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*The Fiction
They Deserve
By Charles Platt*

*HARD SCIENCE FICTION
IN THE REAL WORLD
By Gregory Benford*



TWO DAYS WITH KURT VONNEGUT

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

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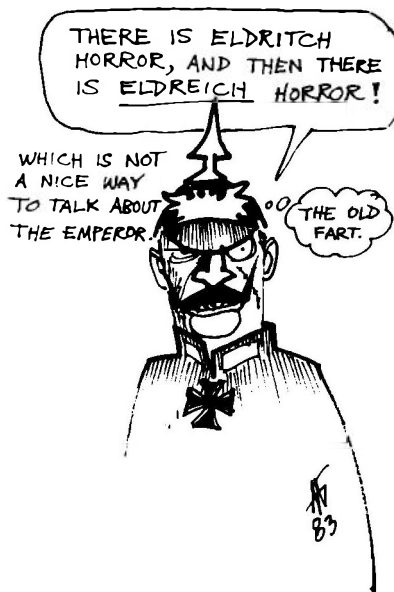
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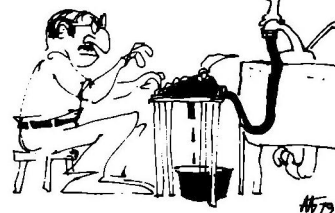
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BUT WHY DOES
GEIS REALLY
WANT MY OLD
ZIP CODE?



...INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY
OF ELECTRIC POWER COMPANIES
SEEKING WORLD CONQUEST...



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THOUGHT FOR THE ISSUE:

The world's future is debased
minds, debased love and debased
money.

ALIEN THOUGHTS

RICHARD E. GEIS

READING FOR FAR FRONTIERS IS IN MY FUTURE...

I've been asked by John F. Carr (and Jerry Pournelle), Managing Editor of the upcoming magazine/paperback FAR FRONTIERS [from Jim Baen enterprises] to review sf books for the new publication.

It will be a lot like the old DESTINIES, will be quarterly.

LETTER FROM J.E. POURNELLE
AND ASSOCIATES
SCIENCE FACT AND FICTION
12051 Laurel Terr Drive
Studio City, CA 91604
November 22, 1983

MARKET ANNOUNCEMENT

FAR FRONTIERS

Editorial Directors: Jerry
Pournelle & Jim Baen
Managing Editor: John F. Carr

'Jim Baen and Jerry Pournelle & Associates will be editing a new paperback/magazine to be called FAR FRONTIERS. This new magazine will be published quarterly and will consist of original fiction and non-fiction. In conception it will be similar to DESTINIES which Jim Baen edited for ACE BOOKS.

'We are looking for the kinds of stories that John W. Campbell would be buying today were he alive and editing ASTOUNDING. The emphasis will be on hard science fiction and realistic speculative fiction -- in essence, a good tale well told. We will also be purchasing poetry and an occasional story of the type that would have appeared in the pages of UNKNOWN, or what Larry Niven calls rivets and sorcery. We are also very interested in good speculative non-fiction. Jerry Pournelle will be doing a science column as well as introductions to stories.

'We will be paying 5¢ a word

for first publication rights for one year and non-exclusive anthology rights, against a pro-rata share of 50%. Rates, of course, will be higher for name authors and for those stories that fit into any of our on-going anthologies: THERE WILL BE WAR, Vol. IV; SILICON BRAINS; LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL, and AFTER THE FALL.

'Send all submissions to:

J.E. Pournelle & Associates, Attention John F. Carr, Managing Editor, 3960 Laurel Canyon Blvd, Suite 372, Studio City, CA 91604-3791.'

THE ROY TACKETT RAG

is hard to take, but justly imposed, since I goofed and he called me on it:

'Your "preview" of Niven's THE INTEGRAL TREES ending with "There is a treat coming to you in 1984: THE INTEGRAL TREES." brought the suddenly dawning light of what is missing from SFR. Consider those of us who have enjoyed THE INTEGRAL TREES in 1983 already. Yes. In ANALOG. You don't have any mention of the science fiction magazines in SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW. Why is that? Seems to me that SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW is missing the very roots of science fiction. Is it not? Is!'

Yes, but. I let my sub to ANALOG lapse some years ago. At present only AMAZING sends me review copies. ASIMOV'S sends a contents page lineup for the next issue. I also let my sub to F&SF lapse... And so, the book publishers, who send all their sf and fantasy and horror releases tend to take over my mind as most-important.

BUT to open an old ~~column~~ column, I do feel that obligation to report on/have reviewed the "heartland" of sf---the prozines---so...one more time...is there anyone out there who reads them religiously, who is a competent writer, who has some sfnal perspective and critical judgement, who would be willing to do a "highlights" column of the three-month-previous issues for SFR?

But back to THE INTEGRAL TREES: It will be a Del Rey hardback, to be published in March, 1984, at \$14.95.

YOU READ ABOUT LETTERS LIKE THIS... but you don't really believe people actually write them...until you get one.

'Dear Mr. Geis,

I am interested in becoming a professional writer and was wondering if you could either send me some information about becoming a writer and/or the addresses of the following science fiction writers: Isaac Asimov, Robert A. Heinlein, Gordon R. Dickson, Jerry Pournelle, and Alan Dean Foster.

'Thank you very much.'

As Paulette noted with some amazement, he didn't even enclose a SASE.

I have not answered.



WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT—

is biology, like it or not, legislate against it or not, villify it or not, mis-name it or not.

This from SCIENCE DIGEST 12/83, sent along by a Canadian fan.

'Are male and female sexuality really so different? Yes, says anthropologist Donald Symons in his scholarly work, THE EVOLUTION OF HUMAN SEXUALITY---and the life-styles of contemporary homosexuals are the acid test. When men or women are not forced to compromise with the opposite sex, says Symons, the profound differences in their sexual natures become clear. In the book he argues thus:

'# There is a substantial male homosexual market for pornography and no lesbian market whatsoever. This suggests that the tendency to be sexually aroused by "objectified" visual stimuli is simply a male tendency, not an expression of contempt for women.

'# The tremendous importance of physical attractiveness and youth in determining sexual desirability among both homosexual and heterosexual men implies that these criteria are relatively innate in men.

'# Knowledge of a potential partner's character---even via a brief conversation---can sometimes diminish a male's sexual interest by interfering with his fantasies. A female's sexual interest usually requires knowledge of the partner's character and prior involvement. Among men, sex sometimes results in intimacy; among women, intimacy sometimes results in sex.

'# Lesbians form lasting, intimate, paired relationships far more frequently than male homosexuals do. The tendency to desire and enjoy sexual variety appears to be a male proclivity, manifested by homosexual men to an unprecedented degree only because their behavior is not constrained by the necessity of compromising with women.

'That homosexual men behave in many ways like heterosexual men, only more so, and lesbians behave like heterosexual women, only more so, indicates that some aspects of human sexuality are not so plastic after all.'

TERRIBLE NEWS FROM ITALY

comes from Gian Paolo Cossato, who wrote on the back of his renewal form as follows (as nearly as I can follow, given his spelling, his desperate need for a new ribbon):

"Here is an updating of the Italian SF scene which might interest you:

Libra Editrice of Bologna went bankrupt October last. Advances

were not paid on several books published and royalties even less. It was a major SF publisher with 6 lines. Apparently Malaguti, who owned Libre, is now in Switzerland and has sent around a letter to all subscribers (who were asked to send large sums of money in advance before Libra went out of business and got few or no books in return) in which he describes his new coming venture in SF. Here is how it should work: A Rumanian publisher will issue the books in Italian language and sell them through the mail to Italian subscribers. Printing costs are much cheaper in Rumania and besides Malaguti states that he will not pay the rights as Rumania has not adhered to the copyright convention. He further says that he feels free to publish anything by any author and adds magnanimously that he might send some money to said authors if the books prove really profitable.

"Nord of Milan, the most important SF publisher, had trouble because of the failure of its distributor, the second one in the country. Fortunately, Nord has a solid record and managed not to be dragged down, but it was a close call.

"Mondadori is still doing its Urania line but translations are abridged as usual.

"Fanucci of Rome is issuing fewer books per year on a non-regular basis.

"Siad of Milan does only two ASIMOV PRESENTS THE GREAT SF STORIES per year, and two THE BEST OF ISAAC ASIMOV'S SF MAGAZINE per year.

"The Italian edition of OMNI has seen its last issue this month. It will turn into FUTURO, so no right ((money)) will be paid to Guccione. They had trouble, too, and lately, they paid less than contracted for translations and rights.

"Armenia has remaindered its whole SF line and again Siad has stopped publishing ASIMOV'S SF MAGAZINE. It was the second attempt after Mondadori tried it a few years ago.

"To sum up: Sf (and Fantasy) is a sick man in Italy, too. Not that other genres are in better shape, mind you."

BAH, HUMBUG!

I wanna tell ya... This has been one hell of a Christmas for me, one I'll remember for a long, long time.

It all began Wednesday, Dec. 21. I went to my dentist to get a cavity filled. The problem was,

the cavity was in my far left lower molar, and my dentist decided to avoid drilling out the existing metal filling to get at the new cavity which was below the metal, in the pulp.

So he went into the back of the tooth, below the gumline. All seemed well when I left his office an hour later; my jaw was still dead and feeless from all that Novacaine.

Thursday, pain became known in that tooth, but I thought it was only the nerves getting used to the new, deeper filling.

The weather, which had been merely bitter cold, turned nasty with snow and ice, all with winds up to 50 mph.

Friday--- More pain! I called my dentist. No answer. He seemed to have decided to not work the day before Christmas. Okay. I could live with the pain until Monday or Tuesday, I thought.

But when I ate breakfast Christmas day---AGONY! Hot coffee on that tooth triggered such pain as I didn't realize could be felt by the human mind.

I quickly discovered that the only relief was to keep the tooth cold. The only effective way to do that was to sip cold water every 30 seconds to 1 minute. Iced water was best, since it kept the tooth cold the longest.

How to get hold of my dentist? I quickly discovered he had an unlisted number, did not have an answering service, could not be reached by anyone short of God.

HELP! A look in the phone book for emergency dental care---look---look---aha, The Multonah County Dental Society blessedly has an emergency dentist on call, even on this most-precious of holidays. But they will not give out his home number; they will call him, then he will call you.

Wait. Sip water. No call. Evening comes. Paulette calls the Society. Sorry, Dr. _____ is not accepting emergency calls tonight. (His office is in Troutdale, out in East County, twenty miles away on impossibly icy streets....) You cannot argue with underlings who are helpless to make changes in policy or force a dentist to give up time on Christmas Eve.

I sat up all night, Christmas night, sipping cold water watching old movies on cable while the wind howled and shook the house and with each howl/shudder I was sure the power wires would be broken somewhere by a falling limb or tree and our electricity would go out AND THAT WOULD BE THE LAST FUCKING STRAW! (Not seeing the thrilling last reel of WILDCAT with Richard Arlen and Buster Crabbe would kill me!)

Christmas day we discovered that a different dentist was on theoretical emergency call. Ha!

He called me. I splained my problem (between 30-second sips of ice water) and said I could be at his office soon after one PM. He gave instructions on how to find his office in the Gateway section of the county, just outside the city limits on 102nd and Halsey. Said to call him, as it would take him a half-hour to get to his office. The number he gave me to call was his office number! (Doctors and dentists, at least, would rather die than have their home phone known to their patients! On TV and in movies doctors are always available and always ready to serve, noble fellows that they are, even in horrible weather.)

Came 1PM and no answer at his office. Call the Society. They say his father says he is in his office. We decide to go to the office.

Paulette, born, raised in the midwest, is an excellent driver, and exceptional on ice and snow. She skidded and maneuvered the Torino to his office. Nobody there. No marks on the snow to indicate anyone had been there that day. We called. Society says he is out in his car according to his family. SURE!

We waited from 1:30 till 2:55; at that point I was running dangerously low on water, even though I supplemented with dirty snow. I decided we should go home.

Safely home. Call Society. They say he should have been at his office all day. They cannot reach him. (Major league, industrial-strength lying going on here!)

We spent hours harrassing the Society service (poor lady), and finally she called a dentist with an office near us a mile away. He called and was sympathetic, but lived in the Mt. Tabor area and it was too icy to drive. He did refer us to a dentist who lived even closer, whose office was in his home, and who might help me.

We called, he was available, we went, he was nice, thirtyish, super professional, has top-of-the-line equipment, and offered, after an X-ray of the tooth, to pull or do root canal work to save it. (The problem was the low filling was irritating a nerve connected to an abcess at the bottom of the root.)

I decided to have the mother pulled. (\$175. for the root canal work seemed too expensive, for me.)

The tooth came out unwillingly, in three pieces. But out it is. And I got in ten hours of blessed sleep last night. I am typing this on the morning of December 26, and am pain-free. Ahh.....

NOTE: all these emergency dentists say in advance they want cash for their services. No checks. My advice, if you are cash short, is to agree, and after the work is done, give what cash you have, and write a check for the balance. This time I had forty dollars cash on me, and borrowed \$10 from Paulette.

And further: get your doctor's home phone number by hook or by crook. AND make sure he has an answering service.

THE LEBANON DISASTER

A little history, professor, if you please! Remember a few years ago when Israel was about to invade Lebanon? The U.S. gov-

ernment pretended it didn't know what was going on; no one in the White House or the State Department watched the evening news, it seems. They professed shock and surprise when the invasion happened. They must have been winking at each other a lot.

And when Israel didn't stop at the Litani river and continued on to Beirut in an obvious and naked attempt to settle the PLO problem once and for all, to drive the Syriand out of Lebanon and to install a Christian, pro-Western government in Lebanon, what did the U.S. government do? We moaned and pissed and cried and forced the Israelis to stop their power play; we were afraid of offending the Arabs, both moderate and radical.

The Big Money interests involved wanted to keep on the good

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side of the Saudis (oil, oil, oil!) more than they wanted to get their property and power back in Lebanon. Since then the oil glut has developed and it's clear the Saudis are not as powerful and influential as thought and need us more than we need them. And at that time the big money thought a deal could be cut with the Moslem forces in Syria and Lebanon.

Now...now it's clear the Syrians (with Russia in the back seat, helping to drive the car) are intent on taking over Lebanon as much as possible.

But in a half-assed, stupid, short-sighted, idealistic move, the U.S. government decided to negotiate a fair deal among all the powers involved. Reagan wanted to be a "peacemaker." Habib shuttled himself half to death, McFarlane did the shuttle dance, too...and the Syrians laughed at us.

What was the stupidest blunder in this unrealistic charade? Creating the French-Italian-American "peacekeeping" force in and near Beirut. It was an American ploy to create a fiction of evenhandedness and impartiality in order to support the Western-oriented Gemayel "government" which is a fraud.

The Moslems all saw through these "public relations" smoke-screens for what they were, a facade put up to placate the American people. The Moslems decided to up the ante and play a trump: they made attacks on the U.S. marines---some rather devastating attacks---which ripped the masks away.

We have shifted policy again, and now embrace Israel as our prime ally in the Near East. And our involvement is becoming naked: we will use the marines (sayeth Reagan December 20, 1983) to move in behind the weak Lebanese army to provide security as the Lebanese army seeks to expand its control throughout the country.

HO HO HO. That role, those tasks, call for a hugely expanded marine presence and a very expensive expansion of the Lebanese army and air force, which you-know-who will pay for.

Hope to God that Congress has the guts to stop this idiocy now, before we have 500,000 men in that quagmire and re-enact the Vietnam disaster all over again.

A BIG BYTE FROM YOUR ASS

Do most people realize yet that computers are being bought by the millions by businesses and governments for one reason only? To save time and labor!

Computers are sweeping people out of jobs all over the place. The process is being hidden by the current fake recovery, but when business slows down again, the rate of unemployment---structural unemployment---will skyrocket.

Computers are getting a great image now, as educational tools for 'the kids' and as game players and record-keepers for households. The personal computer is the "in" thing now.

But the speed-of-light progress being made in computer technology is handwriting on the wall for millions upon millions of workers, for with each quantum leap in memory, in chips, in software, in applications, the era of very, very smart robots is coming. Virtually every office job, every construction job, every field hand job...will be robotized.

There will be a lot of dislocation and maladjustment in societies all over the world as this third or fourth production/work revolution progresses...until some methods and systems are worked out to distribute the wealth and to create new areas of work.

This process will possibly take a generation, and adding these problems to the debt collapse and deepening economic problems will likely cause all kinds of upheavals.

The next twenty years are going to be vicious and traumatic.

What a great time to be alive!

THE DAY AFTER (ABC)

is a nuclear attack TV movie long on horrible detail and despair, short on hope.

It followed the disaster movie formula---set up your characters and the basic approaching disaster, for about one-third to one-half the time/wordage available, then have the disaster happen and dwell on the awful consequences for the remainder of the time/space.

THE DAY AFTER was seemingly authentic and realistic, was riveting once the nuke attack occurred, and made its point that fallout and radiation poisoning is possibly more dangerous and horrible than the initial blast effects.

It left me with the feeling that I had two options: become fatalistic and accept doom in one shape or another by staying in Portland (or any other major metro area), or move to an extremely down-state locale and stay there.

But then the following experts' discussion about a nuclear "winter" created by an all-out nuke exchange during which the weather would make crops impossible for years even in areas not directly affected by the Bombs, made simple

avoidance of target areas not enough.

So if the radiation don't git you, slow starvation will, huh?

The movie and the following discussion seemed designed/stacked to tell everyone there is no hope once an atomic war begins, and that the only way to survival is to make a disarmament deal somehow at almost any cost to avoid a nuke exchange with Russia.

Great. Now, if only Russia felt that way.

But they don't. The Russian rulers don't feel that way! They will continue to develop and test and deploy new and "better" and bigger atomic weapons. And the only way to avoid the atomic war portrayed in THE DAY AFTER is to have better weapons in better positions with better delivery systems than they...or deliberately allow the Russians to get so far ahead of us in atomic weapons that we would not dare attack them or seek to defend/retaliate with atomic weapons, the old "better red than dead" argument.

Since no American president could possibly get away with a unilateral disarmament policy, the only option is to keep ahead in the arms race. We can afford it; quite possibly Russia cannot.

Russia's rulers know one overpowering truth: because of their vastly centralized government, if Moscow is nuked, the soviet empire will disintegrate. With the head gone, the parts will go their own ways. They cannot have any illusions about Eastern Europe, about the Ukraine, about the moslem-oriented southern areas, about those areas formerly known as Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia...about Mongolia.

If push came to shove, also, I wonder how many missiles Russia could actually get off the ground; given the high, precision expertise required to keep nuclear missiles in launch readiness, and given the notorious Russian low morale and worker competence, the spare parts problem, the screw-ups and mismanagement, the drunkenness endemic in the work force and even in their crack military units...

I'm also sure the Russian leaders are aware of these problems. I think they are 90% bluff and bluster, and would back down in a real confrontation.

But I also don't believe we should ever push them to the wall. They wouldn't go nuke for Cuba, but they would if "mother Russia" itself were being dismantled by direct American-funded and inspired revolutions.

I see no immediate danger of nuclear war with the USSR.

A TENTATIVE TANGLING OF TENTACLES

"One requirement is that the opening of a book be seductive. If he's smart a writer will begin a little archly, a little cutely, a little too forward. A stranger is going to open this book and either decide to read it, to give it the next few hours -- or not. And so if I'm a little cute or a little too glitzy in the beginning, this is to hook the stranger. This person will not read the damn book if you do not seduce them. It's... prostitution, yes. It is 'I'll give you the best night you ever had if you give me \$7.'" -- Kurt Vonnegut (March 1983)

It was then my biro snapped.

Sat alone in the swish ritz of the Queens Hotel reception feeling vaguely displaced and disapproved

TWO DAYS IN LEEDS WITH KURT VONNEGUT

of, with the nib in one hand bleeding blood-blue bile and the open mouth plastic tube in the other drip-feeding my fingers a steady pulse of ink.

Then the menopausal receptionist stashed-smiles at me. "You can go up now, Mr. Darlington."

Maneuvering splintered plastic bits down between my shoes and soft-shuffling them back out of sight, streaking rich pile, I head out for the elevator (chintzy inner decor of Yorkshire moors) and angle down a corridor of doors, carefully not smear-touching anything. What if Vonnegut wants to shake hands and I finger-print him, biro ink him? Cosmic confrontation time with the author of "Breakfast of Champions," "Slapstick," "Player Piano" etc. etc., and I'm sticky fingering blue goo ...

First floor, Door 116. A room with window gawping out across City Square where cars revolve in endless train and some armoured king in equestrian statue is fenced in behind a scaffold-cage having pigeon shit surgically sand-blasted. Two chairs over-low slung are drawn close to a gas fire ratchetted too high and in cherry-red intensity. Vonnegut in short red scarf is hunkered down there miserly slurping up a surplus capacity of heat. He gets up, draws me in, his guile-

less smile plastered aslant, but thankfully he doesn't offer his hand ...

He's about my height but slouched; defensively drawn in slightly despite the openness of his manner. His moustache is a couple of shades greyer than his hair, which is as tight-curled as clusters of cartoon thought-bubbles, like on the book covers but a little more disciplined, not as raggedy tousled -- as if he's made an effort to smarten up his act for this tour. His brown close-check jacket doesn't match his pants and there's a tiredness in his eyes that you pick up on lurking just behind the homely courtesy.

Formalities disposed of, tape machine positioned between us, I confess that many of my interviews tend to wind up in Rock-oriented papers, and -- priorities up front

-- ask his views on the state of that art. After all, didn't the Grateful Dead name their music publishing company after his "Ice 9" invention? didn't Al Stewart tag a track off his "Modern Times" album for Vonnegut's "Sirens of Titan?" and isn't there, even now out the window and across the square, a band in Leeds called Slaughterhouse 5?

Is it true that certain of your books are banned in certain American States?

"Well, they try to ban them." The fact seems not to faze him. "It's illegal, but we have to sue these people again and again. Periodically remind them of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Somebody circulated a list of supposedly bad books and this list has never been upgraded. It just keeps floating round and floating round, and it's 12, 13 years old now, but school boards and parents in small towns lift this list and wonder if these bad books (which they've never read!) are in their libraries. And they are. And they throw them out!"

Banned or no, his science fiction travelogue of the Dresden holocaust, SLAUGHTERHOUSE 5, was trans-

lated into an incandescent film by George Roy Hill (of "Gorp" and "Butch Cassidy & Sundance Kid" notoriety). Around the same time Vonnegut's play HAPPY BIRTHDAY WANDA JUNE less successfully became a TV movie starring Rod Steiger and Sussanna York. Then '75 saw a kaleidoscopic phantasmagoria of various elements from the Vonnegut canon whipped up into a low-budget fly-past for American cable and BBC bio-pic slots called "Between Time and Timbuktu." Since then Robert (M.A.S.H.) Altman reportedly tried for the still-born rights to "Breakfast of Champions" -- and was outbid; and John Cale even more recently announced he'd completed the score for a short movie based on Vonnegut's vignette "Who am I This Time?". Director reputed to be Johathan Demmes of "Caged Heat."

Are there other stories you'd like to be filmed?

"No. I don't want to push my luck. I don't think my books make good movies. It's just the way I write. I don't praise myself for this, but I am a presence in my own stories. So anybody who tries to make a movie out of a story of mine is gonna wind up a character short. Because I am in fact, in it. And I can't act for sour apples."

You were quoted as disliking "Happy Birthday Wanda June?"

That was the worst movie I ever saw. There was a big depression in Hollywood when that was made and when "Slaughterhouse 5" was made. There were only two movies being made in Hollywood at that time -- and they were both mine! One was the best movie ever made, and the other was the worst movie ever made."

With nothing else volunteered I go for the wide-angle lens. Kurt Vonnegut -- destroyer of worlds, black humorist, existential absurdist -- are you an optimist?

"As regards human nature -- sure." An expansive shrug, a dismissive gesture with his hands. "But I think what our culture requires us to do is extremely dangerous. And so 'the culture' is a leading character in my books again and again. And the culture is a very stoopid task-master. It makes these bizarre demands on us -- and THERE IS, IN FACT, NOBODY THERE! There's an actual lack of personality in culture (although

BY ANDY DARLINGTON

television is coming close to being such a person in our lives now)." A pause. "But there have been these acts of mercy on battlefields where someone has declined to kill. THAT'S what they're there to do! 'Why on earth are you here? Why on earth were you ever born? -- in order to KILL this person before you!'. And yet people have declined to do this and managed to survive themselves." Vonnegut talks slowly, humorously; when he talks he gives his whole concentration on you, eyes at pinpoint attentiveness. When he talks he talks for you and no one else.

So you see social pressures stuck in absurd ruts; while individual acts provide an escape clause? "Yes. There's a great campaign in the United States by people who have guns and ammunition to sell, that every household should own a gun. And of course -- it's very American to have a gun, supposedly. But I mean, this is all just advertising. So much of this culture has been created. How Americans act has been created. No American should go out with his shoes unshined. When you go out at night you should get dressed up. These are ideas derived from people with something to sell you. They would love to sell you a tuxedo. And they would love to sell you shoe polish. They would love to sell you razor blades -- and look at you with your beard! The culture is so absurd. Most people can't even imagine stepping outside their culture and criticizing it. They assume that it's utterly given -- just like the chemical makeup of the atmosphere. And yet it's clearly an invention that can be added to all the time by vested interests. Look at what Hitler added to German culture! Children come up through the Hitler youth -- or whatever -- and accept it. None of it is criticized. But it's not fear that makes them unwilling to criticize, they just don't realize, just don't understand that it CAN be criticized. That it IS arbitrary." An odd, quirky smile. A long deep-furrowed 4th generation German-American face. A man who lived through the fire-bombing of Dresden by sitting out the storm in the "natural living rock" bunker of an abattoire numbered "Slaughterhouse 5." That was February, 13th/14th, 1945. Now he homes in for the punchline. "I mean -- we've gotten in enough trouble trying to imagine what God wants. We're in worse trouble giving our sole respect to our culture."

It's odd. Vonnegut's on a promotional tour for his latest novel, *DEADEYE DICK*. A tight round of appearances, cities, press

and radio calls, some TV, world-in-a-trunk repetition chaperoned by the brisk knife-edge-crease efficiency of smart upward-mobile PR men. But in this impersonal Hotel room slotted in 20-minute segments, he unwinds the whole automatic-pilot pre-programmed rigidly schedule-bound cat's cradle routine down to a relaxing interlude with an old friend. A neat trick it seems comes natural to him. A calm, slightly fuddled eye to the promo storm.

The ink on my fingers suddenly not so outta place after all ...

"I thought scientists were going to find out exactly how everything worked and then make it work better. I fully expected that by the time I was 21, some scientist would have taken a color photograph of God almighty -- and sold it to 'Popular Mechanics' magazine. Scientific truth was going to make us so happy and comfortable What actually happened when I was 21 was that we dropped scientific truth on Hiroshima. We killed everyone there."

-- "Breakfast of Champions"

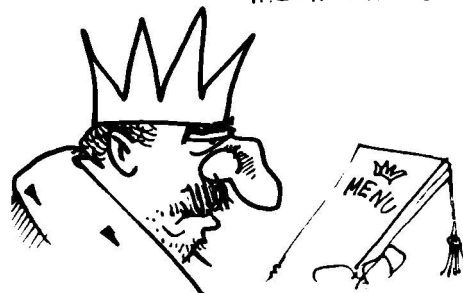
"To be is to do" -- Socrates
 "To do is to be" -- Jean Paul Sartre
 "Do be do be do" -- Frank Sinatra
 -- "Deadeye Dick"

Chicks. Sausages. Antlers. Penants. A clothes line. A pawn shop sign. A "very poorly cleaned" blackboard. Last time I was here at Leeds Playhouse it was Ian Carr's Nucleus asstage, not this Props Dept. detrition of oddities. Carr blew a stunning set -- possibly casually connected to a large chunk of the Theatre's roof coming adrift in subsequent gales -- but even then the place wasn't this full or this abuzz with electric expectancy. The foyer is awash with refugees hunting cancellations or camping out to catch His Master's Voice relayed on wire through tannoy amplification as a Management concession to the punters they're either shoe-horning in or having to turn away. Press immunity has its advantages. I've seen much here from Brecht's "Chalk Circle" to Mike Westbrook's magnificent "Cor-tege," but I've never witnessed it like this. And this night is for a 61-year-old writer who shuffles out in blue two-piece suit, round-toe black shoes, red tie, sleepy eyed. To deliver a rambling idiosyncratic talk (very) loosely peg-

ged out around a thematic clothes line of his life achievements. "I want credit as the man responsible for (a) the Kilgore Trout story (b) the Neuter story, etc. etc."

A humorous, sometimes comic performance received as Holy Writ by the syncophantic assembled. Each anecdote rapturously received, each in-reference smugly responded to, each hint of near-profundity applauded to death. From "if you want to hurt your parents and you don't have nerve enough to become a homosexual -- least you can do is go into the arts;" to "I was raised a pacifist. I'm a pacifist now." Hi ho. So it goes. Vonnegut says "Rolling Stone Magazine" gave him the '60s. And looking around I'd guess this is something like a photofit fake-up of what your statistically average "Rolling Stone" reader might look like in '83. Still hairy but also rather threadbare. Brightly crosspatch and

YOU KNOW YOU'RE LOSING
 THE CIVIL WAR WHEN THE
 MAITRE'D SITS YOU IN
 THE KITCHEN!



fringed in attempted suburban bohemia, but in strict monogamous couples, or student clusters; arty manuscripts in closets, piles of poems in manilla folders in drawers filed in with their relevant rejection slips. Low culture literate. Vonnegut programmed in with Tolkein, D.M. Thomas, Mervyn Peake and "Watership Down."

And Vonnegut plays to expectations. Extends the woolly eccentricity of his novels across the stage for around 45 highly entertaining minutes. A hectically assembled ramshackle self-indulgence of inner mumblings, slapstick monologues and muddle-headed throw-away whimsy. He taps it out with chalk on the blackboard and peppers it richly with "Wampeters, Foma and Granfallons." Random notes? "It's ALL random notes!"

He does his "farting tapdancer" routine from "Breakfast of Champions" to illustrate the Trout technique. It concerns the "alien

Zog from Margo, a planet where the natives converse by means of farts and tapdancing. He lands at night in Connecticut. He's no sooner touched down than he sees a house on fire. He rushes into the house farting and tapdancing, warning the people about the terrible danger they are in. The head of the house brains Zog with a golf club. An example of a tragic failure to communicate." He feeds an ad. for DEADEYE DICK ("my new book, my wonderful new book") in off-hand send-up -- that still gets the message across to the satisfaction of the PR chaperones.

Then in what appears to be a less ambiguous vein, he speaks out against writers who "present their credentials" as educated people, showing some familiarity with Latin and Greek, and Greek mythology, having traveled in Europe some, seen the important Cathedrals, the important paintings. "I", he protests, "make no such allusions. I offer no credentials to prove that I am indeed an educated person." Instead he declares "I am educated as an anthropologist and what impressed me is what the anthropologist Claude Levi Strauss said at the end of his career. That he thought all cultures were equally rich and complex. That there is no one with a deprived culture."

Elitist academics and writers scorn "the sort of population we have in New York today -- Hispanics and Blacks," but "I'm sure they have myths and a culture as rich as theirs, or as mine, or as anyone's. What used to be standards for style or literacy -- or evidence that you are a good writer -- are becoming obsolete. Most critics believe in those standards -- that a person SHOULD have a little Latin, a little Greek, and should know the myths of the Minotaur and so forth. This has made it very hard for us to create an American literature. I'm from Indianapolis Indiana, and when I express that culture, or do honour to that culture, it is scorned by some critics as simply being beneath notice. This is a cultural matter and should be acknowledged as a cultural matter. The cultural standards for judging literature should be abandoned, and everyone should be credited with having a rich culture to begin with. And let's begin from there and see what a person can do with his own -- rather than the critic's -- culture."

The audience goes ape-shit. Like he's delivered a personal ex-oration on the sanctity of their taste; but it makes me a little uneasy. It comes just a whit too cutesy, a bit like telling the

people what they wanna hear. A pat on the head for the collective ego. I mean, I don't know Indianapolis, but I'd guess that its dominant popular mythologies are not that different to those of Dublin, Leeds, or pretty much anywhere else in the West-world. T.V., Rock and Sports Stars, Movies. Sure -- I'd agree that if a writer wants to reach anything other than a micro-elite then they've got to relate to that culture. But to eulogize it on this podium seems slightly over the top. Vonnegut infects this audience with an awe at their own profundity. Rubber-stamps their smug complacency rather than stimulating them to s-t-r-e-t-c-h. Isn't there just the merest whiff of condescension? And -- with security as tight as a drum -- there's no chance to explore the theme yet. There's no time-squeeze between his set's completion and the P.R. men high-jacking him for book autographing chores in the lobby.

But I determine to find time...

"He walked out into the night with his flashlight. He was still giggling. He was making the flashlight beam dance over all the dead people stacked outside. He put his hand on my head, and do you know what that marvelous man said to me? ... 'Son' my father said to me, 'someday this will all be yours.'"

-- CAT'S CRADLE

#

The intense heat from the keyed-up gas fire, and his insistence on poring directly over it to scoop up as much as possible, gets uncomfortable. I want to put to him the question of his condescending to his audience but can't find a way to do it without running the risk of interview time being abruptly terminated and winding up back in Reception with the menopausal receptionist and the bits of my broken biro. So I bide my time with droplets of sweat running down the inside of my shirt. And we talk around his career as an SF writer, through the high-point books CATS CRADLE, SIRENS OF TITAN and SLAUGHTERHOUSE 5; then his apparent decline into a clutch of self-referential books content to serve the by-then massive Vonnegut industry. Does his new book break from this sequence?

He capsule-reviews the "Neuter Novel", DEADEYE DICK -- "Rudy Waltz, the hero, has no interest in sex whatsoever" he relates amiably, "because he accidentally

shot a pregnant woman when he was 12 years old. He has no interest in anything actually. But he foresees, and I foresee the next big parade up Fifth Avenue is going to surprise American civilization. Of course, the homosexuals suddenly poured into Fifth Avenue and marched, revealing how numerous they were, how proud they were, and how many votes they had.

The next flurry up Fifth Avenue is going to be the Neuters. And it is going to be the biggest parade that New York City has ever seen! There's going to be women who look like Marilyn Monroe out on the street carrying signs "DID IT TWICE -- NEEDED IT BOTH TIMES." There's going to be professional athletes --



perhaps American Football Players stripped to the waist -- holding placards saying "HAVEN'T DONE IT FOR 2 YEARS -- NEVER FELT BETTER." And that sort of thing. This may turn out to be 1/4 of the population of New York City. We have no idea how many neuters there are around, because they send off no sex signals. They're not signaling to other people to "come to me, look at me" and all that. So you simply don't notice them. Rudy Waltz -- the hero of my novel -- this neuter, looks like Gary Cooper! He's that big and that handsome. And in Greenwich Village, the sex capital of the world, nobody sees him when he walks down the street. He'll walk into a coffee shop and sit down and not get waited on, because he is a neuter ..."

The phone rings. A persistent reminder from the lobby that my time's up. With nothing to lose I make my play for extra time. One of the things that struck me last night, I offer, was your put-down of "High Culture" (knowledge of Latin, Greek, etc.), in favor of "Folk Culture" (television and street culture?). It seemed to me rather condescending, I mean, YOU obviously relate to literary precedents as well as Pop influences ...?

"No. But I didn't -- you mentioned television, I didn't. But these people have ..."

Was it just ethnic cultures you were referring to then?

"Well, whatever. You can get bizarre combinations in a city like New York where there is a lot of intermarriage and all that. But then, I believe that everyone has myths -- which are ways of discussing life. In the same way that the Bible parables are; here's a story, we can talk around that. And the Hispanics and the Blacks, for example, or the Eastern European Jews or whoever is in New York have parables already. You and I don't know them, or perhaps I do know them. They also have rich music traditions. A lot of Hispanics are part Indian and presumably know old legends from pre-Columbian times. Every culture, every person is a parable."

You mean a common currency of ideas to which people relate. But must that only apply to ethnic groups?

He's shrugging his coat on. Thinking on his feet. "The telly was your invention, because I did not say they had a culture built on television."

Actually he had hinted as much a few thousand words back when he'd accused television of "coming close to being" the "personality in our culture." But instead I just suggest that the dominant contemporary mythologies would be Movie Stars, Sports personalities, that sort of thing.

"Well, you can discuss life around them, those things," he concedes. "That's not a question of how bad that stuff is, or how good." He's warming to the subject. "I wouldn't mind having somebody be hit pretty hard by some drama on television -- but certainly NOT a situation comedy -- and choose to refer to it from time to time in the presence of other people who had seen it." Coat flapping, glasses now perched precariously on the end of his nose, a giant case bulging in all the wrong plac-

es, he starts acting out possible dialogues. "Now why did she DO that? Why was she drunk that night? Did she have to get drunk that night, or was she only pretending to be drunk." He pauses for a moment as we head out for the corridor. "It's the same sort of thing as 'was Hamlet crazy?' One is reputable, and one isn't. Ye-e-e-e-s ..." Perhaps that just occurred to him. Perhaps that's what he meant all along. Perhaps to the Playhouse audience it is Vonnegut's writing that has created their mythologies, not Shakespeare or TV ...

Minutes later, sat alone in the swish ritz of the Queens Hotel reception playing back the tape, I see Vonnegut, coat unfastened and dismally blowing, looking vaguely tired and harrassed, exit through the plate glass doors to be swallowed up by the waiting taxi. En route for Manchester, another stream of interview games and impertinent questions. Another night, another \$7!

"About endings, people complain about the endings of my books. Endings do not matter. They don't. I end CAT'S CRADLE with the end of the world. Somebody thought that was a comment of mine of some sort. It was just a way to end the damn book. People imagine the ending is what we have been building up to the whole time. This is not what we've been building up to. What we have been building up to has occurred about two-thirds of the way through the book. Every message has gotten through, every scene has been played. The last part of the book is saying 'thank you for coming, really, that's all there is, the food is gone, we're out of ice cubes, look what time it is, here's your coat, let's get together again real soon.' It's goodbye ..."

-- KURT VONNEGUT
(March 1983)

(c) All quotes/novel extracts courtesy of "Jonathan Cape Publishers"



SMALL PRESS NOTES ANNEX

ETCHINGS & ODYSSEYS #2 \$6.00
Edited by Eric A. Carlson, John J. Koblas, and R. Alain Everts.
The Strange Company,
POB 864, Madison, WI 53701

This is a 500-copy limited edition, full-size, perfect-bound, coated stock, color-covers volume dedicated to the legendary WEIRD TALES, and featuring (in this 108-page issue) 11 stories, five articles, 19 poems, and innumerable illustrations. By far, for me, the most interesting features were the interview with Margaret Brundage and the article about her and her artwork. She was the prime cover artist for WEIRD TALES and specialized in near-nude damsels in distress of a type and style that couldn't/wouldn't be used now (too revealing). She died in 1976 at age 76, and was quite a woman in many ways.

Also available from The Strange Company is THE ARKHAM SAMPLRT, a supplement to ETCHINGS & ODYSSEYS. A quarterly, it costs \$1.50 or \$5. per year. This first issue has some H.P. Lovecraft correspondence reproduced, and is interested in weird, phantasy, arcane.



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CHARLES PLATT

THE FICTION THEY DESERVE

Many people seem unaware that interactive fiction has already become an important subsection of science fiction. For these blissfully naive souls, a brief recap:

The first successful example in book publishing was Bantam's CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE Series. Devised by a New England school teacher to entertain his kids, each novel consists of episodes one or two pages long, each culminating in a choice such as 1: Fire the ray gun, or 2: Run away. Depending on which option you choose, you are told to skip to a different page in the book. There is then another choice, and another, as the narrative branches and branches again. Most paths through the book are six to ten episodes long, and most of them end with the hero getting zapped. The challenge is to find an ending in which he survives.

Interactive computer fiction is usually more complicated than the CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE type of book. The text is encoded on a disk; the computer displays it on a video screen, and the user types choices on the keyboard. Typically, you're a knight trying to rescue a princess, or an explorer trying to find gold and you have to get out of an underground maze, fight demons, slay dragons and so on and so forth. You type your instructions in a primitive form of English: STAB WIZARD or OPEN DOOR or CLIMB OVER WALL. The program compares your instructions with its built-in vocabulary and jumps to an appropriate part of the story in response.

Most computer stories of this type are guessing games, and like the books, they are tests of survival. Whenever you make a mistake you get zapped, and must start all over again; thus, you learn the correct plot choices the hard way and it can take several days to master a typical computer adventure.

The arcade game "Dragon's Lair" was the first attempt to dramatize this concept via a video disk, effectively putting the player in charge of the outcome of an anim-

ated movie. It has been highly successful; already there are imitators. It seems that in this field, as in prime-time television, something that was originally devised to appeal to kids can be quickly (albeit marginally) modified to sell to adults.

Several science fiction people are now involved with interactive fiction. At one end of the scale we have Byron Preiss employing quantity-writers at modest wages to crank out CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE imitations...or spinoffs -- for the juvenile audience, ages 10 to 20. At the other end of the scale (and if you complain that this isn't a very broad scale, I suppose I must agree) we find James Baen employing more widely known and respected writers (e.g. Janet Morris) to adapt existing science fiction novels or write new ones in the interactive format, for the adult audience, ages 15 to 30.

When I ran into Joe Haldeman at the world convention, he was negotiating with Infocom, the most successful publisher of interactive computer fiction. When I talked to Tom Disch recently, he was selling some sort of multiple-choice computer adventure to Harper and Row. We seem to be seeing the beginning here of a whole new genre, in which the reader ceases to be a mere passive recipient and becomes a collaborator. And most people seem to think that this is a great idea.

Well, it isn't. First of all, interactive fiction doesn't really make the reader any more creative. You can only choose between alternatives that have been pre-set by the writer; you can't invent new paths through a story any more than you can invent new answers to questions in a multiple-choice test.

More to the point, interactive fiction, by its very nature, has to be episodic, codified, and trivial. It is a big step away from characterization and subtlety, in a field where these qualities were already scarce.

Before I argue further, I should mention my own background. I'm not generally hostile to literary innovation or computer technology; I like to see experiments in fiction, and I enjoy computers enough to have sold many game programs and four nonfiction books on the subject. Nor am I arguing in a spirit of sour grapes; true, no one has asked me to write interactive fiction of my own, but actually I sold my first (and only) interactive story back in 1971, before CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE had even been thought of. My effort was titled "Norman vs. America" and appeared in the fourth and last issue of QUARK, a quarterly edited by Samuel Delany and Marilyn Hacker. The interactive form seemed frivolous to me, so I did it as a comic strip in which a naive young man had to choose be-



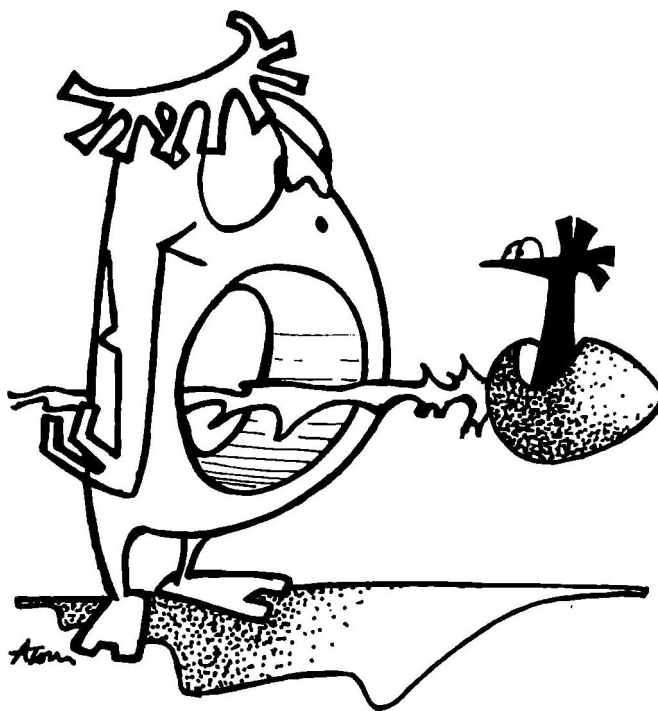
tween ludicrous options: whether to shoplift from Macy's or go to a rock concert; whether to become a dope dealer or a dildo manufacturer; and so on. It was reprinted subsequently in an avant-garde anthology, praised briefly in THE NEW YORK TIMES and subsequently translated into Swedish. Then, appropriately, it died. Since it seemed an inherently trivial form, I never did any more with it. Had someone told me that ten years later it would become a hot trend in publishing, I would have been incredulous.

Without wanting to sound old-fashioned, I believe that to be memorable and important, fiction must have structure, must be built around living, breathing characters of depth, must be carefully paced, and should move through a series of revelations to an ending which, in retrospect, has a sense of inevitability. It is the business of a writer to learn to control these elements, consciously or unconsciously, and this is not a trivial matter. Structure, in particular, is both elusive and fundamental.

Now, in one sense, interactive fiction is highly structured. The writer must plan out a complicated web of possible paths that branch and rejoin without loops, paradoxes or contractions. The logic required is similar to that in writing a computer program.

But this is not structure in a literary sense. Indeed, by its very nature, interactive fiction can have no literary structure at all. The action must be divided into short episodes, each culminating in two or three simple alternatives for the reader. To make a good game, the alternatives must seem more-or-less evenly weighted; thus there can be no sense of events growing inevitably out of previous events, or evolving from the motives and nature of the characters. Plot becomes a whimsical series of yes/no decisions, and the eventual outcome is likewise reduced to the most primitive level: the hero either lives or dies.

Since plot no longer grows from character, characterization is unnecessary in interactive fiction. This is just as well, since there usually isn't room for it. Within the length of a book or the width of a computer disk, there must be dozens of separate adventure paths, many of them branching into dead ends. As a result, the length of any one path will seldom be more than 1000 words. No room for memorable characters and complex interactions between them.



No room for atmosphere, drama and narrative intensity. There is room only for briefly described scenes, and two-dimensional menacing figures that precipitate crises for the reader to resolve by selecting Option 1 or Option 2.

Interactive fiction then, cannot be good literature. But it cannot even be good adventure. An engrossing adventure usually achieves its effects by building a complex plot, full of false trails, twists and revelations. The protagonist uses resourcefulness and cunning to solve each problem, in ways that are unexpected yet consistent with his skills and character. Ultimately, there is a climax and a visceral, cathartic payoff.

None of this is possible in interactive fiction. The hero becomes a mere figure, like a chess piece, moving from one incident to the next. Watch someone playing "Dragon's Lair" and ask why the magic horse must steer left to avoid the third stone pillar, or why the knight must jump onto the second wooden bridge, not the first. These "correct" moves cannot be deduced from the character of the hero, the story so far, or the environment in which it takes place. The pattern is random.

Why then is interactive fiction so popular? First, its short segments suit the attention span of video kids raised on half-hour TV cartoons subdivided by

half-minute commercials. Continuity is no longer a virtue.

Second, by reducing life to a series of arbitrary yes/no decisions, all the disturbing complexities of the real world are eliminated in favor of a codified scenario even more reassuringly simple-minded than that of a typical fantasy novel.

Third, the lack of characterization becomes an advantage, rather than a problem. Most computer adventures are no longer written about a protagonist; they are written in the second person, about the reader. "You" are stuck in the labyrinth; "you" must decide whether to slay the dragon or run for cover. The idea of a central figure with interesting, complex motivations has been discarded on the assumption that readers are less interested in other people than in themselves. Thus interactive fiction is a fine form for members of the Me Decade.

And so the job of the writer is no longer to build a balanced, integrated whole, with dramatic events and consequences relevant to reality. The job is now to devise multiple-choice games that put readers in the starring role, free to demand whatever they want.

The result can only be the fiction they deserve.

and then i saw...

THE MAN WITH TWO BRAINS (R)

is a fine Steve Martin comedy, full of jokes, sight gags, in-jokes, pratfalls and naughty language. Some piquant nudity, too.

The story? Oh, it's about this brain surgeon, see, who has developed a screw-top method for getting at the brain... He meets a fellow weird scientist (David Warner) who has a large number of jarred, conscious brains, falls in love via telepathy with one woman's brain, and... He's married to this pricking-teasing broad, see, (Kathleen Turner [BODY HEAT]) who plays around with everyone but him... And the final segments of the movie involve switching brains...or rather the character/personality matrix in the brains...

It gets confused and is somewhat forgettable in detail. The movie is full of chuckles, smiles and some outright guffaws. At least for me, and I might even be willing to see it again.

THE VERDICT (R)

is superb as an aging, alcoholic lawyer given one last case by a friend, an open-and-shut settle-out-of-court malpractice suit which can make him well financially from his share of the settlement.

But for reasons of pride and shame he decides to fight for a vastly larger award--by jury trial.

A lawyer-reviewer derided the legal procedures used in the movie, but those are only the tools, the mechanism, the background against which this story of character redemption is enacted. Charlotte Rampling plays his new woman friend who turns out to be a spy from the huge corporate law firm defending the doctors, hospital and Catholic archdiocese which owns the hospital.

The movie is excellent for Newman's acting--you believe he is that down-and-out lawyer fighting to save his soul from the bottle and probable eventual suicide.

James Mason is devilishly slick and amoral as the defending lawyer. Fine supporting cast.

THE SENDER (R)

isn't very coherent or rational as it shows a mother-dominated young man with telepathic powers projecting his mental horrors into the minds of his beautiful young woman psychiatrist and fellow patients at a mental hospital.

The film is effective but not convincing beyond the moment. Watch it for the special effects.

STILL OF THE NIGHT (R)

is made watchable by Meryl Streep's compulsively involving performance as the suspicious mistress of a murdered man. The man was the patient of a psychiatrist played low-key and mild-mannered by Roy Scheider who becomes involved with her via the police.

The story is pure formula, as another, psychotic woman is the real murderer who is intent on killing Streep and Scheider as well, to keep them from discovering her identity, and then to keep them from revealing it. The art auction world is the backdrop.

MONSIGNOR (R)

suffers and dies from miscasting, misscripting and misdirecting. Christopher Reeve is still too identified as Superman to be a believable priest. Genevieve Bujold is not so subtly too old for him as an apprentice nun who has an affair with him in Rome during WWII.

The script cannot cope with the novel's 30-year time span and Vatican financial affairs; we have isolated dramatic moments as islands in a sea of dullness. [Bujold's nude scene reveals a weathered torso, tired little breasts, popcorn nipples.] There is a short, no-action after-the-orgy scene with two whores. That was to acquire the R-rating because I strongly suspect the producers realized they had a dog and wanted to lure people with anticipated naughtiness.

Reeve has a continuing problem as an average person--he's too

big! As superman his size is fine; heroic stature, great build. But when he plays normal men he looms and towers and requires tall actors to minimize his size.

Don't bother with this film unless you want to see Bujold do a strip scene

LADIES' NIGHT OUT

stars Pudgy, a female Don Rickles. She's funny the first two times you see her shows, but soon palls as she repeats put-downs and gag lines.

This gal is exclusive with Showtime (cable) and uses a lot of double-entendre material in and apart from her savaging of people's appearance, demeanor, character.

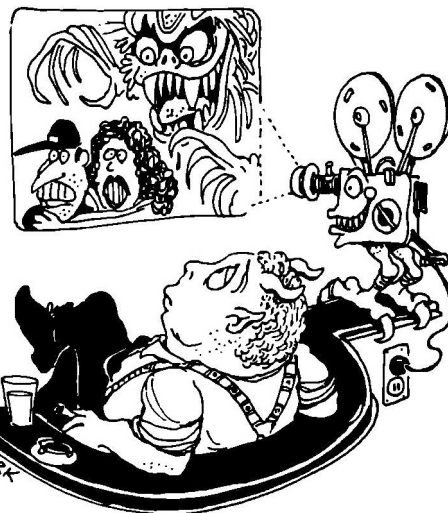
In this show she acts as a glorified mistress of ceremonies at a Chipendale show--in which about eight male hks do strip teases down to strings-and-cup for an all-woman audience.

Interesting phenomenon. The cameras capture some great reaction shots from the young women as these body-builder types accept tips in exchange for giving kisses during their dances.

AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN (R)

is really an old-fashioned movie that, less the love scenes and earthy language, could be (and was!) made in the 30's and 40's and 50's...

Crude, footloose young man joins



RICHARD E. GEIS

Navy to become officer. Tough but caring drill instructor and sweet young woman change his character and insure success. Love conquers all. He will marry her.

A very good movie, extremely well done, well acted. Richard Gere is fine as the soiled youth who seeks redemption in the Navy and finds love in a young woman factory worker near the base, and finds another kind of love in Lou Gossett, Jr., his drill instructor whose job is to push and prod the recruits to expose character flaws which would be a danger to others in wartime, as a jet pilot. But he cares about his charges as human beings, too.

The psychology--the inner, hidden motives in several of the recruits besides Gere are shown clearly, expertly. The character revelations are what make this formula love story so very good.

HONKYTONK MAN (PG)

is the tragic story of a tubercular, over-the-hill itinerant country & western singer during the thirties as he journeys to Nashville for a last-chance audition at the Grand Ole Opry.

Clint Eastwood is very, very good in the title role, and his son, Kyle Eastwood shows great natural acting talent as his teen-age nephew who accompanies him on the trip.

It's a film of character development and revelation, as Eastwood struggles against his killing tuberculosis to get that big break, that one slim opportunity to gain recognition as a fine singer and songwriter while his life of failure and self-destruction seems to run like a black streak through his behavior, intent on frustrating and destroying him. Yet he is a good, kind man at base, and his triumph comes--too late--after his death.

Eastman shows a surprisingly quiet, fine singing voice, and is utterly convincing as his character.

John McIntyre...now in his seventies...plays Grandpa with great skill and loneliness, and dignity.

This is a very good film, recommended for at least one viewing. It did not do well at the box office, though, because Clint Eastwood fans only want him playing loner/action/violence movie roles. He does those for money...so he can then make an occasional "art" film like this.

THE BITCH (R)

was made in England, in 1979, at a time I suspect, when an aging, fiftyish Joan Collins

needed money and decided to do a series of sex films.

In this and a few others she bares her breasts and does nude scenes which show her as a woman who for her age is in great shape. But the face is better than the breasts, and her acting better than this routine plot about a woman intent on maintaining her rich lifestyle at almost any cost.

Of course after she made this film she came to America again and signed on as a bitch on the TV prime-time soap opera, DYNASTY. Now she has fame and fortune--and these awful films rattling in her closet for all to see.

A CASE OF LIBEL

is a play filmed for Showtime. Edward Asner plays an attorney who takes on a Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist (Daniel J. Travanti) in an emotionally charged libel suit brought by a war correspondent.

An hour-and-a-half of courtroom fencing, revelations of character, naked emotions...

and stacked decks. The author makes the conservative, right-wing, rabid anti-communist columnist (based on Westbrook Pegler?) into a cunning/stupid foil for the Liberal, right-thinking good-guy lawyer, Edward Asner, who was cast to his liking, no doubt. But Travanti out-acts him and with a few obvious answers not dictated by a leftist author would have defeated the libel case against him.

Well worth watching for the fine acting.

FIVE DAYS ONE SUMMER (PG)

isn't much. Sean Connery is stolid as a mountaineering Scottish physician on an Alpine vacation with a young woman... I've forgotten their relationship. They pose as man and wife, though no one is fooled.

Good climbing sequences for this set-in-the-Twenties film.

Eventually the girl goes back home. I think. As you see, the movie made a minimal impression on me. I always like to watch Connery, however.

THE SEX MACHINE (R)

is an absurd Italian-made sex farce. In 2037 A.D., scientists solve the energy problem by harnessing the power of sex arousal. A couple, coupling, can light up a house. Etc.

All that interests here are the

beautiful nudes. The acting is of that flamboyant Italian style that passes for humor over there, I suppose. The plot sickens.

MANIMAL (TV)

was minimal. It has, rightfully, been cancelled. A routine police series for children, or those with childish minds, it said, hey, here's this police detective who has this mysterious power to turn himself (in seconds) into any animal he chooses. Wow. And he has this beautiful young woman assistant, see, and a handsome young man assistant...

I saw this show once. I could barely swallow the detective lieutenant changing into a panther. When he shifted into a parrot in order to hear the bad guys do some plotting, I could only wonder about the problem of mass: a 175 pound panther--fine. A 175 pound parrot would have wrecked that hanging bird cage. And as for flying....

The moron TV execs struck out again, thank god.

JINXED (R)

features Bette Midler as talented but unknown Las Vegas singer who talks an unlucky (jinxed) casino dealer into helping her murder her abusive, shit-head husband (expertly played by Rip Torn).

Midler has a natural acting style I enjoy, and a raw energy I admire.

I liked the movie, but wouldn't see it again.

WALTZ ACROSS TEXAS (PG)

wastes Ann Archer, a good actress, as a pretty geologist involved romantically with a wildcatter in Texas.

I didn't watch much of this. When a movie pads with lovingly photographed scenery and other time-wasting footage, early, I often take the hint and leave the channel.

I suppose the heroine and hero fought evil corporate oil interests and corrupt government.

SUPERCHICK (R)

shows a lot of Joyce Jillson often as she pretends to act as a shy airline hostess with a split personality: her bold, swinging alter ego has a boyfriend in every city.

There's a plot involving dope smuggling, as I recall.

Watchable for nudity only.

CONTINENTAL DIVIDE (CBS)

Explains why John Belushi was so depressed about his career that he turned to heavy drugs and eventually o.d.-ed.

In *THE NEIGHBORS* he was cast as a sane, long-suffering nebbish. In this film he was cast as a hot-shot investigative reporter who was bugging VIP public officials with exposes of their grafts and other rip-offs.

He was neat, clean, polite... everything dull and boring he hated as a persona of *SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE*, as the piggish character he played in *ANIMAL HOUSE*, and the antisocial, unconventional brother of *THE BLUES BROTHERS*.

His fame and fortune was made as a non-conformist, outrageous bum, etc. and the attempt to make him a nice leading man type failed utterly.

Had he lived, had more perspective, had better agents or advice, he might have survived his flops and returned to slobsville where his further fortune lay.

CONTINENTAL DIVIDE is a boring, juvenile comedy, and Belushi is made ridiculous as a city dude trapped in the Rockies without enough cigarettes. His backpack is ludicrously large and his pratfalls pathetic.

See it and weep for him.

AUTOMAN (ABC)

is a typical Glen A. Larson inspired production---pure science fantasy. In this case a police computer whiz played by Desi Arnaz, Jr. creates a super crime fighter by creating a human-shaped hologram on his computer screen, piling on the power, and ZZZZZAAAP! the hologram appears in the form of a *TRON*-like male with full magic computer powers... Oh, it's too absurd to describe.

Don't waste your time. Not even once. Not even ten minutes.

ENDANGERED SPECIES (R)

tries to explain why literally over a thousand mutilated cattle have turned up on cattle ranches and farms all over this country. The distinctive aspect of the mutilations is that almost always the "mutilations" are not simply butchery, but are carefully done, surgery-level excisions of organs...most often the genital organs.

The usual explanations are devil cults and flying saucers.

In this movie the explanation is that a well-financed right-wing group of patriots are testing advanced biological weapons and... well, I frankly didn't follow the logic very well, mostly because it wasn't there.

The movie producers wanted to make a provocative action movie, had Robert Urich available, and wanted to keep costs down. (I suspect the same "mutilated" cow was used in all the mutilation shots, and a small town in Colorado (I think) was the locale.)

So the story followed formula and ended with the destruction of the bad guys' base, romance for Urich (an embittered ex-NY cop), and unsatisfied viewers.

Urich does a good job of acting and is now older and more rugged-looking. With the right roles he could be a Bronson or Eastwood.

The R-rating here is for grue and violence. Hardly a bare-breast in sight. Well...two, at least. Nothing special or erotic.

GIRLS OF THE WHITE ORCHID (NBC)

'A white-slavery ring exports glibbly young women to the Far East after luring them with the promise of working as dancers.'

Jennifer Jason Leigh stars as a young, ambitious singer who succumbs to the misrepresentation, and Ann Jillian (in a brown wig) plays an older, broken-to-the-sad-dle exotic dancer who finally commits suicide.

The girls are pressured to 'be nice' to the well-to-do Asian men who come into the clubs and want to have sex as well as drinks. They tip the girls nicely, of course, and the club owners are able to legally prove they are not running a brothel.

The country in question is Japan, the city Tokyo, but for diplomatic reasons, perhaps, the Portland CABLE CHOICE magazine

quoted above chose to use the more general 'Far East' description.

A TV movie like this is so time-worn and cliché-ridden, you'd think it was too awful to make, but anything goes when you're trying to make it big in the ratings game, and I think late November, when this was shown, was a Nielson "sweep week"...or something.

GIRLS OF THE WHITE ORCHID might have been made in 1933...and probably was, in black and white.

In case you want to know, the sweet young (still virtuous) heroine is saved from a fate worse than a low-class dive and low class whoring by her home town boyfriend who flew over just in the nick of time.

LOVE CHILD (R)

is a gritty, very realistic story of a young woman inmate of a Florida women's prison (modern) who gets pregnant by a male guard. She fights to first avoid an abortion, then to keep her baby for at least 18 months (her right according to Florida statute).

Amy Madigan plays, very convincingly, the plain-jane inmate. Beau Bridges does his best with the guard role, but there's no apparent reason for his being attracted to her and his familiar movie-star face and manner help destroy the illusion of docudrama built up to that point.

McKenzie Phillips (of *ONE DAY AT A TIME* (CBS)) playing a sympathetic butch lesbian (and now plump-faced, healthy, chunky, after her bag-of-bones, pock-marked appearance of a few years ago when she was strung out on drugs and was taken off the show for a year at least) also detracts from the "true Story" appeal. As does Albert Salmi as Captain of the guards.

But this is worth watching. It accurately shows modern prison life for women, and has its very real moments of emotional tension.



COAST TO COAST (R)

isn't all that bad a movie despite all the bad-mouthed Robert Blake gave it on the Johnny Carson show soon after he completed acting in it.

Dyan Cannon plays a wife escaping a private sanitarium whose wealthy husband is trying to get her money/keep her out of the way, and Blake plays a scrappy gypsy trucker who owes many back payments on his rig.

And so he picks her up on the highway, tries to get rid of her because she seems so nutty, but she helps him evade a hard-nose repossessing agent...and they roll along across country, in a fairly funny comedy, in a predictable, mostly absurd film.

The film ends with her driving the truck though a fancy garden party thrown by her conniving hubby ...and on through his precious, lavishly appointed big house. Always good for a laugh.

PORKY'S (R)

is pure, naked American male id in action: sex-on-the-brain high school boys, macho male pride, fighting, revenge, ribald humor... It's all done with style and marvelous (apparent) unawareness of the revelations yielded.

It's a feminist nightmare of girls as sex objects, mocking of the antisex puritanism of some older women, a male-centered picture from beginning to end.

All that---and it's funny as hell! At least to men. From its success at the box office it was funny to girls, too.

The story is formula and flows from the campaign to provide one of the boys his first all-the-way sex experience.

The movie portrays in humorous and exaggerated form pure young American malehood in action; all the instincts are put on display without condemnation, and with high humor and low comedy.

HEART OF STEEL (ABC)

is primarily depressing as it details the personal ordeal of steelworkers all at sea for months and months after their steel mill closes down. They've worked in the place all their lives and felt their jobs were set in concrete, as were the jobs of their fathers.

But now their unemployment compensation is running out and they face losing homes, cars, manhood.

Peter Straus plays a steelworker who goes through all the chang-

es---hope, fear, denial, depression, lashing out, rage, guilt, and finally (in an absurd, impossible ending) recovery of pride by means of organizing a work shift of men, invading the idle mill, firing it up, and working like hell for one last eight-hour shift to prove to themselves they could put in a full workday and not screw around, goof-off and really could earn the exorbitantly high hourly union wages they had been making.

Exhausted, full of pride, they then go on to Texas (or where-ever) and seek other kinds of work, free of their emotional dependence on The Mill.

An opiate for the working stiff.

YES, GEORGIO (PG)

is for opera lovers. The world's greatest tenor, Luciano Pavarotti, cannot act, though he tries, in this opera-showcase story about the world's greatest operatic tenor who falls in love with a lovely voice teacher.

You should have a high-fidelity TV set for best enjoyment of this film.

PROTOTYPE (CBS)

features two very fine performances: Christopher Plummer as the head of a scientific team (employed by a big corporation) who develop a humanoid robot with high intelligence and human emotions, who kidnaps the robot to keep it from being turned over to the military for immoral (espionage, assassination) uses...and David Morse whose acting is a perfect blending of awkwardness, puzzlement, and growing understanding of his untenable life (as the robot). The robot happens to see the first (Karloff) FRANKENSTEIN movie and sees himself as the poor monster. In the end, the very human robot decides to commit suicide---and does so. It neatly solves its problems, its makers' problems, and the film's problems.



SCIENCE FICTION, HORROR AND FANTASY FILM AND TELEVISION CREDITS

By Harris M. Lentz III
McFarland & Co.

In 2 volumes, \$69.95

REVIEWED BY FORREST J. ACKERMAN

It is unlikely that more than a handful of individuals (the author, the linotypist, the proofreader, et al) will ever read the entire contents of these two volumes -- they would be just the thing for the Man in the Iron Mask to while away a few years in solitary -- but when needed, the information is there for researchers, imagi-movie fans, terrorvision trivia buffs.

A magnum opus over 4700 typewritten pages in manuscript form, towering nearly two feet, this compendium of actors and actresses, directors, producers, writers and "others" involved in motion pictures of the bizarre, outre, fantastic, horrifying, spacial and science-fictional has been condensed into 1374 pages of essential information on Karloff and Kubrick, on Harryhausen and Harrington, on Lugosi, Lorre, Lee, Lang, Landis, Lewton, from Atwill to Zucco.

Overlooked in Raymond Massey's obituaries is that, besides "Things of Come" he played a part in the futuristic melodrama of 1929, "High Treason" the second British talking picture, which predicted a world on the verge of war in 1940 saved by a pacifist's sacrifice. Did you know Christopher Lee has been in something called "Albino?" That John Carradine who claims he has made "only a few" sci-fi/fantasy/horror films, has been in 79 such motion pictures and 20 television movies from "The Invisible Man" in 1933 to "Frankenstein's Island" in 1982? Lentz lists such things. There are minor errors such as THE WOLF MAN instead of THE WOLFMAN, DR. WU instead of MR. WU, and no one can ever seem to get the name of the Master of METROPOLIS correct -- Joh (short for Johann) Fredersen in the German version and John Masterman in the English, not John Frederson -- and there is no record of James Mason in THUNDER ROCK, nor of that Roadshow classic of the 30s, HELLEVISION.

But the accomplishment far outweighs a few omissions or misinformations; Lentz' compilation is an amazing achievement and no self-respecting university, library or cinephile should be without this major contribution to the "odd genre."



LETTERS

LETTER FROM JOHN GRIFFIN
TRIMBLE
969 S. Bronson Ave
Los Angeles, CA 90005
November 10, 1983

'Thank you for SFR #49. I note that our mailing label has a "T" on it, which means, I 'spect, that you'd like to trade with us for TO THE STARS. I'm certainly willing, and have said so to our computer mailing list input. (My, doesn't that sound high tech?)

'Ted White's letter struck me as his usual opinionated, don't-bother-me-with-the-facts sort of thing. So circulation always wins the fanzine Hugo, eh? How does he explain Ron Ellick & Terry Carr taking it in 1959, with FANAC, against FANTASY SF TIMES still greater circulation? Or CRY winning, later in the '60s? I find it interesting that Ted now feels that the fan categories should be eliminated from the Hugos; a marked about-face from the Ted White who expanded the Hugos, willy-nilly, to include the fan categories, back in 1967!

'In the same damn-the-facts vein, Ted goes on to call our "campaign" for BATTLEFIELD EARTH "cynical." Far from it, we were merely attempting to make a point; namely, that Hubbard's book should be given fair consideration as

what it is: a monumental work of SF, without a lot of nonsense about Scientology or Dianetics clouding the issue.

'When we read BE, Bjo, Lora & I loved it; it was fun, and exciting, and notably lacking in a lot of the maudlin clap-trap that has been present entirely too much in SF in recent years. But we noted that darned few reviewers paid it any attention, and most who did review it weren't willing to examine it without bringing extraneous issues into the review.

'When Andy Porter alleged, in SF CHRONICLE, that the only way BE could win a Hugo would be if hundreds (if not thousands) of Scientists joined ConStellation in order to vote for it, we saw red. So we decided on our infamous campaign. We contacted Author Services, Hubbard's publicity reps, and asked them if they had any fan mail on the book. They did, and offered to give us names & addresses. We contacted Bill Evans, and asked if they would have any problems with us circulating Hugo nominating ballots, so long as we put our name on them as circulators, as required in the rules.

'They gave us the go-ahead and we mailed to the list of people who'd written in about the book, plus people in the SF field whom we thought should know what we were doing. If we'd really been trying to stuff the ballot-box, & had really had big money backing, we'd have utilized our 20,000-person mailing list (the one we used to get 500,000 pieces of mail across President Ford's desk, to re-name the initial shuttle), and made sure that the book was nominated. Instead, I think we played entirely fair. So, even if we failed of the goal of getting BATTLEFIELD EARTH nominated, I believe that we made our point; from reviews I've seen since then, and from conversations with fans, after the Hugo nominations were closed, BE is being considered on its own merits.

'And that's what we wanted. As I've said, we loved the book. I know people who I like and respect, who've read the book and hated it. Fine, but at least they've been willing to make the attempt, which is something I don't believe that they'd have been ready to do if we hadn't attempted to DO SOMETHING! I must say, however, that the majority of fans we've talked to who've read BE have liked it.

'I shouldn't really crab at Ted White; he won a bet for us, after all. But then, it was a sucker bet, 'cause Fred Harris hasn't been around fans long enough to

know how predictable Ted is.

'Hey, Dick, why don't you revive PSYCHOTIC as a small circulation fanzine, and repeat Jack Gaughan's trick from '67, and win two (or even three, and do Jack one better) Hugos at one crack?

'In your "Alien Thoughts" column, I think you're taking too much the view expressed by Casey & others who are banking on the "coming bad times," and are ignoring the tremendous explosion in entrepreneuring that's taking place today, where people are doing their own thing -- to a more successful degree than ever before. We're undoubtedly going to continue to have a problem with heavy industry in this country, 'cause that's a dying part of our economy. But its place is going to be taken by information-connected industry, and the end product will be more employment (and better working conditions) than when we relied on heavy industry. We're certainly going to live in "interesting times" (as the old Chinese curse puts it) while the transition takes place, but I don't think it's going to get anywhere near as bad as the 30s.'

((I've thought about reviving PSYCHOTIC, or REG, or even starting a new-title personalzine, in order to qualify for a Hugo or two under the new rules. But...I hesitate to take on new, long-term, writing/publishing projects while I'm bending all my efforts (most all) to trying to make a solid place for myself in near-future thriller novels in the New York markets. As I grow older I grow more lazy.

((And besides, what would I write about in a separate personalzine that I don't now in SFR? All I could promise is simply more of the same, in bigger, more frequent doses.

((Now, if my fiction-writing career goes aground for lack of sales in the next six months, say, after I've turned out two or three more partials (and if the collaboration(s) with Elton Elliott yield no more fruit), then I may succumb to the lure of PSYCHOTIC...or REG. But not till the August issue will I (or the readership) know which or what or when.

((The coming Bad Times of debt collapse and deflation---worse than the 30's---will be terrifyingly bad for large numbers of people, and yet will be good times for even larger numbers of others. As in the 30's, there'll be a vast series of rolling adjustments and I suspect we are entering that period now.

The dollar continues to gain purchasing power, bankruptcies increase year after year (higher now than in 1982) and the international debt problems simply become more incredible and more impossible every year.

((Heavy industry cannot be done without by this country---unless we want to import all our steel and let foreign firms do all our ship-building, locomotive making, car-making...tank making.... We cannot be dependent on other countries for key defense industry manufacturing. Unless we're willing to be a colony of Japan...or Russia.))

LETTER FROM ARNIE FENNER
9402 West 82nd Terr.
Overland Park, KS 66204
November, 1983

'It doesn't matter that Ted White chose not to read my letter as it was intended (as a response to Rich Brown's charges of unfairness in the fanzine Hugo category) or that the "fanzine" titles mentioned were originally brought up in Mr. Brown's previous letter. Nor does it matter that Ted makes comment on my qualifications to discuss the subject even though he's as ignorant of me and my reading background as he claims I am of fanzines and the Hugos.

'It doesn't matter that Ted has no way of knowing what type of flack Tom Reamy took from true-blue fen (gosh, wow, like Ted) regarding TRUMPET or that he is way off base and totally out of line when he states that Tom didn't care about the magazine's editorial content and that TRUMPET was an "expensively-produced piece of garbage." (Scantily clad people? Where? Artistic rip-offs of muscle magazine male nudes? There's only one drawing -- the cover of #1 -- that might, if you stretch your imagination, be considered such.)

'Never mind that Ted wants fanzines to conform only to his definition of what a fanzine should be. Or that he uses mechanicals, circulation and money as determining factors in what is and isn't a fanzine -- and doesn't take into account the intent of the person(s) producing said fanzine.

'None of it matters. Because, really. Who cares what Ted White thinks?

'Not me.

'Take care, Richard.

'PS: VERY nice cover this issue!'

LETTER FROM AL JACKSON
4513 Pine, Bellaire, TX 77401
November 20, 1983

'Since I was an assistant editor on TRUMPET at the time I can tell Ted White that we did indeed take flack because of the slick appearance of the magazine. Tom Reamy's intention in 1965 was to publish a beautiful fanzine, even though he knew he would be considered as killing a rabbit with a cannon. As Ted correctly points out, TRUMPET became something else, the first in a long line of "slick SF" (Fantasy, comic, gaming, movie) magazines. I think the name semi-prozine is too strong since most of these types of magazines have never paid a cent for their materials. For instance, the longest running one of these magazines is CINEFANTASTIQUE, which I think even still pays little or nothing for its content.

'I'm sure Ted's criticism of TRUMPET comes from his recollection of the first issue or two. We knew we had to improve the prose content and I think Tom succeeded in this. I know that Tom turned down many articles during this time which he considered not up to standard for the magazine.

'It is true that Tom started as an artist and he worked for 12 years as an art director for a technical publication department. In fact, he was an exceptional artist but just as with his writing, he was too modest about his abilities and never pursued his artwork in depth. It is Ted's opinion but I don't think that many would classify middle-and-late-period TRUMPET as garbage.'

((It wasn't that TRUMPET published bad written material, so much as that the graphics and artwork tended always to overwhelm the text. The writing couldn't live up to its framing, its display.))

LETTER FROM F.M. BUSBY
2852 14th Avenue West
Seattle, WA 98119
August 10, 1983

'In "Archives," have you dealt low blows by quoting from the in-house blurbs? The single-quote-mark parts, I mean, that you've printed. Because any book can be made to look stupid by its own blurbs. (Personally, in the case of at least four of my own books I have exed the house-written blurbs

off the proofs, written my own substitutes, and appended "Please use this instead." In all cases my requests were granted; twice the editor thanked me, saying he hated the original blurb too, but hadn't been able to do anything about it. I still haven't a handle on hardback dust-jacket copy, though, because they never let you see that until too late.)

'I think you know my views on the fanzine Hugo: that profit-making high-circ zines don't belong in the same league with low-circ zines conforming to the definition of a fanzine as a Good Respectable Money-Losing Hobby. But the WorldCons are now setting up a separate category, in which you and Charlie can compete by yourselves until the voters realize that all the semi-pro zines are eligible therein. Since It'll be a cold hellish day when I do a genzine again, my concern is minimal. So I hope it works out, and that everyone has fun.

'Am intensely pleased to see the Snyder-Busch-Meredith scam come down in approximation of the dirigible "Hindenburg." Elton can like Herr Busch all he wants, but I find it difficult to sympathize with a man who refers to written works only as "product." Anyone who thinks only in terms of the Bottom Line is automatically the enemy of 98% of writers.

'Personally I caught a few bad years from conglomerate horsepuckie but this year is much better; next spring if all goes to plan, I shall have books all over the stands, jumping out to grab you by the antrims.'

!((We've just received a copy of your new STAR REBEL from Bantam (too late to include in The Archives) and it caught my interest in the first page.))

CARD FROM ROBERT BLOCH
2111 Sunset Crest Dr
Los Angeles, CA 90016
November 9, 1983

'First off, congratulations on your awards!

'What Charles Platt says about the Hugos has been said many times before -- and will be said many times again, because the situation won't change. A popular vote is usually a vote for the popular, and the critical faculties of most fans, particularly the predominant majority of teen-agers, offer no guarantee that awards will be voted on the basis of excellence. Few fans can hope to read even a small portion of the hundreds of books and magazines pouring forth in relentless profusion (as witness the number of current titles listed in your present issue) so even if granted critical acumen -- which is in fairly short supply -- they can't be relied on to change the present setup.

'Yours, for example, is definitely a popularity award -- and as such, you should be proud of it!'

((Oh, I am! I am! But...popularity for what? The quality of my editorials and reviews and this kind of editorial response to letters? Or the content of my writings? Or am I popular just because I publish on time? Or is it because I don't go to conventions and shatter a lot of illusions? I'll (sob) probably never know.))

LETTER FROM RICHARD MCENROE
MV "Gully J" Island Bay
Marina, Island Park, NY 11558
November 4, 1983

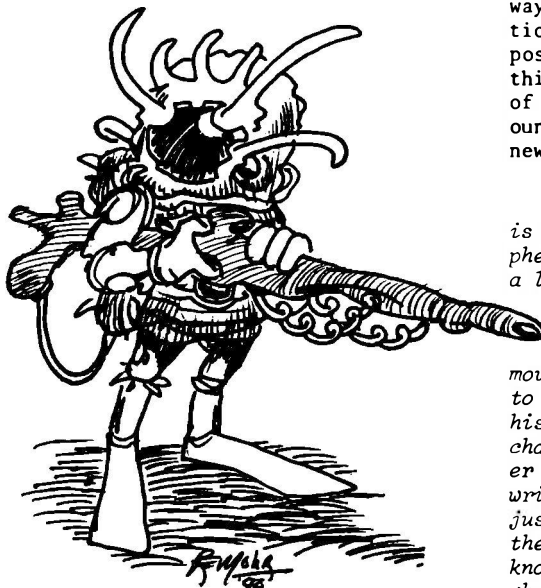
'Once more into the breach ... writing to SFR is quickly becoming a worrisome habit: I'm told if I keep it up, hair will begin to grow on my typewriter keys, not to mention that continued exposure to



Darrell Schweitzer and Elton Elliott can result in tone-deaf prose and leaden exposition -- but what the hell, even someone as terrific as me needs one vice.

'Welcome to Charles Platt. I don't know if one column in SFR will make up for the impending loss of THE PATCHIN REVIEW, but it's better than nothing by far/by a good deal/by a decent amount/well, hell, Platt's got as much right to shoot his mouth off as anyone else ... I'd like to add a couple of things he left out of his convention report: the spontaneous applause that broke out in the back of the hall when Chalker got to the Best Novel Hugo and remarked that he hadn't won that one, either, and the fact that the premiere showing of the final Yamato cartoon was better attended than the program for The Right Stuff -- evidently there's a larger fan interest in the mock-heroics of a bunch of militaristic Asiatics than there is in real-world courage. Also, they must have stopped charging for the long-boat rides after the first day, because they were letting people row for free by Saturday. You should have tried it, Charles, not only was it a rare opportunity for a pallid little limy to see how one of those things looked from the driver's end for a change, but the sight of a boatload of fans armored in D&D and Thieves' World buttons suddenly realizing what a real, live 12-foot oar actually weighs was priceless. The looks on their faces about halfway out into the harbor might just have been worth five dollars.

'I'm surprised that none of your writers has commented yet on the similarities between the recent attempted Meredith/Pocket packaging deal and the increasing incidence of similar package productions in the film and television industry. Several agencies on the West Coast have begun assuming the role of producer. They assemble a property from among their own stables of writers, actors and producers and offer the fait accompli to the studios or networks for distribution. But where this is not objectionable when performed by a studio or network, who after all are in business to perform just that function, the same practice undertaken by an agent presents an immediate and glaring conflict of interest -- because an agent is not a buyer of his client's services, he or she is contracted to get the best possible price for that client's services on the market, a contractual relationship it is clearly impossible to maintain when the agent is both selling the client's ser-



vices and buying them. In fact, this practice has already spawned a whole new class of show-business horror stories, of actors and writers who are deliberately not put up for roles or assignments because their own agents wanted to use them in a package the agents were assembling. And, of course, there is precious little the client can do to redress such a grievance: they'd have to prove their agent had held them back deliberately, and where are you going to get the hard evidence of that? Also, clients who complain find their number of offers in a curious decline.

'The parallel danger of packaging in publishing should be obvious. What writer whose agent is into a packaging deal could ever trust his agent to be acting in his best interest? How could he or she ever be sure that the book bought for three grand wouldn't have gone for four or five or six grand at Del Rey or Bantam or Berkley-Ace-Playboy-Whoever instead? And why should that agent get ten or fifteen percent of a sale he or she made to his own package. Editors and publishers don't get commissions.

'Packaging is not a new indignity. Back in the Fifties at least one well-known agency used to have standing deals with several of the cheaper men's adventure and skiffy mags to supply them with their entire fiction requirements. How many of that agency's clients back then had their careers distorted or aborted feeding their representative's packages. We may never know, but the number is clearly greater than one. That agent is still in business, by the

way. SFWA and the agent's association were clearly correct to oppose this deal, a fact that I think is justified by the number of clients who were walking around Baltimore quietly looking for new agents...

((Yeah, the writer-as-chattel is a danger if the agent-packager phenomenon takes hold and becomes a large chunk of publishing and/or

movie-TV-making. The writer has to keep tabs on his sales, how well his books do, and be willing to change agents-packagers to get better terms/advances/deals. A star writer will still get big bucks, just as star athletes do. And there'll always be agents who will know who is who and what is what, who will act as agents handling writers for sale or lease to the agents-packagers. No matter how many games are played between the writer and the reader, the Market will rule, and the writer who can sell a million books will always be king. This decade it is Stephen King, I guess.))

LETTER FROM BUZZ DIXON
8961 Yolanda, Northridge, CA
91324 Nov 17, 1983

'On the day SFR #49 arrived, I received the oddest rejection letter (or rather, rejection package) in my life -- odder than the rejection from a network producer who returned my material by express mail within twenty-four hours of receiving it with a nasty letter belittling my ideas, scorning my writing ability, and doubting my worth as a human being.

'I'd sent a short (under 400 words) humor piece to a men's magazine. Since the piece was only two pages long, I mailed it folded up in a regular long letter envelope, with a folded up letter envelope as my return postage.

'I got back a large packet from the magazine company. In it I found (1) my humor piece (2) my return envelope, unused (3) a standard rejection note and (4) the December and January issues of the magazine.

'News stand price on the magazines is close to six dollars. This is the first time I've ever profited by a rejection note.

'On to SFR #49.

'Yes, Worldcon prices are get-

ting steep. I realize there's a great deal of expense involved in staging one, and, yes, those working on the committee should be adequately compensated, but still ... \$40 dollars going to \$50?

'Sigh. I guess I'll have to pay -- I haven't been to a Worldcon since Noreascon back in '71 and I have only been to three smaller conventions since then. It seems appropriate, almost compulsory, to attend the science fiction convention of 1984.

'I agree with you, though, about voting/non-attending memberships. They should be kept down to a reasonable level -- with adequate program material sent to the non-attending members.

'The book business seems to be taking lessons from the movie business. Your examples of how book sellers are becoming *de facto* editors reminds me of how the NATO (National Alliance of Theatre Operators) members are exhibiting tremendous sway over what gets made, what gets shown, and what makes a profit. Certain films don't get released (Jonathan Kaplan's excellent film, *OVER THE EDGE*, was never released theatrically because theatre owners feared Kaplan's vandalism theme would inspire teens to riot in the movie houses), others are sent back for reshooting and re-editing (Disney took back *WATCHER IN THE WOODS* after a disastrous screening for the NATO convention in New York and chopped off the old ending and filmed a new one in its place), others still simply are not pushed (*STRANGE INVADERS*-- an odd little SF film that got fair to good notices from critics -- disappeared less than a week after it opened in Los Angeles; it had virtually no media buildup in LA).

'One important factor in the continuing popularity of books -- even genre trash -- is that it is an interactive form of entertainment. Despite the opinions of too many network and film executives, most people enjoy putting at least a little bit of work into their entertainment -- it makes 'em appreciate it more. Stuff that just washes over you is quickly (and deservedly) forgotten (like Saturday morning animation).

'In a similar vein, I enjoyed your piece on writing ("Constructive Projects") and would like to see more of the same in future issues of SFR. I know you've published columns and short pieces on writing before, but I'd really enjoy seeing a little more of these.

'Yes, In many ways writing can be compared to carpentry. And like carpentry, there's good, bad,

and indifferent work. A good book should be well designed, well built and highly polished. I periodically weed my library to get rid of all the Sears particle board junk and keep only the Chippendales.

'I'm glad you have an editor who seems to be operating with the intent of honestly improving the book -- striving for clarity, brevity, and sturdier construction. Would that all editors, publishers and producers have her philosophy.

'Far too often changes are made in an arbitrary, irrational manner hoping to cash in on some quickly fading fad. Alan Brenner, the TV writer, wrote an article in *STARLOG* about how then NBC president Freddy Silverman ordered a dog added to an episode of *BUCK ROGERS* because the dog tested well with audiences (no hint from the network on how said dog was to function in the show).

'A political columnist for the local paper pointed out that Reagan's popularity shot up after the Grenada invasion because he didn't waste time with popularity polls or sounding out Congress or finding out how the average American citizen felt; if he had, there'd still be study groups wondering what to do about the Marxist coup in Grenada. Instead, right or wrong, Reagan acted decisively -- and people applauded him for it.

'Publishers and producers do not seem to realize that giving the people what they want is not the way to success -- giving them what they didn't know they wanted is the path to block-busters (prior to opening, marketing surveys indicated *STAR WARS* would do fair business at best).

'I suspect there is less arbitrary fiddling with books than there is with films and TV (which is not to say there's none -- Peter Benchly added an adultery subplot when his publisher thought married sex was too tame for *JAWS*). First, there's a bit less risk and

not quite as much profit, second, unlike films, books do not tie up the expensive services of hundreds of people, and third, there's no deadline pressure comparable with TV.

'TV writing certainly pays well, but the status of the Hollywood writer (especially in TV) is that of the single most expendable person involved in the production. We are expected to provide carpentry work -- literally -- and when we object to things not making sense or working dramatically, we are either ignored or looked upon with bemused contempt.

'As Marty Pasko, a fellow TV/comic book writer, once said, "The function of a writer in television is to write a scene with the power and intensity of *Blanche's* 'I have always relied on the kindness of strangers' speech in *A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE*; have the network tell you first that they love the scene and second that they're changing the character of *Blanche* to a penguin; then wrack your brains to come up with a workable dramatic reason for the penguin to be standing under a naked lightbulb in center stage saying it."

'Re Orson Scott Card's letter: Well, gee whiz, I happen to like Hemingway and Fitzgerald and Updike and Henry James. While I concede there is a self-congratulatory group of "literati" who make a lot of noise about authors they consider important, the truth is they are a toothless old bunch. The only persons who take them seriously are their own inner circle (much like science fiction fans, but I digress).

'Orson really dives off the deep end with his criticism of "top ... literary caste" writers doing the same "formula" story over and over again -- you know, the one about the creative person who is misunderstood by others as he or she struggles to communicate with them -- books like most of Stephen King's fiction or Robert Heinlein's competent engineers or Ayn Rand's superheroes or Keith Laumer's Retief, stories we all know are loved and cherished by the New York literati.

'As David Gerrold has pointed out, ultimately every story boils down to the same basic plot: Someone or something is trying to keep you from being the person you want to be.

'If this is true -- and I've yet to see the story that doesn't fit this definition of plot, be it *BRECHT IS BACK* or *THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS* or *CAPTAIN FUTURE* --

THE GREAT MEN OF HISTORY
HAD BIG NOSES



then there's almost no point in writing. The protagonist will either (1) succeed -- as in Old Guard space opera (2) fail -- as in New Wave (sic!) gloom & doom or (3) the protagonist changes for the better in a manner unsuspected by the reader -- which is what good fiction is all about.

'Most science fiction, fantasy, and horror is B.A.D. -- no ifs, ands, or buts about it. Most of our wounds are self inflicted.

'Any school of writing (I despise the germ "genre" as pejorative) that produces Ballard, Bradbury, Delaney, Dick, Disch, Ellison, and -- yes, even that old war horse -- Heinlein is a school to be taken seriously. Unfortunately, too much gets written and published that is simply "goshwow" stuff. I've met Asimov -- he's a nice, friendly man, I like the cleverness of many of his stories -- but the man is only a marginally competent fiction writer.

'The same is true for lots of people. Recently, I read the entire collected short works of Saki, Ambrose Bierce, and M.R. James. Now, granted even the best of us have off days, the amount of mediocre-to-dull crap they wrote and published in their lifetimes is staggering. Saki in particular rests his reputation on one single short story (which, admittedly, is a doozy -- "The Open Window").

'The problem is (though "problem" is perhaps too harsh a word) that too many people are amused by a clever little plot twist or invention or bit of action, and think that because they're amused, ipso facto the author is a good writer. "Clever" plot twists without adequate characterization to back them up are just tiresome; O. Henry's and Roald Dahl's and John Collier's short fiction works where Saki's and Bierce's and M.R. James' fail because the former tend to populate their stories with people while the latter inhabited them with stick figures.

'(This, by the way, is a fine example of a pot calling the kettle black. Ask me the weakest aspect of my writing and I'll concede it's characterization.)

'There are an awful lot of clever people who write science fiction. For entertaining light reading that's a cut above the average TV show, one could do far worse than to read them.

'But when it comes to saying something, to commenting on the Human Condition (or Life, the Universe, and Everything, as Doug Adams would have it), most science

fiction and fantasy writers are mute.

'All this is not meant as a put-down of those who enjoy Clarke and Asimov and Doc Smith and a host of others -- it's your money, gang, and if reading about Kimball Kinnison defeating the evil Boskonians turns you on, hey, more power to you.

'But is meant as a put-down of those who say a good ripping yarn should be mere entertainment and the equal if not the superior to mainstream fiction. There are no classics that do not possess sub-texts and multi-layers of meaning and theme -- VARNEY THE VAMPIRE was published in the Victorian era and sold quite well, but somehow fell from view while its competitor DRACULA, has indeed become a classic work of fiction (DRACULA's also got Characterization and Meaning laid on with a trowel).

'There's nothing that keeps good writing from being entertaining, or entertaining writing from being good (indeed, one criteria of good writing is that it is entertaining or interest-grabbing -- most classics are indeed rousing good reads). But too many science fiction fans prefer not to think about human behavior, relationships and motives (because of their own personal failures in these areas?) and opt for spectacle.

'Indeed, one of the reasons I prefer horror fiction nowadays to most science fiction (and there's a lot of turkeys published in the horror category) is because horror writers seem less interested in how things work as why people behave the way they do. Shirley Jackson's THE HAUNTING OF HILL HOUSE tells us precious little about ghosts, but a hell of a lot about human guilt.

'In short, science fiction's worst enemies aren't on the outside, but within our own camp.

'Brunner's column was fascinating. I look forward to seeing the rest of it. In regards to "Japanese films that Daily Variety translated too literally: NAUGHTY GIRL MAFIA and ZOOM-IN--RAPE PUBLIC HOUSING.

'In closing, the Piers Anthony profile was fascinating and John DiPrete should be informed that CREEPSHOW and Warren comics are based on the old EC comics.'

((I enjoy discussing writing, but I'm aware that it involves talking about my own writing style and technique, and I know this comes across to some as bragging, showboating, saying "Hey, I'm a Pro!" and like that. And there is an element of that in my writing about writing. Can't be helped. I may become insufferable if I make more book sales. I have a sneaking suspicion that I'm a damned good commercial fiction writer. I want to entertain people, grab them by their hindbrain and not let go!--and slip an acid little message into their cortex in the process.

((I'm aware of the commercial elements required in mass market fiction now. I think it's a challenge to use a strong woman in place of the usual male hero; it requires adjustments in plotting, in action, in characterizations, in balancing. You have to think of the fact that women buy most of the novels today, and they want to read about tough, competent women, and yet, too, they want heroic men, even macho men, as well, and what I grew up on in fiction doesn't cut any ice any more. We see emerging (DALLAS, DYNASTY, etc.) the bitch-queen villainess, who can take on any man in her fashion. And why not? Women in the workplace are subtly, unknowingly, throwing their increasing economic power around, and writers as well as many other professions, are shifting to satisfy, to lure, to feed this power. It is no accident that more and more editors in publishing are women. It isn't just because they (used to) work cheaper. It's because they are in tune with the majority of their readers.

((I suspect this process may result in a trendline of men withdrawing from reading novels because they sense most novels are slanted toward women...to the point where it won't be "masculine" to read novels. At that point no doubt a publisher will hire a male editor and issue a line of super macho-action, male dominating novels aimed at a strictly male readership. (Not porno, mind you, but with sex of the brief hardcore scene.)

((TV writing---with all those public-morality restrictions---seems a pit inherently frustrating to anyone who wants to do more than simply make money. Especially network TV. Cable is doing some nice, interesting things, but hasn't the economic power to do much. And cable, as it gains more millions of subscribers, will inevitably assume-the-position and become afraid to offend anyone.

((I'd love to see a myriad of expensive, low-numbers-of-subscribers special-interest channels on cable, but doubt that will come about.

((Cable will become ABC/CBS/
NBC with some nudity and swear words.
And the networks will become pap for
the poor and the religious.

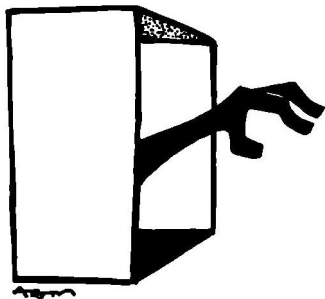
((The small-number special-inter-
est viewers will have to depend on
video cassettes, perhaps, or swing
back to reading expensive small-press
books.

((I get very weary of the elit-
ist, snobbish theory that people
read "escapist", weakly-characteriz-
ed fiction because they got emotion-
al problems and don't want to think
about The Meaning of Life, Death and
All That Shit.

((Sometimes it is true, but
mostly it ain't, and mostly the elit-
ists are just showing their own
emotionally warped shirrtails as
they strive for one-upmanship ego
boosting. Cheapshotism.

((Theoretically, a dozen fiction
books should serve us all forever;
how many Meanings are there in Life,
after all? How many dramatic situa-
tions can be written to perfection?
So how come publishers keep churning
out endless sf adventures, westerns,
romances, mysteries, etc., etc.? How
come people will spend good money
reading in essence the same thing over
and over and over? Why do we sit
and watch TV sitcoms that repeat the
same jokes we saw thirty years ago?
The same private eye series plots?
The same soap opera complications?
A deep hunger? A Need? A built-in
appetite for diversion, fantasy, make-
believe?

((Don't you ever think you're
ripping people off, telling the same
stories over and over, with small
variations? Don't you feel guilty?
Most people seem to need a fiction
"fix" every day or so. And supply-
ing that "habit" is the living of
the entertainment industry, of which
thee and me are willing, greedy
members. But this is the way it
is, baby. Here's a Meaning of Life
for you. Don't fight the tide,
don't fix it if it ain't broke,
and last as long as you can. Also,
most important: always get out of
the way of speeding trains. Of
course, you have to be smart enough
to recognize speeding trains; some-
times they take the shapes of people,
governments, agencies, religions,
etc. Very complicated, at times.
There's more to say, but I'm running
out of room.))



LETTER FROM GEORGE H. SMITH
4113 W. 189th St, Torrance,
CA 90504 Nov. 9, 1983

'I'm afraid Piers Anthony has
allowed his differences with Dean
Koontz to blur his vision of Dean's
highly successful career. Contrary
to Piers' statement that Koontz is
now writing cheap novels pseudon-
ymously, he has been and continues
to be a best-selling author under
his own name for top publishers
like Antheneum, Putnam and others.
PHANTOMS, WHISPERS, THE VISION and
NIGHT CHILLS are a few of his tit-
les. These were also critical suc-
cesses and later made it as paper-
back best sellers. His HOW TO
WRITE BEST SELLING FICTION, written
for Writer's Digest Books for love
of the craft rather than money, is
now used in many writing classes
all over the country, including one
at a college at which I spoke. In
fact, I found that the tyro writers
in that class were far more inter-
ested in what I had to say about
Dean than in what I told them about
my historical novels; they were
excited and enthused at his ap-
proach to writing. His fictional
work is admired by such diverse
writers as Stephen King, John D.
McDonald and Gregory Benford.

'Koontz does write under pen
names, of course, and his success
is just as solid with those. I'm
not in a position to quote the ex-
act amount of his income, but I
can say from my own knowledge that
he receives advances for every book
he writes that are larger than the
yearly income of which Mr. Anthony
is so deservedly proud.

'Piers Anthony's lack of in-
formation regarding Dean's brilli-
ant career may be accounted for by
his hermit's existence. You don't
have that excuse, Geis. I am sure
you are quite aware of Koontz' ex-
cellent reputation but you chose to
permit Anthony to embarrass him-
self without making any attempt at
correction. You're starting to
slip badly. I suggest you need Al-
ter back to keep you on the ball.'

((I knew that Dean had made a break-
through into the top league of fic-
tion writing, but I am not privy to
all the inside info you are, and
never will be. If misstatements
are made in SFR I depend on the
readership to make corrections,
and I thank you for this correc-
tion in re Koontz.))

CARD FROM SANDRA MIESEL
8744 N. Pennsylvania St
Indianapolis, IN 46240
November 17, 1983

'Please convey my thanks to
Paul McGuire for the kind review of
DREAMRIDER in #49. But it isn't
the first novel in an open-ended
series. DREAMRIDER is the opening
part of the originally planned
work that grew to full length and
budded off as a separate book. I
am now at work on the sequel, DAWN-
RIDER, also for Ace.

'I no longer have steel teeth,
my braces having come off last
month, but my bite is sharper than
ever -- and straighter too.'

LETTER FROM EDWARD F. KLUGE, JR.
POB #9007, Denver, CO 80209
Nov. 2, 1983

'As for flight to a safe place,
Carl Sagan recently gave a speech
here, and is giving it around the
country, that puts to rest the id-
ea that there will be any safe
place after atomic war on a large
scale for this reason: If 50 bombs
are exploded (and this is a mere
fraction of the number that are
keyed in by both Russia and the
U.S.), they will create such a
mass of dust in the atmosphere
that it will take four years be-
fore the earth again gets enough
sun to make photosynthesis produce
enough vegetable matter for any
survivors of the animal kingdom to
live on. He finds it hard to be-
lieve that a warring earth would
be sufficiently organized to hand-
le food supplies in a manner to
get survivors through that four
years; instead, he envisions mass
starvation of any survivors, and
prefers to believe that man will
simply come to an end and some oth-
er species may have its chance if
it can manage the fallout problem.'

((Well, hell, if mankind doesn't
survive four years of no crops, how
can any other species?

((Some people would survive, of
course--if only by eating each oth-
er.))

LETTER FROM RONALD R LAMBERT
2350 Virginia
Troy, MI 58083
Nov. 8, 1983

'My discussion of the possib-
ility that super humans might be
produced in the near future, by

means of artificial augmentation and/or genetic engineering, was intended as a minor point addressed to the plaint by Elton T. Eliott and Vernor Vinge that the modern increase in knowledge will soon become overwhelming. I did not mean to carry on at such length, but something tells me this might be important. The development of super humans is very likely to happen, perhaps in the near future. Today's "computer generation" of young people may represent an evolutionary step in that direction already.

'I do not mind being called idealistic, as long as that is not meant to imply naive as well. I do not ignore human nature. In fact, I prefer to study it closely, objectively, not allowing myself to be biased by blanket judgments such as the one some people seem to make, that "human nature" is a synonym for evil.

'History attests that people do not always launch pogroms against anyone who is different. Sometimes it has happened, and sometimes not. Factors external to human nature appear to be involved. For example, during the Thirty Years War, Catholics and Protestants fought each other so ruthlessly that the population of a large area of Europe was decimated. Even today, Catholics and Protestants still kill each other in Northern Ireland. But Catholics and Protestants live together peacefully here in America. The very idea of sectarian strife here is virtually inconceivable. Is our human nature any different than the human nature of the people who live in Northern Ireland, or the people who lived a few centuries ago in Europe? Not likely. So what makes the difference? Obviously other factors must enter in -- such as the identification of Catholicism with Irish nationalism, the desire to preserve the political unity of the Holy Roman Empire, and the non-establishment clause in the U.S. constitution which mandates a strict separation between church and state.

'In the case of super humans of the future, you are assuming certain factors will be involved. You depict the super humans as cold-hearted beings of pure intellect and repulsive form who are as elitist as medieval aristocrats. If your depiction turns out to be accurate, there might be pogroms and jihads. But what if they are not like that at all?

'There is a common belief, on the order of a superstition really, that for whatever advantages a

AN WAS ANTI-CIVIL
RIGHTS, AN AH LOST.
AN AH WAS ANTI-WOMENS
RIGHTS, AN AH LOST.
NOW AHM ANTI-LIVE
FOHEVAH.

WITH LUCK
AHLL LOSE
THIS 'UN
TOO!



person has, there must also be compensating disadvantages. If a person has a high I.Q., he is supposed to be a klutz at sports and a social boor. This notion of compensation has absolutely no basis in fact whatsoever. It is merely the result of wishful thinking on the part of the envious. So super humans need not be monstrous in compensation for being super smart. They may well have all advantages and no disadvantages at all -- not emotionally, socially, spiritually, or physically.

'Possessing neotenic characteristics does not mean that they would be pitiable, large-eyed, pudgy-bodied runts. Neotenic characteristics are things like high forehead and erect posture. Scientists who have speculated on this say that genetically produced super humans would have to have larger and stronger bodies to support their bigger brains. Modern man is almost twice as tall as some of the early hominid species who possessed less neotenic characteristics than we do. And Cro-Magnon man, who had a larger brain than modern man, was also slightly taller. Reconstructions of Cro-Magnons based on skeletal remains strike most people as appearing "noble." This is especially interesting, because the possibility exists that by trying to genetically engineer super humans, we will actually be trying to recreate the Cro-Magnon species.

'Referring to the Cro-Magnons however, we also can see one possible problem involved in trying to genetically engineer super hu-

mans. With increasing brain size comes increasing difficulty for humans. With increasing brain size comes increasing difficulty for larger-headed infants to fit through the pelvic girdle of the mother in childbirth. This problem reputedly contributed to the demise of the Cro-Magnons (at least as a pure genetic strain), causing so many Cro-Magnon women to die in childbirth that the species had too low a rate of increase in population to be able to compete with the rapidly-proliferating Neanderthals. (Some people suspect that modern man may be a strain that arose from a hybridization between Cro-Magnon and Neanderthal. If so, then this would be bad news for all the redneck defenders of racial purity -- we are all the result of miscegenation!) Genetically engineered super humans would probably have to be delivered by Caesarian section, or else be gestated in artificial wombs. In view of this, creating super humans by means of implanted logic chips would probably be more practical.

'Naturally super humans would rise to positions of leadership in society. People of high intelligence do that now, and we all regard this as entirely proper and desirable. If even more intelligent super humans rise to positions of leadership, and as a result things start working better for everybody, and general prosperity increases (perhaps to the point where there is truly plenty for everyone), then who is going to complain?

'Orson Scott Card said that he thought it was curious that my original discussion concerning the nature and merits of science fiction and concerning the congeniality of knowledge took place in the context of the SF vs. fantasy debate. I did not intend that anyone should infer that I was siding with those who complain about SF allegedly being "contaminated" by fantasy. That was not the issue I was addressing. Now, however, I would like to address it.

'My observation is that SF and fantasy are not at odds. The idea that they are mutually exclusive and inherently antagonistic, and that apocalyptic doom will result if some sort of literary apartheid policy is not instituted, strikes me as repugnant and outrageous. Some people are always searching for new niggers. Now it is fantasy, proliferating in the SF neighborhood, that brings cries of alarm from the defenders of cultural purity.

'I have never experienced any

conflict in liking Tolkien, Donaldson, Vance and Hogan. I like the hardest of the hard SF, and I also like Hobbits. SF and fantasy are really not all that different. To paraphrase Arthur C. Clarke, any science fiction sufficiently advanced is indistinguishable from fantasy, anyway. The essence of both forms of literature is playing with ideas. Whether those ideas pertain to scientific knowledge expressed in empirical facts, or to spiritual precepts expressed in popular mythic figures, makes little difference.

'Perhaps SF is oriented toward the logically analytical left hemisphere of the brain, while fantasy is oriented toward the intuitive, dream-generating right hemisphere of the brain. Pitting SF against fantasy is as foolish as dividing the hemispheres of the brain against each other. You need them both. They complement each other. SF and fantasy alike have their places in the human spirit.

'I pointed out in my letter in SFR #48 that SF is a uniquely realistic literary genre because it incorporates the element of radical, transforming change. It cannot predict exactly what changes will come about, but the inclusion of the idea of change is what matters. Now I would like to point out that something similar is true of fantasy. The real universe is constantly full of surprises. We must presume that there are still things science does not understand, and that until those things are understood, they will seem to be as magical and fantastic as relativity would have seemed to Sir Isaac Newton. Therefore, in order to be true to life, literature should contain elements of fantasy. It is not necessary to be correct in anticipating what elements of fantasy will some day turn out to be reality, just as it is not necessary for SF to be correct in predicting exactly what radical, transforming changes will take place in the future. Inclusion of the idea of fantasy is what matters. Fantasy is beneficial because it helps us to maintain a healthy sense of wonder at life itself, and a balanced mental attitude that can embrace all of reality and not be unsettled by surprises.

'The real problem for some people appears to be that the very truth that reality contains nonunderstood fantasy elements is upsetting. Such people have predicated their sense of security on the assurance that empirical materialism has explained (or virtually explained) everything. They want to

think that lightning will not strike them now, because they know it is only electricity. Things like telepathy, precognition, life beyond death, the whole concept of a spiritual dimension to reality, even in many cases something as seemingly technological as UFOs, threaten their cherished epistemological paradigm. They do not want to be left without their philosophical teddy bear any more than religious people do.

'But there is abundant evidence that all those fantastic things exist. If a person's belief system is so weak that he must blind himself to entire bodies of data, then inevitably it must collapse. When it does, he may be left vulnerable in a world full of predatory belief systems.

'People who can appreciate fantasy and play with the ideas of fantasy and frankly acknowledge that fantastic elements yet exist in the real universe, have a far more genuinely scientific attitude than those who can look at a living person and see only an electrochemically driven collection of atoms, and feel threatened if anyone seriously suggests that there might be something more.

'In summation, fantasy has a liberalizing effect on the mind similar and complementary to that of science fiction. We need more scientists who read Tolkien as well as Heinlein. I hope the super humans of the future read both.'

*(UUUMMM....people of high intelligence do not rise to positions of leadership in society. Not in our society. *Not in any society I can see in this world. People of high ambition and power-drives rise to leadership positions. Those are emotional in origin, not intellectual.*

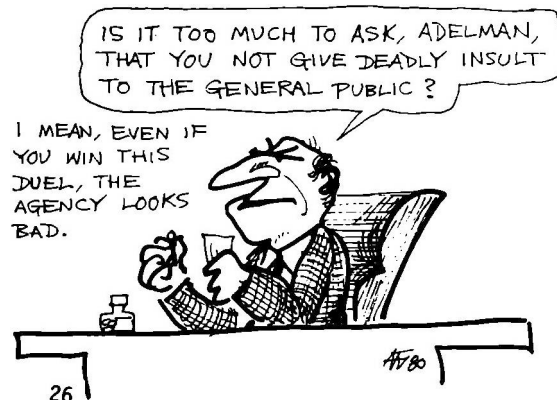
((Please don't tell me Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan are the super-intelligent of America.))

LETTER FROM ALAN ELMS
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS
Dep't of Psychology 95616
December 21, 1983

'Issue #49 didn't include any letters on J.J. Pierce's "Treasure of the Secret Cordwainer" from Issue #48, so let me offer my belated compliments. Without Pierce's work over the years, Paul Linebarger would be almost unknown among science fiction fans, and the scope of Linebarger's future history in his Cordwainer Smith stories (as published and as planned) would be largely unrecognized. Pierce's SFR article was a thoughtful and entertaining survey of the material in the McMurtry collection (now the Kansas collection) of Linebarger's papers.

'An odd sidelight on Linebarger's very varied career, only hinted at in the Kansas materials is that he was once L. Ron Hubbard's editor! Linebarger and Hubbard became acquainted as fellow undergraduates at George Washington University in the early 1930s. When Linebarger became editor of the student newspaper's monthly literary supplement, he published a Hubbard story about a submarine crewman (not science fiction but rather pulpish in style). The two did not keep in touch after Hubbard dropped out of school and Linebarger graduated but Linebarger did get some sort of treatment from "Dianeticist" shortly after therapist Hubbard went public in the late 1940s. Linebarger praised Hubbard's science fiction but expressed reservations about his psychotherapeutic system -- as indicated by the title (or subtitle) of Linebarger's own unpublished book ETHICAL DIANETICS (my underlining).

'I agree with Pierce that the proposed identification of Linebarger as Robert Lindner's patient "Kirk" has been too readily accepted as fact, "as if it were the only thing worth knowing about Linebarger." But if true, it would carry intriguing implications both



for a clearer understanding of the Cordwainer Smith stories and for a re-assessment of Lindner's widely-read "Case of the Jet-Propelled Couch." I've been pursuing the matter for some time and would welcome any evidence for or against the question of whether Linebarger was Kirk Allen. Some of Lindner's case-history details fit very nicely, with allowances made for appropriate efforts to disguise the patient's identity; some don't.

'Linebarger did see more than one psychotherapist during the latter 1940s, but documentary evidence is understandably skimpy. (The frequent assumption that Lindner's patient was really named John Carter does not appear to be true, according to the best sources I've located; but I'd be interested to hear what anyone has to say about that too. If the "real" John Carter or Kirk Allen wishes quietly to stand up at this point, I'll preserve professional confidences at whatever level he requests.)

'However, as Pierce suggests, Paul Linebarger was a fascinating man for many more reasons than the possible connection with Lindner. I'm now working on a psychological biography of Linebarger, with an emphasis on his career as a writer but with some material on his work in psychological warfare and Asian studies. I'd be delighted to receive reminiscences or copies of correspondence from anyone who had personal contact with Paul Linebarger. I'd also be happy to hear from people who have figured out any of the more obscure names and references in the Cordwainer Smith stories. When I get something published, I will of course acknowledge the sources of any such material.)'

LETTER FROM DARRELL SCHWEITZER
113 Deepdale Rd
Strafford, PA 19087
August 9, 1983

'I just read the J.J. Pierce article on Cordwainer Smith. I notice that Pierce mentions the Aldiss/Stover "Kirk Allen" theory. My own feeling is that it's a courtesy to call this a "theory," and unless Aldiss and/or Stover can produce solid evidence, and fast, it should be dismissed as utter nonsense. Were Linebarger still alive, it would also be libel.

'To fill in quickly: Robert Lindner's article, "The Jet-Propelled Couch" (F&SF January 1956,

also in his book THE FIFTY MINUTE HOUR) is about a psychiatric patient treated by Lindner, who was convinced that the adventures of a science fiction hero in a popular book series were in fact his adventures: i.e. that he was really the protagonist of the books, and they were biography, not fiction. He went on to write some himself, filling in more of his "life." Since the patient, "Kirk Allen," worked for the government on some classified project, all this time spent on places other than the Earth got in the way of his job, and his superiors steered him toward a shrink (Lindner). Lindner continued to humor the patient's fantasies, asking for more details of his adventures, etc., until one day "Kirk" said, "You know, Doctor, none of this is true." "Then why did you persist?" asked Lindner. "Because I thought you believed in it," he said.

'This is one of several case histories in Lindner's book. Now Aldiss and Stover seem to have come to the conclusion that this is really the true story of the early life of Paul Linebarger/Cordwainer Smith. This is nearly treated as fact in the Nichols SF ENCYCLOPEDIA. I would like to see the evidence.

'The facts, such as are known about Linebarger, just don't fit. The boyhood of the patient doesn't match anything known about Linebarger. Further, Lindner said that "Kirk" became fascinated with the way that his own name appeared in the work of a "stylist of the 1920s." Later there appeared a series of interplanetary adventures, the hero of which had the same name as the patient.

'This would have been in the 1920s or 30s, in which very little SF appeared in book form. It is pretty clear that Lindner is talking about books, not magazine stories.

'I should point out that there was no "Paul Linebarger of Mars" series in book form in the 1930s. It is pretty obvious that the book series is Edgar Rice Burroughs' "John Carter." Therefore, the patient had the quite common name of John Carter, an understandable coincidence. (The only other possibility, very slight, is Otis Adelbert Kline's "Robert Grandon" series set on Venus. Two volumes were published in the period in question, in 1929 and 1930. Kline's Mars novels were serialized back then, but not published as books until the 1960s.)

'I suspect that the "stylist

of the 20s" is James Branch Cabell and the name coincidence is close but not exact: Cabell had a recurring character named John Charteris.

'I might also suggest that somebody as out of it as "Kirk" is reported to have been, would never have been able to hold the diplomatic and intelligence positions that Linebarger did. I also have it on pretty good information that there was someone named John Carter involved in the Manhattan Project, who later went nuts.

'So unless some pretty good evidence turns up, I think the Aldiss/Stover "theory" should be laid to rest forever.

'Another note: In BILLION YEAR SPREE Aldiss claims that the series described by Lindner is the Lensman Series, not the Burroughs/Mars one. Lindner did indeed mention galactic empires, etc. But I think this was Lindner's attempt to conceal the identity of his patient. He said explicitly that his patient identified with the SF hero because the names were the same, which would make the patient's name Kinneson. The link between the author's name and Linebarger's future byline is just too tenuous. The Lensman novels were serialized in ASTOUNDING in 1937, 1939-40, 1941-42 and 1947. These dates don't fit Linebarger, who had collected his Ph.D. in 1936 and had begun his career by then. He worked for Army Intelligence, 1942-46.'

WE ALSO HEARD FROM:

DOUG FRATZ
CHET TWAROG
ED ROM
MIKE GLICKSOHN
RICH BROWN
RICHARD A FRANK
JOHN T. HARLLEE
STEVE GALLAGHER
HARRY WARNER, JR.
DEAN R. LAMBE
BRUCE D. ARTHURS
NORMAN KAGAN

WHOSE LETTERS WERE TYPED UP FOR INCLUSION...BUT HAD TO BE CUT FOR LACK OF ROOM. THANKS TO THEM AND THE OTHERS WHO WROTE COMMENTS AND REACTIONS.



ONCE OVER LIGHTLY

BOOK REVIEWS BY GENE DEWEESE

THE ANUBIS GATES

By Tim Powers

Ace, Paperback, \$2.95

For once, the cover blurb of a book, extravagant as it sounds, is actually fulfilled -- and then some. THE ANUBIS GATES is a "time travel novel you'll never forget."

The story itself defies capsulization. Suffice it to say that a pair of millennia-old Egyptian sorcerers, in an attempt to open a gate to the netherworld, open instead a series of gates in time, through which twentieth century English professor Brendan Doyle travels back to 1810, where through a dizzying series of adventures and misadventures, he becomes William Ashbless, the 19th century poet whose biography Doyle has been trying to write.

And that is only the barest of beginnings. Doyle, with sidetrips to Egypt and to 1684, becomes intimately involved with, among others: Dog Face Joe, a werewolf who isn't really a werewolf; Amenophis Fikee and Dr. Romany, the sorcerers; Horrabin, a clown-painted beggar king who looks like a giant Punch from a Punch and Judy show and who spends his life on stilts because the touch of the earth is deadly to him; the magically generated clone of Lord Byron, which has been programmed to kill the King of England; a whole sewerful of nightmarish creatures that had been human before Horrabin performed his magical medical experiments on them; and of course, Jacky, the beggar boy who turns out to be the woman destined to become Ashbless' wife.

Almost as intriguing as the story, however, is the 19th century London background, presented with so much realistic and evocative detail that you can almost feel the filth and poverty of the streets and of the underground warrens where Horrabin and his beggars live. Partly as a result of this wealth of detail, the characters, no matter how grotesque their appearance, no matter how outrageous their actions, are made to seem to-

tally believable and, if not sympathetic, universally fascinating and often touching.

In short, THE ANUBIS GATES is the sort of book that is so complex and unpredictable that it makes you wonder how it ever came to be written. And so engrossing that you wish a lot more like it were being written.

ELEMENT OF TIME

By Cathy Livoni

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, \$12.95

Sael, an "unstable" young man with several latent psi powers, including precognitive visions, telepathy and teleportation, becomes involved with the governing council of Galapix in an effort to save that world from being destroyed by a ship from the future. A fast-moving, time-hopping adventure, almost a space opera, ELEMENT OF TIME easily holds your interest from start to finish. The only problem is that much of the action and suspense depend on the "science" which the author invents but never explains. In a way, it's like the gobbledegook that fills most "Dr. Who" episodes, only here it seems to be intended to be taken seriously. Still, if gobbledegook doesn't bother you, you should have a rousing good time.



STARRIGGER

By John DeChancie

Ace, Paperback, \$2.75

The Roadway is a maze of highways and portals stretching across countless planets in this and other galaxies. Built by an unknown alien race, it is now used by humans and whatever other races have discovered it, but no one knows where most of the portals go. Jake McGraw is a "space trucker," driving a computerized behemoth that can withstand the wildly varying atmospheres, temperatures and gravities of the worlds the Roadway passes through. Sam is Jake's "truck," its computer imprinted with the personality and memories -- and possibly the soul -- of Jake's dead father. And Jake is being chased from world to world, flushed out of one hiding place after another, all because someone -- or several someones -- think he has found a map of the Roadway, something that could open up the entire universe to whoever gets his hands on it.

All of which, jammed into a few sentences, may sound wild and unbelievable, but STARRIGGER pulls you into its oddball world skillfully, starting with exciting but seemingly familiar elements and then twisting them and building on them, adding one wonder at a time, so that by the time Jake and Sam end up driving through the digestive tract of a mile-wide, living ferry boat on an unknown alien world, your mind may be a bit bogged, but it all makes sense and seems plausible.

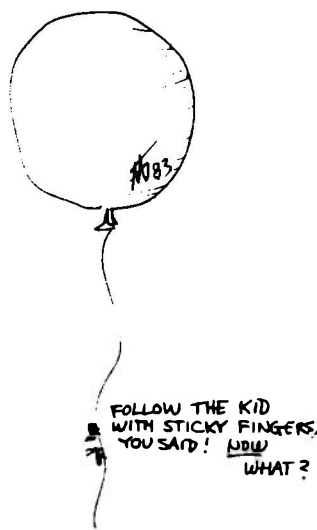
Above all, however, it's fun. Though there are echoes of Roger Zelazny's ROADMARKS and Robert W. Franson's THE SHADOW OF THE SHIP, STARRIGGER stands on its own as one of the best and fastest moving sense-of-wonder adventures of the year. With any luck, it could be the first of a series, since the conclusion leaves plenty of unanswered questions about the Roadway and its ancient, mysterious Builders.

IS THERE A TECHNOLOGICAL FIX FOR THE HUMAN CONDITION?

INTRODUCTION: I wrote this essay for a volume titled *HARD CORE SF*, the collection of papers from the 5th Eaton Conference at the University of California, Riverside. It will be published by Southern Illinois University Press in 1985. I wrote it for the academic intellectual who is rather unacquainted with hard SF, so some of what I say may seem obvious. It's also not written in a folksy style, which might alienate still more. But I thought it might prove interesting as a translational essay, trying to bridge the chasm between Us and Them. Counter-arguments are, of course, welcomed.



People don't read science fiction to learn science any more than others read historical novels to learn history. There are easier ways to go about it.



no suspense. In the same way that the iron rules of the sonnet can force excellence within a narrow framework, paying attention to scientific accuracy can force coherence on fiction.

This rigor creates a fundamental tension between dramatic needs and the demands of accuracy and honesty. It is this which underlies the pleasures many seek in hard SF. Those rewards occur even when hard SF types write what is by strict definition fantasy. Consider, for example, Niven's stories about the era before magic (mana) was used up on Earth ("When the Magic Went Away," etc.). These regard magic as a piece of technology we have lost, and the plot logic follows rules as strict as a chess game. Heinlein wrote early stories ("Magic, Inc.") celebrating this same sense, rationalizing territory previously thought to be beyond the realm of "hard" method.

The fidelity to an external standard of truth makes hard SF resemble the realistic narrative,

HARD SCIENCE FICTION IN THE REAL WORLD

BY
GREGORY
BENFORD

Yet the most simon pure breed of SF, that based on the physical sciences, somehow seems to be the core of the field. Its practitioners command SF's share of the best-seller markets. The gritty detail and devices of the "hard" brand form the background reality of many SF films. To many it seems more true, less wishful, and more hard-nosed than works based primarily on the social sciences. Certainly it seems to many more probable than that broad area of SF which copies jargon or emblems from the sciences without understanding them.

Why? What makes hard SF the center of the field? Answering this goes beyond literary criticism into realms of sociology, Zeitgeistery and political theory. I shall attempt a bit of all those in the process of mapping hard SF -- detailing what I think it does, what its primary modes are, some voices it naturally adopts, and what personalities are drawn to read or write it. My bias is that of a scientist, so I shall first classify and later on attempt some theorizing. First comes botany, then genetics. I shall tell you how this remarkable region of SF looks to me, as one who has worked and socialized in it for decades.

My minimum definition of hard SF demands that it highly prize fidelity to the physical facts of

the universe, while constructing a new objective "reality" within a fictional matrix. It is not enough merely to use science as integral to the narrative; thus, I rule out the works of C.P. Snow, Sinclair Lewis' *ARROWSMITH*, etc. SF must use science in a speculative fashion. The physical sciences are the most capable of detailed prediction (and thus falsification by experiment), so they are perceived in fiction as more reliable indicators of future possibilities, or stable grounds for orderly speculation.

SCIENCE AND ITS ROLES

Using science in fiction introduces tools not generally available to ordinary fiction. The most relevant of these is constraint -- defining what is possible or plausible. H.G. Wells admonished us to make one assumption and explore it; a world of infinite possibilities is uninteresting because there can be

in that it becomes a realism of possibilities, guided by our current scientific worldview. Variations are allowed, since the same facts can be explained by new theories. Thus time travel and faster-than-light journeys slip by, since they are probably impossible but difficult to disprove. Indeed various notions of both spring from the speculative end of physics -- Wheeler's "wormholes" which allow tunneling "through" the geometry of spacetime, or an intriguing result from black hole dynamics, which allows rapid travel forward in time by tangential trajectories in highly curved spacetime.

Rigor can have drawbacks, of course. Stories can turn on as trivial a point as whether a match will stay lit in zero gravity. This is the danger of overdoing the constraint imperative, while ignoring the dramatic requirements of all powerful fiction. In the hands of a writer sensitive to the tension between drama and fidelity, epics such as Herbert's *DUNE* can move the reader while retaining the internal cohesiveness imposed by building the planetary ecology correctly.

Hard SF authors call this fidelity "playing the game" -- by the rules, of course. Veering from the facts of science runs the grave danger of losing the audience. As

Robert Frost said of free verse, much SF is playing tennis with the net down. At first a netless game has an exciting freedom to it, a quick zest, but soon you find that no one wants to watch you play.

A reasonable standard, generally shared by hard SF writers, is that one should not make errors which are visible to the lay reader -- keeping in mind that the usual hard SF reader is sophisticated and not easily fooled. (Hard SF types love to catch each other in oversights; Heinlein once snagged me on a matter of the freezing point of methane at low pressures, and I was mortified.) More important than the factwork, though, is an understanding of science, its methods and worldview. Hard SF types will deride fiction which misrepresents how scientists think, too. A novel such as Fred Hoyle's *THE BLACK CLOUD*, which realistically depicts scientists as they grapple with problems revealing their styles and quirks, will be forgiven its sometimes stiff characters and clumsy prose.

This demand for imaginative realism imposed by scientific constraint provides a foundation for a second major function of science in SF: *verisimilitude*. SF must imbue fantastic events with a convincing reality, aided by a reader's willing suspension of disbelief. The piling on of well-worked-out details, derived from firm science, is a valuable tool. One can pursue C.S. Lewis's "realism of presentation" by working out names, geography, maps, titles of nobility or government, etc., as in *OUT OF THE SILENT PLANET*. This is a well known technique in both fantasy and SF, used by authors as diverse as Tolkien and C.J. Cherryh.

A method strongly identified with hard SF, pioneered by Heinlein, is to fix upon a few surprising but logical consequences of a society of technology. The more unexpected the implications, the better. The surprise of an anticipated facet of the future, implicit in the author's assumptions, instills wonder and convinces the reader of an imaginary world's "truth." Often the best efforts come from noticing how human beings will use physical laws in delightful ways. The moon colonists of Heinlein's "The Menace From Earth" notice that low gravity doesn't merely mean you can carry more on your back -- you can fly. In his *THE ROLLING STONES* the basic fact that Mars is sandy and has light gravity is used to make the Stones a nifty profit, because they realize that bicycles would be a logical, cheap, but overlooked method

of transport. They set about importing them, their ingenuity reaffirming the self-sufficiency of so many hard science heroes.

In employing science's third role, as symbol, SF distinguishes itself from fantasy most clearly. In roughly the 19th century science became widely perceived as a better way to understand our world than either religion or myth -- two elements which, used at face value in fantastic fiction, typically yield fantasy. In SF, science appears as impersonal, not man-centered. Tom Godwin's "The Cold Equations," for all its wordiness and melodrama, still retains its effectiveness because it so clearly states this case. Science in hard SF is often a reality deeper than humanity's concerns, remorselessly deterministic, uncaring of our personal preoccupations, and yet capable of revealing wondrous perspectives. It can either en-case us in the indifference of the universe, or liberate us.

These two reactions to external reality are called forth in Poul Anderson's *TAU ZERO*. A runaway starship cannot brake itself and has no choice but to go on, leaving our galaxy. Boosting ever closer to the speed of light, relativistic effects cause time to slow on board. The ship witnesses the entire outward expansion of our universe, during which whole species rise and fall. Here the science of cosmology paints for the crew a majestic vision outside the ship, including the cyclic collapse inward of all matter and the universe's rebirth into the next expansion. In direct contrast, inside the craft the crew breaks under the strain of their isolation from any enduring human context. They retreat into endless rounds of sexual misadventures and self pity. Science is the infinite here, and man falters before it. Yet some of the crew persists, retains its values and wins through

to a fresh start on a new planet, in a new phase of cosmic evolution. Hard SF is particularly good at revealing the stark contrast of these two attitudes; I cannot recall a non-SF work which so clearly dramatizes this.

Interestingly, Anderson achieved this symbolic substance while violating the constraint of fidelity to physics. He needed his starship to travel through the remaining thirty billion years of outward expansion, in order to preserve an Aristotelian dramatic unity -- keeping the central characters alive. This implied an enormous rate of acceleration, far above what the ship could attain by scooping up interstellar hydrogen and burning it in the onboard fusion reactors.

He was forced to make the ship dive directly through stars themselves, to get more reaction mass. But this would destroy the ship! How to get around this? He finessees the issue, using an argument from relativity which he knew to be wrong, but hoped was convincing to most of his readership. He succeeded, I believe. Few readers noticed the deft way he slid it by.

This is a clear example of a contradiction between the constraints of hard SF and other, literary aims. Such quandaries arise occasionally in any realistic fiction, but in SF they appear at every turn, powerfully shaping the narrative.

VOICES FROM ABOVE

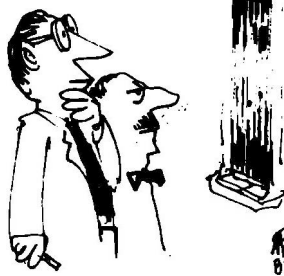
There are several narrative tones often adopted by hard SF writers, giving part of the "hard feel." They contribute to the reading protocols Delany has pointed out, providing the reader with immediate hints about possible postures toward the material.

1. Cool, Analytical Tone:

This is commonly used by Clarke, Blish, Clement, Niven, etc. (In Clarke the narrator is often an historian-chronicler, deliberately removed from the action by time.) It mirrors the scientific literature, where precision and clarity are paramount. The true language of the hardest sciences is mathematics; some narratives seek to reflect this pure, dispassionate statement of facts and relationships, without placing an overt human bias on them.

(1) This is also the origin of introductory quotations from histories written in the far future, the "Britannica Galactica," etc. James Gunn used this voice in a novel way in his most scientifically "hard" novel, *THE LISTENERS*,

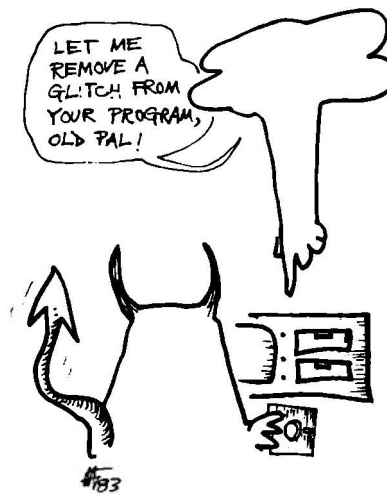
THE CALCULATIONS
AREN'T WORTH SHIT,
BUT AS MODERN ART
IT ISN'T BAD.



by inserting lengthy quotations from the scientific literature, wherein radio astronomers debated the philosophy of listening for extraterrestrial intelligence. Of course, there is an esthetic content to science which is also conveyed by this tone. I used this effect myself in a chapter of TIME-SCAPE, in which a physicist keeps on working on the mathematical structure of a theory, rapt in intellectual beauties ... not noticing that the airplane in which he is a passenger is about to crash.

2. Cosmic Mysticism: (Examples: Clarke again in CHILDHOOD's END and the 2001 novels; Blish's Cities in Flight series; Zebrowski's MACROLIFE; Anderson in TAU ZERO and elsewhere; Stapledon in STAR MAKER especially, where the disembodied point of view explores and exhausts myriad sub-universes.) This tone is an amplified form of the cool voice and dispassionate overview science affords. Here the objectivity is the viewpoint of a (usually unnamed) higher entity, often Godlike. The progress of physical law, often on a cosmological scale, is seen as the exemplar of a higher logic and scheme, to which humans would be well advised to respond with a mingling of scientific interest and mystical devotion. The emotional impact comes from the search for order (and perhaps meaning) in the universe, and confirmation of the role of reason in doing so. I suspect such vast perspectives fight feelings of powerlessness by putting the reader at one with a universal scheme. We might describe this voice as appropriate for a problem story in which the "problem" the reader needs resolved is, What is the underlying meaning to the apparent indifference of the universe? Is there some purpose to intelligence, to tenacity and curiosity?

3. The Wiseguy Insider: This tone appears often in Heinlein, Pohl (GATEWAY, "Day Million"), Haldeman (THE FOREVER WAR and rather more coolly elsewhere), Varley, and Pournelle. It provides a way for initiates to recognize each other, with a kind of boot-camp tone suitable for instructing the raw recruit. There is a conspicuous ease with large matters -- the aphorism expanded into social wisdom, a wisecrack relegating whole political views to oblivion, kernels of truth blown into a kind of intellectual puffed rice. I believe this tone appeals to adolescents particularly, who need to extend their sense of personal power -- often gained by their knowledge of science and technology -- into larger areas, where they may be more uncertain. This tone often



carries an air of the newly arrived, and is beloved by those whose first introduction to SF was through the Heinlein "juveniles" (variant forms of which have since been written by Alexei Panshin, Joe Haldeman, John Varley and myself).

MAINLINING THE SCI/TECH FIX

Martin Bridgstock (2) has applied the existing analysis of psychologist Liam Hudson (3) to the notions of Brian Stableford (4) and others that fiction, including SF, serves for its readers a maintenance function -- not to instruct but to reinforce existing assumptions and ideas. People who become addicted to a particular genre or subgenre, then, read to get their "fix."

Bridgstock uses two basic categories of reader:

The Convergent Personality, committed to order and rationality in understanding and controlling the world. This type must still deal with irrationality and chaos both from outside (other people) and from his inner, subconscious self. We might say in the context of this paper that he seeks a rational or "technological" fix for the human condition.

The Divergent Personality, according to Bridgstock, "...specializes in the arts and humanities, is verbally fluent, good at "creativity" tests, and perfectly at ease with a world -- and a self -- that is not fully rational or controllable." Hudson (3) suggests that in the divergent personality, "The alien is not eluded, or slain at the boundary wall, but assimilated and -- more or less effectively -- defused."

This leads immediately to the suspicion that perhaps we can usefully relate the hard SF reader to

the convergent personality. This would mean that the primary signature of hard SF is an attitude. Perhaps so; I suspect Godwin's "The Cold Equations" became so popular precisely because it articulated an attitude many felt but were unable to express so clearly. I personally resist relying solely on such an easy classification, though it does have a partial validity, a ring of truth. Yet hard SF does not always take such simplistic views of the alien, for example -- and as I shall argue later, the alien may be a core issue in hard SF. I myself have argued before (4) that fusing with the alien is literarily possible, yet I am clearly regarded as a hard SF author.

We must be careful to note that convergent does not imply authoritarian, and divergent is not necessarily more "creative" than convergent. These arts graduates' simplifications ignore that scientific creativity is of a different sort than artistic creation but no less difficult or original. In nineteenth century literature a romantic equation of arts with science was common and some SF retains this odd shibboleth.

Such habits are probably based on both unconscious motivation and ignorance. Scientists have become collaborators, even team players, in this century. After all, for writers it is difficult to deal with figures who do not dominate the foreground, as would the lone investigator, without slipping automatically into the reverse -- the cliché scientist who is narrow, specialized, alienated, a cog in the machine (a New Wave staple). Literature has few depictions which do not lapse into these ritual roles. Authors who are perhaps wary but basically supportive of science usually unconsciously choose the first posture, the scientist as noble pseudo-artist.

Thus romanticizing typically seizes on the few figures who stand outside this trend -- notably Einstein -- and ring the same changes upon this character as did the conventional fictions. At basis this is a failure of imagination or even of simple observation; few scientists work that way. Attitudes, craft, intuition, sociology -- in these and other ways art differs from science profoundly. Fiction has so far had little to say about this. Further, by equating the moral issues of science with those of art we lose the special, powerful role science plays in society. Thus in LeQuin's THE DISPOSSESSED, Shevek did not need to be a scientist at all, and in-

deed the novel itself is marginal-
ly science fiction.

There are prevalent glib generalities about hard SF and the divergent personality -- that readers prefer little characterization or stylistic sense -- which have obvious exceptions. Although Tom Disch's brilliant essay in SCIENCE FICTION AT LARGE anticipated much of Bridgstock's argument, I think Disch overgeneralizes with his assessment that hard SF disbars "... irony, aesthetic novelty, any assumption that the reader shares in, or knows about, the civilization he is riding along in, or even a tone of voice suggesting mature thoughtfulness." (6) An obvious counterexample is Clarke, who is often reflective. There is also Lem, who commonly writes not true hard SF, but something closely allied -- narratives about the structure of science and its limitations as a man-centered activity -- reflecting a familiar, ritual Eastern European skepticism which owes more to Hume, I suspect, than Godel. Typically, those who have widely used irony or aesthetic novelty are the occasional writers of hard SF, such as Pohl, Gunn, James Tiptree, Jr., Greg Bear, Algis Budrys or Brian Aldiss in the Helliconia trilogy. An odd variant of this is Barry Malzberg's GALAXIES, a commentary on Campbell and hard SF itself. Its science is dead wrong, but its heavily ironic points are interesting.

Consider the flip side of this argument. Do those SF writers concerned with "soft" sciences, "inner space," stylistic experiments, or even outright fantasy all fit into a single divergent personality category? Here the polarity of the argument is obviously simplistic. With an eye toward keeping the essential argument intact, I suggest we split the divergents into two subgroups: First, the moderate middle who are not threatened by rationality, though they may be disrespectful toward science, thinking it has too many unanticipated side effects, that its mind set leads to rigidity in real-world problem solving, etc. Second, the far wing -- those genuinely fearful of sci/tech, unable to cope with a society demanding more rationality and the expertise it implies. These people flee to the glades of fantasy, where human will can command powers, bending the universe to our will. The emotional refuge sought by such readers harkens back to an earlier time, when the perceived world was smaller, more cozy. (Little fantasy deals with events outside the earth, for example, though the existence of other planets has been apparent

throughout modern times.)

FIXING A WHOLE: HARD SF AS A CLASS
EXPRESSION:

In an outline of his general overview of SF, as seen from a French Marxist perspective, Gerard Klein stated: "The great characteristic of recent SF is a distrust of science and technology, and of scientists, especially in the exact or "hard" sciences of physics, chemistry, biology and genetics." (9) He maintains that SF mirrors a social class power from the 1960s on, thus confirming the pessimistic writers of the 1950s (Vonnegut in PLAYER PIANO, Wolfe in LIMBO). For them, "...the appearance of imperialism was no longer so benevolent. For SF there followed a period of skepticism, illustrated by the appearance of a new kind of magazine such as F&SF and GALAXY..."

If Klein were correct, we would expect hard SF to show increasing pessimism. Overall, I think it has not. Hard SF is replete with the image of the frontier, of disasters averted by knowledge and hard work. As individuals, I have not found hard SF writers to be more pessimistic about the future than the norm. Quite the opposite, as their strong support for the L-5 Society and scientific research in general attests. Indeed, even when considering such intractable problems as American urban decay, Niven and Pournelle offered a high tech fix with genuine thought behind it in OATH OF FEALTY (10). Even Ian Watson's occasional hard SF work shows a transcending of the barriers of language, and technical means for communicating with the alien, overcoming our own cultural and specist biases.

Klein holds that "...literary works are attempts to resolve through the use of the imagination and in the aesthetic mode, a problem which is not soluble in reality." The problem here is who is expressing the worldviews of the sci/techs? Increasingly, outside hard SF, the influx of humanists and arts graduates, Clarion writing school types, etc. has altered the tone of SF. I fear many of these people are largely antiscience from ignorance. (Though the most prominent Clarion graduate, Ed Bryant, wrote the remarkable hard SF story, "Particle Theory.")

There is also a basic rule



about SF: It is always easier to see problems than propose solutions. This makes the unforeseen-side-effects story the easiest to write, and the ingenious problem-solving ones much harder. We should expect to see more of the former as arts graduates enter the field, particularly if we ignore that citadel of hard SF, ANALOG.

Hard SF's central mode is the problem story. These appeal to convergent personalities, the true class that fits Klein's description. His error lies in assuming all SF readers are members of his newly oppressed sci/tech class. His examples of writers who have "recognized the advent of tyranny based on monopolies" are Zelazny (THE ISLE OF THE DEAD) and Spinrad (THE MEN IN THE JUNGLE, BUG JACK BARRON). Yet these are not hard SF writers. (Though Spinrad's atypical RIDING THE TORCH is an eloquent hard SF work.) Indeed, I suspect the alienation besetting some regions of SF arises from the usual sources -- not the familiar whipping boy of capitalism, but the same forces that operate on all technological societies: the onslaught of fast communications, economies of scale, demographic shifts, and the multinational homogenizing that follows.

POLITICS IN TWO DIMENSIONS

Many hard SF writers are described as politically conservative -- on the face of it, a surprising classification for people writing the "literature of the future." To study this, I propose a different way of plotting the political spectrum. Keep Right and Left on the horizontal scale (though I feel they are virtually useless terms), perhaps denoting by the Right a desire to retain or return to traditional values, while the Left desires to bring into being new values (Socialist Man, for example). Perpendicular to this, add a scale with Statist at the top (believing in concentration of power in the hands of a state), in opposition to the Anti-Statist.

I prefer such a two-dimensional scheme to the usual one-dimensional view, because it separates people who otherwise get lumped together. Thus the Fascists are Rightist Statists, while Stalin was a Leftist Statist. The striking similarity of Soviet and Nazi architecture, for example, is then not surprising. The Leftist Anti-Statists are Anarchists, while their Rightish brethren are the Libertarians. I have also placed Mao, Hubert Humphrey (HH), Ronald Reagan (RR) and Mitterand where I think they fall. I've also included myself, GB, in the spirit of

full disclosure. Of course, this choice of axes may not be the best for clarity; after I advanced this diagram Jerry Pournelle showed me a two-dimensional scheme he had proposed, with Left-Right replaced by "attitude toward planned social progress." (11) Other choices are possible.

Still, my sketch, aside from its possible utility in political theory, does bring up a striking fact, indicated by the circle in the Rightist, Anti-Statist quadrant. This circle, I submit, contains a great majority of hard SF writers. I believe Pournelle, Heinlein, Anderson, Niven, Clement, Harry Stine, James Hogan, Spider Robinson, Charles Sheffield, Dean Ing and several others fit in. Why, then, should so many hard SF writers end up near the Right Wing Libertarians?

I have no clean answer to this. Writers are lonely types, individualist by nature; this alone may draw them toward the Anti-Statist end. But why should they gravitate to the Right? Ursula LeGuin, not a hard SF writer, occupies a position I would take to be that of Leftist, Anti-Statist. Ian Watson -- mostly a soft science fiction writer -- is, he tells me, a Trotskyite. Clarke betrays little clear political orientation, other than a desire for cooperation, regarding politics as transient and not what the human race is basically "about."

Hard SF types may reflect the innate conservatism of science itself, building on an edifice of accumulated facts and the provisionally accepted theories which explain them. The scientist's habits of mind -- painstaking accuracy, constant rechecking, carefully proceeding from what's proved true, individual verification vs. authority, wariness of ungrounded speculation -- may militate against the "leaps of faith" often required by revolutionary social doctrines. But these are only guesses. I submit that, in the spirit of doing botany, this is a curious grouping which a socio-literary theory of hard SF should explain.

It is worth noting that if we include the Stapledon of STAR MAKER as a hard SF writer, then to my knowledge he and Ian Watson are the only left wing statists on the chart. STAR MAKER is notable in that it attempted to span the physical sciences and the social. He invoked a Marxist dialectical evolution, even on worlds inhabited by insects and sea-creatures, depicting such diverse creatures undergoing schematic evolution, through the rise of a proletariat to the eventual triumphant commun-

ism. Despite the vast changes in cosmology and cosmogony since, this strikes me today as the most dated and naive feature of STAR MAKER. The impulse to be "hard" and mechanistically scientific can merely make one seem naive.

HARD SCIENTISTS

"The great simplicity of science will only be seen when we understand its strangeness."

-- John Wheeler

Though he lurks in hard SF from the beginning, the scientist has gotten rather unfair, two-dimensional presentation. Discounting the earlier mad scientist cliché, present since Mary Shelley, we confront the lab-smocked cardboard figures who thronged SF stories and films of the 1930s through 1950s.

Yet many hard SF authors were scientifically trained to some degree (Asimov, Clarke, "Ralph Richardson," Pournelle, Hoyle, Anderson, Hogan, Brin, Sheffield, Forward, Stanley Schmidt, Vernor Vinge, Rudy Rucker, G. Harry Stine, Clement, myself). They have direct experience, yet seldom give us deep portraits of scientists. Most of them have been concerned more with problems than with style or character, and so chose as handy conveniences the spaceship captain or savvy lab administrator as natural pivots of their fictions. They subscribed to the conventional wisdom that in hard SF things were more important than people, intellect dominates over the heart, and that ideas, rather than experience, will play the leading role in setting, character and plot (1). This view is still common, but fading, as more sophisticated authors seek to use the traditional territory of hard SF.

Scientists actually doing science are boring unless the narrator can get deeply inside them. Conventional literature seldom depicts them (12). Only devotees, such as the ANALOG readership, will sit still for extended technical discussions between pieces of decorated cardboard. There are some examples of solid SF characterization of scientists -- Richardson's stories, some works of Poul Anderson, Paul Preuss's BROKEN SYMMETRIES, others -- but not many. A major hurdle in depicting scientists is the lack of science education in our society as a whole. I feel that by showing scientists dealing with a new problem -- not simply showing a historically validated study under way, as in Eleazar Lipicky's THE SCIENTISTS -- we see them most realistically. When the reader can understand the problem he is more involved. What's more,

in fiction the reader can know more than the scientists, via narrative devices such as the two points of view at different times which I used in TIMESCAPE.

My own instinct is that the problems confronting hard SF as it attains a larger audience lie not merely in better characterization or smoother prose, but in integrating all the facets of narrative. The constraint of scientific truth must be balanced against aesthetic imperatives. The scientific world view, its methods and unfolding discoveries, calls into question many of the assumptions of conventional fiction. E.L. Doctorow has remarked that for him, "the great root discovery of narrative literature" is that "every life has a theme, and there is human freedom to find it, to create it, to make it victorious." He wonders whether "the very assumption that makes fiction possible, the moral immensity of the single soul, is under derisive question because of The Bomb." By merely substituting the larger canvas of science for The Bomb, we can state the problem SF presents. Though science is a human creation, it casts doubts upon the primacy of humankind in the larger perspectives of time and space. Inevitably then, SF's goals are sometimes at odds with traditional methods and aims. We cannot expect that a major work of hard SF will read more or less like a conventional novel, but with dollops of science stuck in for reasons of background, plot or atmosphere. That would be a subversion of the potential of the field. SF by bringing to literature the elements of science, inevitably creates fresh tensions between content and form, character and ground. The resolution of these tensions must be evaluated by critical standards which simply do not yet exist, because the problems are new.

We occasionally hear calls for higher standards in SF which hark back to the bourgeois novel of characterization (LeGuin, in SF AT LARGE, Ref. 6). This oversimplifies the difficulties, because one of the prime tasks of SF is conveying strangeness. Portraying people living in a different future is harder than, say, getting into the mind of a nineteenth century mayor of Casterbridge. SF presents genuinely new challenges. Should the reader even be sympathetic toward such people? Does making a character "real" for our readers subvert the very strangeness SF strives to convey? How much of what we "know" about character is in fact conventional wisdom of the times, and when is it necessary to destroy

these preconceptions before proceeding?

Surely we can say that the use of aliens who live in outré environments but talk like twentieth century middle-class Americans undercuts the elements of strangeness in Clement's MISSION OF GRAVITY and Forward's DRAGON'S EGG. In contrast, Terry Carr's deceptively simple short story, "The Dance of the Changer and the Three," attains an eerie sense of alien character without sacrificing its sense of a different perspective. In non-sf, William Golding's THE INHERITORS and Richard Adams' THE PLAGUE DOGS strive in this direction. There are a variety of strategies possible; I myself have used some of the techniques of modernism to imply outré perspectives, perhaps best illustrated by portions of IN THE OCEAN OF NIGHT and in a novella, "Starswarmer." Though of course we know that we cannot escape human categories wholly -- a point Lem makes repeatedly, often with elephantine humor -- the depiction of people or aliens outside our culture represents an aesthetic challenge central to hard SF. Regrettably, it is a challenge seldom met. Although science can give us strange vistas, merely reciting this is not enough; the Cool, Analytical Tone is a limited method. Different, perhaps totally new literary techniques must be developed.

There are tensions between the known and unknown, as Gary Wolfe has discussed, that present unique problems in SF characterization. We must face the fact that our notions of character are themselves ethnocentric, and indeed, so is the assumption that character is central. The perspectives science allows will not always assume that human values or human interactions reign supreme. Characters will be molded by the universe in ways which will not pay even lip service to "humanistic values" -- which are often simply the prejudices of Western Europeans inherited from the last few centuries, and sometimes merely those of people working in English departments. Hard SF attempts to face this fact squarely, though not always adroitly or even consciously.

One of the charms of Pohl's short "Day Million" is its street-wise expression of human values shifted by advanced technology. He makes a bizarre technical future appear more understandable, and far less ridiculous, than our own times. Of course, some hard SF authors prefer to stress our continuity with the future, probably because this is a safer narra-

tive strategy. Poul Anderson's moody, reflective and historically knowledgeable hard SF tales often show how certain elements of human behavior will continue into distant, bizarre settings.

Pursuit of the technically complex and aesthetically unfamiliar limits the hard SF audience. We might ask ourselves: What maintenance function does the mainstream provide for its readers? In part, I think, it reinforces their perception of humanistic values. Doctorow's assumed "immensity of the single soul" is personally reassuring, and its comfortable, human-centered world far less threatening.

SF on the other hand cannot guarantee to support these. It cannot limit itself to the cozy confines of humanism. Thus, its message is unwelcome in some quarters. (Often, people who cannot abide SF do respond to books or shows like THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY, which poke fun at SF clichés, undermining the unsettling strangeness of it all. An alternate, highly successful strategy, is to use the props of SF to retell a sentimental, human-centered story, a la STAR WARS. These are all evasions of the core of the field.) Given its close association with the sciences which yield the largest vistas in space and time, hard SF will remain inherently difficult -- indeed, almost opaque -- to many.

This is unfortunate. For I do agree with Gerard Klein that hard SF, at least, is the underground literature of a usually silent class -- not merely technology hounds, but men and women who have seen the genuinely strange territory that lies beyond the slick finish of popularized science. It is an underswell of our remorselessly complex age, often fixated by futuristic technology and drawn forward by unfolding vast perspectives.

These people are not mere facile technophiles, as some critics (divergent types themselves, no doubt) imagine. They have a certain ingroupishness, I suppose, and within the small garden of hard SF sometimes loyally mistake a rutabaga for a rose.

A minority may seem to propose technological fixes for genuinely irreducible features of life -- note, for example, the repeated avoidance of death in Heinlein's work, and the frequent treatment of preservation through cryonics by several hard SF writers (including me). But overall the writers and their natural audience, the scientists themselves, know that

science is not a mere stack of facts to be memorized, or an authoritarian structure, or the province of Strangelovian fanatics.

High quality scientists are remarkably diverse, broadly educated, and by no means narrow victims of Snow's polarized two cultures. They usually have read hard SF; sometimes, despite a crammed schedule, they still do. SF uniquely displays the tension between realism and imagination, using fresh materials. And hard SF, they know, plays with the net up. Indeed, this creative constraint is so apparent in hard SF that, like a sonnet, it can bring fresh angles and surprises, intriguing new ways of looking at our consensus reality.

This is, I think, the primary pleasure scientists themselves get from hard SF. They see it not as a literature of hardnosed technophiles and adolescents -- though of course there are some -- but as an expression of the bittersweet truths emerging in our century, an echo of man's progressive displacement from a God-given center of creation, so that mankind's perspective is now forever, like science, provisional and ambiguous and evolving.

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RAISING HACKLES

BY ELTON T. ELLIOTT

By the time most of you read this I'll have been writing for SFR almost seven years. It seemed in this Fiftieth issue that a little reminiscing is in order.

It was late in 1975 and I had finished reading an issue of SFR where Dick Geis had recounted a phone conversation with Kurt Vonnegut. Dick said that Vonnegut got ahold of him because his phone was listed in the Portland directory, and he gave the number in SFR. Being the rabid science fiction fan I was in those days (I had organized a local SF club in Salem) and having just recently been introduced to SFR I couldn't wait to call Dick. I mean I had heard this guy had actually won a Hugo award!, corresponded with Asimov and actually talked with Harlan Ellison. But I just couldn't call up, I needed an excuse. Well, morbid fan that I was I found the opportunity when I read in the local paper that James Blish had died. I figured that was important enough to talk to the august Mr. Geis. (Looking back on those, for me early days, I only plead youth -- I was just nineteen.) With great trepidation I called Richard E. Geis. I remember little of that conversation, other than Dick expressing regret over Blish's untimely death. That gave me the courage to call him in the future. All of the calls were extremely pleasant, so I decided to take a fateful step and ask Dick if I could come up and chat with him. He gracefully agreed. Although knowing his reculsive nature as I do now, I suspect he was not eagerly looking forward to the visit.

I rode up to Portland (I don't think I had my license at that time) with two other members of our local SF club. They both read SFR and one of them subscribed. She had read the last several SFRs thoroughly and was determined that we put our best foot forward. I remember her telling me, "You've

got to know how to approach a person like this; if you read the last several issues you'll find that he's installed this wood stove; keep the conversation centered around the wood stove, around things that fascinate him."

I didn't say anything, but I thought that was the biggest bunch of b.s. -- I mean, I KNEW what a guy that published a science fiction 'zine was into, intelligent robots, Harlan Ellison, Isaac Asimov, Arthur C. Clarke, Mars, Alpha Centauri, politics -- I knew he didn't like Teddy Kennedy (that made two of us) -- wood stoves, I wasn't going to waste my time talking about wood stoves.

I remember him gamely talking about wood stoves, and patiently putting up with my enthusiasm over space flight, galactic empires, rocket ships, robots, etc. He even put on consignment a box of SFRs for me to sell at the SF club. I was barely able to carry them up the stairs. Talk about your 175-pound weaklings.

After that I talked to him many times over the phone. Telling him the latest news in SF. Finally one day he suggested I write him a column, a news column. I immediately agreed and rapidly hand wrote the first column and handed it in to him. He gently explained that in the future he would prefer the columns to be typed, and even gave me a battered old Sears electric, which I still use.

The years passed by. I found out that Dick likes sports, spectator sports that is, as much as I do. We went to several Portland Timber soccer matches and watched Ralph Miller's OSU Beavers blow it in the playoffs several times. I read in SFR how Teddy Kennedy would be elected president, how that would cause 25% unemployment. Numerous times I must have over-

stayed my welcome or otherwise gotten on his nerves but he almost unfailingly was friendly. I helped install the machine gun turrets on the top of his house (just joking).

Paulette, over that time has been very patiently editing my sometimes atrocious prose and has made some great grilled cheese sandwiches. The only black spot over these past seven years has been the insistence of Koo, Dick's cat, that my lap makes a great place to shed her fur.

About five years ago, I further imposed on Dick, showing him my first painful attempts at writing fiction. One day early in 1982 I told this notion I had about fanatic Arabs and bizarre weapons. He said let's write it up. We did. A great agent by the name of Joe Elder sold it and the rest will be bestseller history.

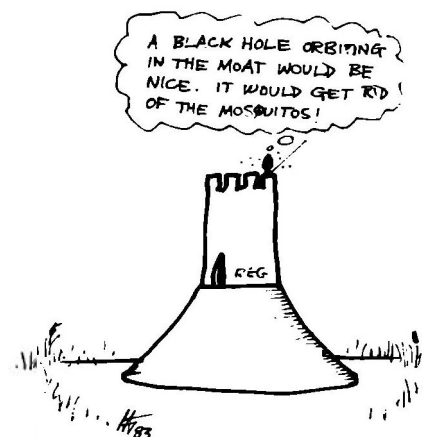
Over time I began to realize that Dick was a mystery to most in SF fandom. One guy did an interview with me that consisted of nothing but asking me questions about Dick. Others in SF are jealous of his many Hugo Awards. He doesn't go to conventions (a smart man). He doesn't seem to need the slavish approbation of the numerous sycophants that inundate the field. Bravo.

He and Paulette Minare' put SFR out on time; others need staffs to do the same.

So for all the above and much more, Dick and Paulette, congrats on the 50th ish, cheers and happy holidays and a productive remunerative 1984.

MUSINGS:

I'd like to call off the fantasy/SF controversy once and for all. It has generated more heat than light, but more importantly



if certain forces have their way the entire argument will be rendered more than moot.

It has come to my attention that a rabid fanatic preacher by the name of Gary Greenwald (he has a program called "The Eagle's Nest" on the Christian Broadcasting Network) has been slamming Dungeons and Dragons quite a lot recently and has once again raised the nasty, dirty haunting spectre of censorship over the SF field.

He has been claiming that D&D is of the devil and I've heard that he is about to broaden that attack to include the entire field of fantasy. I have heard that the Catholic Church, which recently issued a statement asking for government censorship of magazines which they consider pornographic, is going to join up with Greenwald and others of like ilk and call for censorship and an outright ban on the playing of D&D in the public schools and in any public place. Licensing of all stores that carry D&D and other games like it is also to be included in the call. Greenwald is rumored to be asking for a boycott of those stores that sell D&D. I believe this might be used as a platform from which to attack all fantasy and then science fiction as well.

Now is not the time to bicker over differences, but to present a front of solidarity to the would-be censors and attackers of our freedoms. All other conflicts must pale before this threat. If you think these are just a bunch of publicity-hungry nuts, you're probably right. But they do have power: Vonnegut and Ellison have been banned in the public schools. Science fiction has been banned in some private schools all together.

This is a serious threat. The same impulse which led hundreds of thousands to be killed in Europe during the Middle Ages for minor religious differences is alive today. Just as people died in wars arguing over how many sacraments should be used in mass, so today kids are being beaten in private schools because of the language they use or the dress they wear. There are kids today that have never seen STAR WARS or RETURN OF THE JEDI because their parents won't let them watch TV or go to the movies. All over America basic rights that the rest of us take for granted are being denied children, usually in the name of God. And some of the same people are trying to take these rights away from us.

Those of you that feel as I do and are concerned about this

threat to our freedoms, should know that I am considering starting up a legal fund to fight the would-be censors. If you're interested or have suggestions or comments, drop me a card at my address:

Elton T. Elliott
1899 Weissner Drive, NE
Salem, OR 97303

#

On a cheerier note let me wholeheartedly recommend George Zebrowski's trilogy THE OMEGA POINT, available together in paperback for the first time. The first two sections appeared earlier but have been revised for this edition.

THE OMEGA POINT TRILOGY is a roller coaster ride through revenge and retribution, mysticism and madness. The novel centers around a character determined to terrorize and destroy Earth's civilization for imagined and real wrongs that they have perpetrated on his civilization in the past. Armed with a whisper ship, an all-powerful spaceship linked via computer and otherwise to its owner, the madman Georgias, sets out on his mission of destruction. Given the radical Shiite terrorism in the Middle East, the psychological motivation for Georgias is all too realistic.

By using the protagonist as villain, Zebrowski makes some interesting points about how the typical adolescent SF power fantasies are so very close to fascism and fanaticism. THE OMEGA POINT is the most powerful indictment of SF's power fantasies since Spinrad's THE IRON DREAM.

THE OMEGA POINT is a prime example of what Zebrowski, in the Afterword, calls a genre night's entertainment. Georgias goes from a young "freedom" fighter, a la Arafat, to a monster so hateful and so power mad that by the end of the book he becomes one of the most frightening characters to ever come along in SF, right up there with Rasalom in F. Paul Wilson's THE KEEP. The entire book is a marvelous character study wedded to a powerful narrative, one of the bright spots of 1983 science fiction.

Zebrowski's work is historically important to science fiction because I believe he along with a few others like Gregory Benford mark an important transition in SF from the old Yesterday's Tomorrow way of portraying the future to a more current Today's Tomorrow way of representing what might possibly happen. THE OMEGA POINT TRILOGY is a transition along that path for Zebrowski as he freely admits in the Afterword.

THE ADVERSARY

By Julian May
Houghton Mifflin, 470 pp.
\$15.95 (tentative)

THE ADVERSARY by Julian May is the long-awaited conclusion to the Pliocene quartet. It's already available in Britain and should be in U.S. bookstores by the first week in March.

Starting with the award-winning THE MANY COLORED LAND, the Pliocene Exile saga has grown in dizzying scope and complexity. It starts out in a future where humanity has joined an alien federation that is busy exploring and uniting the galaxy in a mental union called the Unity. Many humans don't fit into this utopia and some travel via one-way time gate six-million years into Earth's past to find excitement, adventure. They do, for Earth in the Pliocene Era is dominated by two alien races, the Tanu and the Firvulag who have escaped from their home galaxy some 270-million light years away in order to practice their bizarre battle-religion undisturbed. Well, disturb them the humans do, at first giving the tall Tanu the advantage over the shorter Firvulag. But that isn't all. There is another faction present on Earth, a band of rebels who fled the galactic milieu in order that their leader, Marc Remillard, might carry on his strange frightening experiments. This is a tough, complex mix of characters, groups and events to manage, but Julian May handles it admirably.

Julian May does a superb job of characterization. Marc Remillard is one of the most memorable personalities to ever appear in science fiction. He's complex, utterly ruthless, the adversary of the book's title, yet I found him sympathetic. Another character is Aiken Drum, the fiesty human rogue outcast who later becomes king of the Tanu. Then there's Elizabeth, the mysterious woman who can heal others but whose own soul is haunted by the death of her husband many years ago. There are many others, all fleshed-out humans based on certain archetypes of psychology. May approaches these books the way a historical novelist would. The characterization carries as much weight as the suspense elements. This is not a mode of storytelling that is in vogue in all quarters. For too long clarionism has rendered SF bland, boring and unreadable. Julian May's writing is exciting and readable.

THE ADVERSARY is the stunning grand finale to this richly inventive series. You'll want to read all four books over and over again.

OTHER VOICES

THE ROVING MIND

By Isaac Asimov
Prometheus Books, \$17.95
ISBN: 0-87975-201-7.

REVIEWED BY KARL EDD

Asimov, always his own man, ignores the advertising apothegm that Americans won't read essays and calls his book "a wild miscellany" of essays. In his chatty, persuasive way Asimov leads us into the endless debate between religious creationists and evolutionists. He is so logical that creationists will probably not understand him, but I don't think he cares. He sees them for the simple-minded fools and bigots that they are.

Next he takes on "Reagan-logic" with devastating wit. If Voltaire's audience existed today, it might erect a statue to Asimov to honor his willingness to clash with hypocritical mouthers of unthinking platitudes.

He jousts with the Moral Majority (God's Air Force), censorship, sperm banks, UFOs, telepathy, flat-earth people and birth-control foes. Asimov takes a more positive stance then and discusses plate tectonics, earth magnetism, sun spots, solar wind, Maunder cycles, ice ages, magnetic pole reversal, Jupiter (remember his classic BUY JUPITER?), and Pluto (so-called from the first letters of astronomer Percival Lowell's name). Asimov is not one to overlook black holes, pulsars, tachyons that hypothetically move faster than light.

Those readers who like mental gymnastics will appreciate Chapter 36, "Beyond the Universe," on the nature of the universe, how we perceive it and the nothingness that is beyond it. Molecular biology, an ever more important phase of modern science, is presented in a thumbnail sketch along with some intriguing postulates.

More of the myriad subjects dealt with by Amazing Asimov: Energy, transportation, language, corporate futures, robot labor, computers, chemistry, sociology, postal services, geriatrics, education, photoelectricity, political science, cloning, hotels, botany, genetics, Spanish flu, the

Black Death, flying chairs, brain control, evolution, trapping ice comets for spacemen's water supplies, space tourism, cosmic garbage dumps and word processors.

With his Radio Shack word processor, Asimov has produced and had published 141 books in the past 138 months, exceeding even Max Brand in word production. Like George Bernard Shaw, Asimov r-gus prswasivly 4 fonetic spelling.

The book closes with a warm tribute to Asimov's father. As you close the book you regret that it was so short. A high compliment to an actor has always been to say: "He could read the phone book and make it interesting." Asimov could write the phone book and make it interesting.

Prolific science and science fiction writer ISAAC ASIMOV called from his New York University Hospital bed yesterday to say that he is doing "very well" after triple bypass heart surgery a week ago. He expects to be out in another week and back writing fiction. Asimov, who will be 64 in January, pointed out that he has so far published 286 books with 14 currently at press. "So you see," he added, "even if I had died, I would have published 300 books in my lifetime."

---Chuck Conconi, "Personalities," THE WASHINGTON POST, Wednesday, Dec. 21, 1983.

THE ROBOTS OF DAWN

By Isaac Asimov
Doubleday, ISBN 0-385-18400-X
\$15.95

REVIEWED BY KARL EDD

Elijah Baley, the interplanetary detective who cavorted through THE CAVES OF STEEL and THE NAKED SUN (note the author's fondness for THE) is back in a caper that moves from Earth to planet Aurora, called World of the Dawn.

A robot has been murdered.

But there is more. Baley's career hinges on solving the murder.

er. Also the universe is at stake. A power struggle is shaping up between men and their intelligent machines. (Apparently it has expanded out beyond the Detroit auto industry.)

A femme is involved. Fatale she is. Very fatale and very femme.

As usual with Asimov there are long passages of dialog that constitute town meeting debates and intellectual Steve Allen-type debates, and intellectual dissection of ideas, paradoxes to equal those of Xeno, and zero base contradictions that are sneaked in the way Lewis Carroll sneaked relativity concepts into ALICE IN WONDERLAND. Asimov's method is never boring, usually entertaining, and always thought-provoking.

Tallyho! We are off on a chase of ideas and a killer. The deductive adventure stimulates, and the orgasmic passages range from those similar to a Harvard professor explaining intergalactic sex to a Chastity Colony, to those as delightfully prurient as they are word-framed by a skillful pro who knows the fleshpot tastes.

Periodically Asimov baits you with the tried and true suspense technique of raising a crucial question and dangling the implicit promise that perhaps in the next chapter or two you will know the answer. When you get the answer, it in turn produces two or more additional, intriguing questions.

The book is wordy at 419 pages, but worthy to boot. Georges Simenon brevity, Heinlein fat-trimmed prose, you won't find. Carter Brown fans may need mouth to mouth resuscitation if they attempt to wade through this book. But for those of us who like our Asimov, vintage any year, this pressing of the words has produced the proper blend -- the humor of a Jewish elf, Yankee wit, word conundrums, mental boxing practice, a bit of mind-bending, a story and a learning experience. You will think much about life, love, sex, alternate societies -- and crime.

"--he knew, from her position, that the softness was her left breast and that it was centered, contrastingly, with its nipple hard against his lips./Softly she was singing to the music, a sleepily joulful tune he did not recognize."

This is followed by lyric, poetic aftersex depicted from a man's viewpoint, unmistakably, but sensual, tender and well phrased. Ursula LeGuin's would be the feminine counterpart in delightful sex presentation even for those too old to appreciate much more than the words.

Asimov, seated at his word processor, has fired an artillery salvo of words. They land squarely on target but, of course, we expect that of him.

DINOSAUR TALES

By Ray Bradbury
Bantam, 1983, 144 pp., \$6.95

REVIEWED BY ANDREW ANDREWS

Although the "illustrated story" format in Bradbury's collection of his favorite own DINOSAUR TALES is garish and unnerving, the collection as a whole is notable for his own spiffy reminiscences of his love of the beasts. While "A Sound of Thunder" and "The Fog Horn" bring us intensely believable milieus, braced with conviction, tales such as "Besides A Dinosaur, What-a Ya Wanna Be When You Grow Up?" are mushy and cornball, made for only the most childish reader.

But don't be mistaken. Bradbury's enchanting obsession with the lore is alluring. He gets to you -- in simple ways he shows you how to marvel over these awesome, startling creatures. There are poems that tell a strange rapture. And his happy-go-lucky writing is tarnished only by the paint-by-number running illustrations. Ignore them, but take in what Bradbury revels about.

THE SHADOW SCRAPBOOK

By Walter B. Gibson
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York
1979, 162 pp., \$8.95

REVIEWED BY BILL WINANS

This fascinating volume contains everything one could imagine about the career of the Shadow. Most chapters are written by Walter B. Gibson, longtime writer of THE SHADOW magazine (under the pseudonym Maxwell Grant), others by fan and author Anthony Tollin, the preface by Chris Steinbrunner, Vice President of the Mystery Writers of America.

This paperback (8 1/2 X 11") has a beautiful full-color cover of Shadow memorabilia and contains art and pictures of the Shadow and the principal people behind his career. Included are complete lists of Shadow novels and radio adventures, color reproductions of THE SHADOW magazine covers, secret codes, memorabilia and collectibles, a previously unpublished Shadow novelette, a radio script, a complete adventure from the Shadow comic strip, a chapter on the Shadow movies, and more.

Don't miss this book. I'm sure you'll treasure it as I do. If you look around, you may find this book discounted at local bookstores.



ALLEN H. 82

LEGION

By William Peter Blatty
Simon & Schuster
248 pp., \$14.95

REVIEWED BY STUART NAPIER

If you were expecting a sequel to THE EXORCIST, Blatty's latest novel, LEGION, is not it. Instead, his new story features homicide detective Lt. William Kinderman, a secondary character from the earlier novel, and his

investigations into a series of gruesome murders in Washington D.C. These murders contain similarities to a previous series of San Francisco slayings known as the "Gemini Killings" (including details known only to the police). Most troublesome to Kinderman is the conclusive knowledge that the Gemini killer died years ago. He died -- we learn later -- at the same time that Jesuit Father Damien Karras dove out the window to his death while conducting the exorcism in THE EXORCIST.

LEGION moves more slowly than Blatty's previous work, delving into man's capacity for suffering and pain, the meaning of evil and the existence of God. Most of this comes through internal musings of Lt. Kinderman, a man who has seen so much blood and death he is able to ask the question "why" from a purely philosophical point of view.

As a counterpoint to the grisly recitation of the murders, Blatty uses a humorous portrayal of Kinderman's home life -- including a mother-in-law who comes to visit and insists on keeping a live carp in the bathtub -- and lively repartee with his young associate Atkins to provide some very funny moments.

This book is a good read -- enough plot twist and dead ends (pun intended) to keep your interest and a few unexpected scares scattered along the way. While THE EXORCIST was a genuinely gripping novel -- and quite possibly the novel that spawned a resurgence in mainstream horror (Stephen King had yet to sell a book back then) -- Blatty's LEGION displays an excellent command of believable dialogue and a talent for ethnic humor not found in his earlier work.

THE THRONE OF MADNESS

By Somtow Sucharitkul
Timescape/Pocket, 45439-0, \$2.95

REVIEWED BY PAUL MCGUIRE

The second novel of the Inquest or trilogy begins with one of the protagonists of LIGHT ON THE SOUND (Timescape 44028) becoming one of the god-like Inquestors to gain his compassionate revenge by destroying their galaxy-spanning absolute rule. The Inquestors are utopia destroyers dedicated to the faith that humans are fallen creatures meant to suffer atonement eternally. Over the centuries they have developed a disdain for mortals which

makes the most arrogant feudal Samurai's lack of concern for peasants seem like the love of Gandhi. Most of the novel takes place on their homeworld, Uran's Varek, a planet the size of Well and River worlds. This complex novel has breath-taking variety and beauty, and ranges from a society which dances on the surface of a sapient sun to a city inside the living body of a serpent and a city where the 20,000,000 population is genetically programmed to create an eternal operatic symphony with their lives. In a generous extravagance of invention Mr. Sucharitul all but throws away ideas whole novels could have been built around.

The plot threads are finally tied to a grand multi-player game of makrugh. What chess is to mortals, makrugh is to these demi-gods. Although the fate of their pieces is ruthlessly enacted on the worlds each represents, the Inquestors care more about the corresponding loss of face. In this final game each wears a mask and a device to alter their voices. None of the players know who is who, but the deals and betrayals of the game are still binding on them and their plaything, the universe. But this game will be more unique than any bargained for.

With a future technology advanced to where magic would seem like everyday routine, Mr. Sucharitul is a mystic magician, producing ever more dazzling miracles. His prose is musical. Even the most bizarre images seem realistic once one has been drawn into the lavish and unique world here created. This book could take a while to finish, however, because you may be constantly pausing to think about and appreciate the scene you have just read.

ACROSS A BILLION YEARS

By Robert Silverberg
TOR Books, \$2.75

REVIEWED BY ROBERT SABELLA

This is a Young Adult novel that TOR has released without any identification as such. Fortunately, like all the better YA novels, it can be enjoyed as much by adults as by youngsters.

Tom Rice is a graduate student in archaeology. He is fortunate enough to participate in an expedition searching for the remnants of a billion-year-old race known as The High Ones. The expedition members are a colorful mix of humans, aliens and an android. As the book progresses we learn as much about them as about the High

Ones. There is a lot of introspective and interraction meshed in a fairly suspenseful plot. Events do tend to fall in line easily for the expedition members, but is that any different than, say, LORD VALENTINE'S CASTLE?

The most obvious differences between ACROSS A BILLION YEARS and one of Silverberg's adult novels are simpler character motivation, a complete lack of sex and violence and an occasional tendency for the characters to lecture the reader.

The only people who might be disappointed are those approaching ACROSS A BILLION YEARS expecting a novel as complex as DYING INSIDE or SHADRACH IN THE FURNACE. Everybody else should enjoy a good read.

CROWSTONE

By Hakim

Reviewer anonymous
Coltsfoot Press, The Netherlands
\$12.50

In the darkened, twisting streets of a city grown decadent with the centuries, an evil wizard enlists the services of two unlikely heroes. Their mission is to penetrate the defenses of a great temple and steal from its vaults the powerful Crowstone, a jewel of unspeakably malignant potential.

One of the pair is a slim, grey-clad aesthete, adept with sword and dagger and skilled in the thieves' trade. The other is a barbarian warrior from the Far North, by turns brooding and boisterous, prone to berserk rages.

Along the way, the barbarian falls in love with a little slave, forced into prostitution in a waterfront bordello. The grey-garbed thief, in turn, comes under the spell of a beautiful temple dancer. Their passions become intertwined with the quest for the magical gemstone, leading them down paths of treachery and deceit, until only their courage and wits can save their beloveds and themselves from the plottings of their shadowy employer.

If you thought that this was about another of Fritz Leiber's stories about the Grey Mouser and Fafhrd the Barbarian, you'd better think again. The author writes under the pen name of Hakim, the city is Suvyamara, not Lankmar, and both prostitute and temple dancer are pubescent boys.

Released by the Coltsfoot Press (a subsidiary of the gay-or-

iented Netherlands-based publishing firm of Spartacus, POB 3496, 1001 AG Amsterdam, The Netherlands) CROWSTONE represents a most ambitious -- and audacious -- undertaking.

At 368 pages, it is the largest original work to be published by Coltsfoot. At US \$12.50 the copy (in softcover), it is certainly the most expensive. The market at which it is aimed is definitely not the one in Uncle Hugo's or A Change Of Hobbit, but rather the increasingly vocal minority of men who prefer and are involved in mutually-agreeable sexual relationships with boys below the legal age of consent.

Unlike previous Coltsfoot books, CROWSTONE aspires to a level of graphic eroticism approaching the pornographic. Preserving the "quest" formula of S&S fiction, it incorporates a number of pederastic scenes that will baffle some readers, disgust most and -- disturbingly -- arouse many.

Certainly the less glandular adventures of Valamiel the Scribe and Zaek of Far Thuren are neither more nor less outre than those of most other such tales. Hakim's style of writing is rather less cloyingly turgid than that of at least half of the wordsmiths presently practicing in the Sword & Sorcery genre.

Characterization and plotting follow S&S S.O.P., though that alone shouldn't deter either of the two kinds of folk who're likely to buy it. The hard-core fantasy fan is perfectly happy with well-worn story lines and stock characters, while the boy-lover will doubtless suffer patiently through the scenes of whirling blades and wizardry to get to the "naughty bits."

It is left entirely to the conscience of the individual as to which species of fantasy -- adventurous or deviantly erotic -- comprises the paramount reason for purchasing this novel.

DIRECT DESCENT

By Frank Herbert
Ace Books, New York, 1980, Paperbk.
Illustrated, 188 pp., \$1.95

REVIEWED BY BILL WINANS

The cover proclaims this volume "the newest work by Frank Herbert." But is it? The book contains two novelettes: "Pack Rat

Planet" appeared in the December 1954 issue of ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION; the other has the same setting, different but similar characters and a similar story.

The "Pack Rat Planet" is a far-future hollow Earth, with a library containing all the knowledge of the galactic empire within its shell. The plot of each story involves political elements who want to close the library, and the efforts of the head librarians to keep the library in operation.

The stories are easy to read and move quickly, but will not satisfy the demanding reader. The illustrations, although quite attractive, add nothing to the story. The characters are wooden and uninteresting, the plot and conclusions predictable. I was disappointed and can't recommend this book.

PHILIP K. DICK

Edited by Martin Harry Greenberg and Joseph D. Olander
 Taplinger, 1983, 256 pp., \$12.95

REVIEWED BY ANDREW ANDREWS

"Philip K. Dick's fiction ... focuses on an intense, frightening view of our society -- its mass population, its artificial environment, its confusion of the real and the fake, its loss of absolute values. In the distorting mirror of Dick's work, our commonplace illustrations are paradoxically warped into the shape of truth."

-- From Chapter 9
 of PHILIP K. DICK

Let them do the walking, Msrs. Greenberg and Olander, because here they have brought before you and me the treatise to end all and be all about speculative fiction writer Philip K. Dick. The quote sums it up: And what a sublimely nutshell way of bookbinding the most intensely complete compendium of an author's Meaning and Purpose of writing I've ever read.

The book sums up the aberrant yet struggling writer completely, examining Dick's forays into brazen socio-political alternate and future landscapes, a perspective often dismal and majestic, and his sordid perception of our mechanized society, our indifference, our lack of compassion.

Chapter 6 examines the "mad-man's" political dispatches across the turbulent, unsound characters of his fiction. It works well, but not as sharply as Chapter 9,



as Eugene Warren goes to the karma of Dick's purposes in composing the alternate worlds, the MARTIAN TIMESLIP, THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE and A SCANNER DARKLY, a revelation of the dope scene. Portions of his life are pinned inextricably to his work -- Dick admits so in his own selection, "Now Wait for This Year."

Especially don't miss "Toward the Transcendent: An Introduction to Solar Lottery and Other Works" by Thomas M. Disch. It homes in completely on the simpler ways of understanding such a complex writer, if that is at all possible.

THE ABODE OF LIFE

By Lee Correy
 Timescape Pocket Book, \$2.50

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

Our heroes are flicked by a gravitational anomaly into an unexplored backwater portion of the galaxy and find a highly civilized planet known as Mercan, revolving around an unstable sun. Since the Enterprise was damaged, Kirk has to put in for repairs and must convince the leaders of the Mercadians (without overturning the Prime Directive) that other people do exist outside their sphere of influence. This has to be done quickly because the sun is rapidly becoming unstable and may blow everyone out of the sky. Story is eh!, but the characters are believable.

THE PROMETHUS DESIGN

By Sandra Marshak and Myrna Culbreath
 Timescape Pocket Book, \$2.50

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

The story line of this ST tale is simple (kind of). Our heroes must save the known universe from

the machinations of superior beings called the Designers. Also included in the emotion-filled cast is Savaj, a full-Vulcan and legendary Star-ship captain, who takes command of the Enterprise (sort of), demotes Kirk to Science officer and elevates Spock to Captain. The character development is illogical, i.e., Kirk pulls off so many no-noes that he should have been courtmartialled for insubordination and the brilliant alien Designers came across as unlettered spoiled adolescents. Lots of emotion-packed scenes mixed with opaque psychological insights and many footnotes referring to previous ST books and TV episodes. Eh!

THE OZ BOOKS

By L. Frank Baum

REVIEWED BY NEAL WILGUS

Anyone interested in the Oz fantasy classics surely knows that the 14 titles authored by L. Frank Baum have been available as Del Rey paperbacks for several years now. What I discovered when I began reading the series to my four-year-old son was that the Del Rey books have a minor shortcoming -- those excellent illustrations by John R. Neill had to be reduced so much that many of the details and much of the clarity is lost. Since Neill's drawings are such a perfect match for Baum's magic prose, this is vexatious indeed.

What a lot of fantasy readers may not be aware of is that there is another paperback edition of the Baum Oz books available, one that is large enough (5 1/4 X 8 1/4) to reproduce the Neill illustrations close to the original size. What I'm referring to is the Coles Children's Books edition, published by the Canadian firm that runs the Coles Bookstore chain (Coles Publishing Co., 90 Ronson Dr., Rexdale, Ontario, Canada M9W 1C1). Originally marketed in 1980 with a price of \$3.95 per each, Coles must have found the market was saturated, for when I recently discovered them (spring, 1983) they were reduced to \$1.99, then to 44¢ -- surely the book bargain of the decade.

The Del Rey edition has two things the Coles edition does not have -- original cover paintings by Michael Herring and the "official" map of Oz prepared by James E. Huff and Dick Martin for the International Wizard of Oz Club. Since the map is also reduced to

near illegibility and the Herring covers are rather uninspired, I'm happy to have most of the Coles titles to read from. So is my son.

TIME'S DARK LAUGHTER

By James Kahn
U.S.A., Random House, Inc., NY, NY;
Canada, Ballantine Books of Canada,
Ltd., 5390 Ambler Drive, Mississauga,
Ontario, Canada, L4W 1Y7.
1982, 318 pp., \$3.25

REVIEWED BY W. RITCHIE BENEDICT

Science fiction and fantasy, by their very nature, deal with realities that are odd. Some are odder than others, of course, and a few writers are so surrealist that you have difficulty in relating to their plots at all. Although the cover of this new novel describes it as SF, it is much closer in fact and spirit to fantasy. True, there are ties to our mundane century, but they are tenuous at best. Frankly, it reads like Piers Anthony combined with THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU and a sprinkling of Tolkien on the top. It is a sequel to the novel, WORLD ENOUGH AND TIME (Ballantine), but can stand on its own.

The locale is what is left of southern California (naturally) and the time is many centuries in the future. There has been germ warfare, atomic warfare, a mammoth quake, clone wars and it is all topped off with a new Ice Age. The human race has mutated into many diverse species, to say nothing of the animal and plant population. There are mermaids, centaurs and vampires brought about by genetic manipulation, as well as technological innovations such as the bionic Neuro-men and the Pluggers who bliss themselves out with direct connections to the brain. It is five years after the events in WORLD ENOUGH AND TIME and Josh Green is once again in danger.

He has had the helmet removed that prevented him from being drawn to the City With No Name. As a result, he continually suffers the equivalent of epileptic seizures until he obeys. The Queen of this city is something of a biological horror -- an electronic Medusa who needs Josh in order to reproduce. He goes through with the act because he has no choice.

If the mother was bad enough, the resulting daughter is worse. Not only does she kill her mother at birth, but she is sort of a bird-human hybrid with the power to manipulate time and space at will. As she is telepathically connected with

Josh, he has no choice again as he is summoned by her when she wishes to meet her father. This hybrid has the power to end what is left of the world and there is a moral choice to be made. Do you kill a ten-year-old, however distorted her morality? Or do you let her live and thereby possibly doom everyone?

The secondary characters, from Jasmine the Neuroman to D'Ursu the intelligent bear to Beauty the fastidious Centaur are well drawn. From what little I know about the first novel, I would say that Mr. Kahn has improved his pacing and the new one is more consistent in plot with fewer diversions from the main line. I understand it is part of a projected trilogy.

A well-written, but decidedly unusual novel.

THE OFFICIAL UNDERGROUND AND NEWAVE COMIX PRICE GUIDE

Compiled by Jay Kennedy
Crown Publishers
1982, 273 pp., \$9.95

REVIEWED BY JOHN DIPRETE

Similar in concept to THE COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE, THE OFFICIAL UNDERGROUND AND NEWAVE ("New Wave") COMIX PRICE GUIDE is destined to be a classic. It is endlessly fascinating, beautiful, funny and deserving of fame.

The art and photo reproductions are excellent: b&w and color covers are reprinted in full glory, with the various word balloons, art figures, and magazine titles easily discernible and appreciated. Breathless color is featured on 16 glossy pages. Every page has something to look at



and elicits a raised eyebrow at the daring, bizarre satire represented. The covers depict mostly black humor, in the style of NATIONAL LAMPOON (although it is safe to say that the undergrounds were precursors, not imitators, of the LAMPOON -- and are by and large, a far more "psyched out" entity). Much is erotic; cartoons like this often exaggerate and play outlandish tricks with the human form, striking at the libido of the pimply adolescent who is still buried in us all.

This is not a catalog. Only a brief description is given for each item -- never enough to sate one's curiosity. The front of the book contains immensely readable (to the underground comix buyer) personal essays from the "greats" like Ron Turner (LAST GASP ECO-FUNNIES), Denis Kitchen (KITCHEN SINK ENTERPRISES), Jay Lynch (BI-JOU Funnies) and many more.

Highly recommended for collectors (adults only!).

THE ANNOTATED WIZARD OF OZ

Edited by Michael Patrick Hearn
Clarkson N. Potter, NY, 384 pp.
Color illustrated, \$20.00

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

This book is a MUST for any Ozaphile and should be read by anyone who wants to visit the wonderful land of Oz, with its strange peoples. The original Denslow illustrations are used, color and all. Michael Hearn should be applauded for his historical delvings into one of the best-loved stories of all time (except by librarians, for some strange reason). The annotations are as much fun to read as the story.

TIME TRAVELERS STRICTLY CASH

By Spider Robinson
Ace, 200 pp, \$2.25

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

For devotees of tavern tales, Callahan's Crosstime Saloon is back -- with at least a few new stories. But this book is not completely inhabited by the denizens of the Bar. We have Spider's tribute to R.A. Heinlein at the 1980 Bosklone Con, including his deathless rendition of Ol' Man Heinlein with guitar chords, his Minicon "acceptance speech" and several assorted short stories which do NOT take place in bars. Fun book.

PET SEMATARY
By Stephen King
Doubleday, '82, 374 pp., \$15.95
REVIEWED BY STUART NAPIER

In PET SEMATARY, spelled phonetically like a child would pronounce it, Stephen King puts into place another piece of what is developing as his own unique "Horror History." While perhaps not as precise as the "Cthulhu Mythos," King's history is rapidly creating a horror mystique about Maine equal to Lovecraft's Rhode Island.

Like many of his previous novels, the setting is rural; this time Ludlow, Maine, just down the road from Castle Rock where CUJO went bad with rabies -- or was it just the evil spirit of Frank Dodd we thought had been dispelled in THE DEAD ZONE?

The story opens with Dr. Louis Creed and his family moving from Chicago to Maine where he will be taking over the post of Director of Health Services at the University of Maine. Their new home outside of town is surrounded on three sides by fields that back up to one of the largest undeveloped forest areas in the state. Behind the house a curiously trim and well-kept path curves off through the fields; Louis soon learns that the path leads to the local pet cemetery located in the woods.

Beyond this graveyard for beloved pets lies another, more ancient burial ground. A place Louis finds wields a strange power over those who have visited it. And may have reason to return.

In PET SEMATARY King's rich details create characters a reader can identify with. Then slowly, almost imperceptibly, through a series of thoroughly believable incidents, reality begins to slip away.

A family crisis midway into the story forces Louis to examine his feelings about death and religion; he must make a decision regarding personal acceptance of what "fate" has dealt him. This psychological/moral dilemma is at the heart of the novel; to what lengths can and should a parent's love for a child extend? King's handling of this question is chillingly presented and will surely touch in each reader a sensitive area we have all probably avoided. The decision Louis reaches, and its impact on his family, make for as taut and horrifying a novel as King has yet produced.

PET SEMATARY is a novel from a writer at the peak of his form. King's style is strictly chronolog-

ical; yet he is capable of switching point-of-view with greater ease than many writers today and uses this technique to draw the reader inexorably into confronting the conflict of the story headon. It's an emotional roller coaster ride through someone else's nightmare to a place that sometimes cannot be avoided. It's, as the author suggests, "...a secret place ... you make up reasons ... they seem like good reasons ... but mostly you do it because you want to ... it's your place ... it belongs to you, and you belong to it."

THE MAN WHO HAD NO IDEA

By Thomas M. Disch
Bantam, 1982, 231 pp., \$2.95
REVIEWED BY RUSSELL ENGEBRETSON

Thomas M. Disch has reaped much praise for his novels, especially 334, CAMP CONCENTRATION and ON WINGS OF SONG. While I think most of these are fine (CAMP CONCENTRATION wins my vote for one of SF's near-masterpieces), where Disch really shines is in the short story. To many authors the short story is a means to an end, the end being publication of a novel. Not so with Disch. Here is a man who takes his short fiction seriously.

What if people had to have a license to start a conversation? That is the premise of the title story, and there are few writers aside from Disch who could flesh out such an idea and pull it off with such seeming ease. Unfortunately, there are a few stories here that do not work so well. "The Apartment Next to the War" is a satire gone berserk, too heavy-handed to be effective. "The Santa Claus Compromise" is flawed by its absurdist storyline, which is silly without being funny. On the plus side are "Josie and the Elevator: A Cautionary Tale," "The Grown-Up" and "At the Pleasure Center," and others too numerous to list.

"At the Pleasure Center" weighs in at three pages and contains only two characters but it's a powerful story, hard and razor-sharp. "The Grown-Up" is hardball fantasy that juxtaposes childhood innocence with the bewildering and often sad business of being an adult.

And these are stories for all of you adults who still read fantasy and science fiction. Enjoy.

THE SEX SPHERE, By Rudy Rucker
Ace, paperbk, \$2.75
ISBN: 0-441-75984-X

REVIEWED BY JAMES J.J. WILSON

Rudy Rucker is not a poet but a story-teller for the 80s. His is the voice of the quintessential male of the baby-boom generation. His stories are based on ideas that one might only otherwise find in a late edition physics text and yet these ideas are woven into stories that are compelling, thought provoking and equally entertaining (his short story collection, THE 58th FRANZ KAFKA, Ace 1983, is a must read).

THE SEX SPHERE seems to have just about everything: crazed physicists terrorizing the streets of Rome with bicycles and toy robots, ecology-minded anarchists with atom bombs, hyperdimensional travel, 60s underground cartoon characters come to life, and spheres from another dimension that can change shape to satisfy every man's sexual fantasies. As a male born during the "baby boom" post-war years I'd be very interested to know what women think of Rudy Rucker's stories; THE SEX SPHERE in particular.

It would be almost impossible to tell much about the story itself without spoiling some of the fun so here are two small quotes to whet your appetite:

"Each part of the universe makes its own contribution. You are reading. I am writing. Two spots of brightness. Going out from you are various bands of color, indicating your moods and predilections. Bands emanate from me as well ... and where our color-bands cross each other there is interference. You change me as I change you. Each part of the universe makes its own contribution."

"Listen to this," urged Huba, passing me the earphones. "Pink Floyd." I put on the phones. A single drumbeat whhACKed, and then a whole cream-pie of guitar lines splatted me. I closed my eyes. For a minute I forgot I was the Messiah and just dug the sounds."

Rudy Rucker is not a great writer, in the sense of classic literature, but he is a damned fine storyteller; he has the rare gift of making the impossible, and the often downright preposterous, seem believable.

THE VIVISECTOR

BY DARRELL SCHWEITZER

ALL ABOUT SCIENCE FICTION

We keep hearing from the anti-fantasy reactionaries (and others) that science fiction is either decadent, dying, gone entirely, or at least not at all well. From Elton Elliott this seems to be the argument of someone who can't see beyond this month's genre paperbacks. Alexei Panshin has produced a more literate version, with elaborate historical analogies, but I still don't believe it. Has anybody ever bothered to inform Stanley Schmidt of this dire event? From the looks of the last ANALOG circulation figures I've seen, I guess not. Any writer who stops writing SF because he thinks the field is dead will simply be replaced by someone who doesn't. And most of the established writers don't seem to have gotten the word, because their science fiction continues to appear without interruption. I just got a new Gregory Benford novel in the mail, ACROSS THE SEA OF SUNS, which arrived too late to be reviewed this issue, but it looks like a real live science fiction novel with enough science in it to keep Hugo Gernsback resting in peace and literate enough writing to keep the rest of us interested. I do not think this sort of book has been driven from the marketplace by dragons and elves, at least not quite yet.

Pardon me if I seem naive, but it seems to me that if we are to

judge the health of contemporary science fiction, we should examine books which are science fiction. Otherwise, the reactionary arguments would have held up just as well in the late 1950s when various science fiction writers were turning to detective fiction, historicals, porno, mainstream and various types of non-fiction. But no, in those days, perhaps, fans were less worried about the precious bodily fluids of "their" field.

Let us look at some science fiction:

THE ROBOTS OF DAWN

By Isaac Asimov

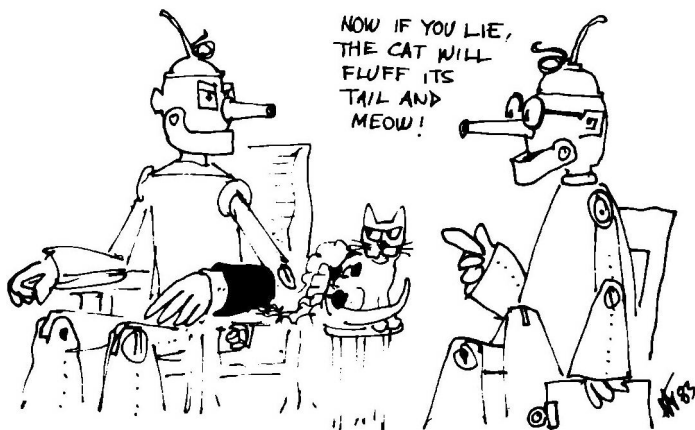
Doubleday, 1983, 419 pp., \$15.95

Asimov's comeback is clearly a sustained phenomenon. For years he wrote only a few trivial short stories (plus his usual gargantuan output of nonfiction), and then THE GODS THEMSELVES came out in 1972, a major work certainly, but followed by little SF of note until FOUNDATION'S EDGE. But now, only a year later, we have another major Asimov novel, one of the very finest he has ever done. I suspect that as long as Doubleday is willing to put up huge sums of money, we're going to see Asimov continue as an important figure in contemporary SF, rather than as the guy who wrote those classics before you or I were born, but is somehow still in his late youth.

We might spot a mini-trend here. The old guard is back in the limelight, winning awards, climbing up the bestseller lists, while the young turks and new wavers and great white hopes of the 1960s are back in secondary positions. Make of it what you will, but in THE ROBOTS OF DAWN, Asimov shows he has what it takes.

The book is of course, the third Lije Baley robot detective novel, a sequel to THE CAVES OF STEEL and THE NAKED SUN. Asimov began and abandoned a third one in the 1950s. I am not sure if this is that manuscript completed after a long hiatus, or a wholly new effort. If the former, it is a seamless job, quite unlike, say, STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND where you can see the old Heinlein uneasily welded onto the new. Of course, it is a legitimate mystery, with the clues laid out, theories built up and knocked down and a startling, but logical revelation at the end. And of course, too, it is legitimate science fiction, the speculative element integral to the crime, the evidence, and the detective's perceptions, and we expect no less than that Asimov should play fair. It used to be the popular wisdom that you could not write a science fiction mystery because the killer would enter the locked room through the fourth dimension, in a manner no one knew was possible, and the detective would catch him with a Fourth Dimension Entry Detection Device, which no one knew he had until he produced it. But Asimov showed us all how to do it thirty years ago and he isn't slipping. This much we can take for granted.

What is more surprising is that this book has merit as a novel, the test being that you might want to reread it, even after you know who the murderer is. Were I to tell you that the butler did it, this would not ruin your experience. As in a typical Asimov novel, there is virtually no action, and the characters spend most of their time talking to one another (the big suspense scene involves Lije Baley getting caught outside in the rain -- and it is suspenseful), but the characterizations are fuller than one expects from Asimov.



There are subtle uses of perception, bits of cultural relativism and prejudice which make his future Earth and his extra-solar worlds seem like real places inhabited by real people. Earth is fairly utopian by 20th century standards (although robots are treated as niggers), but in the eyes of the Spacers, it is unspeakable squalid and its inhabitants barely pass as hyman. After awhile we come to understand why, and then it rings true: don't we sometimes think of Calcutta or Bangladesh that way? On the planet Aurora (the scene of the crime) there are fifty robots to every human. This greatly affects every aspect of society. Involved in the crime is Glora, the Solarian woman from THE NAKED SUN. On Solaria, there are an hundred and fifty robots per human and the most overwhelming taboo is against physical contact between people. In order to solve the mystery, Bailey must acclimate himself to a strange society, then understand a woman who is a stranger there herself, but from a society which differs from that of Aurora toward the opposite extreme.

This is real science fiction. We are made to see how the speculative premises affect every aspect of the characters' lives. In other words, this setting is lived in. The people are a part of it. And their story is told convincingly, and even with passion. I found none of these elements in FOUNDATION'S EDGE, for all that book had its own merits.

There's also sex in THE ROBOTS OF DAWN, even sex with robots. The taboos are all different, so people are open about it. It is only logical that the novel should be too. And when Lije Bailey finds that even going to the bathroom is a strange experience on Aurora, we find out about that too. It is relevant to the case, for all that my own Earthly prejudice leaves me feeling that there's a bit much of this. We could have done without five pages of bathroom scenes.

I suppose that since FOUNDATION'S EDGE won the Hugo last year, the voters will want to give it to someone else this year. Which is a shame, because THE ROBOTS OF DAWN is a better book.

VALENTINE PONTIFEX
By Robert Silverberg
Arbor House, 1983, 347 pp., \$15.95

Silverberg's comeback is a sustained performance too, but I'm a little less happy with it. Someone described LORD VALENTINE'S CASTLE as being like a master

chessplayer giving a novice an interesting game. Well, the sequel is like a master giving an intermediate player an interesting game.

The new book is tighter, faster-moving. People who got bored with CASTLE after a while probably won't with this one. The plot is interesting enough: the shape-changers, the original inhabitants of the planet Majipoor, are waging a subtle biological war against everybody else. Valentine, a man of peace, has to deal with this without compromising everything he stands for. At the same time, he would like to delay as long as possible his elevation to the pontificate, since the pontifex traditionally resides in a vast underground labyrinth as a virtual prisoner. (The old pontifex, symbolic of all this, is kept in a glass bubble on life-support, senile and mad, fantastically aged, but still alive for reasons of state.) The writing is polished and capable. There are even moments of striking beauty and strangeness. The setting is very well realized: Majipoor itself with its pageantry and exotic peoples is a memorable creation.

But I am left less than satisfied. There is very little feeling in this book. We watch events with some interest, but are not really moved by them. But worse than that, there are some serious plausibility problems. The more we learn about the government of Majipoor, the less believable it becomes.

Now it seems that Majipoor is a world fallen into technological decadence, like Burroughs' Barsoom. There are "floaters," which seem to be a species of hovercraft, energy weapons and force fields, but Valentine's army comes equipped with archers. Ships seem to move by sail. There is a certain amount of controlled telepathy, but no radio, even when some form of reliable communication over distance is desperately needed. During the crisis, whole provinces are out of contact with the central government. It takes messengers weeks or even months to bring news, which made me wonder why there are no airplanes, even of the rudimentary wood and cloth variety, such as existed on Earth around 1910.

But if we think these things through, it becomes hard to believe that a world government (on a planet much larger than Earth) could hold together under such circumstances. History teaches us that empires that can't communicate with and move armies to their extremities in a hurry tend to fall apart.

History also teaches us, I think, that Silverberg's concept of monarchy is rather naive. The Coronal and Pontifex of Majipoor are absolute monarchs, governing by divine right. Every few years the Coronal makes a tour of the provinces, so that the countless millions of commoners will be awed into renewed loyalty by his sheer wonderfulness. Now we are told that a potent personage called the King of Dreams can punish the wicked, but he doesn't actually practice mind control on a mass scale, so I wonder why Valentine's divine right of kingship should do him any more good than that of, say, Charles I. Further, it is a characteristic of absolute monarchies that the court is a snakepit of deadly intrigue. On Majipoor there is none of this. The only recorded coup was that against Valentine in the previous novel and that was done by non-humans, the shape-shifters. Byzantine emperors ruled as God's regent on Earth, and were supported by awesome religious pageantry, just like Valentine. A lot of them didn't live to old age. I don't see why Majipoori rulers should fare any better. All we are told is that this is the most placid of worlds. It had better be, to be held together by such a tenuous regime for fourteen thousand years.

Silverberg seems halfway aware of these problems, but never addresses them adequately. As the crisis mounts and at last the kingdom does start to fragment, with false coronals popping up everywhere, Valentine does a great deal of nothing. He feels sorry for himself. At last he resolves to go before the enemy leader and beg forgiveness. His party gets lost in a jungle and he is believed



dead. Finally his regents begin to take the decisive action Valentine seems incapable of. Somehow he remains on the throne, even though the situation calls for a Diocletian or a Constantine and Valentine is a poor man's Mahatma Ghandi. Yet another lesson of history is that amiable, gentle, forgiving and ineffectual rulers tend to get shoved aside. Silverberg has not managed to make me believe in the greatness of Valentine's soul.

And I wonder: Did the human population of Majipoor ever have its Wat Tyler? How about its Karl Marx? Anybody as powerful as Christ or Mohammed? Or are we to believe that in all those fourteen thousand years of divine right monarchy, nobody has ever had an original political or social idea?

CUGEL'S SAGA

By Jack Vance

Timescape, 1983, 334 pp., \$14.95

This is actually fantasy or at least right on the borderline of fantasy and science fiction. As Silverberg points out in his introduction to *THE EYES OF THE OVERWORLD* (Gregg Press edition), Vance is only pretending to write about the far future, for all his Dying Earth books are set millions of years hence. The theory goes that the science fictional gloss in the original, *THE DYING EARTH*, was necessary in order to get it published, because there was no in-genre fantasy in 1950, and most of the fantasy published in the mainstream in those days was post-Thorne Smithian whimsy. (Books like *Karig's ZOTZ!*) Well, maybe so, but it is clear enough to me that the Dying Earth series is about the remote future as much as *THE NIGHT LAND* or the *Zothique* series were -- they treat the future mythologically, rather than scientifically. You couldn't just transplant Vance's plots into the usual never-never land. They need to take place in the half frantic, half exhausted decadence of the Earth's last days when the sun is bloody red and may go out at any minute. (In the new book there is a cult which tries to keep it burning, by beaming firelight into the sky. There are also optimists who carry lanterns to use in the coming darkness.) The far future fantasy speaks in its own unique way. Accept no substitutes. (Of course the most spectacularly successful addition to the tradition in recent years has been Gene Wolfe's *THE BOOK OF THE NEW SUN* which is actually a little more science fictional than Vance.)

CUGEL'S SAGA is a direct sequel to *THE EYES OF THE OVERWORLD*. Lucomu the Laughing Magician has played another delectable jest upon Cugel, transporting him to a remote country. The book consists of Cugel's adventures on the way back and his final encounter with the magician. The adventures are independent enough that this is just barely a novel (indeed, two episodes, "The Seventeen Virgins" and "The Bagful of Dreams" have been published elsewhere as short stories), but it hardly matters, because Vance's sardonic wit and enormous inventiveness are going full force. The story is filled with memorable scenes, deliciously ridiculous (but often sinister) situations and striking images. I am particularly impressed by Vance's ability to sketch in a whole society in a few lines, then make it real, where any other writer would have only been able to produce a one-dimensional gimmick. Thus Cugel moves across a world rather than a featureless and cultureless landscape. Would-be fantasy writers, take notes. Everybody else, just enjoy.

THE AQUILIAD

By Somtow Sucharitkul

Timescape, 1983, 224 pp., \$2.95

This is one of the most enjoyable frivolous books science fiction has seen in a long time. It is a gag from end to end, four linked stories in a series that is the contemporary equivalent of the sort of thing Henry Kuttner used to do: the Hillbilly Hogbans, Pete Manx, etc. But Sucharitkul is more erudite.

The premise is that the experiments with steam in Hellenistic times led somewhere. There were steamships in the early Roman Empire. (Also steam cars, but alas, Nero wrecked them all in the arena.) As a result, the Romans conquered much of North America, only to find it inhabited by super-scientific Olmecs, sasquatches (who are really the ten lost tribes of Israel, mutated by aliens), and Indians who seem to be a lot smarter than the pompous Romans. The title character, Aquila, is an old chief modeled on Chief Dan George of *LITTLE BIG MAN* who keeps saving the ass of General Titus Papinianus (imagine him played by John Cleese) in a series of adventures involving a search for China (and crossing the Rockies on elephants), the equivalent of the Bermuda Triangle, and finally an encounter with the Time Criminal who messed up the timelines enough to allow all this to happen.

There's very little depth, and no seriousness at all, but there are a lot of historical gags (including the world's first transliteration of Chinook into hieroglyphics), outrageous situations and memorable lines like:

"I was not terribly amused, upon regaining consciousness to discover that I had been crucified. That I was face to face with a brontosaurus only compounded my discomfiture." (p. 208)

THE NEW WRITER OF THE ISSUE:

SAVAGE TOMORROW

By Trevor Donohue

Cory & Collins, 1983, 154 p., \$3.95

The first few chapters of this bikers-bash-'em-after-the-blast epic seem to be a virtual novelization of the film *ROAD WARRIOR*. The hero is a taciturn loner, a superb fighter who drives a booby-trapped, super car. You even begin to recognize scenes and characters from the movie: the rape scene specifically, although it has a different conclusion. The running fight scenes are very much the same with the same sorts of weapons. The bad guys are straight out of s&m fantasies, there even being a leather-clad, whip-wielding bull dyke who leads a band of femizons. The Lord Humongous figure is named Scar Tallon, who wears a mask over half his face.

But you also notice how fast you're reading this. No doubt about it, Donohue can write. He has a real talent for furious action scenes. His writing is clear, clean and forceful. There are vivid images.

The book improves when he starts getting inventive. We meet three quasi-clone children who are part of a mad scientist's scheme to remake society. There are lots of interesting ideas touched on, rushed by, then forgotten as the climax arrives with the siege of a fortified museum and more carnage. In the course of this our hero teams up with a survivor of the femizons and a smart, dopey guy who also comes right out of the movie.

If we give the author the benefit of the doubt, we can say that he is manipulating all this material for its mythic resonances, the way Moorcock does with Jerry Cornelius. He certainly achieves this effect sometimes, even if it's inadvertent. But his science is pure myth too: he clearly has no idea how mutations work, what radiation does or what neutron bombs are for.

All these elements are right out of the popular consciousness on the level of superstition.

I'd like to see his next book. With a little discipline, Donohue could become a first-rate novelist.

(Order from Cory & Collins, Box 66, St. Kilda, Vic. 3182, Australia)

NOTED:

INDEX TO THE SEMI-PROFESSIONAL FANTASY MAGAZINES, 1982

By Jerry Boyajian & Kenneth R. Johnson

Twac Press, 1983, 28 pp., \$3.50

A valuable first attempt to keep track of this increasingly important area of publishing. Magazines indexed include WEIRDBOOK, WHISPERS, RIGEL, SHAYOL, etc., all of which publish good material by professional writers in print runs in the low thousands. As they start getting scarce, they'll be sure to drive scholars and collectors crazy. Twac also does prozine indexes, filling in for the apparently inactive NESFA series.

DE CAMP: AN L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP BIBLIOGRAPHY

By Charlotte Laughlin & Daniel J.H. Levack

Underwood/Miller, 1983, Softcover 328 pp., \$9.95

Hardcover & limited/signed/special-bound editions available.

Thorough and complete, listing every appearance and edition of fiction, non-fiction, radio scripts, verse, etc., all of it indexed and cross-indexed. This is a sturdy and handsome volume, up to the usual Underwood/Miller standards, with many reproductions of book and magazine covers. Very useful for untangling the often intricate printing and binding histories of some items, and worthwhile to any de Camp fan or collector. I've spotted one error/omission: the Remploy editions of ROGUE QUEEN and THE CONTINENT MAKERS are described as having illustrated boards and no jackets. My copies have blank boards and jackets.

HORRORS AND UNPLEASANTRIES

By Sheldon Jaffrey

Bowling Green University Pop. Press 1982, 142 pp., paper, price unlisted

An excellent bibliography, history and price guide of Arkham House books. Very well researched, filled with interesting anecdotes and often quite technical details of variants, states and even forgeries. Did you know there are two Arkham House forgeries? Jaffrey tells how to identify them. And most surprising for a price guide, the values listed for out-of-print items are actually realistic. A must for the Arkham collector. Useful for the student of the field.

PRINCE OMBRA

By Roderick MacLeish

Congdon & Weed

1982, 305 pp., \$14.95

This one has been described as a mixture of Tolkein and Stephen King. Indeed, it's about vast mythic conflicts taking place in the present day in a little town in New England. But think of it as Tolkein and King as written by Terry Brooks.

I wouldn't have brought this up at all, had I not been astonished by a favorable review of this book in a major news publication, and massive advertising for the forthcoming Tor Books edition, complete with rave quotes from famous writers.

Could all those people be wrong? Well, yes. If you don't want to believe me, read the book and see who's right, but don't say you weren't warned.

PRINCE OMBRA is an appalling piece of work. It's not quite on the same level as THE STAR RIDERS OF REN, but it's getting there. The premise is that one small boy,

MY AGENT THINKS YOUR CASE IS COMMERCIAL AS HELL! WOULD YOU LIKE A COLLABORATOR?



Bentley Endicott, is the latest incarnation of an eternal hero, who cycle after cycle, opposes Prince Ombra, the Lord of Nightmares. At times Bentley is clearly possessed by the spirit of the Hero, and he becomes amazingly articulate. Then he reverts to his childish self. The problem is that MacLeish only seems to be occasionally so possessed. There are some fine passages in the book, sure. He has a feel for the poetry of language even, but it's completely out of control. The grandeloquent descriptions of cosmic conflicts get very redundant very fast. Between them are pages and pages of the most turgid style-deaf synopsis imaginable. MacLeish can't write in scenes. He can't write dialogue. His characters seem to come right out of a third-rate imitation of PEYTON PLACE. There's even a Wanton Woman who lives in a trailer outside of town, and a sinister village idiot named Willybilly. No kidding. It's as if the spirit of Inspiration tried to settle on someone totally incapable of doing it justice. MacLeish has potentially good material here, but he lacks the most basic novelistic skills.

TEN YEARS AGO IN SF -- WINTER, 1974

BY ROBERT SABELLA

Ejler Jakobsson quit as editor of GALAXY. He was replaced by Jim Baen who had recently been appointed editor of WORLDS OF IF. In an attempt to boost IF's circulation, Baen published a 59¢ issue and introduced such new features as a page of original art and a column by Dick Geis ... David Hartwell quit as science fiction editor of Signet Books and became SF consulting editor at Putnam-Berkley ... Harlequin Books, publishers of an enormously successful series of romance novels, decided to enter the science fiction field with Laser Books. They would be edited by Roger Elwood and use the same formula that made their romances so popular: all novels would have strong leading characters, happy endings, similar lengths and similar covers by Frank Kelly Freas ... ABC aired the movie KILLDOZER based on Theodore Sturgeon's SF story of the same name. It received uniformly poor reviews ... Ursula K. LeGuin's new novel THE DISPOSSESSED was published to rave reviews by most critics.

Transcript of the John W. Campbell, Jr. Memorial Award Banquet

Featuring James Gunn, Steve Goldman, and Brian Aldiss

James Gunn was the host and moderator for the Banquet, which was held at the University of Kansas (Lawrence) on July 15, 1983. The winner was announced as HELLI-CONIA SPRING, by Brian W. Aldiss; runner-up was NO ENEMY BUT TIME, by Michael Bishop; there was no third-place winner.

Transcribed by James J. Murray
and David Truesdale

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JAMES GUNN: I would like to welcome you all to the 1983 John W. Campbell Award Banquet for 1983. We are gathered here tonight to honor the memory of John W. Campbell, editor for many years of the magazine which was originally called ASTOUNDING STORIES OF SUPER SCIENCE. When Campbell became editor of it in 1937 he renamed it ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION. In the 1960s he renamed it again: ANALOG. And it is by the name ANALOG that it is still read and published in the Campbell tradition.

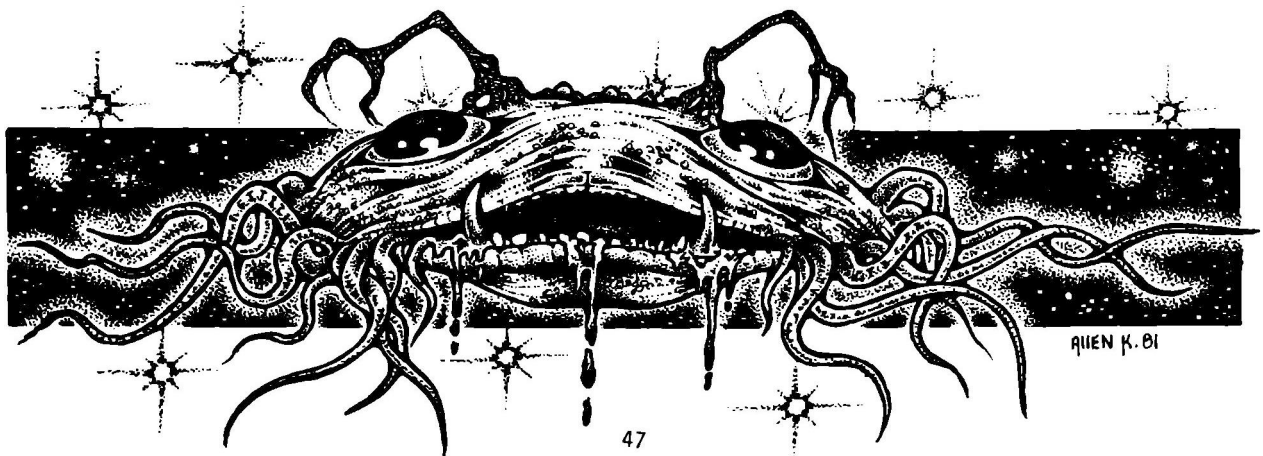
The Campbell tradition that got started in 1937 made a significant difference in the way science fiction was written and published and read, because Campbell, unlike early editors who were willing to open their doors and accept any stories that came to them, picked out those they wanted to publish and sent back the rest. Campbell solicited material, solicited authors, sent out ideas, tried to re-

cruit and make new writers out of technicians, scientists, lawyers, people who might have an idea worth telling in a science fiction story. He wanted to see stories reflective of what he saw around him: a scientific culture growing in importance. And under his tutelage ASTOUNDING became the outstanding science fiction magazine in the country. It became so dominant in the field that -- as I recently wrote in an article -- what was published in ASTOUNDING was recognized as science fiction. That was how one defined it -- the science fiction published in ASTOUNDING was the "real stuff." All that one found in the other SF magazines was somehow inferior -- maybe liked, but not thought of as quite as good, or obviously John Campbell would have published it.

Campbell died in 1971 at the age of 61. He had become the editor of ASTOUNDING at the age of 28. In the first years of his editorship he created an upsurge in enthusiasm for science fiction that later was looked back upon fondly by readers and writers alike under the general term the "Golden Age of Science Fiction." In his second year as editor of ASTOUNDING he introduced writers like Isaac Asimov, Robert Heinlein, Theodore Sturgeon and A.E. van Vogt, all of whom went on to have outstanding careers in science fiction. Two of them, oddly enough, came back in 1982 to write new, significant novels of science fiction.

The year 1982 in science fiction novels was unusual. As some of you may recall, in Arthur C. Clarke's award-winning novel *REND-EZVOUS WITH RAMA*, which as a matter of fact shared the 1974 Campbell award with Robert Merrill's novel *MALEVIL*, everything happened in threes. The party of earthmen who explored the spaceship in the book discovered things always in threes. Others speculated that this meant that Clarke was going to write two more. He never did. However, in 1982, things seemed to follow this pattern. For instance, three old masters of science fiction returned to the scenes of earlier triumphs. Arthur Clarke himself produced 2010, which was the sequel to 2001, subtitled *ODYSSEY II*. Robert Heinlein returned to some of the bigger enthusiasms of his early years with *FRIDAY*, and Isaac Asimov returned to the subject matter of the Foundation Trilogy, writing a fourth volume called *FOUNDATION'S EDGE*.

I viewed this with mixed feelings: I'd just produced a book about Isaac Asimov's science fiction, and already it's dated. It seemed as if I might be fairly safe in doing that since he hadn't written a science fiction novel in 12 years. Apparently I just have myself to blame, because in *ISAAC ASIMOV'S SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE*, which previewed the novel, he said that after he had accepted the \$50,000 that Doubleday thrust upon him to write this fourth volume, he began to look over the earlier stories and ask himself what was there in



this that really deserved a sequel, and it all seemed pretty interesting to him but then he'd written it, and he couldn't see what other people saw in it.

Then he happened to pick up an article of mine about the Foundation Trilogy in which I said there is really no action and no adventure or romance in it, but what it did have was a lot of solving of puzzles. And he said he thought he could do that, so he went ahead and wrote the fourth volume. This, as I told some of my colleagues at the Science Fiction Research Association meeting in June, represents to me the real triumph of criticism. Many of us are accused of course, in writing critically about the field, of making further writing impossible.

Incidentally, two of these three novels were on the New York Times best-seller list. This was unique in science fiction history, and it has portents that I have difficulty coping with. Both Arthur Clarke's and Isaac Asimov's novels were on the best-seller list for a dozen weeks; at one point Clarke's was second and Asimov's third. As a matter of fact, another novel, *SPACE*, by James Michener, also had a science fiction element to it, and it was number one for many of those weeks. Heinlein's novel ended the year in the top dozen in hardcover sales. As a matter of fact, at one time the top four books, and seven out of the top ten books on the NY Times best-seller list were either science fiction or fantasy.

There's another trio of things that happened in 1982. In that year three long-time prolific authors also had new novels published. Frederik Pohl produced *STARBURST*, Roger Zelazny had *EYE OF CAT* published and Frank Herbert, *THE WHITE PLAGUE*. It may be particularly noted that none of these novels were part of a trilogy. It's of interest, perhaps too, that three women who have created surprising personal followings for their work came out with sequels. Julian May produced a sequel in the pre-historic adventure series called the *GOLDEN TORQ*, Marion Zimmer Bradley produced *HAWKMISTRESS* and Anne McCaffrey, who has made a big thing out of dragons, produced *CRYSTAL SINGER*. Bradley, incidentally, whose Darkover books have created their own fandom, had an Arthurian novel on the 1983 best-seller list called *THE MISTS OF AVALON*.

Then there were three authors who began their careers early in the 1970s and who have won awards

for their work who produced new works. C.J. Cherryh, for instance, produced not one novel but two, *THE PRIDE OF CHANUR* and *MERCHANT-ER'S LUCK*; Gene Wolfe came out with two books in his *BOOK OF THE NEW SUN* series, though his publisher insisted that the last of these came out in 1983, *THE SWORD OF THE LICTOR* and *THE CITADEL OF THE AUTARCH*; and Michael Bishop produced *NO ENEMY BUT TIME*. Three relatively new authors produced novels that attracted attention during the year. John Sladek, who isn't really a new author but hasn't been particularly productive in the science fiction field at least, produced *RODERICK*; Spider Robinson, *MIND-KILLER*; and Hilbert Schenk, *A ROSE FOR ARMAGEDDON*. And of course, we had Brian Aldiss' *HELLICONIA SPRING* which was to be sure, the first of a prospective set of three, and it became a best-seller in Great Britain.

But all such neat categories of threes break down if you push them too far. There was only one Philip K. Dick, and his death was the biggest tragedy of the year. He died at 53 and his last novel, *THE TRANSMIGRATION OF TIMOTHY ARCHER* and the film, "Blade Runner," made from *DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP?*, appeared in 1982.

As for science fiction itself, which has for years nibbled at the edges of genteel poverty since its creation, it suddenly became in 1982 the focus of big money to be made or lost. I noted Asimov accepted a \$50,000 advance for *FOUNDATION'S EDGE* and that plus the *Foundation Trilogy* sold to Del Rey for \$1 million. Clarke got that much for 2010 alone, and Frank Herbert got \$1.5 million for writing yet another *DUNE* sequel.

But just to demonstrate that riches can be just as devastating as poverty, a number of paperback publishing companies ran so close to extinction that they were sold. Fawcett, Ace and Playboy Books were sold to other paperback firms, as well as Popular Library, and yet another company, Tower/Leisure Books, went out of business entirely. And just recently, the most successful editor of books in the field, at least in terms of awards, was fired.

In the midst of these uncertain times, I think it is good to have something more permanent to cling to. In this case we have the John W. Campbell Award for the best science fiction novel of the year. Although science fiction is comfortable with change, can even exist comfortably with turmoil, it also

has its cherished traditions. As I said earlier, this is the 11th year of the Campbell Award; this is the fourth year it has been presented on this campus. And I will announce that there was no third place award; the votes were too scattered to justify a third place award this year. The second place award went to Michael Bishop for *NO ENEMY BUT TIME*, a sophisticated and well-written piece of work. But now let me introduce my colleague, Steve Goldman to present the award for the best novel of the year.

STEVE GOLDMAN: I wish, by the way, that Fred Pohl would stop writing so I could finish my book on him.

GUNN: One solution is to just shoot them when you're done. (Laughter)

GOLDMAN: Before I announce the title, I'd like to say a few words about the book that won the John Campbell Award this year. One of the great games people who study science fiction like to play is to attempt to define it. I will not give you a definition of science fiction tonight, except to say that if there is any significant and dominant characteristic of this literature we call science fiction, it is a tremendous sense of curiosity. A sense of curiosity that appeals to usually a very special group of readers; writers and readers who want to know what this world is now, what this world was like then and what this world will be like sometime in the future. And as a result, science fiction presents a unique literature to the reader that builds new worlds so we can examine the very real one we live in now. John Campbell liked to force his writers to create believable worlds that made significant comments on what it was like to be alive now and what we could hope for in the future.

The Campbell Award winner this year is a very new book, and yet a very old one. It will remind you of Campbell's own work, his own desire to portray man as a possibly perfectable or at least advancing creature, a creature with tremendous curiosity himself about how things work and why things work, and that is in fact, in Campbell's short story, "Twilight" what defines man.

MISSION OF GRAVITY gloried in the creation of a strange new planet with a strange system of gravity, and in the story of people dealing with mentally human-like aliens that dared to try and find out something about their planet. The Campbell Award winner this year is also in that tradition of world-

building, a marvelous world quite unlike, yet so similar to what our Earth is like. A world that circles a very old sun and that sun in turn circles a very new, very energetic and very hot sun. And since the course of the old sun is an ellipse, in which it comes closest to the new sun every 1800 years (that's not precise) and then goes way out into space, you get fantastic changes in climate, from tremendous heat to tremendous cold. And in this creatures must exist that periodically have their civilizations and their lives completely destroyed. And since this takes 1800 years, they have little or no memory of what that is like.

In this novel we see the investigation of human curiosity, human invention: why it is we do things, why it is we invent things and then finally, what it means when we do end up inventing these new things; how it changes not only these creatures on these planets but by extension, humanity itself. Their problems are identifiably human problems; their future is identifiably -- as a reader you can see it coming -- our future as well. The human characters in it are the stuff of fantasy, only they're dealing with real worlds. The other creatures in it, and there is a competing intelligent race, are at once identifiably intelligent, identifiably perhaps more knowledgeable about the planet than the humans, yet at the same time you find yourself terribly torn between these two competitors for dominance

over this planet. You're aware that in fact, there's a strange symbiosis going on here and you're wondering whether these two are going to understand it in time before they destroy one another, when it is all said and done.

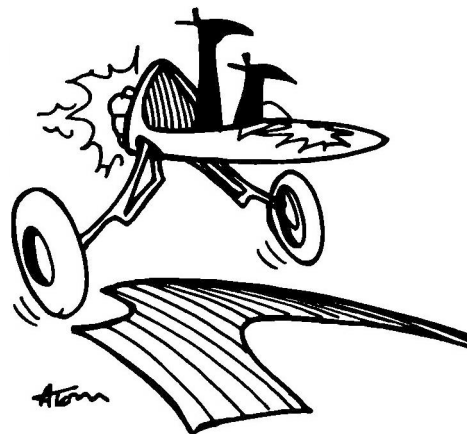
The winner of the John Campbell Award is **HELLICONIA SPRING**, written by Brian Aldiss. It is a tremendous work of science fiction. It will remind you of the Golden Age of science fiction and will remind you also of the tremendous leaps in literacy both the literature and the writers have taken since then.

Ladies and gentlemen, Brian Aldiss.

BRIAN ALDISS: This is a beautiful award, but fortunately it's lighter than the first ones were and I can carry it home. I'd be delighted to do that.

Initially, I should tell you this, Jim, this is the first award for fiction -- as opposed to awards for criticism -- that I've received this side of the Atlantic in almost 20 years. Well, I was beginning to worry -- for your sake, not mine. (Laughter)

HELLICONIA SPRING is well, I didn't really think of it as a trilogy. **HELLICONIA SPRING** is merely the first volume of a three-volume novel. It's a subtle distinction that I'm aware of at the moment, but you'll see what I mean when you come to the end of the third volume.



I'm particularly delighted to receive the good old John Campbell Award because I was in at the beginning of this with Harry Harrison and Dr. Leon Stover. When we founded it, with the blessing of John W. Campbell in the year before he died -- we agreed that literature was really not a democratic process. It's something one man does, although later it becomes common property. And we decided that although there were other awards in the science fiction field -- some minor ones of which you might have heard, the Hugos, Nebulas -- nevertheless, there should be some other process of judging than that rather broad democratic one, and that we should attempt to get a few critics together to argue out the pros and cons of the year's novels, and that's what we did.

There's a particular pleasure, actually, in coming over to Kansas to collect this, because when it was under Harrison's and my jurisdiction it was floating. We tried to get it plugged into Oxford and we darn near succeeded. Eventually, one of their committees turned it down by only 13 to 14, so you nearly lost coming here, and Oxford lost it instead.

I resigned from this award committee three or four years ago because I was going to go on the Book of Prize committee, which has to do with the (mere) mainstream, and not the good old science fiction field. One thought we had in those early days was that we should try and look for the novel that was a little obscure and perhaps not likely to gain general attention. I'm glad to see that kind of tradition is carried on. Last year, for instance, it went to **RIDDLEY WALKER** and I'm very happy to see that you're still continuing that tradition; I'm very grateful and thank you indeed.



THE ARCHIVES

THE ARCHIVES RECORD RECENT SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY RELEASES, SOMETIMES WITH ACCOMPANYING COMMENTARY OR RELEVANT INFORMATION.

THE ARCHIVES IS A DATA BASE AND MAY SAVE THE READER MONEY AND TIME IN DECIDING WHAT TO BUY...AND WHAT NOT TO BUY.



A WOMAN OF THE HORSECLANS

By Robert Adams

Signet, 1983, \$2.50, SF novel
Horseclans novel #12.

'Shunned by her own folk as a creature of Evil, Bettylou Hanson found an instant welcome among the people of the Horseclans. Young, healthy, intelligent and gifted with powerful mindspeak potential, she was everything Milo Morai's people looked for in a clan member. But even Milo himself couldn't have foreseen the powerful role Bettylou was to play in the future of the Krooguh clan. For the frightened girl whom Tim Krooguh had rescued from certain death was destined to become a living legend among the Kindred, a fighter whose courage would rouse the clans against a foul and dangerous foe...'

HELLICONIA SPRING

By Brian W. Aldiss

Berkley, Nov. 1983, Paperback
\$6.95, 361 pp.

Book one of the Helliconia Trilogy.

'Imagine a world in a system of twin suns, where winter is 600 ice-locked years and every Spring is the first remembered. Imagine a People finding ruined cities beneath the melting snows. Never dreaming they had built them. And would again ... Imagine Helliconia. And begin the most magnificent epic since DUNE...'

HELLICONIA SUMMER

By Brian W. Aldiss

Volume 2 of Helliconia trilogy
Atheneum, Nov. 1983, \$16.95, 398 pp.

'This is probably Brian Aldiss's grandest and most sumptuous novel. His picture of an interplanetary summer that lasts for centuries is astounding, his characters memorable, from the Ice Captain to the whores of Matrassyl. We meet Billy Xiao Pin, who comes to Helliconia from a different world -- one that still dreams of

distant earth. And we meet the embattled king of Borlien, who, beset by enemies, trusting none but his phagor guard, decides to divorce his beautiful queen and marry instead the child princess of Oldorando. His struggle to do so, while his foes, sensing his weakness, encircle him, forms the plot of this novel, while in the background the Helliconia forests burn.'

FANE By David M. Alexander

Timescape, Aug. 1981, (c) 1981

\$3.50 'Beyond the stars a terrifying magic reigns! The peaceful planet Fane, home of earthlings and four-armed Fanists, battles for survival against the deadly wiles of a powerful wizard. Grantin, the wizard's bumbling nephew, plunges headlong into adventure in the Weird Lands, where a beautiful woman waits to be saved.'...

THE HIGH CRUSADE

By Poul Anderson

Berkley, Oct. 1983, \$2.50

'Like many another sleepy English village, Ansby was preparing for the crusade to the Holy Land. Until the day a strange craft landed in a nearby pasture.

'Suddenly the inhabitants of Ansby found themselves embarked on a far different crusade ... a crusade which would take them light years away from England and pit their pikes and battleaxes against the advanced technology of an alien super-power!'

THE STEEL, THE MIST, AND THE

BLAZING SUN By Christopher Anvil
Ace, SF, 1983, \$2.75

'Detente between the U.S. and the Soviet Union has lasted for over 200 years -- but only because nuclear war has resulted in the two old enemies bombing each other back into the Stone Age. Now, as each country begins the long climb back to industrialization, the remnants of their populations find themselves once again at war. But war with pre-First World War technology is entirely different from war with the nuclear weapons of 200 years ago: This time there will be a winner. And clearly, whoever wins the bitter struggle for Western Europe will rule the world for a thousand years.'



THE BREAKING OF THE SEALS

By Francis Ashton

Donning Co., 1983, Trade paperback,
\$5.95, 359 pages

'A man of our own time sent back into the past to solve the greatest mystery of all -- the fall of Atlantis! If only he can survive to tell the tale!'

PEBBLE IN THE SKY

By Isaac Asimov

Del Rey, 1983, \$2.95

A Galactic Empire Novel (#3)

'One moment Joseph Schwartz was a happily retired tailor in Chicago, 1949. The next he was a helpless stranger on the Earth during the heyday of the Galactic Empire. Earth, as he soon learned, was a backwater world, despised by all the other 200 million planets of the Empire because its people dared to claim it was the original home of man. And Earth was poor, with great areas of radioactivity ruining much of its soil -- so poor that everyone was sentenced to death at the age of sixty. Schwartz was sixty-two!'

THE CURRENTS OF SPACE

By Isaac Asimov

Del Rey, \$2.95

A Galactic Empire Novel (#2)

'Rik had been psycho-probed and his memories destroyed. Now he was only a helpless field worker in the kyrt fields of Florina where every human being was owned, body and soul, by the ruling world of Sark. But slowly his memories began to return. He knew he had once studied the thin currents of space and that some terrible danger threatened the sun of Florina and Sark. On Sark, the Ambassador of Trantor was searching for him and his dread knowledge. But the Squires of Sark wanted no warning to upset their wealth-producing monopoly on the sale of kyrt. Somehow, Rick must warn both worlds before all life was destroyed. But what could a serf do against the power of distant Sark?'

THE STARS, LIKE DUST

By Isaac Asimov

Del Rey, 1983, \$2.95

A Galactic Empire Novel (#1)

'Someone was trying to kill Biron Farril, just as someone had murdered his father. And behind that threat lay all the might of Tyrann -- Tyrann, the ruthless, barbaric Empire that was ravaging and absorbing all of the Nebular Kingdoms. He fled from Earth into space, seeking sanctuary. But all he found was betrayal and the need to flee again -- into further betrayal. Now Biron was being forced to become a betrayer. Somewhere there was a rebellion world, and he was sure he knew the location. But he was in the hands of Aratap, powerful Autarch of Tyrann, and he must either betray the woman he loved or the rebellion world that offered the only hope for the future!'

THE WINDS OF CHANGE AND OTHER

STORIES By Isaac Asimov

Ballantine, Jan. 1984, (c) 1983

\$2.95

'A 21-story salute featuring a levitating professor, alien traders bringing something to sell, a black hole hurtling toward Earth, the universe being created and many other matters of great import!'

THE FOUNDATION TRILOGY

By Isaac Asimov

Ballantine, Nov. 1983, \$8.95, paper
FOUNDATION, FOUNDATION AND EMPIRE,
SECOND FOUNDATION 510 pp.

'This extraordinary series -- which is to science fiction what Tolkien's LORD OF THE RINGS is to fantasy -- envisions a tremendous sweep of future history and tells the story of a single planet striving to preserve civilization from the savage barbarism of a million warring planets.'

FOUNDATION'S EDGE

By Isaac Asimov

Del Rey, 1982, \$3.95, 426 pages

Book 4 of the Foundation Series.

Much of the background is derived from his Galactic Empire novels.

'Hari Seldon, the great psycho-historian, set up the Foundation to bypass millennia of barbarism and bring about a Second Empire in a mere thousand years. Now, 498 years after its founding, the Foundation seemed to be following the Seldon Plan perfectly.

'Too perfectly, Golan Trevize was sure. Such perfection was impossible after the unpredictable disaster of the Mule -- unless the supposedly destroyed Second Foundation was still controlling humanity. But his attempts to warn others had led only to his exile in space.

'Stor Gendibal of the Second Foundation was also worried by that perfection' ... 'Now he too has been sent into space to trace the strange mission of Trevize.' ... 'He had found an impossible planet -- with even more impossible powers. Events had gone far beyond the Seldon Plan. And only Trevize could save the Plan -- or destroy it forever!'

INTERGALACTIC EMPIRES

ISAAC ASIMOV'S WONDERFUL WORLDS

OF SCIENCE FICTION, #1

Edited by Isaac Asimov, Martin H.

Greenburg, & Charles G. Waugh

Signet, Dec. 1983, \$2.95

'From a time out of legend when Earth rules the starways, to an isolated planet where men and women become something more -- or less -- than human, to a challenging game of interstellar diplomacy where the fate of empires hangs in the balance, here are visions of the distant future, of conquerors and conquered, of politicians, scientists, warriors, and adventurers, dwellers all in ISAAC ASIMOV'S WONDERFUL WORLD OF SCIENCE FICTION.'

B

NIGHTCHILD By Scott Baker

Pocket, Nov. 1983, \$2.95

'Lozan, orphaned at a young age and raised by a bizarre religious sect, the Priests of Night, learns that there is more to life than the endless rituals which take up all of his waking hours. In a world where everyone worships the Goddess of Death, Lozan is guilty of the ultimate blasphemy -- he senses that he is alive and is determined to discover the strange connection which links him to the long-lost planet of Nosferatu.'

ACROSS THE SEA OF SUNS

By Gregory Benford

Sequel to IN THE OCEAN OF NIGHT
Timescape, 1984, \$15.95, 399 pp.

Nigel Walmsley, on the starship, Lancer, has set out to discover that large orbiting satellites have attacked Earth. Back on Earth, there is war, aliens have attacked. A nuclear war on Earth in addition to a war in space, may destroy the universe.

MANDALA

By David F. Bischoff

Berkley, Oct. 1983, \$2.50, SF

'Allelliph -- She was as beautiful as her name. She left her peaceful planet for her coming of age, and love was to lead her as far as it was humanly possible to go. To the Universe's dark heart. To the dying, drifting man-made world that had once been the jewel of the galaxy ... to the wondrous lost planet that held a secret and a power beyond all imagining...'

ARIEL by Steven R. Boyett

Ace Fantasy, Dec. 1983, \$2.95

'... Pete Garey, a young loner who survived the Change and the madness that followed, spent two years wandering and scavenging the near-deserted cities and towns. Then one day, Ariel walked out of the unpredictable wilderness: a unicorn whose dazzling beauty and purity captured his heart. She brought new meaning to Pete's life, and set him on the road to adventure.'

THE SWORD OF SHANNARA

By Terry Brooks

Del Rey, May 1983, (c) 1977 \$3.95

'Long ago, the wars of ancient Evil had ruined the world and forced mankind to compete with many other races -- gnomes, trolls, dwarfs, and elves. But in peaceful Shady Vale, half-elfin Shea Ohmsford knew little of such troubles. Then came the giant, forbidding Allanon, possessed of strange Druidic powers, to reveal that the supposedly dead Warlock Lord was plotting to destroy the world. The sole weapon against this Power of Darkness was the Sword of Shannara, which could only be used by a true heir of Shannara. On Shea, last of the blood line, rested the hope of all races....'

THE ELFSTONES OF SHANNARA

By Terry Brooks

Del Rey, Jan. 1984, (c) 1982, \$3.95

Sequel to THE SWORD OF SHANNARA

'Ancient evil threatens the Elves. For the Ellcrys -- the tree created by long-lost Elven magic -- is dying, loosing the

Spell of Forbidding that bars the hordes of vengeful Demons from the Races of Man.'...

TALONS OF SCORPIO By Dray Prescott
DAW, Dec. 1983, \$2.50 [K. Bulmer]

'To finish the job of destroying the hideous cult of the Leem was just one of the problems confronting Dray Prescott, Earthman on Antares' wonder planet ... While rescuing kidnapped children from the altars of sacrifice, Dray found himself fighting side by side with his own worst enemy, his renegade daughter, Ros the Claw, who had pledged his death. ...'

H.P. LOVECRAFT: A CRITICAL STUDY
Greenwood Press, Oct. 1983, \$29.95
By Donald R. Burleson 243 pp.

... 'Burleson blends a number of critical approaches in this work, including formalist, philosophical, biographical, Jungian, and mythic-archetypal criticism. The organization of Burleson's study is essentially chronological, treating Lovecraft's works in the order in which they were written. In addition to the discussion of Lovecraft's major works, many stories that are less illuminative of Lovecraft's work are grouped at the end of each chapter for lighter critical treatment.

... 'A valuable reference work in criticism and a text for courses on fantasy and science fiction.'

CLAY'S ARK By Octavia Butler
St. Martin's Press, March, 1983
Hardcover, \$12.95, 201 pp., SF

'Trapped in a self-imposed desert isolation, a handful of people exposed to a dangerous disease of extraterrestrial origin must fight a nearly irresistible compulsion to infect others. CLAY'S ARK is a chilling, believable novel of desperate people clinging to their humanity, to their human consciences, even as they evolve ... even as their children are born hardly human at all. At stake is nothing less than the survival of the human species.'

C

THE GOBLIN TOWER
By L. Sprague de Camp
Volume I of **THE RELUCTANT KING**
Ballantine, Dec. 1983, \$2.75

'King Jorian was rather attached to his head. Hence, he felt his promise to steal the Kist of Avlen, a treasure trove of ancient manuscripts on magic, was little enough a price to pay for a chance to escape his own beheading.'...

THE CLOCKS OF IRAZ
by L. Sprague de Camp
Ballantine, Dec. 1983, \$2.50
Volume II of **THE RELUCTANT KING**

'Wizardly schemes, Jorian knew, went oft a-gley. But this time the wizard's plan seemed simple. Since ancient prophecy foretold that the clocks would save Iraz, Jorian must repair the great tower clocks that his father had built.'...

THE UNBEHEADED KING
Volume III of **THE RELUCTANT KING**
By L. Sprague de Camp
Ballantine, Dec. 1983, \$2.50
Published in hardcover, Mar. 1983

'Three years earlier, Jorian had been the crowned King of Xylar. But the laws of Xylar decreed that each randomly chosen King must be beheaded at the end of a five-year reign. Jorian had a prejudice against losing his head. With the aid of the aged wizard Karadur, he managed to flee'...

DRAGONS OF DARKNESS
Edited by Orson Scott Card
Ace Fantasy, Dec. 1983, \$2.95
(c) 1981 Illustrated
Companion to **DRAGONS OF LIGHT**.
'Fifteen authors and fifteen illustrators join to bring you dragons in all of their dark and splendid forms!'

THE RIVER OF DANCING GODS
By Jack J. Chalker
Del Rey, Feb. 1984, \$2.95, Fantasy
'Life had not been kind to Joe and Marge. Now, according to the stranger who met them on a road that wasn't there, they were due to die in nineteen minutes, eighteen seconds. But the ferryboat that waited to take them across the Sea of Dreams could bring them to a new and perhaps better life.'

WHEN VOIHA WAKES By Joy Chant
Bantam, Nov. 1983, \$2.50, Fantasy
'This is the tale of a love that shattered a world, between a woman destined to be queen and the young man who stole her heart with the magic of his music. Rahike was Young Mistress of Naramethe, an exotic land of spice and wine where women ruled and men lived at their pleasure. Mairilek was a humble potter, beautiful, graceful and strong, who defied custom to play the music forbidden to men, and loosed the power of the ancient sleeping gods upon the earth.'

DARK COMPANY, THE TEN GREATEST GHOST STORIES, Ed. by Lincoln Child
St. Martin's Press, Dec. 1983, hardcover, \$12.95, 334 pp.

Ten stories of supernatural

terror. 'They also have the added distinction of being the most frightening tales ever to make a reader lose sleep or reach for the light switch with trembling hands.'

VOICES FOR THE FUTURE, VOL. III
Essays on major SF writers
Edited by Thomas Clareson
and Thomas Wyrner
Bowling Green Univ. Popular Press
Nov. 1983, \$8.95
Hardcover \$19.95

'This volume of **VOICES FOR THE FUTURE** continues the series begun by Bowling Green University Popular Press in 1976. It is, however, the first collection to include studies of major writers of fantasy as well as science fiction, a fact which in itself may say something about the development of the field in recent years. Unfortunately its publication has been somewhat delayed by circumstances that neither Bowling Green Press nor I could control. Hopefully it will be followed in the near future by a group of studies concentrating upon some of the earlier writers of SF and fantasy whom contemporary critics have neglected.'
-- Introduction

THE SENTINEL By Arthur C. Clarke
Berkley, Trade paperbk, Nov. 1983
\$7.95, 303 pp., Masterworks of SF&F, Illus. by Lebbeus Woods

Volume I of a series of illustrated trade paperbacks which will include books by Fritz Leiber, Philip Jose Farmer and Frank Herbert. Introduction by Arthur C. Clarke, autobiographical, including notes for each of the nine stories in the volume. "The Sentinel" formed the basis for the film 2001. "Guardian Angel" was expanded into the novel CHILDHOOD'S END. Also included are "Breaking Strain" and "Rescue Party."

1984: SPRING, A CHOICE OF FUTURES
By Arthur C. Clarke
Del Rey, Feb. 1984, hardcover original, \$14.95, nonfiction.

'In this extraordinary collection of his articles, essays, and speeches, Arthur C. Clarke, citizen of the world, expounds on the world's most serious problems: war and peace, the frontiers of space and the need for global communications, etc. Then in the more personal pieces, Clarke, citizen of Sri Lanka, takes on subjects near and dear to him in a series of revealing and delightful reminiscences.'

THE WOLF WORLDS

By Allan Cole & Chris Bunch
Del Rey, March, 1984, \$2.95, 304 pp

'THE WOLF WORLDS is the second in a continuing series of adventure SF novels. Each book concerns the exploits of Sten, a young recruit to a secret military unit, as he undertakes and successfully completes perilous but vital missions on behalf of the Eternal Emperor.'

PIERS ANTHONY

By Michael R. Collings
Series ed. Roger C. Schlobin
STARMONT READER'S GUIDE 20
Nov 1983, \$5.95 ISSN 0272-7730
Included is index & biblio.

WINDOWS

By D.G. Compton
Ace SF, Nov. 1983, \$2.95
Originally printed in hardcover
'Rod was a television reporter with the ultimate gimmick. Thanks to the marvels of microsurgery, TV cameras were implanted in his eyes. He could broadcast people's actions without them even knowing it. But when he was forced to spy on a dying woman, he deliberately blinded himself by overloading his sensitive circuits.
'Rod thought that he could opt out of the tough choices that society was forcing him to make. He was wrong, of course. Dead wrong ...'

D

THE BLACK CASTLE

By Les Daniels, (c) 1978
Ace, Dec. 1983, \$2.50, fantasy
'Introducing Don Sebastian, the vampire horrified by man.'
'Spain. 1496. The inquisition. Screams. And the darkness that is Europe is lit by the human bonfires of the inquisition. Even those cold and courtly agents of the Dark one, Don Sebastian de Villanueva and his witch-consort Margarita, are sickened by the sound of cracking bones.'...

THE FOREST OF APP

By Gloria Rand Dank
Greenwillow Books, Nov. 1983, \$9.50
A book for juveniles -- 160 pages.
'The rhymers had often told tales of strange creatures in the forest, faces glimpsed peering from the bushes, a snatch of song heard late at night. Hunting parties always took care to skirt the old forest near the town of App. The tales were told, and retold, but few actually believed they were true.'

STARRIGER By John DeChancie
Ace SF, Dec. 1983, \$2.75

'There's no life like the wandering life of a stardriver... especially when, like Jake, you're guided by an onboard computer that is like a father. Literally. But who started the dangerous rumor that Jake had found the ancient map that traced the Skyway to the legendary end of the universe?'

THE COSMIC PUPPETS

By Philip K. Dick
Berkley, Oct. 1983, \$2.50
'Ted Barton stared at the old newspaper in terror. "Scarlet Fever Strikes Again. Second Child Dies ..." The second child was Ted Barton. He hadn't moved away from Millgate on October 9, 1935. He had died of scarlet fever. But he was alive! Sitting here beside his wife in his car, his hands gripping the wheel desperately...'

DEUS IRAE

By Philip K. Dick & Roger Zelazny
DAW, Dec. 1983, \$2.95, (c) 1976
'Set in bizarre future America you will encounter: a bunch of backwoods farmers who happen to be lizards -- a tribe of foul-mouthed giant bugs who worship a dead VW sedan -- an automated factory that can't decide whether to serve its customers -- or kill them -- Across this nightmare landscape -- pursued by an avenging angel on a bicycle one man makes a painful pilgrimage in search of the One who changed the world so drastically, the legendary, but very real, God of Wrath.'

THE WOUNDED SKY By Diane Duane

Star Trek novel
Timescape, Dec. 1983, \$2.95
'A pretty alien scientist invents the intergalactic inversion drive, an engine system that transcends warp drive -- and the Enterprise will be the first to test it! The Klingons attempt to thwart the test, but a greater danger looms when strange symptoms surface among the crew -- and time becomes meaningless.'

SPACESHIP TITANIC

By Richard Duprey & Brian O'Leary
Dodd, Mead & Co., 1983, 230 pp.
\$14.95, hardcover, SF novel
Contest winners are taken on a ride into space aboard the shuttle, Titan. A red light warns that #3 Engine is failing.
'Should an attempt be made to crash land the shuttle? Should the women and children be transferred to the international space lab with which they are to rendezvous? As fumes of burning rubber begin

to permeate the air, the passengers commence to become alarmed and reactions range from heroism to panic that will propel some to their deaths in outer space, while family and friends keep a helpless vigil on the planet below.'

TIME FOR SHERLOCK HOLMES

By David Dvorkin
Dodd, Mead & Co., Sept. 1983
Hardcover, \$14.95, 224 pages
Doctor Watson and Holmes feel young again after taking a youth elixir discovered by Holmes. Searching for the murderer of Britain's prime minister, clues lead them to America where they find Professor Moriarty, who uses the legendary Time Machine which he stole from H.G. Wells. They race through time to foil Moriarty's plan to run back and forth through time murdering world leaders, and thus rule the world.

E

AND THEN THERE'LL BE FIREWORKS

By Suzette Haden Elgin
Book III of the Ozark Fantasy Trilogy (c) 1981
Berkley, Nov. 1983, \$2.50
'Crystal Invaders from the stars, Cause Ozark much Dismay! Though Magic's might has failed the test, Can Responsible save the day?'

MEMOS FROM PURGATORY

By Harlan Ellison
Ace, Nov. 1983, \$2.95
New Edition -- 1st Edition, 1961
This autobiography was first published by a small paperback house in 1961, sold out immediately and seemed to disappear. It was not available in used-book stores -- owners of the book passed it from friend to friend. By 1969 it "had become an underground cult item that caused an even smaller West Coast publisher to bring out a second edition." Rare copies of the first edition sell for over \$70. MEMOS has an updated introduction by the author.

'In the mid-fifties, Harlan Ellison -- kicked out of college and hungry to write -- went to New York to start his writing career. It was a time of street gangs, rumbles, kids with switchblades and zip guns made from car radio antennas. Ellison was barely out of his teens himself, but he took a phony name, moved into Brooklyn's dangerous Red Hook section and managed to con his way into a "bopping club." What he experienced (and the time he spent in jail as a result), was the basis for the violent story that Alfred Hitchcock filmed as the first of his hour-

long TV dramas... This autobiography is a book whose message you won't be able to ignore or forget.'

PAINGOD AND OTHER DELUSIONS

By Harlan Ellison, (c) 1965
Ace, Dec. 1983, \$2.95

Eight imaginative science fiction stories.

'Passion is the keynote as you encounter the Harlequin and his nemesis, the dreaded Ticktock-man, in one of the most reprinted and widely taught stories in the English language; a pyrotic who creates fire merely by willing it; the last surgeon in a world of robot physicians; a spaceship filled with hideous mutants rejected by the world that gave them birth.'...

AGAIN, DANGEROUS VISIONS

Edited by Harlan Ellison
Doubleday, 1983, Paper, \$12.50

In these 825 pages there are 46 original stories, with introductions by Harlan Ellison. This companion to DANGEROUS VISIONS is also available in a deluxe edition.

'Each story outrageously introduced by Harlan Ellison, winner of more awards for imaginative literature than any other living writer. Each story with an Afterword by its author.'

F

THE PARADOXICON

By Nicholas Falletta
Doubleday, Nov. 1983, \$14.95
222 pp., Nonfiction, Illustrated
... 'Arranged alphabetically, each of twenty-five chapters discusses and analyzes a classic type or family of paradoxes, tracing not only its logic (or lack thereof) but also its history and philosophy, for part of the lure of the paradox is its insolubility, which has attracted the best minds for millennia. More than a mere games book, THE PARADOXICON is a beautifully illustrated excursion into the fun house of logic.'

THE GREEN ODYSSEY

By Philip Jose' Farmer
Berkley, 1983, \$2.50

'It was not enough that he had the misfortune of landing on a feudal planet. Alan Green had to serve the Duke of Tropat as kitchen-slave -- and his wife, the beautiful but unwashed Duchess Zuni, as official lover, under constant threat of death. And if the Duchess's demands and her adored pet Alzo's appetite for human flesh were not enough, Green had to do duty to his nagging slave-wife Amra and her retinue of children. Somehow he had to escape and return to Earth!'

LOVE SONG By Phillip Jose Farmer
Dennis McMillan Publications
500-copy ed., signed & numbered by the author. (c) 1970
\$40.00 + 85¢ for \$50 insurance

A bizarre gothic romance, written for Brandon House, a pornography publisher in California.

NIGHT OF LIGHT

By Philip Jose' Farmer
Berkley SF, Nov. 1983, \$2.50
His classic novel of the ultimate religion. (c) 1966

'Every seven years, for one night,' ... 'all who stay awake and take the Chance become what their inmost longings dictate: a beast howling with lust or depravity, or a godlike being flowering in truth and light. Thousands are transformed into monsters, and others find perfect happiness. Those who are afraid to take the Chance escape by lying drugged in the Sleep. John Carmody, a conscienceless exile from Earth, arrogantly chooses to take the Chance. It is too late to turn back. Shrieking in terror, he confronts the darkness...'

THE ASH STAFF By Paul R. Fisher
Tempo Books, (c) 1979, \$2.25
A Magic Quest Book

'Pesten is becoming a wilderness of ice and stone. Dragons and wolfdens ravage the land. With the death of Rhawn, Mole has become a leader before his time. With his band of fellow orphans, he must destroy the loathsome sorcerer, Ammar ...'

GUESS WHAT'S COMING TO DINNER?

By Scott Fivelson
Illustrated by John Caldwell
The Extraterrestrial Etiquette Guide
Bantam, Dec. 1983, \$3.95, 112 pp.

'All points are covered from menu planning to reading ET body language. The average ET, unschooled in earthly manners, may opt to stay long past dinner. Should this sticky situation arise, the guidebook explains how to train your guest in household repair, gives ET dating tips and advice on seeking employment.'

THE DRAGON WAITING by John M. Ford
A Timescape Books Hardcover/published by Pocket/dist. by Simon & Schuster
Nov. 1983, \$15.50, 365 pp.

'The year is 1478, the dawn of the Renaissance. The Wars of the Roses have put Edward IV on the throne of England. Lorenzo the Magnificent's brilliant court blossoms on the wealth of the great Medici bank. Leonardo da Vinci is at work on his anatomical studies. But all is not quite as we know it. This is a changed world.'...
54

THE HOUR OF THE GATE

By Alan Dean Foster
SpellSinger Book Two
Warner, Feb. 1984, \$2.95, 304 pp.

'In Book 2 of the continuing SPELLSINGER saga by critically-acclaimed science fiction writer Alan Dean Foster, grad student and rock guitarist Jonathan Meriweather, continues to follow his fate as the maker of musical magic, the powerful SpellSinger. In this charmed universe of talking beasts, Clothahump, turtle and wizard, and SpellSinger prepare to battle the dreaded plated folk. SpellSinger, accompanied by Mudge the Otter and the lovely flame-haired Talsesa, begin a suicide mission in search of allies through the subterranean lair of Massawrath, Mother of Nightmares. It is a perilous journey that none has survived before.'

G

THE END OF THE EMPIRE

By Alexis A. Gilliland
Ballantine, Dec. 1983, \$2.25

'For centuries the Holy Human Empire had stifled change, and it paid dearly for that mistake. The "Empire" was down to one planet and shrinking rapidly.'...

SON OF THE MORNING AND OTHER STORIES

By Phyllis Gottlieb
Ace, Dec. 1983, \$2.95
'A galaxy of high adventure ... from GalFed tales to child androids ... from the rich imagination of one of today's most original SF talents!'

SHADOWS 6

Edited by Charles L. Grant
Doubleday, Oct. 1983, \$11.95
Dark fantasy. A collection of 16 horror stories which are ... 'bizarre, unsettling, haunting. They will spirit you away to worlds of lurking menace and shadowy dread. For they are filled with creatures of the mind that refuse to vanish. And nightmares that linger...even when the sun comes up.'

The author has won three World Fantasy Awards.

THE ALCHEMISTS By Geary Gravel
Del Rey, Feb. 1984, \$2.95, SF

'In its eagerness to expand, the Empire was often too willing to look the other way while entire alien races were destroyed. When the Kin were discovered living on the beautiful planet that men called Belthannis, Scholar Emrys headed the team brought in to judge the aliens' right to survive. The Kin looked human, so at first the verdict was clear'....

THE WELL OF DARKNESS

By Randall Garrett

& Vicki Ann Heydron

Bantam, Dec. 1983, \$2.50

'Bearing the Ra'ira, Raith-skar's most sacred gem, Rikardon and Tarani flee a ruthless enemy across the burning deserts of Gandalara. Protected by the swordsman's mighty warcat Keeshah, and the mystic bird called Lonna who obeys the illusionist's commands, the two discover the smoldering passion they have long denied. But when Keeshah leaves them to fulfill an ancient mating ritual in the Valley of the Sha'um, Rikardon and Tarani must risk death in the Well of Darkness to fulfill their destiny.'

H

THE LADIES OF MANDRIGYN

By Barbara Hambly

Del Rey, March, 1984, \$2.95, 320 pp Fantasy.

'The City of Mandrigyn was conquered and its men enslaved in the foul mines of the evil Wizard King, Altiokis. Now the women of the city, led by Sheera Galernas, had come to hire the mercenary army of Captain Sun Wolf. But Sun Wolf was too wise to become involved in fighting against wizardry ... until he woke to find himself kidnapped and offered a grim choice by Sheera.'...

THE ROAD TO THE MIDDLE ISLANDS THE WILDERNESS OF FOUR--BOOK IV

By Niel Hancock

Warner, 1983, \$2.95, Fantasy

...'The story of the magical coming of age of Olthar, the otter, called the Olthlinden. He has a special mission to perform in the battle to save his people from destruction by the Dark One. Olthar must fight savage warriors, wolves, dragons and snakes. Strange winds and mists pursue him, enemy spies lurk everywhere, and Olthar begs to be released from the awesome burden he carries. But the choice is not his alone and finally he joins with his friends -- earth-folk and waterfolk, who together fight the evil that threatens to overrun them all.'

THE SHE DEVIL by Robert E. Howard

Ace, Dec. 1983, \$2.50

First time in paperback

'She is as beautiful as an African sunset, as deadly as a lioness enraged, as wanton as a summer storm. From San Francisco to Singapore, from the high plains of Tibet to the jungles of India, no man lucky enough to encounter her can ever forget the magnificent adventures known to legend as THE SHE DEVIL.'

HEROES OF BEAR CREEK

By Robert E. Howard

Ace Fantasy, Nov. 1983, \$3.95

In these 423 pages, the author of the Conan series combines three novels: A GENT FROM BEAR CREEK, THE PRIDE OF BEAR CREEK and MAYHEM ON BEAR CREEK. 'No collection of Howard is complete without these hilarious, action-packed tales of Breckinridge Elkins and Cousin Bearfield Buckner. Theirs is the West that never was, where scoundrels and heroes clashed with six-guns and branding irons ... where honor was only a word and survival was everything!'

GOLD STAR By Zach Hughes

Signet, Dec. 1983, \$2.25, SF novel

'The mass of the galaxy was behind them ... Pete ran a star search and found something else. ... He saw instead a Blink Beacon. The contents of the Beacon's tape made only a small disturbance on the surface of his ship's tape... Just under a thousand years ago, a fleet had passed the Beacon. And then there was nothing until, loud and clear, there came a pre-blink signal which was recorded to indicate that the blinking ship had skipped past the Beacon, flying through subspace outward toward total blackness.'

J

THE SF BOOK OF LISTS

By Maxim Jakubowski & Malcolm Edwards

Berkley, Nov. 1983, \$7.95, paper

'From the most famous monsters of all time, to the villains and heroes that readers love, to the most overrated SF novels ever, the editors have joined forces to create a book that should satisfy even the most demanding lists devotee.'

REEL by Laurence M. Janifer

Doubleday, Nov. 1983, \$11.95

'It's the Pleasure Planet, the Las Vegas of the Federation. Whatever you want, there's someone on the Reel who'll provide it -- if you can pay the price. It's a world run by madams and casino owners, a world whose only law is the law of supply and demand.'

'Christie Chesson supplies: she's working for one of the Reel's biggest pleasure houses, but she can't make enough to get out. On the Reel, if you don't have a piece of the action, the action has a piece of you ...'

CONAN, THE DEFENDER

By Robert Jordan

First Tor Printing, Dec. 1982

First Mass Mkt Printing, Dec. 1983 \$2.95

'Embroidered in seething rebellion, sworn to defend the tottering throne of ancient Nemedra, pursued by the luscious and shameless Sularia, Cimmeria's bravest, most exciting hero challenges the magic-spawned menace that cannot die: The invincible, diabolical Simulacrum of Albanus.'

K

THE CHAOS WEAPON By Colin Kapp

Ballantine, Jan. 1984, (c) 1977

\$2.50 'Probability zero -- or less. A man -- or a civilization -- can live with good luck and bad ... it somehow evens out in the long run. But when the laws of chance are suspended and the breaks are all bad, that's the time to find out what's going on -- and to stop it -- before it's too late!'

THE LOST WORLDS OF CRONUS

CAGEWORLD 2 By Colin Kapp

DAW, Dec. 1983, (c) 1982, \$2.50

'Mercury Shell, Venus Shell, Earth, Mars, Asteroid, Jupiter, Saturn. Each shell concentric, studied with artificial planets, each planet embedded in its shell, spinning like a ball bearing. The whole Zeus-created in the service of Man but now beyond his control. Now mathematics and space physics, converging, suggested another shell, its existence hidden from Man. A shell of utter darkness, cold and silent where only extreme mutants could survive....'

PET SEMATARY

By Stephen King

Doubleday, Nov. 1983, \$15.95

A 372-page supernatural thriller by the author of THE SHINING and CARRIE.

...'PET SEMATARY begins with a visit to the graveyard in the woods where generations of children have buried their beloved pets. But behind the "pet sematary" there is another burial ground, one that lures people to it with seductive promises ... and ungodly temptations.'

DEAD ZONE By Stephen King

With 8 pages of movie photos

Signet, paper, \$3.95, 402 pp.

'Johnny, the small boy who skated at breakneck speed into an accident that for one horrifying moment plunged him into THE DEAD ZONE. Johnny Smith, the small-town schoolteacher who spun the wheel of fortune and won a four-and-a-half-year trip into THE DEAD ZONE. John Smith, who awakened from an interminable coma with an

accursed power -- the power to see the future and the terrible fate awaiting mankind in THE DEAD ZONE.'

CHRISTOPHER By Richard M. Koff
Bantam, Jan. 1984, \$2.25, (c) 1981
Juvenile novel of a 13-year-old.

'Christopher carried his books to the locker in the hall and put them on the top shelf. Idly, he looked into the mirror over the wash basin and what he saw sent a shock through him. He could feel the hairs rise on the nape of his neck. Where was he? Hair, face, clothes, mouth, eyes. He, Christopher, just wasn't there.'

PHANTOMS

By Dean R. Koontz
Berkley, 1983, \$3.95, 425 pages

'Closer ... They found the first body hideously swollen and still warm. Then they found two severed hands. Then two staring heads in wall ovens. 150 were grotesquely dead and it had hardly begun in the tiny mountain town of Snowfield, California.

'And closer ... At first they thought it was a maniac. Then they thought it was an obscene new disease. Then they thought it was the Russians.

'And closer ... Then they found out the truth. And they saw it in the flesh. And it was worse than anything any of them had ever imagined ...'

LAMMAS NIGHT

By Katherine Kurtz
Ballantine, Dec. 1983, \$3.50, 448 pp

In the "Prologue", it is stated that Adolf Hitler kept full-time astrologers on his staff and seems to have based many of his decisions in the Second World War on positions of the stars. Witches may have raised a cone of power to keep him from crossing the English Channel to invade Britain. This novel tells how Hitler's belief in astrology and the occult may have shaped the events of history.

L

THE GLORY GAME by Keith Laumer
Tor Books, Dec. 1983, \$2.75

'As the Hukk maneuver on the fringes of Terran Space, the Terran Navy is about to begin the most important "game" in the history of the human race. For too many years the Hukk have been pushing, pushing at humanity's frontiers, testing our strength and our courage -- and finding both wanting. Now the Terran Hardliners have had enough. They will use the coming war games to start a real war, even if it requires a revolution at home to clear the way for THE GLORY GAME.'

RENSIME By Jacqueline Lichtenberg
A Sime/Gen Novel Doubleday
Jan 1984, \$11.95 'Laneff Farris is an anomaly -- an ordinary Ren-Sime in a family of highly skilled channel Simes and Companion Gens dedicated to uniting the two branches of mutated humanity. Unexpectedly changing over into a Sime, she kills the two who try, unprepared to help her. When she finally disjuncts, frees herself of the desire to kill to get energy-of-life from Gens, she vows no other child will have to kill to survive changeover as she has.'...

CHANNEL'S DESTINY

By Jean Lorrah & Jacqueline Lichtenberg
DAW, Dec. 1983, (c) 1982, \$2.95
A Sime/Gen novel. 'Zeth Farris's father had been the first channel -- the first Sime to extract selyn, the elixir of life, from a Gen without killing, and Zeth's life-long ambition had been to emulate his father -- to help form a new breed whose special powers would redress the perverse mutation of humanity which had set man against man in a millennium of strife.'

THE HORSE GODDESS

By Morgan Llywelyn
Pocket, 1983, \$3.95, 439 pp.
'Morgan Llywelyn's wondrous saga of the mighty celtic world that reigned centuries before LION OF IRELAND!'

'It tells the story of Epona, a Celtic chieftain's daughter. Endowed with all the magical powers of the druids who are able to command wind, fire, water and all the beasts of the land, Epona chooses not to become a druid priestess, enraging the powerful village priest, Kernunnos. Determined to escape his tyrannical grasp, Epona flees with a band of traveling Scythian horsemen, led by their imposing prince, Kazhak, and rides with them toward the boundless steppes of the east. Kernunnos, however, will not let his prey escape so easily, and pursues the Scythians in the shape of a savage wolf, killing members of their tribe and afflicting others with dreams of terror. To appease the wild beast, the tribe plans to offer Epona as a sacrifice, despite her highly valued ability to communicate with animals.'

THE ART OF THE RETURN OF THE JEDI
Ballantine, Nov 1983, \$17.95
Author: Lucasfilm, Ltd.

Included is the complete script of the film, by Lawrence Kasdan and George Lucas. Illustrated in color and in black and white.

'THE ART OF RETURN OF THE JEDI contains stills, sketches, set designs, production paintings and special effects sequences. A separate section is devoted to costume design and creature development, an acclaimed specialty of these epic motion pictures.'

WITCHWOOD By Tim Lukeman
Pocket, Dec. 1983, \$13.95, 190 pp.
Vol. I of the Witchwood tetralogy

'A lost city. An ancient witch cult. A young girl's developing power to wield magic... a new novel which begins the Witchwood tetralogy, four books telling of the waking of the land of Therrilyn.'

M

DAMIANO By R.A. MacAvoy
Bantam, Jan. 1984, \$2.75

'He was called Damiano Delstrego: wizard's son, alchemist, heir to dark magic. Yet he was also an innocent, a young scholar and musician befriended by the Archangel Raphael, who instructed him in the lute....'

PRINCE OMBRA

By Roderick MacLeish
Tor Books, 1982, \$3.50

'Prince Ombra is the lord of every mortal nightmare. He has appeared in the world a thousand times, and the rememberers have given him a thousand names -- Goliath, the murderous Philistine -- Mordred, enemy of Camelot. The heroes of legend have offered their lives in confrontation with the evil one. Among them have been David and Arthur, king of the Celts. They have had a thousand names. The thousand and first hero was born on the northeastern coast of America in the fourth decade of the nuclear age. In his ninth autumn, his life suddenly darkened...'

THE ARMAGEDDON RAG

By George R.R. Martin
Nemo Press, 1983, 333 pp., \$50.00
ISBN: 0-914261-00-2 (Collector's Edition); ISBN: 0-671-47526-6 (Trade Ed.); Illustrated by Victor Moscoso; Collector's Edition slipcovered.

'At the gigantic West Mesa outdoor rock concert in 1971, Patrick Henry "Hobbit" Hobbins, the kinetic leader singer of the rock supergroup the Nazgul, was assassinated as he belted out the sizzling lyrics of "The Armageddon/Resurrection Rag." His killer was never found.

'Thirteen years later, on the anniversary of Hobbin's death, the defunct group's manager, Jamie Lynch, is ritually murdered -- his heart torn from his body -- while

the Nazgul's final album Music to Wake the Dead plays in the background. The killer leaves no trace.

'Demonic forces are using the power of Rock 'n' Roll to resurrect the Nazgul and the revolution of the sixties. Ex-underground journalist Sandy Blair, now adrift in the eighties, sets out to investigate...'

JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARDS, VOL. 5
Edited by George R.R. Martin
Bluejay Books, 1984, \$7.95

'Bluejay Books is proud to present the nominees for the John W. Campbell Award for the best new author of 1977: Jack L. Chalker, C.J. Cherryh, M.A. Foster, Carter Scholz. Here is the full flowering of their talent: three novelettes, and a short novel, COMPANIONS, by C.J. Cherryh, all written expressly for this volume. Also award-winner Cherryh's "The Dark King," altogether five thrilling stories that give you the world .. and the stars. Every single one is a winner!'

HALLOWEEN III SEASON OF THE WITCH
Jove, Oct. 1982 and 83, \$2.95

By Jack Martin, based on a screenplay by Tommy Lee Wallace

...'Bloodchilling screams pierce the air. Grinning skulls and grotesque shapes lurk in the gathering darkness. It's Halloween. The streets are filling with small cloaked figures. They're just kids, right? The doorbell rings and your flesh creeps. But it's all in fun, isn't it? No, this Halloween is different. It's the last one.'

BE AN INTERPLANETARY SPY #6

THE STAR CRYSTAL By Ron Martinez
Bantam, Jan. 1984, 121 pp., (c) '83
Illus. by Rich Larson & Steve Fastner, 20+ space games.

'You are an interplanetary spy. Your mission is to protect the diplomat Quarboss Tro as he travels with the most valuable jewel in the galaxy, the Star Crystal. You must stop unknown agents from stealing the crystal and attacking Tro!'

RUNES OF THE LYRE

By Ardath Mayhar
Ace Fantasy Book, 1983, \$2.75

'The asyi sleep. On the world called Hasyih, the tents of an army dot the Great Plains, but the soldiers in armor of polished silver, lie in the grass deep in ensorcelled slumber. An evil as powerful as the Asyi themselves has destroyed world after world, but the defenders sleep on. Only one thing can wake them from their dreams: the notes of a lyre carved with runes of magic. Only the queen of the Asyi can loose the music from its strings'....

MORETA: DRAGON LADY OF PERN

By Anne McCaffrey
Del Rey, Nov. 1983, \$14.95

'Pern is a long-lost Earth colony periodically threatened by ecological disaster in the form of Thread. When these silvery, mycorrhizoid spores from the Red Star descend on Pern every two hundred years, they devour all organic material they encounter. Enter the dragons.'

In this novel a mysterious ailment causes death to hordes of holders, craftsmen and dragonriders, endangering the people's ability to char Thread.

ASIMOV'S

SPACE OF HER OWN

Ed. by Shawna McCarthy
Dial, Jan 1984, \$12.95

Collection SF stories by women authors. ...'Each and every story is sure to grasp your attention as the author takes you on a tour of her own alien landscape, be it close to home or on distant worlds. The days of male dominated science fiction are long gone. As each of these outstanding stories demonstrates, women now have a "space of their own."

THE THROME OF THE ERRIL OF SHERILL

By Patricia A. McKillip
Tempo Bks, (c) 1973, \$2.25

A Magic Quest Book. "'The road will twist and turn three times ... and on the third twist there is a hill, and on the hill is the black, crumbling, rotting House of the Doleman. It has great towers without doors, and walls like broken teeth, and strange shoutings come from within the walls. My mother says I must never go there!'"...

FIRST THE EGG By Louise Moeri

Pocket Books, 1982, \$1.95, 116 pp

'No one in her Marriage and Family class could believe the assignment! Become the "parents" of an egg -- and treat it like a newborn infant? Keep a baby book on its progress? Carry it around for a whole week, unless it had a babysitter? '

THE WEIRD OF THE WHITE WOLF

Book III of the Elric Saga

By Michael Moorcock
Berkley, 1983, \$2.50, Fantasy

'The albino emperor meets Queen Yishana. Now sword and man are one. Elric's awesome loneliness, ironically, is ended. And the Eternal Champion and his blade Stormbringer must go forth through havoc and horror to carve out their Destiny.'

THE VANISHING TOWER

By Michael Moorcock

Book IV of the Elric Saga

Berkley, Nov. 1983, \$2.50, (c) 1970

'Elric, cursed and beloved of the Gods, follows his black hell-blade Stormbringer into the Vanishing Tower, gateway to the myriad planes of Earth and Time -- and to the countless hells that are his destiny.'

THE INTERSECTION OF SCIENCE FICTION AND PHILOSOPHY: CRITICAL STUDIES

By Robert E. Myers, (Ed.)

Greenwood Press, Dec 1983, \$29.95

'Robert E. Myers has assembled a collection of essays which explore aspects of the relationship between science fiction and philosophy....The authors of individual essays appreciate science fiction and the significance of the philosophical issues it touches upon. They bring to this study the insights of diverse disciplines: philosophy, social science, poetry, linguistics, future studies, medical humanities, and literature. Dealing exclusively with topics relating to science fiction and philosophy they offer an initial exploration of the philosophical problems within science fiction and their implications.'

N

THE INTEGRAL TREES

By Larry Niven

Del Rey, March, 1984, \$14.95

A hardcover original, 256 pp., SF

...'Critics long thought Niven would find it difficult to surpass his Hugo-winning novel RINGWORLD -- the story of an artificial world 300 million miles in circumference and 1 million miles high.

'They were right. Despite the passage of 14 years he has never since created an environment so vast, an ecology so well developed, or cultures so original. Not until now, that is. In THE INTEGRAL TREES Niven presents a fully-fleshed culture of evolved humans who live without real gravity in the doughnut-shaped gas tube that rotates about the neutron star. This is the novel his fans have been awaiting!'

STAR GATE By Andre Norton

Ballantine, Dec. 1983, \$2.25

(c) 1958 SF Adventure

'Kincar was heir to Styr's holding on the planet Gorth, but when he learned the truth of his birth, he turned his back on that part of his life. Most of the Star Lords had abandoned Gorth, but a renegade group remained, and Kincar meant to accompany them through a Star Gate in their quest for an alternate world...'

SARGASSO OF SPACE By Andre Norton
Book 1 in the Solar Queen series
Ace SF, Dec. 1983, \$2.50
(c) 1955

"'Worlds for sale!' was the startling cry that electrified Dane Thorson of the space trader Solar Queen. But who'd be crazy enough to buy the newly discovered planet? The data is sealed: the planet could be a treasure trove or a radioactive desert -- and only a crew as desperate as that on the Solar Queen would risk such a gamble.'...

THE STARS ARE OURS'

By Andre Norton
Ace, 1983, \$2.50, (c)1954

'Earth in 2500 A.D. is no place for a young man with a dream of freedom. And Dard Nordis is worse off than most; his brother was executed for covert activities as a Free Scientist in a world where science is blamed for all the evils that befell the world in the late 20th century. Now Dard is a hunted man, trying to find his brother's friends before his brother's enemies find him.'...

THE BEAST MASTER By Andre Norton
Ballantine, Jan. 1984, (c) 1959
\$2.50 SF adventure

'Left homeless by the war that reduced Terra to a radioactive cinder, Hosteen Storm -- Navaho commando and master of beasts -- is drawn to the planet Arzor, to kill a man he has never met. On that dangerous frontier world aliens and human colonists share the land in an uneasy truce. But something is upsetting the balance, and Storm is caught in the middle. He had thought the war was over -- but was it?'

O

JONUTA RISING', SPACEWAYS #13
By John Cleve [A. Offutt]
Berkley, 1983, \$2.50, SF

'Even death does not mean the end of Jonuta. Like the legendary phoenix, he is back, at the helm of the Coronet, living the only life open to a Galactic spacefarer: raiding, plundering, slaving -- while eluding the long arm of Trans-Galactic Watch. Following a clue from the luscious captive Verley, Jonuta traces his old enemy Eks to the "off limits" planet Arepien. But in spite of the unclad beauties who are eager to engage in sexual congress with the gods descended from the sky, Arepien proves dangerous. And when Major Zahrad of TGW appears on the Coronet's tail, Jonuta realizes that the decisive, life-or-death battle must at last be waged.'

SPACEWAYS #14 ASSIGNMENT: HELLHOLE
By John Cleve [A. Offutt]
Berkley, Nov. 1983, \$2.50

'Retired cop Alanni Keor bought the farm ... literally! She was happy farming with her partners -- an Outie and and a Jarp -- until a powerful politician blackmailed her into becoming an interplanetary thief. To steal the mysterious alien thing called Invisible Wisdom, she had to go to Hellhole ... the planet that lived up to its name!'

DEMON IN THE MIRROR

By Andrew Offut & Richard Lyon
VOLUME 1 of WAR OF THE WIZARDS
Pocket, (Reissue), \$2.50, Fantasy

'Tiana crosses swords with demons, barbarians, vampire nuns! On a quest to find her lost brother, Tiana of Reme, foster daughter of a pirate captain, ventures on a dangerous journey toward her greatest challenge -- the battle of the Wizards!'

SPACE HISTORY By Tony Osman
St. Martin's Press, Dec 1983
\$16.95, ISBN 0-312-74945-7

Illustrated, 215 pp. 'The romance, the challenges, the successes, and the setbacks involved in man's age-old quest to reach beyond our planet are compellingly captured in Tony Osman's SPACE HISTORY, a one-volume, illustrated chronicle of space exploration.'

P

A LITERARY SYMBIOSIS
SCIENCE FICTION/FANTASY MYSTERY
By Hazel Beasley Pierce
Greenwood Press, (price not given)

255 pages, indexed, the book has four parts: "The Science Fiction/Fantasy Detective Story;" "The Science Fiction/Fantasy Mystery of Crime;" "The Science Fiction/Fantasy Thriller;" "The Science Fiction/Fantasy Gothic Mystery." 'Contributions to the study of science fiction & fantasy, #6.'

THE COSMIC COMPUTER

By H. Beam Piper
Ace, Nov. 1983, \$2.75

'Merlin -- the legendary name that conjures up visions of unlimited knowledge and power. Merlin, the god-like, infallible computer that could mean the salvation of a war-torn human race. But does such a fantastic cybernetic marvel really exist? Is Merlin just another legend of the spaceways, as most people believe? Or is it really hidden somewhere on the colony planet Poictesme? And if it is found, will it save mankind ... or be its destruction?'

STARBURST By Frederik Pohl
Ballantine, Dec. 1983, \$2.75

'The crew of the Constitution -- scientists cum astronauts -- had been carefully screened for extremely high intelligence and superb physical qualities. They were to be the first explorers sent to another stellar system. There they would explore the planet Alpha-Aleph and then return. They were the toast of the world press -- true heroes, for they were to go where no Man had gone before. Or so they thought.'...

EXILES TO GLORY

By Jerry Pournelle
Ace, Dec. 1983, \$2.75 (c) 1977

... 'As a senior engineering student at UCLA, Kevin seemed on the verge of realizing his ambitions, when one night he was attacked by a murderous "youth gang" -- and accidentally killed one of them while escaping. That's when it all changed: "You don't kill juvies in this town," the homicide detective told him. Suddenly Kevin Senecal was on the run, and on all of Earth there was no place to hide ...'

JANISSARIES

CLAN AND CROWN
By Jerry Pournelle & Roland Green
Ace SF, 1983, \$3.50, 383 pages

'For the first few years, Rick Galloway and his band of mercenaries were doing well just to survive. They'd been swept off a hilltop in Africa by a flying saucer, and deposited on an alien world where the other inhabitants were human -- but from various and unfriendly periods of history, all collected by flying saucer raids.

'Rick has faced facts: This planet is going to be home, permanently. And to create a society safe for themselves and the families they are gradually building, they need to do more than just survive. They must convince the others that a unified, peaceful society is better than a collection of warring tribes. Force would not be Rick's chosen method of persuasion -- but on a planet where the other dominant culture is one brought straight from ancient Rome, force may be the only way.'

THE PERILOUS GARD

By Elizabeth Marie Pope
Tempo Bks, (c) 1974, \$2.25
A Magic Quest Book 'Kate was lonely. Banished to a remote castle in England's wild north, she missed her friends and family. Then she came across a strange young man alone in the darkness, and discovered another world beneath her feet: the faery realm of Elvenwood, the endless labyrinth

beneath the Hill, where the Fairy Queen imprisons gentle souls and neither sun nor moon has ever shone....'

Q

ELLERY QUEEN'S LOST MEN

Edited by Ellery Queen and Eleanor Sullivan

Dial Fiction, (Doubleday), \$12.95
Oct. 1983, hardcover; Stories collected from ELLERY QUEEN'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE; 288 pages.

'The alumni reports of many colleges include a section listing Lost Men -- class members who can no longer be reached, who have disappeared without leaving a forwarding address and have been impossible to track down.

'There are stories in this new Ellery Queen collection about just such men, men who lose touch with their past, with their family and friends, either intentionally or for reasons beyond their control.'

R

NIGHT OF THE CLAW By Jay Ramsey
St. Martin's Press, 1983, \$12.95
Hardcover, Horror novel, 367 pp.

When Alan Knight returns from Africa he brings a small parcel given to him by an anthropologist. He is unaware that the anthropologist killed himself shortly after. The parcel contains a talisman of evil which will soon break loose, transforming his comfortable life.

THE LAGRANGISTS By Mark Reynolds
Tor Books, 1983, \$2.95

'L-5, a point in the Earth-Moon system where orbits are forever and the new age of Freedom and Plenty can begin. Now they're trying to kill the man in charge of the first L-5 colony, and Private Eye Rex Bader is the man who will have to find and stop them...'

MINDKILLER

By Spider Robinson

Berkley, Nov. 1983, (c) 1982, \$2.95

'The creation of one of our most acclaimed young science fiction writers, MINDKILLER is more than a science fiction novel. It speaks to the reader of a world just around the corner and of the most frightening possibilities in that world for control of the human mind.'

THE SLEEPING DRAGON

By Joel Rosenberg

Book I, GUARDIANS OF THE FLAME
Signet, 1983, \$2.95, Fantasy

Fantasy gaming becomes a matter of life and death when a group of college students are transported

ed to another world and find they are the characters whose roles they were playing. In this land of fire-breathing dragons and magic, they must find the Gate Between the Worlds to return back home -- and the gate is guarded by a deadly sleeping dragon.

THE WAR FOR ETERNITY

By Christopher Rowley

Del Rey, 1983, \$2.95

'The bearlike aliens of Fenrille had long been allies of the fiercely independent human clans.. Together Men and Fein ruled the wooded highlands of the odd planet's single continent. And together they grew rich, for only the people of the highlands could harvest the drug that kept men forever young.

'Then the masters of a distant Earth sent a starfleet with a force of brutal Space Marines to seize the planet. But they were not prepared for the colonists' stiff resistance -- and no one had warned them of the aliens' very special defenses.'

S

BRONWYN'S BANE

By Elizabeth Scarborough

Bantam, Dec. 1983, \$2.95

'Bronwyn, Crown Princess of Argonia, was born under an unlucky star. Not only was she a strapping, awkward, hot-tempered girl ill-suited to palace life, but she had been cursed at birth with a spell that made her tell nothing but lies! When war broke out between Argonia and Albemarle, Queen Amberwine sent Bronwyn away to keep her out of trouble -- to her cousin Carole, who'd inherited the gift of musical magic from her hearth- witch mother and minstrel father'...

URANIA'S DAUGHTERS

By Roger C. Schlobin

Starport House, Sept 1983, \$6.95

STARMONT REFERENCE GUIDE #1

ISSN 0738-0127 79 pages

A checklist of women science fiction writers, 1692-1982. Includes index and bibliography. Arranged alphabetically by authors' names, included is "Directory of Pseudonyms, Joint Authors, and Variant Names." Sequels are cross referenced, series are identified.

ALIENS FROM ANALOG, Anthology #7

Edited by Stanley Schmidt

Davis Pub., Dec. 1983, \$12.95

'Man is an interesting species but he is probably not the only intelligent species in the universe. The universe is a big place, with

lots of room for variety. So who else is out there -- and what happens when they and we meet?'

THE SHATTERED GODDESS

By Darrell Schweitzer

Donning Co., 1982, Trade paperback, \$5.95, 183 pages

'When an evil witch secretly substitutes her own son for that of a royal heir, she unwittingly creates her own greatest nemesis. Condemned to a hole-in-the-wall existence at the bottom of society, the true heir must study magic to survive. But when he discovers his own real identity, he learns that to reclaim the throne he must unleash a magic that will destroy the world!'

ACROSS A BILLION YEARS

By Robert Silverberg

Tor Books, Dec. 1983, \$2.75

'Scattered throughout the globe of human-occupied space is evidence of a civilization that bestrode the galaxy before humanity was born. Now, a strange device has been discovered that shows the details of that great civilization. The details include a star map and hints that the High Ones are not extinct after all.'

OUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN

By Clifford Simak

DAW, 1983, (c) 1974, \$2.50

'They were our children's children, and they came one day from nowhere -- walking through holes in the air into our world. By means of one-way time tunnels, they fled the ravening beasts with teeth, claws and tentacles, that reproduced like bacteria and were intelligent. They fled to escape the uncontrollable horror of their own far future, and we, their distant ancestors, housed and fed and comforted them, content in their assurance that the tunnel was securely guarded from the beasts, whatever or whoever they were.'...

THE GREEN FUTURES OF TYCHO

By William Sleator

Bantam, Jan. 1984, \$2.25 (c) 1981

Juvenile. 'THE GREEN FUTURES OF TYCHO tells of 11-year-old Tycho, who digs up an alien silver egg while planting a vegetable garden and soon discovers that his find has the ability to send him back and forth in time. At first young Tycho uses this power to settle small scores with his siblings but then finds that he can use the egg to catch glimpses of his adult self. To his horror, he witnesses a variety of futures, seeing an adult who is increasingly evil and dependent on the egg for power. Determined to return the egg to the

point in history when it was originally left on earth by aliens, Tycho finds himself on a life-threatening chase through the centuries, pursued by his older self who wants to keep the egg.'

SPACEHOUNDS OF IPC
By E.E. "Doc" Smith
Berkley, 1983, \$2.50
(first published in 1931)

On a passenger flight to Mars, a space ship falls apart, and the wreckage is towed off by an alien warship. The survivors escape in a small module and set course for nearby Ganymede. A novel of cosmic adventure.

LANDO CALRISSIAN AND THE STARCAVE OF THONBOKA by L. Neil Smith
Ballantine, Dec. 1983, \$2.50

An SF novel based on the characters created by George Lucas.

'For a year Lando Calrissian and Vuffi Raa, his five-armed robot astrogator, had roamed space in the *Millennium Falcon*, seeking or creating opportunities to turn an easy, but not too dishonest credit. But now their partnership seemed doomed -- for Lando's uncharacteristic impulse to help a race of persecuted aliens had suddenly made him and Vuffi vulnerable to several sets of their own enemies ...'

THE VOID CAPTAIN'S TALE
By Norman Spinrad
Timescape, 1983, \$2.95

'Void captain Genro Kane Gupta is truly the master of his craft. Through the pleasure rooms of the *Dragon Zephyr*, he moves with *haute* authority, the object of every woman's desire. But the good captain hides a secret...The Void captain's libido and a woman's transcendent appetite are short-circuiting the ship directly into the Great and Only -- to the ultimate calamity, or the ultimate bliss!'

THE ORPHAN By Robert Stallman
Timescape, (c) 1980, \$2.95

A wild-eyed beast with a taste for blood changed to human form, little Robert, and was adopted by a farm family.

'Robert had his own will and wanted to stay human. Still the beast arose unbidden, shifting form without warning. Neither beast nor child could conceal the danger, as their dual nature threatened to reveal itself, to destroy their cover -- and to leave them at the mercy of forces unknown!'



CHEON OF WELTANLAND
Book I: THE FOUR WISHES
By Charlotte Stone
DAW, Nov. 1983, \$2.95

'Freed from the tyranny of conquerers and the slavery of the ape-people, ward and student of a Hyperborean witch, the girl Cheon was to be granted four wishes. This is what she said: "That no man shall again do to me as the Bunnish men and the men of the Dark Place did ...

"That I may grow tall and strong and skilled in the use of weapons, that I may slay me as I please ...

"That I may be a witch skilled in sorcery, yet beautiful like the dawn...

"That I may be a queen as my father promised me, the queen of the Northlands..."

FIRE FROM THE WINE DARK SEA
By Somtow Sucharitkul
Donning Co., 1983, Trade paperback, 301 pages, \$6.50

The first collection of Sucharitkul's work. Before his first novel, Sucharitkul won the year's Best Science Fiction Writer Award. He is called "the brightest new star in the SF galaxy." Included are two interviews with Sucharitkul.

THE AQUILIAD
By Somtow Sucharitkul
Timescape, Dec. 1983, \$2.95, SF

'Now, 100 years after Julius Caesar's death, journey to another dimension where time is warped, Bigfoot growls, hot air balloons sail, and Rome never fell. Discover a wondrous new America where bumbling General Titus and wily Aquila, the Eagle, lust for Aztec gold and battle an evil time traveler and an invasion of flying saucers from a distant future beyond the past.'

THE STEPS OF THE SUN
by Walter Tevis
Doubleday, Nov. 1983, \$14.95, 264 p.
... 'It is the year 2063 and all energy sources have been depleted or declared unsafe. An ice age has begun, China's world dominance is growing, and America is sliding into impotence.

'Belson, undaunted by the paralyzing apathy around him, haunted by deep emotional problems that are driving him toward suicide, embarks on a highly publicized search for an extraterrestrial fuel supply that will reverse America's decline. Though he sleeps through

the long night of space, fate brings him to his star. What happens there is unexpected, nearly inexplicable, and shocks him back into sanity and life.'

OTHER WORLDS: THE FANTASY GENRE
Bowling Green Univ. Popular Press
By John H. Timmerman
Nov. 1983, \$7.95 (hardcover \$16.95)

'Professor Timmerman looks at fantasy literature with a critical eye towards identifying the genre and locating its relation to literary tradition. He has written a lively and informative text.'

STARDEATH
By E.C. Tubb
Del Rey, 1983, \$2.25

'Ships occasionally disappeared in hyperspace, regrettable sacrifices to the luxury of faster-than-light travel. But now one of the lost ships has been found' ... 'The lucky ones on the lost ship are dead. The others have been turned inside-out in gruesome parody of human beings -- and they are still alive.' ... 'The enemy is unknown -- and the only way Varl can solve the mystery is to use himself as bait!'

V

CUGEL'S SAGA by Jack Vance
Sequel to **THE EYES OF THE OVERWORLD**
TIMESCAPE, Nov. 1983, \$14.95, 334 pp.

... 'Cugel, the adventurous and egocentric rogue, lives in a decadent future world of Machiavelian sorcery. Once again, he manages to survive a series of dangerous encounters with monsters and wizards by using his flamboyant wit. Marooned half a world away from home by long-time arch enemy Iuconnu, The Laughing Magician, Cugel cunningly works his way through mud pits and bars, through village manor houses and across the seas drawn by sea worms, back to the land of Almerly to gain vengeance upon the nefarious Iuconnu.'

COMPUTERWORLD By A.E. Van Vogt
DAW, 1983, \$2.50

'A.E. Van Vogt, master of innovative science fiction, has brought this vision of the days to come into focus with his new novel, the story of our world under the cold and emotionless eye of the almighty computers in conflict with the efforts of just flesh-and-blood people to achieve some way of asserting free will beyond the scope of mechanical programming. Here is a novel to read after you have re-read 1984 and to set alongside Van Vogt's classic works for prophetic science fiction.'

WORLD'S END By Joan D. Vinge
Volume 2 in the Snow Queen Cycle
Bluejay Book, Feb. 1984, \$13.95
750-copy collector's edition also.
'Journey to WORLD'S END, with its strange, twisted landscapes where madness awaits, BZ Gundhalinu is one who is brave enough -- or foolish enough -- to venture there. His quest: to rescue his lost brothers from the wilderness and to redeem the family honor ...'

W

THE YEAR'S BEST HORROR STORIES, SERIES XI, Ed. Karl Edward Wagner
DAW, 1983, \$2.95

"Wagner has done his work well, and DAW deserves the thanks of horror readers, and librarians catering to them, for keeping this anthology going, its price low and its quality high." -- BOOKLIST

THE BOOK OF SILENCE
By Lawrence Watt-Evans
Del Rey, Jan. 1984, \$2.95, 336 pp.
Fantasy, Book IV of **THE LORDS OF DUS**

'Nothing had gone right for Garth the overman since he had come to the human city of Skelleth. He had been exiled from his home, forced to raid the altars of the Dark Gods, possessed by Bheleu, god of destruction, and tricked into vowing to serve the god of death through the god's high priest, the mysterious Forgotten King.

'Now the followers of Aghad, god of hatred, had tortured his wife and threatened to kill his sons. He could only defeat them by taking up the Sword of Bheleu again -- surrendering himself to the rage of the ruthless god. Or he could bring the Forgotten King the Book of Silence from a long-forgotten crypt....'

EARTHCHILD By Sharon Webb
#1 in the Earth Song Triad
Bantam, 1983, \$2.50

'It was called the Mouat-Gari process. It gave to all of Earth's children man's oldest dream -- immortality. For Kurt Kraus, torn from his family, attacked and persecuted by a generation he was destined to see age and die before his eyes, the first years of eternal life were the hardest.

'But as a century passed, and Kurt found himself one of Earth's ageless rulers, he discovered immortality's terrible price, and the awful choice mankind had to make to redeem its future.'

WHAT DREAMS MAY COME
By Manly Wade Wellman
Doubleday, Dec. 1983, \$11.95
A novel of the scholar/adventurer, John Thunstone.

'Thunstone wants to see Old Thunder, the historic giant whose white outline dominates the steep slope separating Claines from the rest of the world. And he's come to see for himself the local ritual of overturning the Dreamer Rock, a fallen obelisk of sandstone which lies at the edge of the churchyard. The townspeople observe this "pagan" custom every July 4th -- but this July 4th might be a little different....'

LIGHTRUNNER

By Lamar Waldron & Rod Whigham
Donning, Oct. 1983, Trade Paperbk, 8 1/2 X 11 Illustrated, 112 pages in color, \$9.95.
Limited edition, \$30.00, with slipcase, hardcover, color print, signed & numbered bookplate.
Starblaze graphic novel, an epic science fiction adventure.

'A graphic novel of life and death, loyalty and love, duty and honor. A universe poised on the brink of galactic war becomes the background for Burne Garrett's rite-of-passage from cadet-forcer to young adult. Framed for a crime he did not commit, Burne must not only prove his innocence to the Star-Stream assembly, but to his father, Thorvus Garrett, the famous Lion of Denna, as well.'

THE BEST OF JACK WILLIAMSON
Ballantine, Jan. 1984, (c) 1978
\$2.95, Classic SF

Fourteen stories, including "Nonstop to Mars"; "With Folded Hands"; "The Happiest Creature"; "Jamboree"; "The Highest Dive."

SHADOWINGS: A READER'S GUIDE TO HORROR FICTION 1981-82

Ed. Douglas E. Winter
STARMONT STUDIES IN LITERARY CRITICISM I ISSN 0737-1306
Starmont House, 1983, \$6.95

'The definitive guide to contemporary horror fiction, written by major authors and critics in the field. Introduced and edited by World Fantasy Award nominee Douglas E. Winter'

THE WOLFE ARCHIPELAGO

By Gene Wolfe
Zeising Bro., Oct. 1983, 119 pp.
Trade Ed., 820 copies, \$15.95
Signed limited Ed, 200 copies, \$30.00

A collection of Gene Wolfe's short stories with Introduction: "The Island of Doctor Death & Other Stories", "The Death of Doctor Island" and "The Doctor of Death Island."

THE CITADEL OF THE AUTARCH
By Gene Wolfe
Pocket, Nov. 1983, \$3.50
Book IV of Book of the New Sun, completes the tetralogy

'Severian the fallen Torturer pursues his grand destiny across the lands of Urth, in a journey fraught with peril and wonder, ancient memories and savage death. Fleeing the terrors of the deep water dwellers and the flying slivers of night, he moves inexorably toward the final mystery -- the long-foretold coming of the New Sun!'

Y

TALES OF WONDER

By Jane Yolen
Schocken Books, 1983, \$14.95
A book of 30 new fairy tales compiled for adults.

'These stories embrace deep-rooted and universal themes -- love and separation, obedience and loyalty, the true nature of happiness -- which are taken from ancient mythology, medieval romance, nineteenth-century fairytales and modern science fiction....'

Z

OMEGA POINT TRILOGY

By George Zebrowski
Ace Original, Nov. 1983, SF, \$2.75

'Gorgias was a dangerous man. Stranded in the remotest galactic wastelands, he was a relic of the most evolved civilization humans ever dreamed possible -- and which they had destroyed. Now he didn't figure into their plans anymore. But they figured into his. He was a man with a mission: out to avenge the past, with only his wits and a fighting ship that couldn't be equaled.'

AMAZING March, 1984, \$1.75
Edited by George Scithers

Two major items in this issue: an intriguing, masterful analysis of STAR WARS, Star Wars, and George Lucas by Algis Budrys....

And GATEWAY III: WHERE THE HEE-CHEE FEARED TO GO [Part One of Two Parts] The novel will be concluded next issue. Under the title HEE-CHEE RENDEZVOUS it will be published in May, 1984 by Del Rey Books.

Also this issue: fiction by Robert Morrell, Jr., Alan Dean Foster, and a story authored by Gardner Dozois, Jack Dann, and Michael Swanwick.

Also: Opinion, Book Reviews, Discussions, The Strategic View. Poetry, and a Cartoon.

SMALL PRESS NOTES

The small press scene is becoming more and more professional and expensive, especially in the limited edition book area.

THE WOLFE ARCHIPELAGO By Gene Wolfe
Ziesing Brothers, 1020 copies, 200 signed and numbered: unsigned copies are \$15.95; signed/numbered are \$30. Ziesing Bros., 768 Main St., Willimantic, CT 06226.

The book is quality hardcover, with an extraordinarily fine dust jacket painting by Carl Lundgren; some would kill for the original, I think.

The stories: "The Island of Dr. Death and Other Stories," "The Death of Dr. Island," and "The Doctor of Death Island" are all finely wrought intricate (at first) and perhaps (if you don't pay close attention) baffling examinations of insanity and its consequences, and its kinds, and its causes.

Someday (if not already) books will be written examining in exquisite detail the subtleties of character and event in these jewels of fiction. Whole careers will be built on Wolfe's writings.

There is, incidentally, a bonus in the Foreword by Gene Wolfe---a short-short titled "Death of the Island Doctor." There is yet another variation yet to be written, of course: "The Death Island Story, Doctor."

THE ARMAGEDDON RAG By George R.R. Martin. \$50. Special limited edition of 540 copies, autographed and numbered, with slipcase.

The hardcover book is itself a work of art, with the dust jacket painting by Victor Moscoso an added bonus.

This edition is published by Nemo Press/Poseiden Press. Order from Nemo Press, 1205 Harney Street, Omaha, NE 68126.

The novel is simply marvelous! Martin's skill and talent are awesome as he evokes the rock band milieu of the 70's and overlays it with somber, vicious overtones of ultimate

evil, supernatural evil, as a hated rock promoter's heart is literally torn from his chest in a grisly ritual murder as a preliminary to the planned regrouping of the great rock band, the Nazgul.

The evocation of the atmosphere and power of rock music is here so well done that it is itself almost supernatural. Martin uses words to build images that sizzle and scald. His characterizations are true and solid.

This volume is, yes, a high-priced collector's edition, but the fiction--the novel--is worth the money in itself.

Martin writes of demonic possession, of a takeer of the world by Satan...of the ultimate frenzy of the most massive rock concert ever held. And more and more.

You can't miss with this novel.

GROUND ZERO GRAPHICS, 1131 White Av., Kansas City, MO 64126, has issued two art prints of Leo and Diane Dillon's cover paintings for Vinge's **SNOW QUEEN** and Ellison's **DEATHBIRD STORIES**.

They are big--18 x 24--and on very heavy white cardstock, in glorious color. Not to frame these is a crime.

I've misplaced the flyer detailing costs for these. Write Ground Zero for details.

SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE for December, 1983 blew my cover: Andy Porter actually published two photos of me. The "Mystery Man" of fandom revealed! Oh, A-a-a-a-r-r-r-r-gh!

But seriously, folks, SFC does a good job of reporting sf and fantasy news, views and events. Andy has

the advantage of being based in the New York area and can personally follow up many stories neglected or even not known by the other newsmen.

Monthly, \$18. per year for USA and Canada. Write for other rates. Address: P.O. Box 4175, New York, NY 10163-4175.

STARSHIP Winter-Spring 1982-83 \$3.00 from Andy Porter, address above.

Was this the final issue of **STARSHIP**? I think so. But it was a fine one and worth getting by mail, now.

There's personal revelation you rarely see in Jack Dann's "A Few Sparks in the Dark," and in "Hear How They Chirp" by Fred Pohl you can understand a professional writers feelings about critics and reviewers. "The Silverberg Papers" by R. Silverberg gives up-to-date info on the business/technical side of professional sf writing.

And Letters and Gregory Benford on the scientific perspective....

This sort of material is worth having and enjoying, no matter when published.

BOP SQUARED By Dan Weiss
Black Plankton Press, POB 9812, Berkeley, CA 94709. \$4.95 + 63¢.

A novel, self-published, soft-cover format, which I read and gradually disliked more and more



RICHARD E. GEIS

as the out-of-body experience of the teacher-character became more and more absurd and as the plot broke down and cried for mercy killing. The story seemed to begin as a Juvenile, but became too gross as the story invaded an underground torture/prison run by school officials and connected by tunnel to a public high school.

After that the teacher investigating this horrible situation by means of out-of-body traveling became involved in astro-plane mysticism and I got disgusted.

A NEW SETTLEMENT OF OLD SCORES

By John Brunner

A COLLECTION OF TOPICAL SONGS AND FILKSONGS ESPECIALLY COMPILED FOR CONSTELLATION, THE 41st ANNUAL WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION

\$8.00 + \$1.00 postage and handling. NESFA, Box G, MIT Branch Post Office, Cambridge, MA 02139-0910.

This is a songbook of Brunner's original work and contains 32 songs, most with music. Each song is illustrated by art contributed by 21 of SF's finest artists.

The volume is 8½ x 11, 68 pages, heavy stock, perfect bound or plastic comb binding (for flat opening).

HEART OF STONE, DEAR and other stories

By R. A. Lafferty

SNAKE IN HIS BOSOM and other stories

By R. A. Lafferty

Chris Drumm Books, P.O. Box 445, Polk City, IA 50226

These are small-size 46-page booklets of five short stories each. Offset printing, heavy cover stock. No art. \$2. each, postpaid.

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