately reflected in SF&F writing over at least the past decade.

'That outlook is certainly not a confident one. A good deal of doubt has seeped into the conventional wisdom about our ability to avoid the Big Screwup. Leaving aside the question of whether that assessment is correct (or, at least, any more correct now than it ever would have been), if we accept that large numbers of the folks for whom all those bright, shiny paperbacks are intended do think that way, it isn't very surprising if the Competent Hero is no longer all the rage.

'But, while I don't go out of my way to read books known to certain elves or wizards or other such exotic fauna, the ones I have encountered seem no more or less inclined to such a pessimistic/realistic (choose one, depending on your own protective coloration) attitude than do current SF works. The basic question of whether the protagonist can solve problems (be the problem a soon-to-be-critical nuclear pile or a peevish dragon) or is just there for the reader to observe as Greater Forces push him or her around can be answered in either way, in either type of fiction.

'Maybe I have missed the point of Mr. Elliott's objection. Anyhow, I still don't think it'll make much of a fight. There are some interesting questions about this fantasy binge, though. Why did it occur, and why in this particular form? There's been a great deal of fantasy written in the past that doesn't fit in with stories about gnomes or Christian demonology. After all, "One Ordinary Day, With Peanuts" is fantasy, and we don't seem overrun with stories of its type.

'Mr. Schweitzer's contention that a deluge of Sword-and-Sorcery constitutes a return to traditional literary norms is entertaining but unconvincing. In its original setting, folklore attempts to explain more of the world than you can see from the highest rooftop in the village. It is a part of the society that generates it. Our own society's attempt at that explanation would seem likely to

me to be something as unique to our society as that folktale was to its. I think that purposes served by fantasy in the past are as likely to be served in our time by science fiction as by fantasy.

'For that matter, I think you could argue that our society's folklore is highly science fictional (as opposed to fantastical) in nature. I'm not talking about anything published in ANALOG or F&SF, you understand. No, if you want to find the modern folktale in its natural habitat, you must hazard a trip to the modern village square: the supermarket. Buy something. Anything will do. (Take plenty of cash, though, just in case the falloff in inflation vanishes while you're in the store.) As you wait in the interminable Express Lane, you'll get your chance to brush up on modern folklore, and on what is probably the most widely read science fiction in the country. Where? Why in the pages of the National Enquirer (or like publication), of course. "Kidnapped By Saucer Men!!!!!!" and "Pictures of Big-foot!!!!!!" are the names of our modern fairy tales. (Well, the old ones weren't so great before the Grimms and H.C. Anderson polished them up, either.) They serve the same purposes in our society that the old tales served in theirs. Along with "The 200 Miles-per-Gallon Carburetor that General Motors Killed," they explain the workings of our world and add a touch of excitement to crushingly dull existences. And they are not fantasy. They're science fiction. Makes you feel swell, doesn't it?

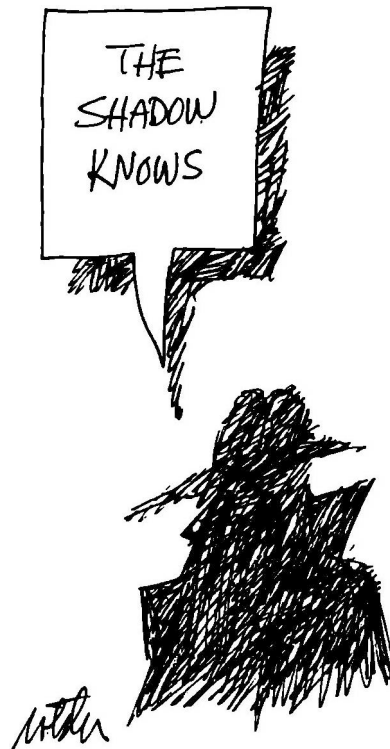
'So why all this dragons and magic and co.? I don't know. As someone pointed out, at least they are reading something. And with THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION reporting that its readership seems to be aging about one year per year, we need all the good news we can scrounge up.

'I suppose we could take up the question of Hero-As-Prime-Mover versus Hero-As-Billiard-Ball, but I limit my beating of dead horses to one a day.'

((Why has fantasy become a big thing in publishing? A cynic would say that a year or so ago a lot of editors, publishers and writers looked upon the success of Le Guin and Donaldson and said to themselves, "I think I'll write-buy-publish a big-many-line of fantasy novel(s)" and lo---now---all that is on the stands and in the pipeline and we're stuck with it until the fad

passes or the sales figures kill it or (horrors) confirm it as a money-making genre. We'll take a look around and see how many corpses litter the landscape, a year from now.))

((Yeah. I'm more and more viewing my life as would a geologist---strata of fanzines, novels, living in Portland...Venice...Portland... Venice/Santa Monica...Portland... The era of Carol, the era The Many Women...the era of Paulette. A life of some variety and change. Yet with continuing underling strands of sameness, drives, talents. I'm not a person, I'm a civilization.))



LETTER FROM ROY TACKETT
915 Green Valley Road NW
Albuquerque, NM 87107
12 February 1983

'Herro Lichard:

'Or words to that effect.

'At the ASFS meeting last night Pat Matthews, for reasons beyond the ken of mortal man, handed me copies of THE ALIEN CRITIC #7,8 & 9 and I glanced through them when I got home in the wee hours and sort of compared them to SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #46 which arrived on the scene here a number of days ago. There are some differences, aren't there? For one thing those issues of AC were filled with controversy, for the most part between the evangelical femin-

inists (no, that ain't a misspelling) and the crusading anti-feminists. About the only thing controversial in SFR these days is Schweitzer discussing generic fantasy. Maybe it is just as well.

'As a book buyer I am distressed to see the lessening of competition in the publishing business because it makes it so much easier for the remaining companies to get together to raise prices. Paperbacks are selling for \$2.50 to \$2.95 now and a graph of my purchases vs. prices would show mirror images: as the price goes up the number of books I buy goes down. I gave up purchasing hardcovers a couple of years ago. That statement needs modifying. I gave up purchasing new hardcovers. I still buy used books and from the remainder houses. Being one of the ancients I am beyond the stage of rushing right out to buy, say, 2010: ODYSSEY TWO for fifteen bucks. I can wait a couple of years for it to either show in paperback or hit the shelves of one of the used book stores. Now I realize that buying used books does not do the writer any good in the matter of royalties but paying out 15 bucks doesn't do me any good either. Undoubtedly book publishing has fallen on hard times due to a variety of economic pressures but those pressures are working on the readers, too.

'Incidentally, I wonder if there's been any speculation on how much the growing percentage of illiterates in the population is affecting the book business?

'That'll curl your hair, Dick. I've read a couple of articles in the popular press recently that speculate, seriously, that inasmuch as people are getting more information from the electronic media the ability to read orally is not necessary any more. Some of this new age sociology is shudder-producing.

'Some of it seems borne out in

the huckster rooms at recent conventions. Posters and buttons and other visually oriented items sell well. Books and magazines gather dust on the tables.

'Which is why I go to fewer and fewer conventions. Film and television freaks bore the hell out of me.

'Be that as it may there is already some serious speculation that the hardback fiction market is just about finished, having priced itself to death. Is the paperback market all that far behind?'

((It is said that the big bookstore chains are dictating price now: they have told publishers, it is said, that they will not handle any paperback books (with a few hot exceptions) priced over \$3.50. Readers are not willing to fork over four buck or more for a paperback. This in turn is feeding back to the writers who are being urged/required to not write books longer than about 100,000 words.))

LETTER FROM RONALD R LAMBERT
2350 Virginia
Troy, MI 48084
March 7, 1983

'Civilized ways are superior to primitive ways, of course; that is why civilization evolved. But that is not the primary reason why European colonists took over America from the Amerindians so easily. Darrell Schweitzer fails to consider what really did in the Amerindians -- ecological upset caused by the European settlers. By that I do not refer to the wholesale leveling of forests or slaughtering of buffalo, I refer to the imbalances in nature the Europeans caused by their very presence.

This is not as mystical as it seems. The settlers brought many things to this continent that did not belong here. Most people know that dandelions, many insect pests and various blights came from Europe. What they often forget is that the colonists also brought with them the deadly diseases of Europe, such as smallpox. Europeans, having been exposed to such diseases all throughout their history, had developed some resistance to them. But the Amerindians had never before been exposed to the diseases of Europe, and had no resistance. Thus whenever a smallpox epidemic swept through the colonies, colonial villagers suffered a 10% to 30% death rate, while at the nearby Amerindian villages the death rate was 90% to 100%. This is what wiped out many east coast tribes to the last man, woman and child. It was germ warfare -- inadvertant, but nonetheless effective -- that enabled the European colonists to win America so easily.

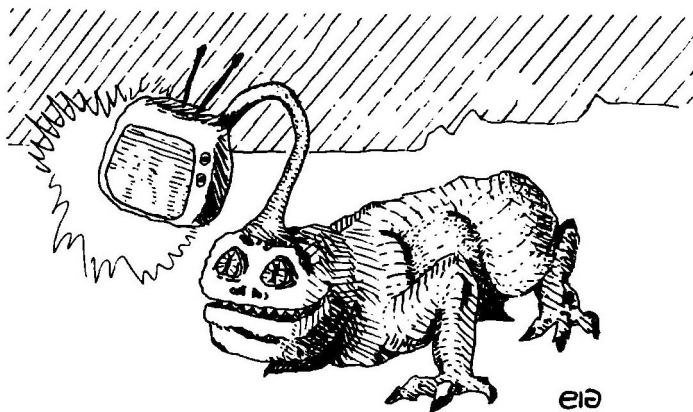
'One might wonder why there were no equivalent American indigenous diseases to devastate the Europeans. Perhaps it is because the Americas have not been inhabited by humans as long as has the Eurasian landmass, thus human diseases had time to evolve to a higher level of virulence in the Old World than in the New. That is only speculation. But it was unquestionably an ecological disaster for the Amerindians when the first Pilgrim set foot on Plymouth Rock.'

CARD FROM ROBERT BLOCH
2111 Sunset Crest Dr.
Los Angeles, CA 90046

'Many thanks for the latest issue! I gather Richard Wilson's piece is actually the transcript of a convention speech. If so, where and when was it delivered?

'I am tempted to get into the sf vs. fantasy and Elliott-vs.-the-world hassles, but time precludes. If you do decide to change SFR---and I don't blame you for the workload must be enormous!---perhaps you can manage to perpetuate it in present form until #50.'

((I will of course continue SFR until it reaches the point of such a small circulation as not to be worth continuing, or until my professional writing becomes so successful that SFR wouldn't be



interesting or important enough to me to continue it. The most likely change will be a gradual metamorphosis to a more personal zine...an expansion of "Alien Thoughts" and the letter column, primarily. I'm as curious as anyone as to what will actually happen.))

LAST WAVE

"THE LAST BEST HOPE OF SPECULATIVE FICTION"

Scott Edelman, Editor & Publisher
252 94th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11209

The 1980s do not look as if they will be very good years for speculative fiction. The field has forgotten the literary fruits of the New Wave, and fallen back into a commercial complacency. Gardner Dozois takes note of this in the March 1983 issue of SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE:

"Risk-taking is way down in many markets, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to sell literary-innovative works ... The market as a whole is also much more reluctant than it was a few years back to let authors get away with sex scenes, 'dirty words', controversial material, moral ambiguity or unorthodox stylistic technique."

This saddens me, for if these words are true (and few would call them false), then many stories that ought to be written will not be. Though there are some writers capable of writing well when writing well will not reward them, there are others who find it difficult to continue without a ready market.

But we should not give up hope. In 1982, the World Fantasy Convention awarded Italo Calvino the Life Achievement Award, and Gabriel Garcia Marquez, a writer of undeniably speculative fiction, won the Nobel Prize for Literature. Gene Wolfe is finally receiving the attention he deserves.

In such an atmosphere is LAST WAVE SPECULATIVE FICTION born.

I wish to publish the best the field has to offer. To distinguish my "best" from what another editor might intend, let me offer an extremely biased list of some of my favorite speculative authors:

Thomas Disch, Avram Davidson, Gene Wolfe, Joanna Russ, R.A. Laferty, Italo Calvino, Ed Bryant,

NIGHTMARE FROM THE END OF THE WORLD

Winged Shadows Of The Mind
Perched On The Cranium Vat
Azure Hooks Of The Soul
Virgins, Breasts Heaving, Glowing
With Satan's Fire Sacrificed
Steel R a k e s T

ear Down Mankind's cheeks

THE BURNT STARS CRY OUT
"Little man The Stars Are Not For You."
The Great Weapons Of Eons Past
SIT Out Their Stellar Fury

Step Into The Dead Space
At Your Own Risk
Horrors Untold
Retinas Searing
With Orion's Light

Perseus Beckons
The Sirens Of Sagittarius Entice
Mankind Into The W-e-b

LOOK OUT

Behind You Above You
All Around You

INSIDE YOU

They've Grabbed Your Mind
Castrated Your Future
THE PRIME MOVERS ARE DEAD
(Unable To Help)

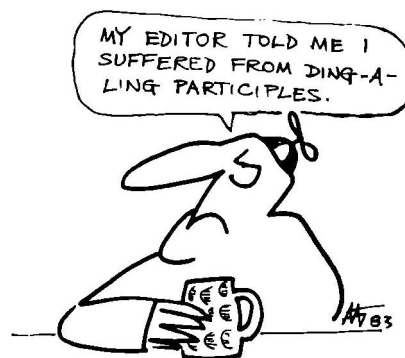
Surely Meekness And Humiliation
Will Follow All The Days Of Your Life
And Thou Shalt Dwell
With The DEMONS OF DARKNESS
dreams of light

F O R E V E R

---BLAKE SOUTHFORK

George R.R. Martin, Alice Sheldon, George Alec Effinger, Jorge Luis Borges, Kate Wilhelm ... I could go on forever, but by now I'm sure you get the idea. I'm looking to be the Paris Review of speculative fiction.

LAST WAVE will pay 2¢ a word or a minimum of \$100 on acceptance for First North American Serial Rights. Advertising and subscription rates will be announced shortly. I will attempt a quarterly schedule. The first issue should be published in the latter part of 1983, hopefully in time to debut at the World Fantasy Convention in Chicago.



THE VIVISECTOR

BY DARRELL SCHWEITZER

WHAT MAKES FANTASY BORING?

The above question is a puzzler. Last issue, I chose three fantasy novels at random and found them all dull, varying from mildly uninteresting to absolutely vapid. But the failings of the three books in question (A WIZARD IN WAITING by Robert Don Hughes, THE LIGHTS OF BARBRIN by Joseph Burgo and SHADOW MAGIC by Patricia Wrede) were all the common ones of bad writing and a lack of imaginative depth. None of them provided a huge amount of insight into those special characteristics which, when mishandled, can make a fantasy tedious when the writing isn't notably bad, and the plotting and characterization are on a level which would be at least adequate in other types of writing -- science fiction for instance. I've noted in the past that the best fantasies seem to be far better written than the best science fiction novels. This does not indicate an inherent weakness in the science fiction form, merely that fantasy has been around longer, has had longer to refine itself, and has attracted the attention of some of the world's great writers. Science fiction also started with much lower standards, even in its pre-genre days. Dime novel and pulp magazine roots were there even before Hugo Gernsback came along. Fantasy at the same time (say, the first two decades of this century), was a "literary" type of writing, which meant regular book publication and publication in higher standard "quality" magazines. You are not going to find any science fiction writer contemporary with, say, Arthur Machen or Lord Dunsany who is as good a writer as either of them. The reason is that, even then, the science fiction writer had the advantage of novelty. The fantasy writer did not. Likewise, you won't find any science fiction writer contemporary with Tolkien or Peake or T.H. White as good as they.

However, you will find science fiction writers quite as good as any fantasy writer active today. The problem with the fantasy field today, as I've mentioned before, is that it has sunk down to the

level of science fiction. It has become a genre. Lester del Rey, the Hugo Gernsback of fantasy, has done exactly what Gernsback did in 1926. He has identified the field in the public mind in terms of a handful of easily understood characteristics, and made those characteristics more important than the quality of writing, in effect lowering standards sharply.

But fantasy is a more fragile art than science fiction, precisely because it is not idea oriented. The ideas themselves carry little weight. The things that matter are the same ones that distinguish a really good poem from technically competent greeting-card verse. There are no halfway measures. A metaphor is either dead-on, providing genuinely profound insight or else it's just, ah, ... kind of interesting. A story that's only halfway to being intensely beautiful is, well, pretty, which is a different matter entirely. Allegory which is less than incredibly subtle is obtrusive and boring as hell. A sharp lowering of standards in fantasy has produced a lot of very boring books, some of which sell very well, probably because they still contain the quickly recognized elements which make this newly genreified fantasy appeal, perhaps for reasons more psychological and sociological than literary. But for those of us who have known the finest fantasies, that appeal certainly isn't very strong.

All of which brings us to this column's main selection. (Honest, folks, I was trying to be nice this time, but it just worked out this way!)

THE MISTS OF AVALON

By Marion Zimmer Bradley
Knopf, 1982, 876 pp., \$16.95

Surely this is the biggest disappointment of recent years. Here's a book I really wanted to like. It is a major reinterpretation of the Arthurian story, which is one of the most profound and

beautiful myths of our civilization. Bradley has certainly put a lot of effort into this. It is anything but a slipshod job. It is even in an abstract way, quite divorced from its merits as a story, interesting.

But, alas, it is not only boring, but monumentally so. I think in certain circles it will become another DHALGREN, the subject of "How far did you get?" parlor games. I couldn't finish it, try as I might. I then turned it over to H____, my captive Lowest Common Denominator reader. H____ is somebody who gobbles up DAW and Del Rey books. He doesn't want anything too demanding. He dotes on Lawrence Watt-Evans and James Hogan. He isn't adverse to long books. He also dotes on Stephen Donaldson. He also reads incredibly fast, and can get through the average novel in a couple hours. He isn't fussy about style or texture. I think he actually skims for "story," i.e. the broad outline of events, and little else. He reads very differently from the way I do, and demands different things from a book. He couldn't



finish it either, though he did make it 100 pages further in than I did. H_____ is also a Marion Zimmer Bradley fan, who has read all the Darkover books and is enthusiastic about them.

This gave me pause. I note that the book is on the bestseller lists. It is also getting good reviews for the most part. I am almost at a loss to explain this, but fear not, I shall try.

I think it's on the bestseller list for a reason the publisher is trying to hide. The jacket nowhere mentions science fiction. The only other book we are allowed to know about is THE CATCH TRAP. But, I think the book is selling so well because everyone who ever got hooked on Darkover went out and bought a copy, the same way everyone who had ever read DUNE or THE LORD OF THE RINGS or THE FOUNDATION TRILOGY went out and put various Dune sequels, THE SIMARILLION, and FOUNDATION'S EDGE quite solidly onto the bestseller list. SF and fantasy seem to have a staying power that popular mainstream fiction lacks. THE FOUNDATION TRILOGY came out in book form in the early 50s. How many mainstream bestsellers from those years are even in print anymore? But Asimov went clunking along, gathering generations of readers, until finally there were enough of them to have an enormous impact. This happening simultaneously to several writers is a partial explanation of why the New York TIMES and PUBLISHER'S WEEKLY bestseller lists have been dominated by SF and fantasy of late.

Marion Zimmer Bradley goes back a long way. Her books have been appearing for over twenty years, her short stories longer than that. They've stayed in print, gathering more and more readers. Now, suddenly there is a huge mass of them, all of whom rush out and buy this major new Bradley novel. Many of them will like it too, because it will remind them of all those earlier books. When you like a book enough, you don't want it to stop. Stopping is not something THE MISTS OF AVALON ever seems to do.

Now let me devote a paragraph to biases. It may shock you to learn that I've never read a Marion Zimmer Bradley novel before. This is for the most innocent of reasons. She's been around in SF for more than twenty years, but I haven't. It isn't humanly possible to read everything, or even most of everything, particularly if you want to explore other areas of literature too. I have lots of



Bradley books on my shelves, but I just haven't gotten to them. Simple as that. Right now there is a sizeable minority in fandom which refuses to read Bradley, the theory being that since there are Darkover conventions and Darkover fanzines and (as the phrase goes) "Darkover trekkies," anything with that kind of a narrow cult following must be pretty brainless. I don't believe that for a minute, but at the same time, if THE MISTS OF AVALON wows its readers by being just like Darkover only moreso, I am completely unmoved. I should also mention that I am biased in favor of a superlatively-done medieval fantasy, and am more than partial to King Arthur.

So why couldn't I finish the thing. Because it isn't superlatively done, that's why. THE MISTS OF AVALON is a perfect example of a book which is well enough written to be passable science fiction, but which fails completely because of the special demands of fantasy.

Something as familiar as the story of Arthur, Guinevere, and Lancelot and the fall of Camelot simply has to be great art or else it is wasting the audience's time. We already know what is going to happen. The experience has to be made more vivid than before, the insights have to be deeper, or else tedium sets in. I suspect this is how it was in all of literature prior to modern times. It used to be that storytelling was restricted to standard subjects. The audience of Homer knew the story of the Trojan war. Medieval audiences knew the Matter of Britain (Arthur), the Matter of France (Charlemagne) and the Matter of Greece and Rome. This be-

ing so, the would-be bard had to be really good, and nothing less would do. In our century the one writer who has been able to pull it off with Arthur is T.H. White. The real problem with THE MISTS OF AVALON is that it is nowhere near as good as ONCE AND FUTURE KING.

Of course is is not intended to be like White's masterpiece. Its plan is quite original, and as I mentioned before, interesting quite apart from its merits as a story.

This is the pagan women's version. Neo-pagans will want to read it to see their side get a fair shake. Women who will read anything with strong female characters in it, whether or not it is otherwise any good, will also no doubt be interested. And if you are interested in just how many new wrinkles the Arthurian story can develop, here's your big chance. This is certainly an original and quite well-thought-out version.

The setting is a quasi-historical post-Roman Britain, where Romanized (Christian) Britons and barbaric tribes of various sorts (pagan) must unite against the invading Saxon hordes. Sorcery is real and effective. The isle of Avalon, to which the dying Arthur is carried at the end, is a pagan place, where priestesses of the Earth Mother are trained. Morgaine (Morgan le Fay) studied there for years. But as the land becomes more Christian, Avalon becomes harder and harder to reach. Those without special powers tend to find themselves on the Isle of Priests (Christian) which co-exists in the same space. This is a nice conceit and one which could be made rich with symbolic resonances. But overall, it doesn't work, for a variety of reasons.

For one thing, Bradley seems determined to tell "what really happened," in the sense of providing the apparent basis for the late medieval versions of the story. She does this deftly with some of the names, Sir Kay being just Caius, Guinevere being Gwenhwyfar, but less deftly with incidents like that of the sword in the stone. Here Arthur merely snatches the sword of the previous king off an altar when he needs one in a hurry during a Saxon raid. There are many changes like this, all in the direction of the mundane, the ordinary.

The religious element is simplistically handled. I am reminded of those western movies made by guilt-ridden White directors who go to incredible lengths to depict everything about Indian culture as good, noble, pure, beautiful, sensitive, etc., and everything about White culture as crass, ugly, spiritually dead. That's how paganism and Christianity are contrasted. Anything pagan is good. Anything Christian is bad and a bit dull too. But the Arthurian story, for all it may have had pagan Celtic roots in the dim past, is quite inextricably Christian. Its beauty comes from Christian mysticism. Its tragedy comes from the Christian concept of sin. Arthur is conceived in sin, from the lust of Uther Pendragon. For all Arthur may try to be the perfect king, for all the knights may seek redemption in the Grail, the forces that bring them all down are set in motion before Arthur is even crowned. Without this you just have a long and complex story with a sad ending, not real tragedy.

Further, as H. points out, this version goes to such lengths to tell the women's side of things that it gets boring, because most of the interesting parts happen offstage. Alas, for whatever reason the women, Morgaine in particular, just aren't that central to the whole story. They aren't present at crucial moments. All considerations of fairness or gender roles aside, White did better by sticking with Arthur, simply because Arthur is more important.

My added objection is that the writing just isn't good enough to sustain a nearly 900-page book, let alone a 900-page book that repeats, yet again, the main Arthurian story. It's the kind of writing that wouldn't bother you in an Ace Double, or even a 250-page science fiction novel. (Or even a fantasy novel where the author is entirely on her own ground.)

It isn't particularly bad most of the time. Only some of the love scenes, which seem to be transplanted from one of those gold-embossed women's historical romances (with titles like LOVE'S TENDER PASSION or maybe LOVE'S PASSIONATE TINDER), are actively bad. They detract seriously, but aren't enough to kill a book of this size. What kills it is that there aren't any parts that are particularly good. There is nothing intensely moving or beautiful or frightening. Again, I'm not expecting this to be T.H. White, but here we have a 900-page book that is utterly humorless. White's humor gave his King a warmth Bradley utterly lacks. It also enabled him to orchestrate the emotional tone.

Go reread Chapter Eight of THE CANDLE IN THE WIND, the last section of ONCE AND FUTURE KING. This is the part where Guinevere is about to be burned at the stake for her faithlessness. Arthur, in agony over what he must do, knows it is his duty to watch the whole scene from a window. In charges Lancelot and company to rescue the queen. A fight ensues, and Arthur for all he knows that his knights are being killed, and that everything he ever worked for is being destroyed, feels an intense, if ambivalent joy. He cheers Lancelot on. We're able to forget for an instant how terrible this is, and when the queen is rescued, we are elated. But then word comes that Gareth and Gaheris, two characters we know well, rather innocent types who idolized Lancelot and were knighted by him, have been slaughtered senselessly, even though they were unarmed. The effect is devastating. There's no trickery, but the scene is an incredible emotional roller coaster.

Bradley hasn't got anything even a tenth as good. That is the real reason I was unable to finish THE MISTS OF AVALON.

THE UNBEHEADED KING

By L. Sprague de Camp
Del Rey/Ballantine, 1983
186 pp., \$9.95

Here's a fantasy that isn't particularly ambitious, but is completely successful at what it does. If you've read de Camp before, you need only be told that this is another de Campian romp, up to his highest standards. In a sense, there is a virtue in predictability. If you buy a de Camp book, you know you're going to get something worthwhile.

THE UNBEHEADED KING is the third in the Jorian sequence, which also includes THE GOBLIN TOWER and THE CLOCKS OF IRAZ. Our hero has suffered the misfortune of becoming king of Xylar. The Xylarians, you see, behead their kings every five years, and whoever catches the old king's head when the executioner throws it into the crowd, becomes the new king. But Jorian escapes, and has many adventures, always pursued by bands of Xylarians out to stabilize the political situation, since his sudden departure has left the kingdom in a muddle.

Most of Jorian's efforts this time have to do with retrieving his wife who was left behind in Xylar. Things just don't proceed the way they usually do in fantasy novels. De Camp parodies the form by making it more realistic, forcing more of the complexities of life into a type of story that tends to ignore them. Thus, when Jorian and his wizard friend are escaping in a demon-propelled flying bathtub, the demon gives out and they crash in a game preserve, they're promptly arrested for poaching. When Jorian hires another wizard to send a demon to fetch his wife and the demon botches it, a lawsuit results. In the meantime Jorian is haunted by a spectre that howls, "Pay your debts!" To raise money, he has to do something few sword and sorcery heroes ever consider -- work for a



living. One of his trades is story-telling, which enables de Camp to embed several amusing shorter narratives in the book. Most of them have to do with the follies of kings. There is even a technical discussion of the difficulties in consummating a marriage with a mermaid. Finally, when Jorian climbs a mountain and seeks advice from a noted spiritual master dwelling in a cave, the sage suggests bribery. This helps, but even then, things don't work out as planned. Alas for romance!

All of this is told in a spritely, witty style. The invention never slackens. There isn't a whole lot of depth but this is an ideal piece of light reading. You'll zip through it quickly and thoroughly enjoy it all the way.

The dustjacket by Darrell Sweet gets a few details wrong, but is far closer to the spirit of the book than were the bulge-and-biceps covers found on the first two books of this series. Conan-esque adventure this is not.

IN A LONELY PLACE

By Karl Edward Wagner
Warner, 1983, 265 pp., \$2.95

Karl Wagner is best known for his heroic fantasy series about the swordsman Kane, which I confess, has never appealed to me very much. But over the years he has published just a few contemporary-scene horror stories, mostly in WHISPERS and in prestigious anthologies. (Also, one in F&SF.) Now they are all collected, and the result is one of the best horror collections in years.

I think what Wagner has managed to do is combine the best elements of the classic supernatural story of Machen, Lovecraft, James, etc. with the modern variety. Unlike the Victorians, he doesn't have to hint at matters sexual, but at the same time, unlike a lot of bestselling horror novelists I could name, he still knows the meaning of restraint. He makes effective use of setting and atmosphere. While he is completely uninhibited when he needs to be, he doesn't pile on the action and gore to hide a lack of substance.

The best story in the book is "Beyond Any Measure" which I reviewed a couple issues back when it was in an issue of WHISPERS. It's an absolutely stunning vampire/reincarnation tale, which



quite literally mixes Victorian and modern elements in a London that has room for both moldering graveyards and cocaine parties. Also superior is "The River of Night's Dreaming," an exercise in controlled ambiguity, in which an escaped madwoman (or is she) thinks she has found shelter but instead sinks further into terror and hallucination wrought by the evil influence of THE KING IN YELLOW. (The imaginary verse play which corrupted the characters in the Robert Chambers book of the same title.) Both stories take their titles from THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW and give you an idea of the kinky range of cultural influences you're likely to find in Wagner. (They're both "erotic nightmares beyond any measure," as Frank N. Furter would remark.) ".220 Swift" is an interesting variant on Machen's "The Novel of the Black Seal," which makes good use of Wagner's North Carolina background. His "little people" are the "ancients" of Appalachia folklore, who supposedly dug mines in the hills then vanished as the white men came. His ending is quite the opposite of Machen's, and will surprise you. "Sticks" is one of the few good Cthulhu Mythos stories in recent years.

Wagner borrows from Lovecraft, Machen, Chambers, etc. but he is not a derivative writer. He makes this material his own. He's making a definite contribution to a tradition, rather than just aping it. If he ever writes a novel like this, it'll be something special.

Reference:

THE GUIDE TO SUPERNATURAL FICTION
Everett F. Bleiler
Kent State University Press
1983, 720 pp., \$55.00

Another one of those massive reference works, intended for li-

braries. This one describes and evaluates 1775 books from 1750 to 1960 in great detail, covering every story in a collection if they're all fantasy. It isn't definitive. These books never are. There are always books that should have been included but aren't and others that are and you wonder why. But a great mass of valuable information is assembled here. This book should be the first place you turn to when researching an author. The judgments, while notably opinionated, are for the most part sound. The only error I've found so far is one story omitted from Lady Asquith's THE SECOND GHOST BOOK. This is the sort of thing that results from a lost file card. The only entry I find strongly questionable is the one on Peake. Bleiler doesn't like Peake, does not consider him to be really fantasy, and dismisses the GORMENGHAST TRILOGY quickly, covering only Mr. Pye in detail. He misses "A Boy in Darkness" and the short stories entirely.

I don't think casual readers will want this, but it's of considerable value to the serious scholar and bibliophile.

URANIAN WORLDS, A READER'S GUIDE TO ALTERNATIVE SEXUALITY IN SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY

By Eric Garber & Lyn Paleo
G.K. Hall & Co., 1983
177 pp., \$28.50

If the present flood of SF reference works would have been hard to believe twenty years ago, this one would have been inconceivable. It's an annotated bibliography of gay and lesbian-interest SF and fantasy, shading off into related areas of alternate sexual styles, feminism, alien sex, etc. Good scholarship, lucid annotations, if a trifle specialized. I almost wish the authors had bothered to include John Norman. I'm sure their annotations would have been choice. Once in a great while they slip and hold some 19th Century author to task for not having late 20th Century liberal sensibilities. Overall, level-headed, and sure to be the definitive guide in this area for a long time to come.

SMALL PRESS NOTES

BY THE EDITOR

THE CASTLE OF THE OTTER By Gene Wolfe
Ziesing Bros. \$16.95, Feb., 1983.

This 117-page hardcover book is about the writing of **THE BOOK OF THE NEW SUN** whose parts, **THE SHADOW OF THE TORTURER**, **THE CLAW OF THE CONCILIATOR**, **THE SWORD IF THE LICTOR**, and **THE CITADEL OF THE AUTARCH** have all now been published.

This book is absorbing and a delight; it provides all kinds of detail about **THE BOOK OF THE NEW SUN** in a conversational style, and it slides about into anecdotes and asides about this and that...writing, military theory, how writers and editors work together...

Alas, this wondrous book is now sold out. All copies of the trade edition and the signed edition are gone. For many this review is an exercise in sadism. But there may be a second edition or three. There should be. Get a copy if and when.

RIGEL #6, Winter 1982, \$2.50

Edited by Eric Vinicoff

Features include an editorial, letters, an interview with Poul Anderson, opinion by Debbie Notkin, film review and commentary by Alan Dean Foster, science by Dr. Dean R. Lambe.

Stories by Jack Wodhams, Richard Lupoff, Karl Hansen, Charles Sheffield, and Marcia Martin.

This is a large-size, professional sf magazine in intent and execution (though some of the interior illos are amateurish, a bit too clumsy), with full-color, very fine cover artwork and graphics.

Subscriptions are \$8. for four issues from Aesir Press, PO Box 2523, Richmond, CA 94802.

Try an issue. Everything is professional except as yet the circulation.

WEIRDBOOK #17, \$5.00

Edited and published by W. Paul Ganley. PO. Box 149, Amherst Branch, Buffalo, NY 14226.

WEIRDBOOK has been published since 1968, I believe, and is a labor of love, a hobby, and an outlet for surprisingly good horror fiction.

This issue has a superb cover by Stephen Fabian and fiction by Edmund Shirlan, Jessica Amanda Salmonson, Carolyn White, Darrell



Schweitzer, Steve Rasnic Tem, Ardath Mayhar, and Brian Lumley... Damn near an all-star lineup.

Good to fine artwork by many, including two (besides Fabian) often seen in SFR: Allen Koszowski and Bruce Conklin.

WEIRDBOOK is a quality magazine.

GRIMMOIRE #3 and #4, \$2.50

Edited and published by Thomas Wiloch, 8181 Wayne Road, Apt. H2084, Westland, MI 48185.

Weird, surrealistic, horror... strange little magazine. Stories, poems, collages, articles & misc.

RINGTIME By Thomas M. Disch
Toothpaste Press, \$10. April, 1983.

Another short story in the odd booklet, high-quality paper/covers format [4½ x 9½], with typeset text.

The story itself is of course intriguing, dealing in blackmarket total-experience recordings and an apparently washed-up creator of recordings.

Disch is clever and acute and funny, but somehow this story ends on a blah note for me; I expected a kicker, a resolution, and it sort of trailed away....

Order copies from Bookslinger, 330 E. 9th St., St. Paul, MN 55101.

COMPOUND INTEREST By Mack Reynolds
NESFA, \$13.+ \$1 postage & handling. February, 1983.

This is the annual volume published to commemorate the Guest of Honor of Boskone. Mack Reynolds was the GoH of Boskone XX and this book is perhaps more appropriate and valuable because of his recent death.

Contained within are 11 short stories and one poem. Included are his first published story, "Last Warning," and his latest work, "Idealist," written especially for this volume.

This is a limited edition: 200 numbered, slipcased, autographed; and 800 copies numbered from 201-1000. Excellent dust jacket by Wendi Pini, the Official Artist at Boskone XX. [The boxed edition was sold out as Boskone and is not available.]

Address for the Reynolds book and for the NESFA Indexes described below is: NESFA, Box G, MIT Branch Post Office, Cambridge, MA 02139.

THE NESFA INDEX TO THE SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINES AND ORIGINAL ANTHOLOGIES, 1977-78, 1982.

Edited by Ann A.B. McCutchen

The 1977-78 volume indexes 181 volumes including 114 issues of 12 magazines and 67 original anthologies. It costs \$7.00 + \$1. for postage & handling.

The 1982 Index, same price, covers 103 volumes of which 77 were issues of 10 magazines and 26 were original anthologies.

THE GHOST OCEAN

POEMS OF HORROR AND THE SUPERNATURAL
BY ROBERT E. HOWARD

Published by Vernon Clark, 4900 Jonquil Lane, Knoxville, TN 37919.

\$5. softcover, \$10 hardcover.

Send postage for the class of postage wished.

The softcover edition weighs 2-1/2 ounces. No info on the hardcover.

This is a limited edition: 360 copies, of which 50 are hardbound.

There are 20 Howard poems here, accompanied by full-page illustrations by Rick McCollum, Steven R. Trout, and Charles E. Williams, Jr. All the illos are good, some hinting of comics influences, all in the lurid, pulpish, sensuous, violent tradition of Howard.

Howard's poem are colorful, and they rhyme.

DARK WINDS - Summer 1982, \$3.00

'The Decadent Fantasy Magazine'

Edited and published by Vernon Clark, 4900 Jonquil Lane, Knoxville, TN 37919.

This issue is devoted to an appreciation of Karl Edward Wagner, and especially Wagner's exceptional sword and sorcery hero, Kane.

Good to average artwork. Seven poems.

**PRINCE VALIANT--An American Epic
VOLUME ONE: 1937**

By Hal Foster

Edited by Rick Norwood

Manuscript Press, PO Box 1762,
Wayne, NJ 07470.

A major labor of love, a will to preserve a heritage of comic art ---call it what you will, this huge volume reprints in full, original, superior color, on very thick cover stock, the first pages/episodes of the Prince Valiant adventure strip.

This volume is 17" x 22" and 56 pages. Very expensive at \$100. per copy, but of a 1500 limited edition.

The episodes carry Prince Valiant from childhood to young adulthood and adventures with knights of King Arthur's Round Table.

There are also other samples of Hal Foster's artwork and a short biography. Hal Foster died July 25, 1982.

Manuscript Press has plans for other/further Foster volumes.

They also have a Lost Manuscript series. So far published are:

1. LEFT OF AFRICA by Hal Clement
2. ARCHIPELAGO by R.A. Lafferty.

THE PATCHIN REVIEW #6, MARCH-MAY 1983
Edited and Published by Charles Platt
9 Patchin Place, New York, NY 10011.
\$2.00

Charles continues to stir up the animals in his drive to elevate the quality of science fiction, a quest and a task on a par with carrying water in leaking buckets.

The major item this issue (besides his satiric urging a nomination/vote for Hubbard's BATTLEFIELD EARTH in the Hugo balloting) is the reprinting of a PEN American Center symposium of editors of major pub-

lishing houses who boldly and baldly evaluate various novels on a commercial basis while deciding on bids for reprint rights.

It's an eye-opening and cold-shower reading experience for any idealistic, literature-oriented writer--and required reading in my opinion.

Charles solicited sf comment on this piece from Richard Curtis, Frederik Pohl, Adele Leone, Gregory Benford, Alfred Bester, Norman Spinrad, David Hartwell, Jerry Pournelle, Ian Watson, Richard Geis, Edward Ferman, Pat LoBrutto, Piers Anthony, Christopher Priest, J.G. Ballard, Brian W. Aldiss, John Saldek, Kit Reed, Henry Morrison, Shawna McCarthy, Janet Morris, and Barry Malzberg. Charles has extensive commentary of his own.

It's very revealing of basic attitudes.

AN ALGIS BUDRYS CHECKLIST 75¢
A TOM DISCH CHECKLIST \$1.00
A MACK REYNOLDS CHECKLIST \$1.00
A HAL CLEMENT CHECKLIST 50¢
Compiled by Chris Drum

PO Box 445

Polk City, IA 50226

These are small booklets, offset, and of a seemingly completeness, with an index. Very handy. All are subtitled, "Notes Toward a Bibliography."

Each author's published output is recorded by year.

George Flynn assisted in compiling the Reynolds checklist.

AURORA Vol.8, No.2, Winter 1982-83,
\$2.50.
Published by SF3, Box 1624, Madison,
WI 53701.

Edited by a committee, dedicated to Speculative Feminism, this is a well-done, well-printed fanzine with a wide variety of features, articles, reviews, art, poetry. Fiction, too.

This is not a radical or exclusive feminist magazine; rather it explores aspects of sf and fantasy with an eye on the role of women. It has humor and equanimity.

CLAUSTROPHOBIA #75, March, 1983, \$1.50
Life-Expansion News
Edited by Eric Geislinger and Jane Talisman.

5047 SW 26th Dr., Portland, OR 97201.

News and articles and commentary on the leading-edge developments in medicine, science, environment, space and society. There is information here you'll never discover anywhere else. A very valuable publication.

MOONSCAPE #1, Winter, 1983, \$2.75
Edited by Mogens Brondum
Box 1858, Swan River, Manitoba,
Canada R0L 1Z0.

In his editorial, Brondum says he wants to break down the wall between fantasy and reality, and this finely printed and made-up magazine is his first attempt at breaching said wall.

An experienced reader and editor can tell story quality from almost the first line. Jack Wodhams is a pro: consider the great first line of his "Jade Elm," this issue:

I cannot remember having a consciousness before I tasted blood.

That's a grabber!

Consider the first two sentences of A.J. Thomas' "Gut Reaction":

The angry scream smote David Gracchi's ears as he pushed through the swinging doors into the pungent-smelling rat room. His Greek god handsome face scowled in annoyance as he guessed the cause of the outburst.

Intended as a hook, it is so badly written it is hilarious. 'scream smote' is too alliterative. And what else would it smite but ears? What else would scowl but his face? Why else but in annoyance?

I will resist an analysis of the next line:

"Goddamn you, David Gracchi and Goddamn your effing rats!", the furious voice shrieked.

There are nine stories in this first issue of MOONSCAPE, of uneven quality. And a quality artfolio by Stephen Fabian. Excellent artwork throughout; fine Brad Foster cover.

INDEX TO THE SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINES - 1982 \$4.50

By Jerry Boyajian & Kenneth R. Johnson.

Twaci Press, P.O. Box 87, MIT Branch P.O., Cambridge, MA 02139.

This is not as extensive as the NESFA Index described earlier in this column, but is also less expensive.

This Index has an appendix in which are listed sf appearances in such as ATLANTIC, BEAVER, HUSTLER, HARPER'S, VOGUE, READER'S DIGEST, ELLERY QUEEN'S, STARLOG, HIGH TIMES, COSMOPOLITAN, OUI, PLAYBOY, ESQUIRE, MIKE SHAYNE'S, ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S, GALLERY....

Both Indexes list OMNI sf. The NESFA INDEX includes RIGEL and FANTASY BOOK...

I suppose both would be nice to have.



RAISING HACKLES

BY ELTON T. ELLIOTT



ODDS AND ENDS

Part two of "Science Fiction is Dying: Can the Patient Be Saved?" has been postponed until '48 so I can bring the readers of SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW this message:

Richard E. Geis and Elton T. Elliott have sold a novel to Fawcett Gold Medal/Ballantine. The novel, *THE SWORD OF ALLAH!*, sold December 15, 1982. The authors were represented by the Joseph Elder Agency. The novel was purchased by Fawcett Senior Editor Michaela Hamilton, who described it as a "disaster thriller." The novel will appear under the joint pseudonym Richard Elliott. It will not be published as science fiction.

MUSINGS

Have you noticed that STAR WARS has now become a generic put-down like science fiction? When Reagan made his "High Frontier" proposal the press jumped on it immediately calling it pie-in-the-sky and NEWSWEEK ran a cartoon showing Reagan's new defense advisors: E.T., R2D2 and C3PO.

On the other hand it moves what used to be considered "way out" SF into an area where writers of suspense fiction can use it as a normal backdrop for their tales of intrigue. It is now possible for the writer who likes science fiction, but is tired of New York SF editors that want only fantasy, to write directly for the thriller market.

* * *

Check out the January '83 issue of OMNI. The First Word editorial is written by Vernor Vinge whose "True Names" is one of the few ground breaking SF stories to come out in the last five years. In the editorial Vinge points out a problem that I believe might

eventually make writing realistic SF impossible. (More on this next issue; check out the magazine from your library if you don't own it.) He says that "nothing makes the future of any species so unknowable as technical progress itself." And goes on to observe that "we are at the point of accelerating the evolution of intelligence itself ... when this happens, human history will have reached a kind of singularity, an intellectual transition as impentable as the knotted space-time at the center of a black hole, and the world will pass far beyond our understanding. This singularity, I believe, already haunts a number of science fiction writers. It makes realistic extrapolations to an interstellar future impossible."

Well, folks, there you have it. This might very well be the single most important point about the current state of science fiction. Vinge is onto something that is so crucial to the field I cannot overstate its import.

Think about it, mull it over. How can the world remain intelligible given technological progress? Particularly progress that alters the human mind.

* * *

Speaking of progress, the February '83 issue of SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN reports that an optical analogue of the transistor has already been built. Hail the age of the optical computer. Who needs electric current when you can have beams of light. Science Fiction stories set in the future which don't take into account optical computers are already obsolete.

More on all this next issue.

* * *

Thank you: to all the people at Norwescon '83 who told me how much they enjoyed my news columns over the years; to those who said they enjoy my current column. Also thanks to Von for letting me watch "Dallas."



THE ARCHIVES

WHAT'S THE ARCHIVES ALL ABOUT, DICKIE?

The purpose of The Archives is to provide the readership with an overview of what's been published by the professional sf and fantasy publishers. Sometimes a review will follow a listing, sometimes a quote from a blurb to give a general idea of what the book is about, and sometimes not even that will be possible.

Of course, we don't receive every sf and fantasy novel or collection or anthology. But most do show up.

In "Other Voices," eventually, we'll publish reviews of sf and fantasy books not received but which a reviewer has read and desired to review for SFR.

NEXT ISSUE I hope to expand The Archives to include Small Press items. More small press efforts would be listed/acknowledged/reviewed that way than at present in "Small Press Notes."

There are too many fanzines received to include all of them as well...or are there? Why not go whole hog? Why not spend an hour a day typing up The Archives, making snap judgements, quickie reviews? That prospect thrills me. I'll see if it will trot around the house without collapsing at the far turn.

Now---ladies and gentlemen, you are about to sink forever into that vast uncharted swamp known as The Archives, or Geis's Folly. [Tickle my POB and I'll folly you anywhere!]

THE GAME By Les Logan

MAGIC SHOW By Laurie Bridges & Paul Alexander

THE DOLL By Rex Sparger

DEVIL WIND By Laurie Bridges & Paul Alexander

Bantam, \$1.95, March, 1983.

These are the first four Young Adult (no sex) occult horror novels issued in the Dark Forces series.

These novels have large print, 135 pages---approx. 30-35,000 words.

BILI THE AXE By Robert Adams
Signet, \$2.50, January, 1983.

This is #10 in the Horseclans series. Bili and his warriors help defend New Kuhnbuluhm against the

Witchmen.

Other Horseclans novels are:
THE COMING OF THE HORSECLANS,
SWORDS OF THE HORSECLANS, REVENGE
OF THE HORSECLANS, A CAT OF SILVERY
HUE, THE SAVAGE MOUNTAINS, THE
PATRIMONY, HORSECLANS ODYSSEY, THE
DEATH OF A LEGEND, and THE WITCH
GODDESS.

TWILIGHT WORLD

By Poul Anderson

Tor, \$2.75, February, 1983.

First published in 1961, this sf novel deals with the mutants created by a nuclear war and their struggle for survival.

ORION SHALL RISE

By Poul Anderson

Timescape, \$16.95, March, 1983.

Poul's new big science fiction novel. 'A panoramic novel of man's struggle to rebuild civilization after a nuclear inferno.' The time-frame is considerably farther into the future than you might expect. This is true, hardcore science fiction.

FOUNDATION

Del Rey, \$2.75, March, 1983

SECOND FOUNDATION

Del Rey, \$2.75, March, 1983

FOUNDATION AND EMPIRE

Del Rey, \$2.75, March, 1983

By Isaac Asimov

This is probably the most well-known and widely read and long-lived series of sf novels [from 1951-2-3]. The extremely readable and intriguing stories of Hari Seldon's psycho-history plan to preserve knowledge and shorten the "dark ages" after the 12,000 year Galactic Empire died.

But not everything goes according to plan....

ISAAC ASIMOV PRESENTS THE GREAT SF STORIES - #9 (1947)

Edited by Isaac Asimov and Martin H. Greenberg.

DAW, \$3.50, February, 1983.

Fourteen stories by the great names of postwar sf.

THE WINDS OF CHANGE

By Isaac Asimov

Doubleday, \$15.95, March, 1983.

21-story theme collection of recent (1977-82) stories.



STARSHIPS

Edited by Isaac Asimov, Martin H. Greenberg, and Charles G. Waugh.
Fawcett Crest, \$3.50, May, 1983.

Thirteen-story anthology dealing with space voyages beyond the solar system. Divided into sections:
The Complement---a story each involving the Captain, the Crew, the Passengers, and the Cargo;
The Type---Time Relativity Ships, Generation Ships, Suspended Animation Ships, Cybernetic Ships, and Faster Than Light/Hyperspace Ships;
The Events---First Contact, Inspection, Disaster, and Combat.

CAUGHT IN THE ORGAN DRAFT

Edited by Isaac Asimov, Martin H. Greenberg, and Charles G. Waugh.
Farrar, Straus & Giroux. \$12.95, March, 1983.

Thirteen-story anthology dealing with biology in science fiction. It includes Robert Silverberg's short story of the same title.

FROST By Robin W. Bailey
Timescape, \$2.75, March, 1983.

New fantasy novel about a witch who has lost her powers and must turn to the sword to survive.

THE REGIMENTS OF NIGHT

By Brian N. Ball

DAW, \$2.50, February, 1983.

Second printing; first in 1972, Far future science fiction. A 'Black Army' is released from its lost underground stronghold on Earth after a thousand years.

THE WIND FROM A BURNING WOMAN

By Greg Bear

Arkhan House, \$13.95, March, 1983

Six stories and short novels dealing with a future history and two humans involved in that history.

Many fine illustrative drawings by Dennis Neal Smith.

AGAINST INFINITY By Gregory Benford
Timescape, \$14.95, April, 1983.

His new sf novel. Set on Gany-mede during a long-term effort by resident humans to terraform the moon of Jupiter, it involves an inexplicable entity they call the Aleph. This thing is huge, mobile, dangerous, impervious to harm, and indifferent to man. Hunting the Aleph is a yearly event.

Solving the problems caused by the Aleph (and answering the questions it raises) is the core of the novel.

THE DISAPPEARING DWARF

By James P. Blaylock

Del Rey Fantasy, \$2.75, February, 1983.

The sequel to THE ELFIN SHIP. Fantasy with a light touch as Jonathan Bing, Master Cheeser, accepts Professor Wurzzle's invitation to visit the empty castle of Selznak, the Evil Dwarf...where they discover a treasure map!

THE GUIDE TO SUPERNATURAL FICTION

By Everett F. Bleiler

The Kent State University Press
[Kent, OH 44242] \$55.00

A monumental work, this. Over 7000 stories and novels are covered, from about 1750 to 1960. Each has a plot summary and critical comment. Biographical info on the authors is provided, along with an author index, story index...pseudonyms are entered...and a subject index is included. Every kind of 'Contranatural' fiction is covered, including Gothic novel, Oriental tales, Romantic fantasies, Victorian ghost stories, fin-de-siecle horror fiction, plus 20th Century light fantasy, heroic fantasy, supernatural

horror, occult fiction---and many mixed forms.

736 pages, hardbound, 8½ x 11.

FALLEN STAR By James Blish

Avon, \$2.50. Feb. 1983. First published in 1957.

A well-done Earth-at-risk sf novel, set in the Arctic, involving a disguised alien. Told first-person by Julian Cole, a science writer along on the expedition.

WELCOME TO MARS By James Blish

Avon, \$2.50, May, 1983.

First published in 1967, this is a bit absurd as a teenage boy (17) discovers antigravity, constructs a homemade spaceship and visits Mars where he becomes marooned...

THE MACHINERIES OF JOY

By Ray Bradbury

Bantam, \$2.75, Reprint of earlier Bantam editions, reset with new typeface.

Twenty-one short stories.

The front cover headlines him "The World's Greatest Living Science Fiction Writer." The back cover more accurately describes him as "...America's preeminent master of the fantastic."

THE COLORS OF SPACE

By Marion Zimmer Bradley

Starblaze Editions

ISBN: 0-8965-191-3 \$5.95

REVIEWED BY STEVE MILLER

The original publication of THE COLORS OF SPACE was in 1963; this book is said to have 1/3 of the original manuscript restored to the text. Certainly that alone will make the book a must for Bradley completists.

THE COLORS OF SPACE is a juvenile, not quite as successful as a Heinlein or even a typical Norton.

Bart Steele is swept along by events as humanity tries to throw off the limitations of star travel imposed by the Lhari. Bart's father had died trying to free humanity from these bounds.

Bart undergoes a dangerous transformation, and becomes a human spy among the Lhari. The Lhari are color blind: They only see in shades of grey. That secret becomes the key to the novel.

The book is a fast read, has adventure, foreign ports to sight-see, but is basically about the

well-known belief that "enemies are just people, too." Bart has to deal with that realization at a crucial point in his life and the life of the several galaxies.

Not a great read, not a great story; this is minor Bradley.

WEB OF LIGHT

By Marion Zimmer Bradley

Timescape, \$2.95, February, 1983.

This is the first volume of a new fantasy series. Set by the shores of Atlantis, WEB OF LIGHT is the story of a war between opposing magical forces, involving two sisters.

GREYHAVEN: AN ANTHOLOGY OF FANTASY

By Marion Zimmer Bradley

DAW Fantasy, \$2.50, 240 pp.

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

This is a collection of 18 short fantasy stories written by various writers, professional and otherwise, who were guests at one time or another at Greyhaven and House Greenwalls, Marion Zimmer Bradley's domain. Each has a short introduction by MZB and includes Randall Garrett, Vicki Ann Heydron, Susan Schwartz Caradoc Cadzor, Robert Cook, various Zimmers, etc. The stories range in length from a paragraph or two to thirty or more pages and from this universe to unicorns and sword and sorcery, while the authors run the gamut from computer programmers and English professors to tattoo artists and poets. It is the type of book that you can read comfortably if your reading time is limited to short bursts. Worth getting.

A REVIEW SHOULD BE
PURE AND CLEAR, LIKE
A GOBLET OF PERRIER
WATER.

THE DROP OF
POISON IS
OPTIONAL.



THE MISTS OF AVALON

By Marion Zimmer Bradley
Knopf, \$16.95, January, 1983

This hardcover fantasy novel, 876 pages long, is the most ambitious novel Marion has ever attempted. It deals with the women of the legend of King Arthur, of the conflict between the new religion of Christianity and the old religion of Avalon. And it retells the story of King Arthur, the intrigues, the wars, the loves, the magics, the deaths. It is a new perspective on the Old Religion, on Arthur, on how history is made and recorded and how it survives.

This is a disciplined work of fiction. By a woman. For women. The fictional style is woman oriented, and the point-of-view is that of the various women---Guinevere, Ingraine, Viviane, and above all of Morgan le Fay.

Most men, and most teenage boys, will not like it.

The dust jacket painting by Braldr Braldr is beautiful. For its length and size, this is a good buy for \$16.95.

WINTER LORD

By Jean Brooks-Janowiak
Signet, \$2.95, January, 1983.
Supernatural horror novel.

NIGHT OF THE WOLF

By Christopher Bryan
Harper & Row, \$10.95, May, 1983.

A novel of suspense set in present-day England. A police Inspector unravels a world-wide conspiracy to overthrow existing power systems in order to impose a "New Order." There are supernatural elements.

TIMES WITHOUT NUMBER

By John Brunner
Del Rey, \$2.50, February, 1983; originally published in 1962 but revised and expanded since then.

The Society of Time faces disaster as corrupt officers of the Society threaten all history.

JHEREG By Steven Brust

Ace, \$2.50, April, 1983

Fantasy by category, but probably science-fantasy in content, this is a new novel about a young man on another world who, seeking adventure, becomes an Assassin and takes as friend/companion a kind of dragon with whom he is telepathically linked. There is some witchcraft involved.

The writing is realistic and very good.

THE UNBEHEADED KING

By L. Sprague de Camp
Del Rey, \$9.95, March, 1983.

New fantasy adventure, a light-hearted romp, about a king defying the custom of beheading-after-five-years-of-rule. With the aid of a wizard and a demon he also wishes to save his queen. But there are always problems, complications and villains!

De Camp has mastered this style and will always provide a fun read.

HART'S HOPE

By Orson Scott Card
Berkley, \$2.75, February, 1983.

This is hardball fantasy, dealing in death, sorcerous, vicious revenge. A 300-year saga that traces brutal, evil consequences.

THE WORLDS OF H. BEAM PIPER

Edited by John F. Carr
Ace, \$2.75, February, 1983.

Ten of the late H. Beam's short stories, including "Time and Time Again," and "Day of the Moron."

AS THE GREEN STAR RISES

By Lin Carter
DAW, \$2.25, March, 1983. Fourth printing since 1975.

The fourth novel in the Green Star saga. The mind of an injured Earthman is transported to an alien planet to occupy the body of a young primitive....

MEDUSA: A TIGER BY THE TAIL

By Jack L. Chalker
Del Rey, \$2.95, April, 1983.

Volume Four of the Four Lords of the Diamond series. Previous titles:

Book One: LILITH: A SNAKE IN THE GRASS.

Book Two: CERBERUS: A WOLF IN THE FOLD.

Book Three: CHARON: A DRAGON AT THE GATE.

Secret agent mind transfer, adventure on the ice world Medusa.... The Confederacy vs. the worlds of the Warden Diamond.

CHARON: A DRAGON AT THE GATE

By Jack Chalker
Ballantine Books, 1982, 289 pp.

REVIEWED BY W. RITCHIE BENEDICT

This is the third volume of The Four Lords of the Diamond series. I caught the first volume, LILITH: A SNAKE IN THE GRASS, but missed the second, CERBERUS: A WOLF IN THE FOLD.

There is a super-scientific quasi-dictatorship space empire in

the future -- the Confederacy. The Warden Diamond is one planetary system where the Confederacy does not hold sway -- for a very good reason. The system consists of four planets (of varying degrees of habitability -- from blistering tropics to cold and barren tundra) and has a peculiar organism that infiltrates the organic system of anyone or anything that settles there. As a result, they are unable to leave, or they will die suddenly and painfully.

The Confederacy decides this is a perfect dumping ground for all of their criminal elements (a la Australia in the 18th Century) and each world soon develops its own peculiar civilization.

The Lord of each world hates the Confederacy and there is some evidence mysterious aliens have made a deal with the Lords that may result in the eventual downfall of the Confederacy.

There's a unique problem in intelligence: how to get information from a system where nothing is able to leave? The solution is to mind-wipe four criminals and replace each with the persona of one man who will yet be able to experience and report, existing in two (actually five) places simultaneously.

Carrying out this mission is not an easy job, and Charon is no bargain as a planet. Hot and sub-tropical, full of strange animals, it is also a place where magic and witchcraft really work. The hero soon finds he is metamorphosizing into a lizard-like creature and is in danger of losing his basic humanity. The Lord of this world has apparently been deposed and gone into hiding and it is a female Lord who is now in power.

I have never been too taken by Chalker's specialty -- that of human transmutation, but I am interested in the complexity of his plot -- where nothing is ever quite what it appears to be. In effect, he is writing a science fiction spy novel where the question of who is working with whom and why is paramount. There are twists and turns and red herrings all over the place. How he is going to be able to tie up all the loose ends in the final volume (due in April 1983) will be a wonder to behold. I believe this is a much stronger novel than the first volume and it is fast-moving and entertaining. Certainly worth looking into if extended series are your bag. Each book can stand on its own merits, however.

THE DREAMSTONE

By C.J. Cherryh

DAW, \$2.75, March, 1983.

A new novel, fantasy, about the last defense of Faery against the encroaching iron sword of the Era of Man.

Man, materialism, rationality and science are here evil.

AGAINST THE NIGHT, THE STARS

THE SCIENCE FICTION OF ARTHUR C. CLARKE

By John Hollow

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, \$14.95, April, 1983.

Analysis of Calrke's sf and thus an analysis of Clarke the man is the result. The basic vision of Arthur C. Clarke is optimistic for mankind's future---a destiny out among the stars. Hollow is mindfull of the formative influences of early youth, of the background culture absorbed in growing up---and Clarke grew up in England.

If you like literary analysis, this is a good job and worth your time and money.

MOONSCATTER

By Jo Clayton

DAW, \$2.95, February, 1983.

The second novel of the Duel of Sorcery. A brave warrior-woman battles an immortal wizard.

THE RELIGION

By Nicholas Conde

Signet, \$3.50, March, 1983.

New horror novel about a hidden, savage, worldwide religion which requires children as sacrifices to its gods.

FEVER

By Robin Cook

Signet, \$3.95, January, 1983.

Hardcover by Putnam in 1982.

Cook's latest medical thriller, this time involving a doctor fighting an industrial conspiracy: his daughter has leukemia caused by industrial pollution. He is labeled "crazy".

A TAPESTRY OF MAGICS

By Brian Daley

Del Rey Fantasy, \$2.95, February 1983. New novel.

Sword, Sorcery, and elements of hardcore science fiction---as a knight of his world becomes involved with the Beyonds where a Singularity merges other worlds and realities with his.

A complex, plausible science fantasy by the author of THE DOOM-FARERS OF CORAMONDE.

THE VARKAUS CONSPIRACY

By John Dalmás

Tor, \$2.95, March, 1983.

Near-future science fiction novel dealing with the development of supermen.

PATHWAYS TO THE GODS

By Erich Von Daniken

Putnam, \$16.95, February, 1983.

Subtitled "The Stones of Kiribati," this book is Von Daniken's latest accumulation of questionable evidence that ancient astronauts/gods descended from space and created mankind in their image, leaving behind enigmatic "proofs" of their technology and intelligence.

This is for True Believers.

TALES OF NEVERYON

By Samuel R. Delany

Bantam, \$3.50, April, 1983; second printing from September, 1979.

Five stories and an appendix.

Samuel R. Delany may be an acquired taste; he requires time, patience and a delight in words and phrases and sentences and paragraphs sometimes exhausting, sometimes rewarding, sometimes marvelous, sometimes impossible.

The price asked for this reprint suggests full aim at a small literateur audience. The cover showing a young nearly-nude couple by a tree (with a flying dragon in the night background), he with his phallic sword in full erection, she in her burlesque-style beaded bra and panties suggests hedging the bets.

NEVERYONA

By Samuel R. Delany

Bantam, \$6.95, April, 1983. Trade paperback.

New fantasy novel about a far-past empire and about a young woman on a dragon's back on a quest. She joins with a young male with a phallic sword and becomes involved in palace intrigue...

Delany here deals heavily in parable and metaphor. Bantam deals here in cheap paper.

THE THREE STIGMATA OF PALMER

ELDRITCH By Philip K. Dick

DAW, \$2.50, March, 1983. First published in 1964.

This is a classic playing-with-reality sf novel, by Dick in his prime.

THE BLUE HAWK

By Peter Dickinson

Del Rey, \$2.50, April, 1983.

Reprint of this popular 1976 novel about a boy's religious sin and rite of passage in a primitive, magical world.

MUTANTS

By Gordon R. Dickson

DAW, \$2.95, March, 1983.

An 11-story collection on the theme of human variations and potential.

Originally published by Macmillan.

THE FAR CALL

By Gordon R. Dickson

Ace, \$2.75, February, 1983.

The latest edition of this 1973, 1978 sf novel of the first Mars Expedition.

THE PRITCHER MASS

By Gordon R. Dickson

Tor, \$2.75, February, 1983. First published in 1972.

A strange and horrible fungus is among us and Earth's only hope is the Pritcher Mass which searches the psychic wavelengths for living worlds.

WHITE GOLD WIELDER

By Stephen R. Donaldson

Del Rey, \$14.95, April, 1983.

Book Three: The Second Chronicles of Thomas Covenant.

The full Chronicles of Thomas Covenant the Unbeliever are:

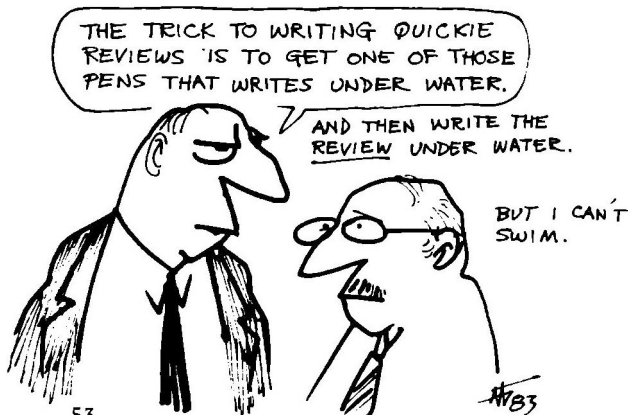
Book One: LORD FOUL'S BANE

Book Two: THE ILLEARTH WAR

Book Three: THE POWER THAT PRESERVES

The Second Chronicles:

Book One: THE WOUNDED LAND



Book Two: THE ONE TREE
Book Three: WHITE GOLD WIELDER

Covenant finally returns to the Land and continues the battle against Lord Foul, the Despiser. He realizes he has the key to controlling his power and is ready for the final confrontation with Lord Foul.

The style is as rich and colorful as ever, and the detail and characterization as fine and deep. Once you're hooked on Donaldson's world and themes you're helpless to stop reading and reading....

This is a long novel---485 pages ---and bound to be a long delight for his fans.

THE ONE TREE By Stephen Donaldson
Del Rey, \$3.50, April, 1983. First published in hardcover April 1982.

The Second Chronicles of Thomas Covenant, Book Two.

The sequel to THE WOUNDED LAND.

MAGICIAN'S GAMBIT

By David Eddings
Del Rey, \$2.95, June, 1983.

Book Three of the Belgariad saga. Previous titles are PAWN OF PROPHECY and QUEEN OF SORCERY.

Fantasy about a quest to recover a stolen, magical Orb. A princess, sorcerers, a strange tower, an evil magician...

LOVE AIN'T NOTHING BUT SEX MIS-SPELLED

By Harlan Ellison
Ace, \$2.95. Feb. 1983. First published in hardback in 1968.

This edition contains 13 of the original 22 stories; 3 new stories have been added. Collectors take note.

Harlan is compulsively readable. He will grab you, shake you, alter your life. Literally, he can change the direction of the lives of those who read his stories, and that is especially true of this collection dealing with the tightest and up-tightest of human emotions and relationships. Even his Introduction ---naked and sometimes frighteningly honest---can blow you away. Beware.

SHATTERDAY

By Harlan Ellison
Berkley Books, \$2.75

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

At last SHATTERDAY has come out in paperback, the hardcover version having been printed in 1980.

Two of the stories, "Shatter-day" and "Jeffy is Five" are on L.P. records and "All the Lies that are my Life" was printed in a short Underwood-Miller edition with forewords and afterwords by Robert Silverberg, Ed Bryant, etc.

Some of the other stories I had read in F&SF, PLAYBOY and OMNI. All have been published elsewhere. And I would describe them as good, vintage Ellison. I was anxious to read "How's the Night Life on Cissalda," it having been touted as a "really dirty story." Hilarious it is! Dirty it isn't, (at least, not to my prudish mind). It's worth the price of the book alone.

The stories can be safely read on a cold winter's evening in the dark, by the light of a dying fire. Nothing truly disgusting or stomach-turning. But the ideas presented will make you think, will obtrude into your daily thoughts under certain circumstances, in certain situations. Flashbacks. Get it by all means.

BENEFITS By Zoe Fairbairns
Avon, \$2.95, April, 1983.

Near-future sf in which strong women battle a right-wing authoritarian government in England which has forced women from the workplace back into the home and now is decreeing which women may be mothers. But the contraceptives in the water supply have deadly side-effects for the newborn, in spite of the official antidote.

COMPANION TO NARNIA

By Paul F. Ford
Harper & Row San Francisco, \$5.95, March, 1983.

A complete, illustrated guide to the themes, characters, and events of C.S. Lewis's imaginary world. Foreword by Madeleine L'Engle.

This religious-oriented reference book is in paperback format, printed on good pulp paper; but it probably wouldn't last very long in a school library.

KRULL By Alan Dean Foster
Warner, \$2.95, July, 1983.

Novel based upon a screenplay by Stanford Sherman. The movie will be released this summer.

An epic fantasy set on a planet with two suns. Kingdoms battling for supremacy in a medieval age must unite to battle the Beast, a dark, evil force from Krull's ancient past which has reemerged to dominate the planet with its evil minions.

FOR LOVE OF MOTHER-NOT

By Alan Dean Foster
Del Rey, \$2.95, March, 1983.

The story of how Flinx and his flying snake, Pip, got together.

Later adventures of these two are: THE TAR-AIYM KRANG
ORPHAN STAR
BLOODHYPE
THE END OF THE MATTER.

SPELLSINGER By Alan Dean Foster
Warner, \$2.95, June, 1983.

New fantasy novel. The story of grad student and rock guitarist Jon Meriweather, who is transported to a wizard's world of disarming beauty and savage violence. He becomes a soldier whose weapons are sword and song.

THE MAN WHO USED THE UNIVERSE

By Alan Dean Foster
Warner, \$2.95, August, 1983.

New sf novel [advance copy] about a new Foster protagonist--- 'Kees van Loo-Macklin, a born killer, seizes the reins of an intergalactic underworld and spreads his influence to the farthest planets. He joins with a race of aliens in a plot to subvert his own race. One alien, at the risk of his life and race, dares to pursue the truth ---who is Loo-Macklin and what is his real quest?'

A quick dip into this novel suggests Alan has written a tough, realistic, adult sf novel. I look forward to reading it all the way through.

TRANSFORMER By M.A. Foster
DAW, \$2.50, April, 1983.

A genetically constructed genius, virtually immortal, able to change body structure, the Morphodite, now a woman, tracks down her and her planet's enemies in interstellar space.

THE SHADOW OF THE SHIP

By Robert Wilfred Franson
Del Rey, \$2.75, May, 1983.

First volume of a science fiction series involving alternate universes. A man, Eiverdein, needing a starship to return to known space and the culture of Earth Humans, hears of a rumored abandoned starship in a subspace trail. Frustrating him are murders, strange physics, an alien whose speech can kill, and a girl who seems to vibrate in and out of existence....

Franson overwrites; he tends to characterize every piece of dialogue, describe every facial expression, express every thought, detail every move.

THE BRONZE OF EDDARTA

By Randall Garrett and Vicki Heydron
Bantam, \$2.95, May, 1983.

New fantasy novel, third in The Gandalaria Cycle. Previous titles are THE STEEL OF RAITHSKAR and THE GLASS OF DYSKORNIS. Coming in 1984 is THE WELL OF DARKNESS.

Sword and sorcery, a sacred, stolen jewel, telepathic giant cats and a beautiful illusionist are the major elements in Rikardon's adventure on the desert world of Gandalaria.

Told in first-person by Rikardon. Fast-paced but cliched story.

THE COSMIC DANCERS

By Amit Goswami with Maggie Goswami
Harper & Row, \$18.50, April, 1983.

They are avid readers of sf and Amit is a physicist. This book is an examination of science-fictional use of known physics and of its use of speculative physics. The style is conversational, oft humorous, always interesting. Many times using quotes from sf to pose problems and questions for examination, the authors cover gravity, astronomy in every aspect, entropy, life, hyperspace, atoms, mind, the paranormal....all with the aid of clear, often funny illustrations/cartoons. Index.

Foreward by Kate Wilhelm.

CASTLEDOWN

By Joyce Ballou Gregorian
Ace, \$2.95, May, 1983.

First printed by Athenium in 1977. This fantasy is the sequel to THE BROKEN CITADEL. A young English girl is transported to a strange fantasy world by the Players of Ornat.

THERE IS NO DARKNESS

By Joe Haldeman & Jack C. Haldeman II.
Ace, \$2.75, February, 1983.

In a galaxy sprinkled with human colonies grown independent and Earth devastated and degenerate, a giant space-traveling university called Starschool needs defenses as well as academics. Its students learn many different lessons at its ports of call.

THE WALLS OF AIR

By Barbara Hambly
Del Rey, \$2.95, March, 1983.

New fantasy novel; the sequel to THE TIME OF THE DARK.

PRINCE OF THE GODBORN

Part 1 of the SEVEN CITADELS saga.
By Geraldine Harris
Greenwillow, \$9.50, February, 1983.

THE CHILDREN OF THE WIND

Part 2 of the SEVEN CITADELS saga.
By Geraldine Harris
Greenwillow, \$9.50, February, 1983.

Medieval-setting sorcery-fantasy series for ages 12 and up. Adult hard-core sf and fantasy readers will find these somewhat dull and plonking.

Subsequent novels in this series are: THE DEAD KINGDOM and THE SEVENTH GATE.

These are quality-bound hard-back novels with a detailed map of Zindar in the time of Kerish-lo-Taan.

INVASION: EARTH By Harry Harrison
Ace, \$2.75, May, 1983.

Earth against the aliens. Many very realistic double-page drawings by Evan Ten Broeck Steadman.

A REBEL IN TIME

By Harry Harrison
Tor, \$3.50, February, 1983.

New novel. A crazed colonel in charge of a secret govt. time-travel experiment project takes gold and the plans for a machine gun back to the Civil War South with intent to change history. An agent is sent back to stop him at all costs.

THE FLOATING GODS

By M. John Harrison
Timescape, \$2.50, February, 1983.

A new Viriconium novel in this fantasy series.

PARADISE By Dan Henderson
Tor, \$2.95, April, 1983.

Powerful aliens, irritated by mankind and Earth, retaliate in strange, terrifying ways....
New novel.

NEBULA WINNERS FIFTEEN

Edited by Frank Herbert
Bantam, \$2.95, March, 1983.

First published in hardcover, April, 1981, by Harper & Row.

The short story and novelet winners for 1979 (it takes a few years to get these volumes in print, considering voting time and editing time and publisher pipeline time), plus a novelet from the runners-up, and three short stories from the runners-up...and two essays by others favored by Herbert.

CODE OF THE LIFEMAKER

By James P. Hogan
Del Rey, \$13.95, June, 1983.

Advance copy---bound galleys---of the new sf hardcover novel. It deals with sure-fire sf themes: aliens, mankind moving into contact with alien technology and having to face some tough questions and answers dealing with the beginning of mankind, allegiance, and the real nature of man.

Review next issue.

EAGLES' WINGS TO THE HIGHER PLACES

By Hannah Hurnard
Harper & Row San Francisco, \$4.95, March, 1983.

Religious allegorical fantasy. This is a sequel to HIND'S FEET ON HIGH PLACES and THE MOUNTAINS OF SPICES.

Hannah Hurnard is a prolific writer whose books have become classics of Christian faith and teaching.

CONAN, THE UNCONQUERED

By Robert Jordan
Tor, \$2.95, April, 1983.

A new adventure written by perhaps the best of those who have attempted to imitate Robert E. Howard's style and pacing. In many ways Jordan surpasses Howard.

Lousy, amateurish cover painting by Walotsky.

GUNNER CADE By Cyril Judd

[C.M. Kornbluth & Judith Merrill]
Tor \$2.95, April 1983.

Hard-core sf from 1952. A loyal soldier is outlawed and fights back.

Also in this volume: TAKEOFF by C.M. Kornbluth [1952] a short novel about the first human venture into space. It has a postscript by Frederik Pohl.

PHANTOMS By Dean R. Koontz
Putnam, \$15.95, March, 1983

New small town horror novel.

THE SPACE EATER

By David Langford
Timescape, \$2.50, February, 1983.

A genuine hard science fiction space adventure novel.

THE UNFORSAKEN HIERO

By Sterling E. Lanier
Del Rey, \$11.95, May, 1983

HIERO'S JOURNEY [1973] was a very good, well-received sf novel. This is its sequel, set in the same North America 5000 years from now after a holocaust.

Per Hiero Desteen---priest, telepath and trained killer---was sent on a mission into the wilderness and encountered and fought the evil Unclean and their vile, mutated beast followers.

This novel shows Hiero and his new bride, Luchare, continuing the struggle against the Unclean who war against man and civilization. More wonders and revelations.

It is Lanier's superior writing which makes this ancient theme work so well again. His command of realistic detail, character and tension make this a fine, rewarding reading experience.

STAR COLONY

By Keith Laumer
Ace, \$2.95, March, 1983. First published by St. Martin's Press in 1981.

Mankind's first colony planet, Colmar: its struggle to survive. Classic hardcore, high-tension sf adventure.

RETIFF TO THE RESCUE

By Keith Laumer
Timescape, \$14.95, Feb., 1983.

The first new Retief novel to be published in ten years.

DANCE OF THE HAG

By Stephen Leigh
Bantam, \$2.50, March, 1983.

New sf novel. A sequel to SLOW FALL TO DAWN, involving again the Hoorka assassins' guild of the planet Neweden.

MEMOIRS OF A SPACE TRAVELER

Further Reminiscences of Ijon Tichy
By Stanislaw Lem
Harvest/HJB, \$3.95, April, 1983.

Nine stories in which Lem does a kind of intergalactic Jonathan Swift turn, satirizing types of foolish government and foolish technology, which implies very foolish people.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE

By Stanislaw Lem
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, \$12.95, February, 1983

Translated from Polish by Michael Kandel. Published in Poland originally in 1968.

A secret 2500-person team in the USA seek to decipher a beamed message from space.

HARPY'S FLIGHT

By Megan Lindholm
Ace, \$2.50, February, 1983.

New fantasy novel. A heroine struggles against creatures known as Harpies. Set in a world of medieval civilization.

PRELUDE TO CHAOS

By Edward Llewellyn
DAW, \$2.75, February, 1983.

A food additive is sterilizing mankind.

KINE

By A. R. Lloyd
St. Martin's Press, \$11.95, 1983.

In a peaceful woodland and marsh valley a territorial struggle pits native animals against savage wild mink invaders.

First published in Great Britain by Hamlyn Paperbacks.



TEA WITH THE BLACK DRAGON

By R.A. MacAvoy
Bantam, \$2.75, May, 1983.

Martha Macnamara, zen practitioner, and Mayland Long, at least a thousand years old, together find magic, adventure and romance as they search for Martha's missing daughter in the baffling world of computer wizards and electronic crime.

A charming, modern-day fantasy, in which you are sure everything will come out all right. It does.

THE LAST WARRIOR QUEEN

By Mary Mackey
Seaview/Putnam, \$15.95, March, 1983.

This might be called a speculative pre-history novel. Set in Mesopotamia when written history is about to begin, it tells of a time of changes as the great matriarchal cities which have dominated civilization to that time are beset by hordes of male-dominated nomads.

On a one-to-one human level it is the story of Innana, a beautiful young psychic-talented nomad girl who leaves an oppressive tribe and seeks peace and happiness in the matriarchal City of the Dove where she meets and falls in love with a gentle man... She is a pivotal figure, is destined to be queen of the city, and to lead it into battle against the nomads.

This is a feminist novel, and well done. It is full of love, magic and wishful thinking.

TRIANGLE

By Sondra Marshak and Myrna Culbreath.

Timescape, \$2.50, March, 1983.

A new Star Trek novel by the authors of THE PROMETHEUS DESIGN, also a Star Trek novel.

THE OBSESSION OF SALLY WING

By Russ Martin
Tor, \$2.95, March, 1983.

Occult horror novel. First printing.

TENGU

By Graham Masterton
Tor, \$3.50, April, 1983.

The Japanese revenge for the atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is sending an ancient, terrible demon to the U.S. Tengu is a demon of possession and destruction. New novel.

THE NONBORN KING

By Julian May
Houghton Mifflin, \$16.95, Feb., 1983
Volume III in the Saga of Pliocene Exile.

KHI TO FREEDOM

By Ardath Mayhar
Ace, \$2.50, May, 1983.

'For Hale Enbo, servitude promised freedom! He loved his life as planetary scout, indentured to the alien Ginli, traveling throughout the universe, finding and befriending the myriads of intelligent life forms. Until he discovered what his masters were really after. Until he found one of his friends staked out on the Ginli's vivisection table...'

LIFE PROBE By Michael McCollum
Del Rey, \$2.95, June, 1983

New sf novel. An ancient alien civilization's life-probe craft lands on 21st Century Earth. Eons of alien science will be available...if Earth can repair the probe.

STAR RIDERS OF REN

By Calvin Miller
Harper & Row San Francisco, \$7.95, March, 1983. Trade paperback.

This is the second volume in the Singreale Chronicles fantasy series. The first was GUARDIANS OF THE SINGREALE.

Daniel San Souci has provided many full-page b/w illustrations.

This is Good vs. Evil sword & sorcery, set in a medieval-like time and culture, with a Christian moral slant.

THE CHESSBOARD QUEEN

By Sharan Newman
St. Martin's, \$13.95, March, 1983
A sequel to GUINEVERE, this is Newman's second Athurian romance.

KAJIRA OF GOR By John Norman
DAW, \$3.50, March, 1983.

The 1983 Gor book, the 19th novel of the Counter-Earth saga.

The beat goes on. More of his peculiar version of hardball social biology. Women must be put in their place (on their knees) and kept in their place, to everyone's satisfaction.

THE WINDHOVER TAPES: FLEXING THE WARP
By Warren Norwood
Bantam, \$2.75, Feb., 1983

Gerard Manley, diplomatic troubleshooter to alien civilizations in his sentient starship, Windhover, on a special mission to unravel the Tenderfoot legend.

Previous novel in this series was AN IMAGE OF VOICES. Next is FIZE OF THE GABRIEL RATCHETS (available July, 1983.)

ALL IN GOOD TIME

By Edward Ormandroyd
Bantam, \$1.95, Feb., 1983

Young Adult time travel novel. It is a sequel to TIME AT THE TOP.

ELFQUEST-Book Two

By Wendy & Richard Pini
Donning, \$10.95, 1982.

The adventures and quests of the Wolfrider clan of Elves, and their conflicts with the hated humans, the trolls, and as yet unknown forces.

Wonders abound in this full-color illustrated fantasy, especially the amazingly well-done artwork, the coloring, and the layered characterizations, humor, and real tragedy.

Each panel of this graphic-art story is lovely, often full pages are integrated for subtle and powerful impacts, and the pace never slows except for deliberate accenting of emotion and mood.

These are quality 8½ x 11 soft-cover books, printed on the best, heavyweight stock. Their value in story/art and printing quality (and collectability) is very high. Well worth the money.

I cannot believe pure illustrated fantasy could ever be better.

THE DEADLY SKY

By Doris Piserchia
DAW, \$2.50, January, 1983.
New SF novel

DREAM MAKERS—VOLUME II THE UNCOMMON MEN & WOMEN WHO WRITE SCIENCE FICTION

Interviews by Charles Platt
Berkley, \$6.95, June, 1983.

More marvelous profiles which reveal, uncover, illuminate, expose the personality and character of those "interviewed" by Charles who has a very keen eye for the inner person and the outer clue. Quite often the author's chosen surroundings tell as much about him as his words.

Charles Platt has his prejudices and is aware of them and largely compensates or surfaces them to offset his possibly warped judgements in certain instances.

Those writers profiled in this volume are:

Jerry Pournelle, Larry Niven, Christopher Priest, William Burroughs, Arthur C. Clarke, Alvin Toffler, John Sladek, D.M. Thomas, Keith Roberts, Andre Norton, Piers Anthony, Keith Laumer, Joe Haldeman, Fritz Leiber, Robert Anton Wilson, Poul Anderson, Jack Vance, Theodore Sturgeon, L. Ron Hubbard, Joanna Russ, Janet Morris, Joan D. Vinge, Harry Harrison, Donald A. Wolheim, Edward Ferman, Kit Reed, James Tip-tree, Jr., Stephen King.

And Charles Platt is himself profiled at the end of the book by Douglas Winter.

The quality of these profiles can be judged by those published in SFR recently, especially the Laumer interview last issue and Janet Morris this issue, as well as the picture presented of Platt Himself by Winter.

DREAM MAKERS I and II are absolutely must-reading for any sf, fantasy reader. They add so much to the reading of a given author's novels and stories.

MIDAS WORLD By Frederik Pohl

St. Martin's, \$13.95, July, 1983.

His new novel about the development of fusion's free, limitless power and the avalanche of production and consumption that follows, with the consequential waste of the remaining natural resources of Earth.

The hero must stop the free power in order to free mankind and save the planet.

A cautionary tale not likely to be too popular.

UNDERSEA CITY

By Frederik Pohl & Jack Williamson
Del Rey, \$1.95, February, 1983. 4th printing. First published in 1958.

Another adventure with Cadet James Eden of the Sub-Sea Academy as the deep Krakatoan Dome is endangered by strong seaquakes which are not natural.

FARTHEST STAR

By Frederik Pohl & Jack Williamson
Del Rey, \$2.75, February 1983. First published by Ballantine in 1975.

The first Cuckoo novel. A strange, vast entity/artifact from another galaxy approaches ours. Mankind has a lower-class civilization among those known to the galactic culture and we rent living human 'replicates' to aliens for whatever purposes required.

Replicate human explorers are sent to investigate....

WALL AROUND A STAR

By Frederik Pohl & Jack Williamson
Del Rey, \$2.95, February, 1983.
A new novel, a sequel to FARTHEST STAR.

Further human contact and investigation of the vast bubble called Cuckoo, with the entire galaxy at stake.

THERE WILL BE WAR

By Jerry Pournelle
Tor, \$2.95, January, 1983.

Twenty-two stories, articles, introductions, and two poems dealing with man's wars and warlike tendencies through the ages and into space.

John F. Carr is Associate Editor.

DRAY PRESCOT 28 -- DELIA OF VALLIA

By Dray Prescott
DAW, # 509, Dec. 1982
192 pp., \$2.35

REVIEWED BY IAN COVELL

This latest book in the increasingly complex web of Antares' politics begins derivatively enough: a warrior, lost and weakened in the desert, lures down a vulture, cuts off its head and drinks its blood. One twist: The warrior is a woman called Delia ... aka Delia of Delphond, Delia of The Blue Mountains. Dray Prescott's wife, shipwrecked.

Though the usual adventures begin there -- capture, assault, battle, flight -- Delia's tale gradually reveals deeper concerns of the author, perhaps not quite expressible from Prescott's own memoirs of the last 27 books.

We have never before been shown in detail the life and secrets of The Sisters of the Rose; this book in its second section, tells us much. Then the emphasis switches again as Delia -- having refused the proffered leadership of the Sisters -- is seconded to seek out a rebel Sister who, once dishonored and now bitter, has turned to the breakaway sect The Sisters of the Whip who offer her sorcery as aid. This breakaway sect has one main aim: the torture, degradation and death of men. Supposedly in retaliation for the subjugation of women for centuries.

Slavery is examined in general and in the particular; Delia undergoes slavery. Slavery of two kinds. "Prescot" has used the book to make clear statements about heroic fantasy but mostly about equality that should (I hope) make feminists cheer or at least nod. He has made other statements that may dampen the antagonism that now seems to split fantasy roughly into female authors/male authors. He juxtaposes the cruelly anti-male sect with a macho gruesome regime led by a "man" whose treatment of women is not a long way from that in John Norman's fiction.

Told from a woman's viewpoint, DELIA's initially light tone ("Dray Prescott" is almost perfectly in control; while having some fun with the genre he is also writing interesting and affecting prose) darkens through stark reality (a brutal hideous plague) to total black in the pages of torture, slavery and death. Prescott has written an astonishing book. If you read no other book by him, read this!

The cover is by Ken W. Kelly; I finally know why Prescott is continually trying to get back to his wife -- which, by the way, is her uppermost reciprocal thought ...

FIRES OF SCORPIO

DRAY PRESCOT:29
DAW, \$2.50, April, 1983.

New sf novel in this long-run series. This is the second novel in the Pandahem Cycle of Dray Prescott adventures on the far planet Kregen.

These are told first-person by Prescott, to Alan Burt Akers who is the Earth agent with whom he has contact.

This is colorful, action-packed, alien adventure a la Burroughs, only better written than ERB could manage.

THE THREE-LEGGED HOOTCH DANCER

By Mike Resnick
Signet, \$2.50, February, 1983.

Tales of the Galactic Midway #2. A carny crew in alien-inhabited space has a lot of problems putting on shows and staying alive.

THE 57TH FRANZ KAFKA

By Rudy Rucker
Ace \$2.50, January, 1983.

From Charles Platt: "I happened upon his [story] collection by accident, and was very surprised when I found myself enjoying it more than any other new writer's stories that I've read in the past couple of years."

REVIEWED BY JAMES J.J. WILSON

Rudy Rucker, in addition to three novels, has published two non-fiction books on mathematics. This is his first collection.

He is also a mathematical philosopher, and while his stories are enthralling and funny to the average reader, anyone with training in mathematics or physics will delight in the ironic and yet logical ways Rucker treats complex theories and plausible speculations.

I won't summarize every story in the book but "Pac-Man" is about a video game whiz who receives a reward from Ronald Reagan for inventing a new missile guidance system, and "Inertia" is a story that contains fairies, goblins, sprites, people who can fly and the possible destruction of the earth, and is also one of the most hilarious in the book. Just to whet your

appetite, other titles are: "The Indian Rope Trick Explained," "The Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics," and "A New Experiment with Time" ... and surprisingly, the stories are just as funny, clever and thought-provoking as the titles.

This book is an unexpected gem.

THE FIRST BOOK OF SWORDS

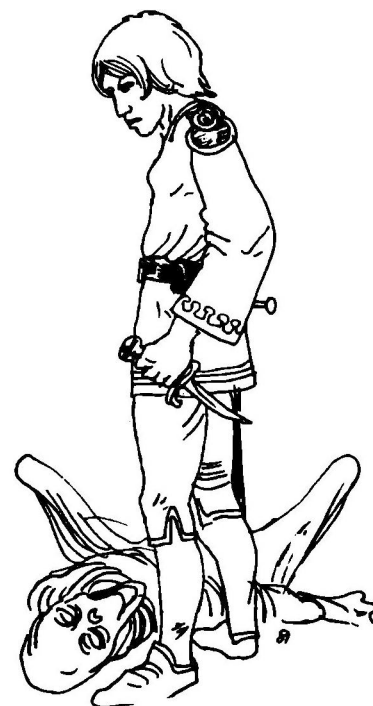
By Fred Saberhagen
Tor, \$6.95, March, 1983.

A trade paperback edition, printed on good quality pulp paper. 'Thousands of years after a war so terrible that it changed the very laws of nature, gods and giants once again stalk the earth and play their games with human lives.'

THE SHATTERED GODDESS

By Darrell Schweitzer
Donning, \$5.95, March, 1983.

New fantasy novel. When an evil witch secretly substitutes her own son for that of a royal heir, she unwittingly creates her own undoing. Condemned to a hole-in-the-wall existence at the bottom of society, the true heir must study magic to survive. When he learns his own real identity he learns that to reclaim the throne he must unleash a magic that will destroy his world.



And, surprise, Darrell can write! He has a fine, smooth, adroit, controlled style. He knows plot, conflict, pace, tension. He handles words verrry nicely. I'm impressed. He's become an accomplished writer, seemingly in a few months, but of course this quality has been evolving for years. I just didn't notice.

HEROIC VISIONS

Edited by Jessica Amanda Salmonson
Ace, \$2.75, March, 1983.

Fantasy anthology of 11 new stories by very well-known sf/fantasy authors: Michael Bishop, F.M. Busby, Grania Davis, Gordon Derevanhuk, Alan Dean Foster, Charles E. Karpuk, Phyllis Ann Karr, Fritz Leiber, Joanna Russ, Robert Silverberg, and Jane Yolen.

Featured is Fritz Leiber's new Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser novella.

THE ALIEN UPSTAIRS

By Pamela Sargent
Doubleday, \$11.95, February, 1983.

In the near future food, jobs, police and hope are in short supply.

Then a man who claims to be an alien moves in upstairs....

New sf novel.

THE GOLDEN SPACE

By Pamela Sargent
Timescape, \$2.95, March, 1983.

Science fiction novel dealing with the social consequences of planet-wide immortality. How to revitalize a safety-conscious world.

EARTHSEED By Pamela Sargent
Harper & Row, \$6.95, March, 1983.

New Juvenile sf novel in which teenagers, newly created from genetic banks of human seed by a super-computerized sentient Ship on a voyage to plant mankind on an Earth-like planet, must go through a "survival test" in an Earth-like "Hollow" of Ship. Instincts are awakened and the boys and girls must learn to cope with the problems that have bedeviled mankind for eons.

A rite-of-passage type of novel with a 15-year-old heroine.

Trade paperback format. Good book paper.

THE UNICORN CREED

By Elizabeth Scarborough
Bantam, \$3.50, Feb., 1983.

High fantasy as a hearthwitch, a wandering minstrel and an orphan unicorn battle a sorcerer for control of a kingdom.

Scarborough's first novel was **SONG OF SORCERY**.

THE WORLD INSIDE

By Robert Silverberg
Bantam, \$2.50, March, 1983.

First published in 1971, this novel tells of life in Urban Monad 116, a giant, thousand-story building in which live 880,000 people in the year 2381 AD. And about trying to get out.

MAJIPOOR CHRONICLES

By Robert Silverberg
Bantam, \$3.50, Feb. 1983. First published in hardback, 1981.

Majipoor, the giant planet of **LORD VALENTINE'S CASTLE**, has a giant history and varied lands and peoples. These are sampled as a young man in the Labyrinth re-lives life-records of famous and adventurous from the past.

Distancing narrative technique doesn't work to involve the reader. Silverberg is intent on moral and social messages in these episodes. But an inventive, impressive effort.

THE MAN IN THE MAZE

By Robert Silverberg
Avon, \$2.50, April, 1983.

Before Bob "went literary" he wrote a string of high-quality pure sf novels---adventures in mind and body and space: highly tensioned, paced, with fine characterization and intriguing concepts. The best sf of their time. This is one of them. First published by Avon in 1969, this is its third printing.

An ambassador to an alien race is mutilated by that race, goes into exile/hiding, and is sought by his fellow humans to help defeat an alien threat to mankind. They must find him in a deadly maze on a distant planet. And if they do find him---why should he help them?

OUT OF THEIR MINDS

By Clifford D. Simak
DAW, \$2.50, January, 1983; originally published in 1970.

A man takes a wrong road and drives into a reality warp---into a time/place where creatures from the imagination are real.

AGAINST THE PRINCE OF HELL

By David C. Smith & Richard L. Tierney.
Ace, \$2.50, February, 1983.

This is the fifth novel in the Red Sonya series. She is a contemporary of Conan, and travels the same lands. A mercenary, an expert swordswoman, she (of the flame-red hair) pits herself in this adventure against a power-mad wizard who rules a city poised precariously above the door to the Seven Hells.

THE NAGASAKI VECTOR By L. Neil Smith
Del Rey, \$2.75, April, 1983.

'To his bosses at the Ochskahrt Memorial Academy he was Captain Bernard M. Gruenblum, Temporal Division---just another time traveler. But to the aliens from Yamaguchi he was, literally, God. So, if Bernie was going to medieval Japan, they were, too. Well, three of them.

'It was supposed to be a routine historical survey, but things livened up when a mutiny knocked Bernie off course. With disillusioned aliens for a crew and a brig full of murderers. Bernie knew getting home was going to be tough---and that was before the time machine disappeared!'

THE STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN

By Zecharia Sitchin
Avon, \$3.50, May, 1983.

Nonfiction. An attempt to prove by archeological and ancient text evidence that mankind formerly worshipped actual immortal "gods." Many photos and drawings.

NEBULA MAKER & FOUR ENCOUNTERS

By Olaf Stapledon
Dodd, Mead, \$14.95 hardback, \$7.95 paperback (same size, same book paper), April, 1983.

A short Introduction of this volume by Arthur C. Clarke. Rather trite and empty. **NEBULA MAKER** and **FOUR ENCOUNTERS** were published separately in England and combined into this volume for publication here in America. Thus there is an English edition Introduction to **NEBULA MAKER** by Harvey Satty included here, and an English edition Introduction by Brian Aldiss to **FOUR ENCOUNTERS**.

NEBULA MAKER is a first-person recounting of "dreams" in which the Stapledon voice describes his visions of the creation and development of our galaxy.

FOUR ENCOUNTERS is a recounting of conversations with a Christian, a Scientist, a Mystic and a Revolutionary. The essences of these types and viewpoints/lives are contrasted and exposed.

Stapledon survives in reprint after reprint, and yet, could these books be published, new, today?

The full-page b/w illustrations by Jim Starlin don't add anything to the books and seem to have been included to fill out the page requirements.



THE GATES OF EDEN
By Brian Stableford
DAW \$2.50, February, 1983.

A far-future hardcore sf novel. An explorer ship has landed on a swamp planet whose alien biology threatens all sentient life in the galaxy.

THE WAY TO DAWN By Bill Starr
Del Rey, \$2.50, April, 1983.

A Farstar & Son novel, #1. Ranger Farstar and his son, Dawnboy, intergalactic merchants, are caught in a deadly race to claim an uncharted planet.
Semi-Juvenile sf adventure.

FLOATING DRAGON
By Peter Straub
Putnam, \$15.95, Hardcover, Feb, 1983
His new novel.
To be reviewed next issue by Darrell Schweitzer.

THE HOUSE OF THE LIONS By L.T. Stuart
Bantam, \$2.95, April, 1983

After the Great Fire, York, capital of the empire, rose to power under a cruel tyrant. Below, in the caverns of the damned, people waited for the White Warrior of legend to return and deliver them.

'But it was Youngman Snag, the sinner priest, whom destiny touched. His bold quest took him into the unlit catacombs of the Undying Ones, through a hellish jungle of burning tigers and flying serpents, to a final reckoning at a place called The House of Lions, to bring light and hope back into the world.'

WATCHDOG By Faith Sullivan
Signet, \$2.95, February, 1983.
New occult horror novel.

KING'S BLOOD FOUR By Sheri S. Tepper
Ace, \$2.50, April 1983.

New Fantasy novel involving a kind of living chess-like game with mortal consequences for the players.

SET OF WHEELS
By Robert Thurston
Berkley, \$2.50, February, 1983.

New novel about a man in a post-2000 AD over-controlled world who blasts off in an antique hot car---a '67 Mustang for a last run to California....

CHRYSLIS 10
Edited by Roy Torgeson
Doubleday, \$11.95, April, 1983.
New short story collection, original publication. Eleven stories by such as David Bischoff, Tanih Lee, Roger Zelazny, Tom Monteleone, Gardner Dozois and others.

ON THE GOOD SHIP ENTERPRISE — MY FIFTEEN YEARS WITH STAR TREK

By Bjo Trimble
Starblaze/Donning
ISBN 0-89865-253-7 \$5.95

REVIEWED BY STEVE MILLER

ON THE GOOD SHIP ENTERPRISE was a pleasant surprise. My first reaction to the cute cover and Donning's jacket copy: "The First Uncensored, Unauthorized Star Trek Memoir!" was to let the book sit. The back cover's proclamation of Bjo as "The Erma Bombeck of Sci-Fi" didn't help.

I did pick up the book at lunchtime and after about forty minutes I put it down to start eating. The short anecdotal sections lend themselves to quick-read situations, and many of the stories are indeed funny. What the book does not offer, is gossip worthy of the jacket blurb.

Effectively Bjo is the main character in the book with Star Trek second and perhaps Hollywood itself third. The behind-the-scenes info on the aspects of Star Trek I'd never been involved in were more interesting than I'd expected, and shows there is a core of witty, thoughtful Star Trek fans just as there is a core of witty and thoughtful SF fans.

There's much name-dropping here, but it comes with the territory. If you need to buy a gift for a Star Trek fan, by all means get this book and read it before you give it. The book is an informal and informative history about a phenomenon that has affected the entire SF genre.

THE YEAR'S SCHOLARSHIP IN SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY, 1976 - 1979

Edited By Marshall B. Tymn and Roger C. Schlobin. Foreword by Brian W. Aldiss.
The Kent State University Press, \$22.50. February, 1983.

Material from **EXTRAPOLATION** is organized here into six sections: general studies; bibliography and reference; collective author studies; individual author studies and bibliographies; teaching resources; and art and film. Entries are cross-referenced and the volume includes both author and title indexes

LYONESSE
By Jack Vance
Berkley, \$6.95, April, 1983.

Trade paperback original.
A high fantasy novel.

THE BLUE WORLD By Jack Vance
DAW, \$2.25, April, 1983.

First published in 1966, this novel of life on the waterworld called The Blue World is rich in imagery and danger.

CENOTAPH ROAD

By Robert E. Vardeman
Ace, \$2.75, March, 1983.

New novel of a young man unjustly accused of murder--on the run--who takes (in a time of magic) a way out---into another, alternate world. There he finds a friendly sentient giant spider, persistent enemies, battles, gore...

This is book one of a series. The second novel is **THE SORCERER'S SKULL** (coming in June), and #3 is **WORLD OF MAZES** (coming in September). Obviously, Bob, the co-author of the successful War of Powers series, has been busy.

This novel is fast-paced and marvelously purple, written in a heavily melodramatic, sensual, detailed style that will remind you of the best of the old **PLANET STORIES** magazine tales.

MILLENNIUM By John Varley
Berkley, \$6.95, June, 1983.

New sf novel dealing with time-travel and the distinct possibility of the end of the [future] world. Fine detail and characterization. Soon to be a motion picture with a screenplay by Varley.

Review by Gene DeWeese next issue.

IN A LONELY PLACE
By Karl Edward Wagner
Warner, \$2.95, March, 1983.

A collection of Wagner's present-day horror stories. Introduction by Peter Straub. Seven stories.

EARTH SONG By Sharon Webb
Athenium, \$12.95, April, 1983.

Science fiction novel for Young Adults. This is the second novel of a trilogy about a future in which an immortality process destroys artistic creativity and about the lives of those talented young people who decide to perfect their art and accept inevitable aging and death.

The novels/trilogy also incorporates the ambition of an immortal to make himself dictator of all Earth's people.

Serious social issues involving immortality are treated here, such as what to do with immortal idiots and imbeciles.

Sharon Webb writes very well, with a grace and skill and economy I find impressive.

SECTOR GENERAL By James White
Del Rey, \$2.75, March, 1983.

Four stories of sf medicine
as practiced by Sector General
hospital where the victims of dis-
asters in space are brought.

These are new stories.

The book is dedicated 'to The
Friends of Kilgore Trout, who treat
the impossible with the contempt it
deserves.'

THE GODFORSAKEN

By Chelsea Quinn Yarbro
Warner, \$3.95, May, 1983, 400 pages.

Set in Spain during the Inquisi-
tion... A heretic's curse by the
Devil results in horror and death in
the family of the Grand Inquisitor.

The detail and recreation of that
terrible time is marvelous. The su-
pernatural element becomes real.

HYACINTHS By Chelsea Quinn Yarbro
Doubleday, \$11.95, April, 1983.

New novel dealing with the
seduction of the masses with total-
experience entertainments---by means
of direct brain hookups. There are
problems...

ERIDAHN By Robert F. Young
Del Rey, \$1.95, June, 1983.

New sf novel. A 1998 time
traveler operative, investigating
human bones in the Upper Cretaceous
Period, finds a boy and girl there
who claim to be the Prince and
Princess of Mars.

This is written cute, with
short sentences.

GAMES-----

ILLUMINATI [Expansion sets #1 & 2]
48 new groups to manipulate in the
original ILLUMINATI card game. Each
new set costs \$6.

Steve Jackson Games, POB 18957,
Austin, TX 78760.

NECROMANCER Fantasy game for two
players. Each player becomes a
wizard with an army of zombies and
skeletons. 112 counters, 11x17
two-color map, 24-page rulebook.
Cost: \$5.00. Steve Jackson Games.
Address above.

BATTLESUIT Man-to-man combat be-
tween nuclear-armed infantry who
travel and fight in powered armor.
This is a sequel to OGRE. Four
sheets of giant-sized counters,
21x32 two-color map, 24-page rule
book. Cost: \$5.00. Address above.

TRUCK STOP Newest CAR WARS role-
playing supplement, provides move-
ment and combat rules for the Big
Rigs. Rules for buses and RVs also
included. 27 full-color counters,
21x32 map of a fortified truck stop.
24-page rule book. Cost: \$5.00.
Address above.

MAGAZINES-----

AMAZING May, 1983, \$1.50.

Cover by Frank Kelly Freas

Opinion by Robert Silverberg

Reviews by Frank Catalano and

Robert Coulson

Stories by: Somtow Sucharitkul,
John M. Ford, Alan Dean Foster,
Gene Wolfe, J. Michael Matuszewicz,
William Wu, and Gregory Benford.

Editorial by Mark J. Rostien.

Poetry by Thomas Disch, R. Frazier.

AMAZING July, 1983, \$1.50.

Cover by Thomas Kidd

Opinion by Robert Silverberg

Reviews by Frank Catalano and

Robert Coulson.

Stories by: Rand B. Lee, F. Gwyn-
plaine MacIntyre, Kevin Kotowski,
Sheila Finch-Rayner, Avram Davidson,
Ron Goulart, Frederik Pohl.

Editorial by Kim Mohan.

Cartoon by Wm. Rotsler and Alexis
Gilliland.

FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION March,
1983, \$1.75.

Cover by Duncan Eagleson

Books by Algis Budrys

Films by Baird Searles

Science by Isaac Asimov

Stories by: Michael Reaves, Kim
Stanley Robinson, Timothy Zahn,
Richard Mueller, Richard Cowper,
Harvey Jacobs, Edward Whelan, Felix
C. Gotschalk.

FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION April,
1983, \$1.75.

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Films by Baird Searles

Science by Isaac Asimov

Stories by: Hilbert Schenck, Lisa
Tuttle, Avram Davidson and Grania
Davis, Gene Wolfe, Bruce Sterling,
Walter Satterthwait, Gil Fitzgerald,
O. Niemand.

FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION May, 1983,
\$1.75.

Books by Algis Budrys

Films by Baird Searles

Cover by David Hardy

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Stories by: Charles Sheffield,
Frederik Pohl, Nancy Springer,
Thomas A. Easton, John Morressy,
Andrew Weiner, Edward F. Hughes,
Thomas M. Disch, Gene O'Neill.

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Toi King, Sex Guild Companion, is
knapnapped by the corporation she
frustrated in STAR WHORES. Taken
to Phallus, the pleasure planet,
injected with a new, powerful sex
drug, enslaved, she must make her
escape and seek a terrible revenge.



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RECORDING-----

WHITE GOLD WIELDER

By Stephen R. Donaldson

Caedmon LP TC1717 CSS-Cp1717, \$8.98

Donaldson reads from his new
novel the "Winter in Combat" sec-
tion. He has a smooth, pleasing
voice, but seems awkward, nervous
and not quite familiar enough with
the material. Too, some of the
words do not pronounce well.

ALIEN CONCLUSIONS

mate fate if pressures continue? A return to a 32-page newsprint SFR! Imagine! Is no abomination too great? Can you imagine only these Thoughts and a few pitiful outside reviews and the Archives? A single article? A short interview? Ahhh, how the mighty will have fallen!

Why-why, I might even be so desperate and malevolent as to publish my own science fiction in SFR again! Remember ONE IMMORTAL MAN in SFR #25-26-27-28? It could happen again!

I can see I've turned the stomach of all my readers. Glazed eyes, contorted mouths, flared nostrils, rigid necks, stentorian breathing, shouted imprecations. And that from those who like me!

Well, we'll see what happens in the real world. Times may get better. I may never sell another novel, conclude my career is over, and have scads of time to read and review for SFR. Wouldn't that be nice?

Relax. I'm not bitter, I'm only desperately running on and on to fill space. When I do this I tend to go to extremes. My id takes over and I paint gloomy pictures with words. I just let my fingers go where they will... In typing (and wine) there is truth...and a kind of macabre fun.

I think I'm having a severe IRS reaction; I had to write over \$1100. worth of checks today for taxes to Uncle, the state, the new, stupid Tri-Met [bus system] tax, Multnomah County business tax, the Portland business license bureau...and in May another \$350+ check for house taxes (the 3rd for 1982--or is it '83?) anyway, it's a never-ending drain and it gets worse every year. I'm running as fast as I can and I don't get nowhere except older and tired. I can't for the life of me understand how people can vote for those outrageous taxes and politicians who do nothing year after year but increase taxes in one guise or another and under one pretext or another. Ahhh, the joys of Welfare....how sweet it would be to be on the taking end sometime--and how depressing.

I'm going up to watch the news and drink some wine.
Have a nice day!



SMALL PRESS NOTES ANNEX

FANHISTORICA #4, Dec. 1982, \$1.50. Edited and published by Joe D Siclari 4599 NW 5th Ave Boca Raton, FL 33431

Yes, Virginia, there was a fandom in the Olde Days...and this is a reprintzine displaying some of the best fanwriting from the early 40's to the early 60's. We have items by Alva Rogers, Dick Lupoff, Bob Shaw, et.al, F. Towner Laney, Bob Tucker...Ray Nelson....Artwork by Lee Hoffman, Bill Rotsler and Richard Bergeron, Ross Chamberlain, Bjo Trimble, Hannes Bok, Ray Nelson, Alva Rogers, Bob Shaw... Many of the best writers were also good artists. Or vice versa.

Of course this is mimeographed.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #46 Interview with John Sladek; "How NOT To Write Science Fiction" by Richard Wilson; profile of Larry Niven; "Standing By Jericho" by Steve Gallagher; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; "Raising Hackles" by Elton T. Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #45 Interview with Keith Laumer; "Pulp!" by Algis Budrys; Interview with Terry Carr; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; "Raising Hackles" by Elton T. Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #44 Interview with Anne McCaffrey; "How Things Work" by Norman Spinrad; "Fantasy and the Believing Reader" by Orson Scott Card; "Raising Hackles" by Elton T. Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #43 Interview with James White; "The Porno Novel Biz" by Anonymous; "How To Be A Science Fiction Critic" by Orson Scott Card; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; "Once Over Lightly" by Gene DeWeese; SF News by Elton T. Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #35 Interviews with Fred Saberhagen and Don Wollheim; "The Way It Is" by Barry Malzberg; "Noise Level" by John Brunner; "Coming Apart at the Themes" by Bob Shaw.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #36 Interview with Roger Zelazny; A Profile of Philip K. Dick by Charles Platt; "Outside the Whale" by Christopher Priest; "Science Fiction and Political Economy" by Mack Reynolds; Interview 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 Interview 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; "Unities in Digression" by Orson Scott Card.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #38 Interview with Jack Williamson; "The Engines of the Night" by Barry N. Malzberg; "A String of Days" by Gregory Benford; "The Alien Invasion" by Larry Niven; "Noise Level" by John Brunner; SF News by Elton Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #39 Interview 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 Interview with Robert Sheckley; 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. McMurray; "Chuck's Latest Bucket" by David Gerrold; Interview with Michael Whelan; "The Bloodshot Eye" by Gene DeWeese; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; SF News by Elton T. Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #42 Interview with Ian Watson; "One Writer and the Next War" by John Brunner; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; "The Human Hotline" by Elton T. Elliott.

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FEATURED CONTRIBUTIONS

THE ALIEN CRITIC #5 Interview
with Fritz Leiber; "The Literary
Dreamers" by James Blish; "Irvin
Binkin Meets H.P. Lovecraft" by
Jack Chalker.

THE ALIEN CRITIC #6 Interview
with R.A. Lafferty; "The Tren-
chant Bludgeon" by Ted White;
"Translations From the Editorial"
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and Cory Panshin; "Written to a
Pulp!" by Sam Merwin, Jr.; "Noise
Level" by John Brunner; "The Shav-
er Papers" by Richard S. Shaver.

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