

# SCIENCE FICTION

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1984

## REVIEW

NUMBER 51  
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*John Brunner*

*Charles Platt*

*Bob Shaw*

*Damon Knight*

*Barry Malzberg*

*F. Paul Wilson*

IT COMES IN A  
PLASTIC BAG TO  
KEEP THE SLIME  
FROM DRIBBLING ON  
THE NEWSTAND.



HAS YOUR MAJESTY  
CONSIDERED THE JOYS  
OF FIRE AND  
THE SWORD?



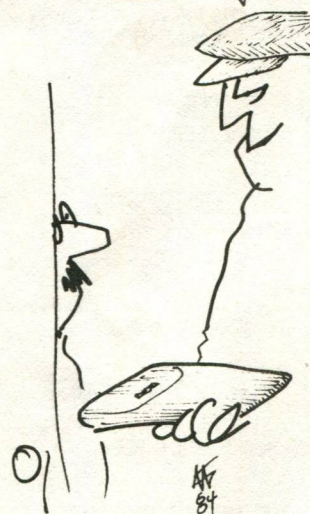
**Alexis  
Gilliland**

THE PROBLEM WITH LITERARY  
CRITICISM IS THEY LET SLOBS  
LIKE YOU DO IT!



BUT I'M A  
TRENDY  
SLOB.

YOU DA TURKEY  
WHAT SUBMITTED  
DIS MANUSCRIPT,  
BUB?



INTERVIEW: DONALD KINGSBURY



# SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

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31,32,35,39,40,45,49,50,53,  
DAVID TRANSUE---7,8,34,37,52,59,60,63  
MIKE ARDEN---8,51  
MICHAEL GILBERT---9,48  
OLE PETTERSON---16  
S.L.T.---19  
BRAD W. FOSTER---25,33,36,37,41,46,56  
ALLEN KOSZOWSKI---28,34  
RAYMOND H. ALLARD---42  
GRANT CANFIELD---44,55

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ALIEN THOUGHTS.....4  
BY RICHARD E. GEIS

AND THEN I SAW.....6  
BY RICHARD E. GEIS

LOOK WHAT THEY'VE DONE TO  
MY SONG, MA.....7  
BY F. PAUL WILSON

INTERVIEW: DONALD KINGSBURY.....9  
CONDUCTED BY ROBERT J. SAWYER

OTHER VOICES.....15  
BOOK REVIEWS BY  
DEAN R. LAMBE  
JANRAE FRANK  
NEAL WILGUS  
MICHAEL A. MORRISON  
BILL WINANS  
PAUL MCGUIRE  
KARL EDD  
ROBERT SABELLA  
RUSSELL ENGEBTRETSON

THE DECLINE OF FICTION.....20  
BY CHARLES PLATT

ONCE OVER LIGHTLY.....22  
BOOK REVIEWS BY GENE DEWEESE

FLASHPOINT: MIDDLE.....24  
BY BARRY N. MALZBERG

A REPLY TO GREGORY BENFORD.....26  
BY DAMON KNIGHT

NOISE LEVEL.....27  
A COLUMN BY JOHN BRUNNER

TO BARRY: DOWN IN THE DREAM  
QUARTER.....28  
A POEM BY BLAKE SOUTHFORK

NOTES ON THE MAN IN THE TREE....29  
BY DAMON KNIGHT

THE VIVISECTOR.....32  
A COLUMN BY DARRELL SCHWEITZER

THE GLASS BUSHEL.....35  
A COLUMN BY BOB SHAW

SMALL PRESS NOTES.....38  
BY RICHARD E. GEIS

RAISING HACKLES.....39  
BY ELTON T. ELLIOTT

LETTERS.....42  
PIERS ANTHONY  
IAN COVELL  
DOUG FRATZ  
TONY ALSO-BROOK RENNER  
RICH BROWN  
DARRELL SCHWEITZER  
DAVID LASS  
ROBERT BLOCH  
DAVID GERROLD  
STEVE PERRY  
K.J. COHEN  
JOHN BRUNNER  
LAURA CAMPBELL  
POUL ANDERSON  
DONALD FRANSON  
NORMAN KAGAN

TEN YEARS AGO IN SF - SPRING, 1974  
BY ROBERT SABELLA.....55

THE ARCHIVES.....56  
BOOKS AND OTHER ITEMS RECEIVED  
WITH DESCRIPTION, COMMENTARY,  
OR OTHER INFORMATION.



## REVIEWS-----

SOMETHING ABOUT AMELIA.....	6
LICENSE TO KILL.....	6
THE HUNGER.....	6
VALLEY GIRL.....	6
MIKE HAMMER.....	6
BUFFALO BILL.....	6
ALONE IN THE DARK.....	6
CONFESSIONS OF A WINDOW CLEANER.....	6
CONFESSIONS OF A POP PERFORMER.....	6
THE MASTER.....	6
LOVESICK.....	6
CLAY'S ARK.....	6
LIGHTRUNNER.....	6
IRON TONGUE.....	6
EROS ASCENDING.....	6
THE YEAR'S BEST HORROR STORIES, SERIES XI.....	16
SHADOWINGS.....	17
THE SF COLLECTOR'S CATALOG.....	17
H.G. WELLS IN THE CINEMA.....	18
EARTHCHILD.....	18
THE WIZARDS OF ARMAGEDDON.....	18
THE ALIEN UPSTAIRS.....	19
SUNMAIFS.....	19
BRONWYN'S BANE.....	19
THE BEAST.....	21
TABLE FOR FIVE.....	21
LEGMEN.....	21
LOOKIN' TO GET OUT.....	21
CREEPSHOW.....	21
JUST BEFORE DAWN.....	21
THE MAN IN THE TREE.....	22
THE BRANCH.....	22
THE STEPS OF THE SUN.....	22
THE GHOST LIGHT.....	22
WHAT DREAMS MAY COME.....	22
GREEN EYES.....	23
SOUL RIDER: SPIRITS OF FLUX AND ANCHOR.....	23
ONE WINTER IN EDEN.....	23
THE SHORES OF ANOTHER SEA.....	23
THE SENTINAL.....	23
CHILDHOOD'S END.....	23
ANNALS OF KLEPSIS.....	32
THROUGH ELEGANT EYES.....	32
GOLDEN GATE & OTHER STORIES.....	32
DARK VALLEY DESTINY: THE LIFE AND DEATH OF ROBERT E. HOWARD.....	33
THE FRINGE OF THE UNKNOWN.....	34
MR. MOM.....	37
LOSIN' IT.....	37
STROKER ACE.....	37
LOVE SONG.....	38
INDEX TO THE SF MAGAZINES-1983.....	38
CIMERA?.....	38
THE LLEWELLYN NEW TIMES.....	38
STARSHIP, Winter-Spring 1984.....	38
STEVE LYON: THE DOCTOR.....	38
NEXUS.....	41
THE FIRST KINGDOM.....	41
ELFQUEST #3.....	41
PRIVATE WORLDS.....	41
FILE 770.....	41
THE EXPERIMENT.....	55

## MY LAST WORDS

...are being written April 9, the day before these layout pages go to the printer.

# THINGS THAT GET BUMPED IN THE NIGHT...were, this issue, "Clarion

Call" by Avram Davidson. Next issue for sure, Avram!

And two pages of "Alien Thoughts" which would have been political and likely more economic commentary. The CIA operations against Nicaragua are especially intriguing.

Also bumped again was the second part of the Darrell Schweitzer interview. Part of the problem was my accepting Bob Shaw's offer to write his legendary column, "The Glass Bushel" for SFR. And the letter column went to 14 pages; could not be cut!

Paulette has done heroic work with The Archives, condensing book descriptions to the bone, and we saved a few pages there. And "Other Voices" was shorter, too, this time, due mainly to fewer reviews received. But even there I had to cut a page of Alma Jo Williams' shorty reviews to make the 64-page limit.

The life of an editor is hard!

# CRAIG MILLER called last week to tell me of the Hugo nominations: SFR for Best Semi-Prozine, and me for Best Fan Writer. The nominee must officially accept the nomination before it goes on the final ballot. I'm always surprised and delighted at being on the final ballot for one or more Hugos; it's an egoboo ball to find that a lot of people think I write and edit so well.

---RICHARD E. GEIS

### Next Issue.....

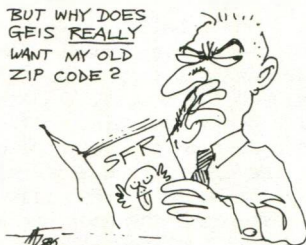
INTERVIEW: DARRELL SCHWEITZER  
PART TWO

"CLARION CALL"  
BY AVRAM DAVIDSON

"IN THE WAVE'S WAKE"  
BY GREGORY BENFORD

INTERVIEW: JULIAN MAY

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:

Deal with people on their  
terms---steal from a thief,  
lie to a liar, manipulate a  
manipulator....



# ALIEN THOUGHTS

**RICHARD E. GEIS**

¶ WRITE IT AGAIN, DICK

is what is happening as you read this. I, and Elton Elliott have signed contracts with Fawcett for the sequel to our novel, THE SWORD OF ALLAH. This one is titled THE BURNT LANDS and sends hero John Norris to the horribly burned and wasted lands of Europe after the solar flare which killed 99.99% of the people and after killer winds and firestorms had swept those countries.

Why the trip? A surviving band of terrorists are holding for ransom the president of the United States.

Ms. due in August. Publication likely sometime in 1985.

¶ An observation on the economy, and after this I'll leave my favorite subject alone for this issue.

First, an admission of error: I misjudged in saying I thought the economy would start dying in November-December, 1983. Obviously there is/was a lot of bounce left in the credit cards. People have been buying cars and houses like crazy---and going into debt like crazy to do it.

It now appears, to judge by the dive of the stock market, that mid-1984 will be the turning point. From now on (now is Feb. 29) interest rates will climb and that will write finish to this recovery.

With a current deficit of 180 or so billion, and with handwriting on the wall later this year for 250 billion dollar deficits for 1985 and onward, with the economy faltering badly come election time in November, the new president will face the prospect of cutting the budget and increasing taxes in a recession. If that bullet is not bitten, the real pessimists will see their worst projections come true: terrifying inflation, incredible interest rates...a looming road to a Brazil-type bankrupt economy and maybe a revolution from the right.

I look for the new president to be a Democrat who will be able and

willing to make cuts and slashes in entitlements and other government spending which a Republican president couldn't get away with. The new man will impose "poverty with compassion."

¶ I think it's marvelous how the people of this country are rallying to spend all kinds of money to feed the starving deer and elk in the northern western states this winter...so they can be shot later in the year during hunting season.

¶ I really love President Reagan's remark that it doesn't matter whether you cover a deficit by taxes or by borrowing. It says so much about his basic ignorance and stupidity.

If you pay for a 200 billion dollar deficit by taxes, that's the end of it---it's paid off. If you borrow 200 billion at today's interest rates, you pay 200 billion dollars of interest in nine years...and still owe the 200 billion principle.

The way things are going, the Reagan administration will run up the national debt (with congress' willing collaboration!) to two trillion dollars before he's out of office (if re-elected) in 1988.

And the public will be paying about 200 billion interest per year---more than the entire federal budget ten years ago.

When that chicken comes home to roost, it'll smother the whole damn country!

¶ I don't believe a damn thing any politician says anymore. Reagan lied his head off to get elected in 1980: balance the budget, kill the education dept., do this, do that... and he's reneged on every one of them.

He clearly had a secret priority---to build up the military and re-establish the American empire and roll back Soviet expansion, and to hell with balancing the budget!

So tell me, what is Fritz Mondale's secret plan? He'll never tell.

And if Gary Hart performs a miracle and cops the Demo nomination, what will be his secret set of Things To Do?

We are in the hands of liars, mandmen, thieves and cowards. I see it at every level of government, from Portland's city council to the absurdly spineless legislature of the state, to Washington, DC.

## A MOCKERY OF FREEDOM

Every few years I contemplate the structure of society, and am amazed at how virtually impossible it is to live in this country (or any other country) without paying tribute to landlords. [And let us be clear---a landlord is also and often especially so, the State.]

Land is owned, if not by private citizens, then by "the people" (a mockery, since "public" lands are actually owned by the government, which is in turn owned and manipulated by politicians and/or the megafortunes and power-lines (corporations) controlled by the people who control the megafortunes.

And all this land is controlled in order to keep ordinary people





from living without paying for the privilege of sleeping somewhere.

You cannot roll a travel trailer onto a city park and live rent free, can you? You can't buy land and live rent free, can you? [Taxes!]

And you can't just roam the streets with a backpack and sleep in a park that way.

There are laws against living without paying rent. You pay rent in effect to stay alive.

The entire structure of society is shaped to make you pay for the privilege of being alive. You are the slave, the sheep always to be sheered of whatever money you can earn, or of value from whatever you may produce.

(One of the greatest con games in the structure to bleed people is interest on debt. But nobody can force you to go into debt.)

No matter how prosperous and wealthy a country becomes, the ongoing structure of laws continues to suck you dry of money--for rent.

Periodically I mentally explore ways to live without paying rent. Finding a rent-free, safe place to sleep always stumps me. I am always forced to break a law: camping on a roof of a building, say, which is rarely inspected...finding a hidden patch of ground in freeway-bordering shrubbery...empty, abandoned houses or buildings.... Impermanent. Liable for arrest for trespass or other sin against property, city or private.

Maybe, maybe in the pioneer days one could claim land in the wilderness and live tax-free, rent free. But civilization has caught up with us now, and no place is beyond the palm-up hand (a gun is in the other) of the State.

My home is hostage to the tax collector--pay up or in three years or so they'll foreclose and sell my house for back taxes [rent!].

The only halfway viable method I've thought of is the motorhome which can be parked at a curb for a few days at a time, before moving to a new neighborhood. But that system is high-cost, too, because you'd need to replace batteries often, or find a very quiet generator of electricity to use during night times.

And nomadism is made very difficult because so many employers and financial institutions will demand of you a "permanent address" (you can't get a p.o. box without a permanent address).

Society wants you under its subtle control, paying rent, paying a share it determines of your income.

The only options are to have miniscule income and turn the tables--live off the state. Or live as a street person, a hobo, a bum, a tramp.

A man in Portland recently tried

to live out of a shopping cart downtown beside the county library.

There was a big outcry and the powers that be finally put him in a mental home. Obviously a crazy.

And periodically a man or woman will be discovered who has been living in one of the city's forest parks in the neighboring hills---having constructed a shack of scrap wood---and this outrage is instantly ended.

Only by becoming a hermit and doing the Vonu bit can a person evade the gimlet eye of the state or other landlord. It's a very high price to pay...and so we all pay the rent and most of us aren't even aware of the basic outrage involved.

Why should a person have to pay just to be alive?

And isn't it odd that this is true in so-called socialist countries, too? Socialists demand that every citizen contribute to the State---or be punished.

I believe a homestead, once bought and paid for, should be rent-free, tax free, for as long as you own it. You could live very cheaply, without electricity, if you wished, and only pay for the one basic service needed---water and sewer. You could scrounge wood for a woodstove, grow most of your food, and spend a lot of time in libraries. On a small farm with a well and an out-house, even water and sewer expense could be cut.

Well, from all news reports, even in this "recovery" homeless people are increasing, living on the streets, as bag ladies, as suitcase men, as some families live out of a covered pickup truck...in cars.

And in the next leg down of the depression these numbers will dramatically increase as more and more people cannot afford to pay the exorbitant tribute (ransom) demanded by the State and by private landlords (who also pay rent) for the privilege of being alive.

But only the destitute and the fanatics will endure the life-style required by society now to live rent-free.

Maybe multi-millions of homeless in years to come (who signed on in the millions to pay \$500,000 for a \$100,000 home over thirty years) will force a change in this iron law. But I doubt it.

I suspect, suddenly, highly efficient solar-power units will allow a new era of luxury nomadism.

Hummm. There's a novel in that idea...

...a motor home whose roof is covered by solar cell units powerful enough to charge, every day, highly efficient, long-lasting batteries, which could run the mot-



or home for about one or two hours or fifty to a hundred miles per day. And provide power for TV, refrigerator, appliances, lights, etc. at night.

Now, that would be something worth saving up for.

Imagine the conflict between the New Nomads and the State, as the existing culture and power structure sought to ban such life-styles and/or tax/license it to the point of making it non-viable for poor people.

Special police forces would be hired...a lot of counterfeiting of licenses and permits would go on, a network of CB alerts would be developed to warn of approaching smokies, and back-road living would be an option. There would be some shoot-outs, sabotage, etc.

You'd have supply industries and services grow to maintain and perpetuate the New Nomad motor homes and life-styles.

You'd have tribes, caravans, distinct "nations" of nomads, and even warfare between these tribes for prime camping/clustering spots.

It all depends on technology. It all depends on the possibility of living rent-free for millions of people.

Employers would soon cater to nomad workers, providing special parking areas... The New Nomads would have a class structure, and middle-income families would join, linking up with computers and radio and mobile telephones.

Some would tow special greenhouse trailers and grow a lot of food. Self-sufficiency and independence would be a new fad, a new watchword...

There would be gangs who preyed on the nomads...and New Nomad protection and police forces...

As I said, there's a novel in this.





# and then i saw...

## SOMETHING ABOUT AMELIA (ABC)

is a nice-nice documentary-style drama about upper-middle-class incest.

Ted Danson (of CHEERS fame, and remember him as the young Asst. D.A. in BODY HEAT?) played the well-to-do father with an inexplicable need for love and sex from his young-teen daughter (played beautifully by Roxana Zal). It didn't convince me.

Danson seemed too competent, too well-balanced, too handsome, to be hiding such a Need. True, he did display more-than-normal jealousy when his daughter went to her first prom with a nice boy from her school, but....

Maybe I find it difficult to feel sorry for people who live in \$250,000 houses and have no money worries.

## LICENSE TO KILL (CBS)

follows the docudrama approach again in a story about a wealthy middle-class businessman (Don Murray) who drinks too much and who, drunk, killed a teen-age girl in a head-on collision in which he was barely bruised.

We are then given parental heartbreak and justice-system delays and apparent miscarriage of justice as it looks like the evil drunk (selfish, selfish!) will get off scott-free on a technicality.

James Farentino was good as the overcontrolled, delayed-grief father of the girl.

The one realistic thing about the film was Don Murray's bitching about his lawyer's outrageous legal fees.

But here again the networks have demonstrated that the wealthy middle-class male is the only class of person they feel it is safe to make the villain.

Actually, women are more likely to abuse their kids than men (not sexually, but physically, emotionally), and women are more likely to be drunks, secretly, at home. But, of course, they do wrong because their men are abusive or depriving them of love.

## THE HUNGER (R)

uses the vampire movie and tries to make of it an art film. Fine, arty visuals, moody music, despair, desperation....

Catherine Deneuve is a pure, ageless vampire who, in present-day New York, is sad to see her latest male lover (played by David Bowie) lose his immortality factor and age over two hundred years in a day or two.

She's gone through a series of lovers and keeps their husks stored in the attic.

Enter Susan Sarandon, a lovely woman doctor working in a life-extension research institute who is vitally interested in the cataclysmic aging of Bowie (and the aging is very convincingly done---they can make anything realistic nowadays!) . Deneuve seduces Sarandon---bites her---and places some of her own blood in Sarandon's bloodstream. Sarandon gets sick and is converting into an immortal vampire who can "eat" only human blood (ordinary food makes her sick as a dog). Eventually she is forced by her Hunger to kill and eat her fellow doctor/lover.

Great images, whispers, low-key lighting... The ending will not surprise you...and may disappoint you as it did me.

The seduction scenes between Deneuve and Sarandon were nicely done, though---even with the nudity---a bit too contrived; I sensed they were inserted to hype the picture.

## VALLEY GIRL (R)

is fairly convincing as it involves (romantically) a San Fernando Valley high school girl with a lower class Los Angeles punk rocker boy.

The clash of values and cultures is interesting, if really accurate.

Standard formula story. Some very good acting by new young actors and actresses.

A good mixture of realism and idealism. Some sly mocking of without parents.

## MIKE HAMMER (CBS)

fails in its casting Stacy Keach as Hammer---a nice guy trying to play tough. His hard-boiled acting is undermined by a subtle good-guy inside. But the casting might have been deliberate to make Mike Hammer more acceptable to the public morality which rules network decisions. As it runs now the series is just another pseudo private-eye series with old-fashioned voice-over to give it a phony first-person narrative "feel".

Of course Mike Hammer, even in the original Spillane novels, was a cartoon. But he was an honest cartoon. In this network incarnation, Hammer is a self-mockery---a joke, a satire of the private-eye genre.

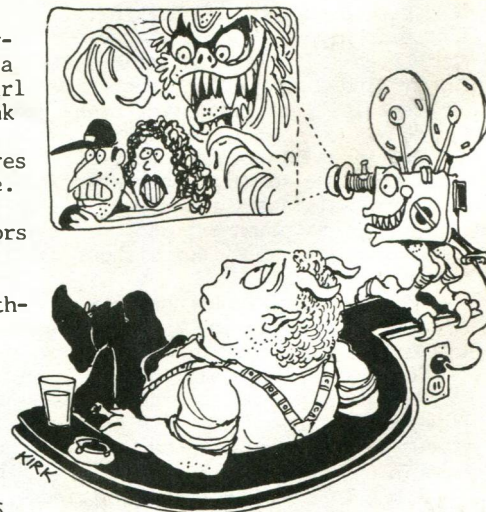
## BUFFALO BILL (NBC)

is about an egotistic, arrogant, selfish talk-show host who turns into a wimp whenever confronted with real opposition, real anger, real contempt. Dabney Coleman plays Bill very well, and may be making a career of playing such types (as in 9 TO 5 and MODERN PROBLEMS).

But I don't like phoneys and cannot find anything in this show to like. Archy Bunker had the courage of his convictions and an innate honesty and reluctant fairness. Buffalo Bill is simply a bullying fraud surrounded by too many asslickers and cowards.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

# RICHARD E. GEIS





# LOOK WHAT THEY'VE DONE TO MY SONG, MA

I'd been a knot of tension all day but the liter or so of Freixenet brut under my belt had gone a long way toward untying me by screening time. As the theatre darkened and the screen lightened and the Dolbyized sounds of Tangerine Dream vibrated the seats, I held hands with my wife and watched. Like Thomas who first wanted to thrust his fingers into Christ's wounds, I'd said all along that until I sat in a theatre and saw it with my own eyes, I wouldn't believe it. But there it was: THE KEEP ... "based on the novel by F. Paul Wilson."

Never thought it would happen. The book's slouch toward the screen had been a perfect example of Murphy's Law. A great start: Koch-Kirkwood Productions had generously optioned it for CBS Theatrical films in the summer of '80; THE KEEP was to be part of CBS' big expansion plan. But no one wanted the author to script the movie -- he'd never done a screenplay before and couldn't be entrusted to cut his teeth on such a big project. A "pro" was brought in but his screenplay was rejected. Then the screenwriters struck. "Could we have an extension on the first option because of the strike?" Sure. Then Michael Mann was brought on the scene as writer-director -- "to ensure a unity of vision on the project." I'd been impressed with THIEF and THE JERICHO MILE and figured we were cookin' now.

Then CBS went and released a couple of flops and decided to tighten the belt on all future productions. Koch-Kirkwood-Mann said they couldn't make THE KEEP under the new budget restrictions so they went to Paramount and worked a turnaround. Things began to go smoothly for a while: Oscar-winner John Box was signed as production designer, and Wally Veevers, who had worked on all sorts of goodies, from Menzies' THINGS TO COME in '35, through Kubrick's 2001, to SUPERMAN, came on as optical effects director. Principle photography was completed in December, '82 and THE KEEP was scheduled as a Summer of '83 release.

Then, tragically, Wally Veevers died before he really got started on the sfx. The early summer release became late summer, then was pushed back to November. Now it was December.

**By F. Paul Wilson**



Finally, it was ready. I knew it was going to be good. It had to be. Despite the fact that Michael Mann had not deigned to reply to my comments on the first draft of his screenplay nor to my offer of any assistance that he might require, that he had been cool and distant when I visited the set at Shepperton Studios in England, that he had refused to allow me an early screening, that during the entire project he had not sought any advice or opinion from the originator of the characters and concept of the story he was filming, I was sure it was going to be a good film. After all, I'd heard all along how Mann had thrown himself into the project, going so far as to dig out old SS and Wehrmacht manuals to assure a look of utter authenticity; he even brought a linguist to the set to teach the British actors how to speak not with a German accent, but with a German rhythm. He was the movie-maker and I was the bookwriter. He was working in his field of expertise. (When I expressed to Whitley Strieber -- who had already been down this road twice -- my confidence in how well everything was going, he gave me a small, knowing little smile. I didn't understand that smile then.)

I told myself that in order to protect his own vision, Mann was trying to put some distance between himself and the originator, afraid I'd act like an overprotective parent and harass him to distraction. So despite the rudeness, the rejection, the cavalier attitude, I was sure it was going to be a great movie. Had to be. It had everything going for it. Mann and Paramount knew what they were doing, right? Everything was under control, right?

Right?

Imagine a sylvan god creating tree after tree after tree, painstakingly etching each crag in the bark, each vein in every leaf, fashioning utterly perfect, unspeakably beautiful trees.

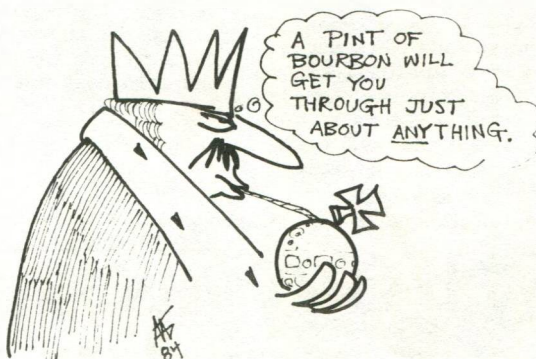
Now imagine him getting lost in his own forest.

The first half of the film was one of the most glorious experiences of my life. (It doesn't compare to hearing that your wife is fine and you're the father of a healthy little girl, but it's up there.) To see scenes you wrote for the page come alive on the screen is an experience every writer should have just once in his life. The photography, the lighting, the sets -- all absolutely stunning. I'm a sucker for the expressionistic blend of light and shadow the Germans did so well in the 20s and 30s and much of THE KEEP reminded me of that.

But the narrative ... I noticed dangerous little cracks in the narrative. I brushed my fears aside: Michael Mann knows what he's doing; he'll patch them up.

But he didn't patch them up. He let them get wider, becoming fissures, then wide bottomless chasms that eventually swallowed the whole movie. I didn't realize that immediately, but as my post-screening euphoria wore off, I began to question the film objectively.

Silly things -- like changing Woermann from the last of a long line of Prussian military men to a street socialist who'd fought the fascists in Spain half a dozen years before. Not only does this rob Woermann of his conflict of loyalties but anyone with a couple of functioning neurons knows that socialist fighters in Spain in 1936 don't wind up Wehrmacht captains in 1941. It is laughable. But not as laughable as Mann's version of Molasar. If he didn't think a human form was visual enough, he could have kept





Molasar in a cloud or blurred his outlines or something! Anything but that cross between a rubberized Darth Vader and a flayed ape.

He failed to develop a single character to the point where we could care about him or her. He made Glenn/Glaeken into a robot, and added a priest who did almost nothing. Glaeken and Eva (why wasn't "Magda" an acceptable name?) meet on a hill and -- cut! -- they are in bed. Cuza's crisis of faith was gone. The whole point of Cuza being a Jew -- other than the irony it lent his position -- was to allow Molasar to fake the power of the cross over himself and use that as a lever against Cuza's soul. Without that crisis, the presence of a Jew in the keep smacks of exploitation.

The plot was chopped up into an incomprehensible mishmash. There is no dramatic tension, no catharsis. Molasar's final destruction of the German soldiers takes place off stage as in a Greek drama -- we hear a few shots, some screams, and then find everyone charred to a crisp. Glaeken's final battle with Molasar, the confrontation to which

the whole movie should have been pointing, is over in a flash. Glaeken's triumph is perfunctory at best, then he too is sucked into the vortex. As in a typical B-movie from the 50s, anyone or anything that doesn't quite belong in this place and time cannot be allowed to remain. I ignored that cliché in the book but apparently Mann did not choose to do so in his film.

A parade of missed opportunities. That's what's so frustrating. This wasn't a schlock production. Lots of money, time and talent were involved. What went wrong? I do not know. I can't get a straight answer from anyone. I have production stills of scenes that never made it to the screen, scenes that might have given some of the characters a little depth and explained more of the plot. But they're on the cutting room floor. Why? I don't know. Maybe Paramount, for its own reasons, made Mann cut the film down to 97 minutes. I'll probably never know. No one tells the author a damn thing.

Whatever the reasons, the story is gone. Nothing is left but a bewildering progression of beauti-



fully lit, wonderfully angled pieces of film. I feel betrayed. Cheated. It angers me to know that millions of people will walk out of the movie thinking that's the way I wrote the book. Some of them will no doubt pick up a copy, but most will not opt for what they'll feel is a more concentrated dose of confusion. And there will be uncounted millions more who will skip the movie and the book because of all the scathing reviews from the film critics.

I could have helped. I offered and, God knows, I was willing. If I'd been allowed a little input I could have made it a better picture. Mann the film maker in collaboration with Wilson the storyteller might have come up with a winner. After all, it's my story. I know it best.

As Jeffrey Lyons said on PBS, "It could have been wonderful."

Amen.

"AND THEN I SAW" CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

#### ALONE IN THE DARK (R)

gives the viewer Jack Palance as an escaped homicidal maniac (with three other inmates from the most-dangerous ward of a private sanitarium) after a power outage and a back-up generator fails and the locks of the institution's doors do not work.

(Thin premise, but wotthehell, it's a low-budget horror film.)

They go after a new doctor's family, resenting his taking over for a doctor they loved who left to take a better job elsewhere.

Suspense and gore, murder and mayhem follow.

Donald Pleasence plays the idealistic, weird psychiatrist boss of the institution, and gets himself killed trying to "reason" with the sadistic, paranoid, homicidal escapees.

Pleasence steals every scene he's in, of course, with his aura of weirdness just below his surface.

There are some gripping, contrived ending tension scenes in this movie, as the doctor and his family are stalked and under siege in his house by the crazies.



#### CONFESSIONS OF A POP PERFORMER (R)

Another of those slapstick, broad comedies made in England which feature stupid, inept heroes (Jerry Lewis types) who stumble into social and workplace disasters and in these R-rated comedies also lurch into sexual situations in which the young woman almost always is bare-breasted and/or totally starkers. BEAVER!

Ten years or so ago pubic hair would have been a staggering sight on film. Now it is a so-what on Showtime.

In these films the young man is often nude, too, but rarely is a glimpse given of male genitals. Showing progressively more erect penises may be the next "break-through". (The men are already explicitly fondling women's breasts and kissing and sucking for a few seconds, the nipples.) Eventually, I suppose, any sexual contact will be permitted (except anal) provided the male does not ejaculate on-camera.

#### CONFESSIONS OF A WINDOW CLEANER (R)

is a formula repeat of CONFESSIONS OF A POP PERFORMER. (See above.)

#### THE MASTER (NBC)

is that network's attempt to cash in on the success of martial arts films. In this Lee Van Cleef---bald, in his 60's ---plays a mysterious, super-conditioned master of occult and martial arts. He has a snotty young man assistant who screws up a lot. And together they Do Good by foiling nasties. The kung-fu encounters are well-done: those stunt men and doubles do great work.

I doubt I'll watch another of these.

#### LOVESICK (R)

has a great cast with Dudley Moore as a lovesick psychiatrist who has fallen for a patient (reverse transference, in the trade), Alec Guinness playing the ghost of Sigmund Freud, John Huston as Moore's mentor, Selma Diamond and Alan King as members of the Psychiatry Board of Review...and Elizabeth McGovern as the patient.

But the film is slow, dull, with lots of no comedy or very mild amusements. Everyone seemed...bored, as bored as Moore with most of his patients before he met Her.

Marshall Brickman's direction seemed languid, aiming for charm instead of energy and funny. Chamber music in the background, a predictable story in the foreground.



## INTERVIEW:

# DONALD KINGSBURY

CONDUCTED BY ROBERT J. SAWYER

Donald Kingsbury's epic COURTS-  
SHIP RITE has received unique treat-  
ment for a first science fiction novel.  
The book was published in  
six different formats over an  
eighteen-month period. Early in  
1982, Simon & Schuster distributed  
an advance trade paperback with a  
plain green cover to critics and  
booksellers. ANALOG serialized it  
in the spring of 1982. Simon &  
Schuster released it simultaneously  
as a hardcover and a quality paper-  
back in July. The Science Fiction  
Book Club brought out its edition  
late in 1982. Timescape's mass-  
market paperback appeared in July  
1983.

COURTS-  
SHIP RITE is a sweeping  
saga of an energy-poor planet where  
multiple marriages are the norm  
and cannibalism is a sacred ritual.  
It received the kind of notices in  
the mainstream press that most SF  
authors only dream of getting.  
Witness PUBLISHER'S WEEKLY: "an  
ambitious work, certain to gather  
a lot of attention." And KIRKUS:  
"a feat of nonchalant, assured com-  
plexity: rich, teeming." Rare is  
the reviewer who doesn't compare  
COURTS-  
SHIP RITE with DUNE.

Who is Kingsbury? The readers  
of ANALOG know him. He's been ap-  
pearing since 1952 in that maga-  
zine's pages, commanding four cov-  
ers. His stories are remembered  
for their rare depth of characteri-  
zation, for their rich explorations  
of future human societies. Equal-  
ly noteworthy are his contributions  
to the oft-neglected second half of  
ANALOG SCIENCE FICTION/SCIENCE FACT.

Born in 1929 in San Francisco,  
Donald MacDonald Kingsbury lived  
his childhood in such diverse  
places as New Guinea, New Mexico,  
and New Hampshire. His father was

a mining engineer. He moved to  
Montreal in 1948 to study at McGill  
University. He became a Canadian  
citizen in 1953 and now teaches  
mathematics at McGill. Divorced,  
he lives with his two sons.

Kingsbury is 195 centimeters  
tall, a sprawling man with a pierc-  
ing gaze. Though the dust jacket  
of COURTS-  
SHIP RITE has no author  
photo, it is Kingsbury himself who  
appears in profile as Joesai in  
Rowena Morrill's cover painting.

Accolades have poured in for  
Kingsbury's SF. Terry Carr has  
said, "Kingsbury isn't yet a fam-  
ous name but he soon will be."  
In 1980, his novella "The Moon God-  
dess and the Son" was a Hugo nom-  
inee. And COURTS-  
SHIP RITE was a  
contender for the best novel Hugo  
in 1983.

SFR: You were born in San Francis-  
co and ended up in Montreal, but  
there was a lot in between, wasn't  
there?

KINGSBURY: When I was a year-and-  
a-half, we moved to a gold-rush  
town in the interior of New Guinea.  
My father hired a converted World  
War One bomber to fly us in.  
They tell me I stuck my nose right  
out the window and got a big shock  
as 100-mile-per-hour winds whipped  
by. I had Australian nannies and  
we had 20 black servants. My moth-  
er was a Southerner and she fell  
into the old plantation mode very  
easily. When the servants chopped  
wood for the stove -- we didn't  
have electricity -- I'd turn up  
and all the work would stop.

They'd teach me about woodcutting.  
I'd play around with the axe under  
their very careful supervision:  
they weren't going to let me get  
hurt. All my early learning was  
in this manner: interacting with  
the adults. My two sisters and I  
were the only children in the town.  
When I was six, my parents decided  
it was time we got out of the wild-  
erness and into some proper schools.  
We spent six months in the Pacific  
en route to California, traveling  
around China, Japan, Indonesia,  
and Hawaii. That's one of the  
reasons I like to wander around  
the galaxy on paper: it's easy  
for me to fall into the traveler  
mode. We left California when I  
was in the sixth grade and went to  
New Mexico for a year. We lived  
in Tyrone which is an old silver-  
mining town not far from Alamogordo  
where the A-bomb went off.

SFR: How were these moves reflect-  
ed in your work?

KINGSBURY: When you write, you  
take and alter things. Joesai be-  
ing a goldsmith in COURTS-  
SHIP RITE comes from the time we spent in  
New Guinea. A lot of the semi-des-  
ert in New Mexico probably came  
out when I wrote about the planet  
Geta in that book. Someone wrote  
me a letter saying, "That doesn't





look like an alien environment to me; it seems just like New Mexico." Well, I thought about it and said, "Yeah, you're right."

I wanted Geta to be a harsh planet, so I took Earth and censored the lush parts that I'd come to know. I didn't want to make it uniformly harsh, though. That's often a weakness in SF: they take five square miles of the Earth and make a whole planet out of it. In Frank Herbert's *DUNE* it's all desert; in *STAR WARS* they've got planets that are all rain forest or all ice. That doesn't strike me as very reasonable. Human beings live between the freezing point and the boiling point of water, yet in that small range, you can find tremendous climatic variety. In the north of Geta, it's very cold and elsewhere there are forests -- admittedly not very lush ones -- and there are many, many places where it is harsh, harsh, desert. Australia might be a model for it. All the Australians live along the coast; it's pretty uninhabitable in the interior.

**SFR:** What made you choose science fiction as your means of expression?

**KINGSBURY:** Science fiction is a testing ground for new ideas about society in a world where conventional ideas are beginning to limp. It's immunization against future shock. The science fiction reader is quicker on the draw than the TV watcher when challenged by a new reality. If I had been confined to writing a novel about group marriage consummated in contemporary North America, I would have had to deal with jealousy and the interactions of a hostile society. Without the constraint of being stuck in our culture I could ask: How would the sexes distribute family burdens among many members? How would they get along if they saw an addition to their family as a helpmate rather than a rival? What limitations would such a loyal, close-knit group have?

**SFR:** It sounds as though the idea appeals to you.

**KINGSBURY:** I've thought about group marriages. The problem is finding partners. People who might be right for the experiment may not be right for you. I know of one group marriage: they tell people they're just two couples. That's what I love about science fiction: you can explore the different things that human beings can get involved in. Workable, fine cultures can be enormously different from one another. Most people feel if you stop being a conservative you start being a

pervert. Deviations from societal norms can be quite disgusting, but they can also be quite beautiful.

**SFR:** How did you become interested in science fiction?

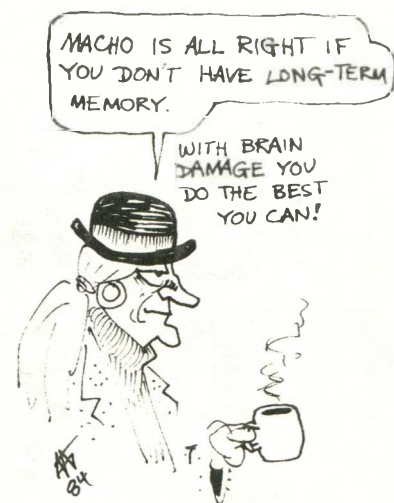
**KINGSBURY:** When we came back to the States, I discovered BRICK BRADFORD comics. I can't remember any of the other comics I read, but I do recall reading BRICK BRADFORD. I might have reacted the same to FLASH GORDON or BUCK ROGERS, but the newspaper we got did not have them. BRICK BRADFORD was their one science fiction strip. When I first came across it they were in the middle of an adventure: the States were being invaded by these strange people in big fur caps and long winter coats. They weren't called Russians, but you knew that's what they were meant to be. They were invading in a fleet of zeppelins. Brick Bradford got involved with a scientist who managed to put up something like the DEW line, only it wasn't radar: it was a kind of repelling ray that disintegrated the great Dr. Timmins. They built a sphere that shrank and they went into the eye of a Lincoln penny, finding planets orbiting around atomic nuclei suns. I used to read that strip very carefully, cutting them out and putting them in a scrapbook. That was my first introduction to SF.

**SFR:** What about traditional SF literature?

**KINGSBURY:** When I was ten, I hated reading, found it a drudge and a bore. We got all these stories about boxes that cranked out salt, filling ships which sank to the bottom of the sea. Fairy tales. What a bunch of nonsense! I was not interested. I figured maybe it's because they were only feeding us kids' books. I wondered what the adults were reading. The book I happened to pull out of the library was *SEVEN FAMOUS NOVELS* by H.G. Wells. My mother had used to read to us from *THE INVISIBLE MAN* as bedtime stories, so I knew Wells' name. After reading *THE TIME MACHINE*, I was hooked.

**SFR:** How did you get introduced to *ASTOUNDING* magazine?

**KINGSBURY:** I'd never heard of it until the War when I was on paper drives, collecting newspapers and the like. We'd pick up these strange books with covers showing bug-eyed monsters carrying off nubile young ladies: *SUPERSCIENCE*, *ASTONISHING*, *THRILLING WONDER*. I



would take these home and read them. There were a couple of *ASTOUNDINGS* mixed in with the others. I didn't differentiate between them at all at the time. One day in 1944 I noticed a copy of *ASTOUNDING* on the newsstand. It had a very intriguing cover by Timmins. I bought a few issues, but hadn't been too impressed, so I'd skip an issue or two. I always looked and evaluated whether a particular issue was worth a quarter or not. Then I saw the cover for A.E. van Vogt's "Mixed Men" with a guy falling toward a planet. Couldn't resist it; loved the story. The next issue I bought had "Dead Hand" in the Foundation series by Isaac Asimov. "Mixed Men," "Dead Hand," and Murray Leinster's "First Contact" fell practically one right after the other. After those three stories and their lovely illustrations I was hooked. I always found a quarter every month after that.

**SFR:** Do you still have those issues?

**KINGSBURY:** Oh, yes. My 1945 collection isn't in good shape, though. I felt there were a lot of bad stories mixed in with the good, so I tore out and saved the ones I liked. I took the serial installments of *THE WORLD OF NULL-A* by A.E. van Vogt out of there too, and made a book out of them.

**SFR:** How did you get started as a writer?

**KINGSBURY:** When I was sixteen, back in the days when \$30 a week was a very good wage, anything an editor would have paid you for a story was a lot of money. I always wanted to be a writer; I never stopped to consider if it was a good way to make a living. It said "unsolicited manuscripts must have return postage" on *AS-*



OUNDING's title page, so I figured someone must be sending these stories in. I set a goal of writing two pages a day. For the first story I wrote, I fulfilled that faithfully, no matter how long it took me. If I got to the bottom of the second page and I was in the middle of a sentence I stopped and went to bed. I had to get the spelling right, which was very painful for me.

SFR: What was that first tale about?

KINGSBURY: It was a simple story about a bunch of guys who build an atomic rocketship and go to the moon in 1965, get out of the ship, look around at a very bleak landscape, pick up some rocks, and head back to Earth. I wasn't into having them find vegetation on the moon because I didn't believe in that. I was writing SF, not fantasy. I had them finding exactly what Apollo really did find.

SFR: But it didn't sell.

KINGSBURY: No. I was dejected at its rejection. I'd expected to make a sale. I felt obviously someone was going to buy it and give me a hundred dollars so I could take girls to the movies and be a big shot in high school. I took it pretty bad; I cried a lot. But I sat down and wrote another story. I just kept doing that. Finishing something is a lot of reinforcement in itself. Pick a size you can deal with and work up from there. Don't start with a novel. I know lots of people who tried to begin with a novel and never finished it so today they aren't writers. I turned out twenty-five short stories before I sold "Ghost Town" to Campbell.

SFR: Were you only submitting your work to ASTOUNDING?

KINGSBURY: No. If Campbell rejected it, I sent it to PLANET STORIES or THRILLING WONDER. There was no FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION. One didn't have anything to do with AMAZING, then. AMAZING was hollow-earth people, a real bunch of nuts at the time. I wouldn't read it. I'd look at a copy once in a while, but it was just garbage. One of my stories was rejected by John Campbell because it had sex in it. H.L. Gold rejected it "because we've already done sex to death."

SFR: When did you graduate to writing longer works?

KINGSBURY: I took my first crack

at writing a book when GALAXY magazine announced a contest: \$1000 for a novel by an amateur. They ended up having Fred Pohl write the winning novel under a pseudonym because the amateur ones they got in were terrible. I didn't finish my entry, THE FINGER POINTING SOLWARD, by the deadline. In fact, I'm still polishing the manuscript today, 35 years later.

SFR: Your published output was quite small in those early years wasn't it? The only other thing was the article "The Right to Breed."

KINGSBURY: Campbell kept sending that back for revisions. "No fire," he'd say. "Give me fanaticism!" I re-wrote it but he sent it back again. "Worse. Now you are slyly winking at the reader saying I'm not this fanatic; these aren't my real opinions." So I wrote it the way he wanted and it was a great success. While a student at McGill University in Montreal, I tried to write the Great American Novel. I had a story in my files about a pregnant girl running away to a hot, sandy Venus. My agent said, "What's Venus doing in this story? Put it back on Earth." Well, I did and I made a novel out of it. I got lost, disappeared from the SF scene, doing it, but it never sold. I did not keep up my connections with Campbell. That was a bad, bad mistake.

SFR: How did you learn to write?

KINGSBURY: In the early days, I always kept a copy of Wells' SEVEN FAMOUS NOVELS and THE WORLD OF NULL-A by A.E. van Vogt on my desk, along with some Westerns. Whenever I was having trouble writing a particular passage, I'd look to see how Wells or van Vogt handled something similar. The Westerns were very helpful for atmosphere description, landscape and action detail. Van Vogt had this thing about 800-word scenes: shorter than that you may not be saying enough; longer, you may be saying

too much. I found that a very good guide in trying to pace myself. Van Vogt ended up doing a review of COURTSHIP RITE for the dust jacket.

SFR: Indeed: "Science fiction here takes another step up, acquires a new beauty ..."

KINGSBURY: I was thrilled. It's great when one of your boyhood heroes pats you on the head.

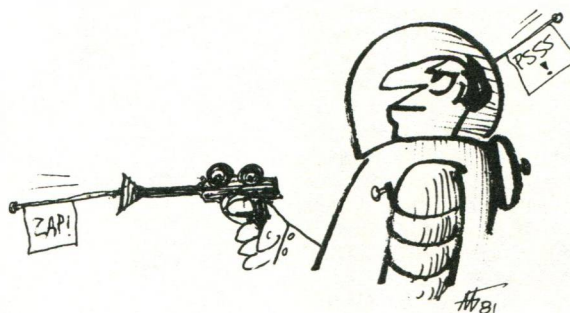
SFR: Did you ever meet van Vogt?

KINGSBURY: Oh, yes. I decided to fly out to the Jet Propulsion Lab to see the Voyager Saturn fly-by. I noticed one of the people who was also going to go was A.E. van Vogt. I wrote him a letter saying I'd been a long admirer of his and I'd like to meet him. I told him anecdotes about how I'd been thrilled as a youngster by his stories and how I'd read his essays on how to write SF. He replied with a very nice letter. When I got to Pasadena, there he was watching the big TV screens. It was just like we were in a control room on board a spaceship watching Saturn go by -- that's the way our minds work. I had a very nice chat with him and his wife and he invited me out to dinner. It was a delightful evening.

SFR: Do you adhere to any sort of writing regimen?

KINGSBURY: One of the troubles with being a bachelor is you've got to do everything for yourself. I try to catch up on household affairs, then block out two weeks in which to get as much writing done as I can before dirty dishes and laundry bury me. During those two weeks I'm a grumpy, unsociable slob. I can write very fast once I'm going, but even with my word processor, I never really turn out more than 2000 words a day.

SFR: So you use high technology to help you write?





KINGSBURY: Fitting, isn't it? After I got the contract for COURTSHP RITE I went out and bought a word processor because I couldn't face the idea of typing drafts over and over again. I got an Olivetti -- it's obsolete now, but a good machine at the time -- dedicated word processor. Now I have an IBM Personal Computer with ProKey software. I belong to the school that says once you've had a word processor, you can't go back. Used to be I'd avoid doing minor revisions just to keep from having to re-type a page.

SFR: There seem to be connections between your novelette "To Bring in the Steel" and COURTSHP RITE. Or am I mistaken?

KINGSBURY: All of my stories, including "Ghost Town" are in the same series. I was impressed by Asimov's Foundation series and got involved in creating my own future history. Copycat! I never read any Heinlein. When he was turning out juveniles I considered myself too old to read them. Besides, I couldn't afford hardcovers: they were some ridiculous price like three dollars. He quit writing for ASTOUNDING about the time I started to read it. I have most of my unpublished stories in my files but they don't fit the background anymore because it's developed. In the early versions of my universe, the first moon landing was in 1965 and World War Three started in 1968. In that war, ICBMs were launched from the moon. Since it takes only a primitive rocket technology to go from the moon to the earth but a complex rocket technology to go from the earth to the moon, a moon colony would be safe from attack. Once you make the massive effort to get the moon colony going, you could have a pretty devastating power position over the earth. What I missed was that if you have the sophisticated rocket hardware to get to the moon, then you would also have the more economical technology to bombard the earth from elsewhere on the planet. That idea is not in my future history anymore.

I jumped to various parts of my galactic history. One of the stories I had was about a guy who was getting upset with the way the galaxy was going and sent a bunch of people out to this planet called Geta. I don't really remember too much about it because it was all plotted in my head and I never wrote any of it down. That was the seed of COURTSHP RITE. I sketched out what the region looked like at the time. There

was this finger of stars pointing across a black abyss, which I called the noir gulf because I was flunking French at the time. If I ever went back and wrote a story about where the people in COURTSHP RITE came from, I'd probably discover many interesting things I don't know now. In one of these stories, I had a planet that supported itself by raising colonists to sell: just a big childraising factory. Another involved the planet Lager, which also appears in "Shipwright." That's the one that Campbell and Gold rejected because of the sexual content. "Shipwright," incidentally, is contemporary to COURTSHP RITE.

SFR: You were once involved in Scientology. Or would you prefer not to talk about that?

KINGSBURY: Oh, I have no trouble handling the Scientologists. Dianetics, you know, was first presented in ASTOUNDING. I sent away for the book, actually receiving it before its official publication date, and read it in one sitting. I thought, "that's a very interesting psychotherapy technique; I'll try it out on my girlfriend." I went over to her place, had her lie down on the couch, and closed the living room door. In the middle of the session, her mother broke in. She thought -- well, you know what she thought: we were doing something indecent. I later married that girl, though. I spent one week of our honeymoon learning Dianetics from L. Ron Hubbard; the other week we went to Martha's Vineyard. I began to have reservations about the Scientology organization. I was going to start a group in Montreal, but I found Hubbard very, very, very difficult to work with. I always knew I didn't agree with him on a lot of things. He was impossible to work with if you didn't agree with him and in that way he created scads of heretics.

SFR: You were ultimately excommunicated.

KINGSBURY: I taught my mathematics course at McGill in the same way they taught Scientology: as workshops, a very fast, very effective method. I wrote a report on the application and sent a copy to Hubbard. He sent me back a letter saying I had plagiarized his learning theories. Hubbard built a great apparatus to deal with enemies. In order to have something for the apparatus to do, he goes out and creates enemies. He has a hard time with able people. When he gets able people around him, he excommunicates them.

SFR: You've been with the SF scene since the 1940s. What changes and trends have you observed?

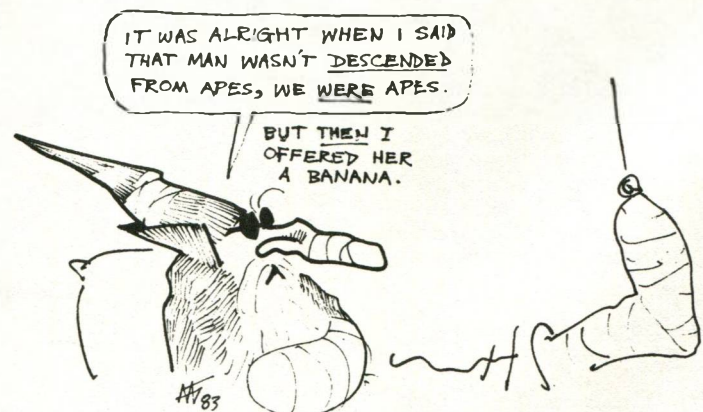
KINGSBURY: The quality of storytelling and writing is steadily improving. It's harder and harder to sell a story that's patchy. SF has an inexhaustible supply of ideas, just as science has an inexhaustible supply of discoveries. One of the things I've noticed in the last few years is the rise of fantasy. Some people thought that was going to kill the SF market, but SF publishers absorbed fantasy, fantasy didn't absorb them.

SFR: What fantasies do you like?

KINGSBURY: I like Patricia McKillip's Riddlemaster series. If it has "Swords" in the title and "Sorcery" in the title, I tend to avoid it. My advice to people trying to write fantasy is, for God's sake, take out all the swords and the sorcery. If you've got anything left over, go from there.

SFR: Have you ever considered writing any yourself?

KINGSBURY: I've plotted out my own fantasy novel, called PLANET OF MAGIC. In the story, Earth is the





repository for the galaxy's sinners. In "To Bring in the Steel," the little girl is reading PLANET OF MAGIC. That's a reference to this fantasy that I intend to write someday.

SFR: Do you think fantasy is easier to write than science fiction?

KINGSBURY: It's always going to be difficult to find people to write hard, technology-oriented, ANALOG-style SF. You not only need a speculative ability, you also need a writing ability: those two high-level skills have to occur in conjunction. Some people who are highly trained in science make very poor speculators. A lot of writers see all the money in the SF field and decide to move in, but if they lack that speculative knack, they end up writing fantasy.

SFR: How do you perceive the speculative knack as working?

KINGSBURY: Prediction is the key. In my first published story, "Ghost Town" (1952), I said man would be on the moon by 1965. My friends thought a thousand years from now, maybe ... I bet all my friends in high school that we'd be there by '65. It's a bet that I lost, but not by much. You have to predict something that seems a little bit preposterous. It'll always come sooner than you think.

Let me give you another example. In the first edition of Willy Ley's book ROCKETS AND SPACE TRAVEL, he said he didn't see how Uranium-235 could possibly be applied to rocketry. This was before the A-bomb. I wrote him a castigating letter -- me, a 15-year-old kid arguing with the great expert -- saying of course you could apply atomic energy to space flight. Willy wrote me back saying he could not comment because the military wasn't allowing anyone to talk about U-235. I linked that with the fact that I hadn't been able to find any recent information on U-235. In 1939, everyone had been talking about it freely.

I notice you've got the facsimile edition of the July 1939 ASTOUNDING in your bookcase, there. The editorial is about U-235 and atomic energy. Suddenly in 1940 -- boing! -- all references to U-235 disappeared from the journals. Yet I knew they couldn't have just lost interest. My natural speculation was that a military project was afoot and, considering the complete silence, I assumed it must be a realistic, practical military project. They weren't thinking of using U-235 in the Third World War; they were planning

to use it in the Second! I argued this with my friend Bruce Knight. I was saying there must be a secret atomic bomb project and we're going to drop an A-bomb on the Japanese very soon. He pooh-poohed me. We argued until three in the morning. The next day, while I was mowing my lawn, Bruce came down the street white-faced. "Guess what," he said. "What?" "You won the argument." "What?" "They've just dropped an A-bomb on Japan!" "What?" That's the way the speculative mind works. You pick up on detail. If you'd been alert, you would have sensed it in the air.

SFR: It's rare in SF for female characters to be handled well, yet you excel at them. Why?

KINGSBURY: Partly because I understand women. I have two sisters, so there were always a lot of women around the house having hen sessions. To them I was just part of the woodwork. I saw that facet of the world that some men never see. Partly it's because I didn't understand women at all. I got very interested in what their goals were and how to please them, how to turn them on. With that kind of empathy, your preconceptions get blown away. I used to write controversial articles for the McGill University newspaper. One, called "They Sent Her to the Butcher Shops," was about the old abortion laws here in Canada. The afternoon after it appeared, a pregnant student dropped by my office. We talked about it. That opened my eyes to a lot of the unjust ways society was treating women. It became easy for me to write about women without turning them into cardboard. Stereotypes are just verbalizations of inadequate mental pictures.

SFR: You are one of the few authors to have written for John W. Campbell, Ben Bova, and Stanley Schmidt. What continuity did you perceive between them and what differences did you notice in their editorial styles at ASTOUNDING/ANALOG?

KINGSBURY: Campbell set up a style that was very amenable to working with authors. When Bova and Schmidt picked up, they very much tried to work in the Campbell tradition. It wasn't an idiosyncratic Campbellian way of doing things that they were imitating slavishly. It was a very successful method of developing authors, which is what an editor wants to do. Ben paid a lot of personal attention to his authors. By the time I got in con-

tact with him, I wasn't a complete amateur so I don't really know what his total slush-pile treatment was. I approached Ben for the first time at an SF convention. There had been two atomic rocket motor projects under way, and the best, most imaginative of the pair had been canned. I asked him if he'd be interested in a scoop article on the cancelled project and he said no. "We're not interested in reporting what's been done; we are interested in speculation. In what way might this open up things in the future? In what way is this on the forefront?" I said it could fit those parameters. With his permission, I submitted it. Ben was very impressed. That was a very personal contact with the editor. Of course, I had a good piece of buried research to talk about. With a good product like that, it's not hard to get personal attention from an editor. Ben's very good to you when you have something to offer him. The next thing I sent him was "Shipwright." He sent it back to me, which disappointed me a little, but it was only for revisions. He said he liked it very much and was surprised to receive it because he'd started to think of me as a writer of fact articles. "Shipwright" was in my Finger Pointing Solward series.

COURTSHIP RITE was supposed to be the next story -- a novelette -- in the series, but it just wasn't working. I read an article by Jerry Pournelle in GALAXY which stimulated me to write "To Bring in the Steel." I spent a week writing that and another week typing it, editing a little bit. I shipped it to Ben Bova, who bought it. The next thing I sent him was that novelette version of COURTSHIP RITE. He sent it back saying make a novel out of it. He told me he was leaving ANALOG, so I didn't have any more communication with him.

I finished "Moon Goddess and the Son" and shipped it off there. I didn't hear about it for a long time because Stanley Schmidt was in the midst of moving in. I got a very favorable reply from Stanley, but he said I'd have to cut 4,000 words out of it because it was longer than he could print. Stan was also a little bit worried about the sex involved. I said you shouldn't worry about it: the girl in the story is very moral. She gets involved in a few little things, but after all she's mostly interested in preserving her virginity throughout most of the story. He printed it and it was nominated for the Hugo. A story that's going to be nominated for the Hugo is not too hard to sell.



When Stan moved in, he really tried to write personal stuff to all his authors. Of course, as time goes on, that becomes harder and harder to do as your slush pile grows. He's very committed to encouraging new authors. He knows he can't live off the old ones. He can't really afford the old ones: once they become known, they go somewhere else. You've got to keep cultivating new ones; I think he does that fairly well. He's getting better and better at it. Some of the stories he published when he started were a little bit weak, but that was because it takes awhile to establish contacts and get your authors going. ANALOG is beginning to show the fruits of some of Stan's initial encouragement.

SFR: He made you take 40,000 words out of COURTSHIP RITE.

KINGSBURY: That wasn't really an editorial judgment, just a constraint of the magazine. I'd sold COURTSHIP RITE to Pocket Books and we thought it would be good marketing to have it serialized in ANALOG, advertising of a kind. I knew it was going to be too long for them. My agent suggested I send it there anyway. Stan liked it, but felt it was 40,000 words too long for his needs. I tried to get him to commit himself to buying a cut version prior to my actually doing the cut, but he didn't see how the novel could survive that drastic an edit. And I didn't want to do all that work cutting if it wasn't going to be bought. So we compromised. I did the first installment on speculation. It was hard work, even on my word processor. He said okay, go ahead, so I had the horrible ordeal of cutting the next three installments, all of which would have been 30 or 35 thousand words long, down to 20,000 words. I think I managed pretty well.

SFR: When did you acquire an agent?

KINGSBURY: I had my first agent when I was 20. I thought every young, aspiring author should have an agent, which is not true. There is no real difficulty in selling short stuff on your own. My agent was a nice old man who didn't know much about SF. I paid him to be a critic, which was not unreasonable; he was spending time on me and I wasn't up to publishable levels yet. I found his critiques fascinating.

I started looking for an agent again after I sold COURTSHIP RITE. I didn't want to negotiate the con-



tract myself; that's very slippery business. Jerry Pournelle recommended Eleanor Wood. She's Robert Heinlein's agent, as well, so I figured I couldn't go wrong in having her. She's certainly worth her 10%.

SFR: I understand there are two versions of "Shipwright" in print.

KINGSBURY: That's true. In the one that appears in ANALOG, there is a scene where the two engineers are going through a bar and are picked up by women. In the version that appeared in Terry Carr's BEST SF STORIES OF THE YEAR #1, the men work in a strip joint. They strip for the women who pick them up, which is the way that culture works. ANALOG felt that was a bit strong for the magazine field. I prefer the version that appears in Terry's anthology.

SFR: Do you have a good relationship with Terry Carr?

KINGSBURY: Well, I certainly like Terry Carr. He's reprinted every one of my ANALOG stories and that has certainly given a boost to my career. When David Hartwell moved to Pocket Books from Berkley he was bemoaning the fact that he had worked for three years developing a stable of authors and now he was back at square one at Pocket, with an offer he couldn't refuse. Terry said, "Well, you know, I've been buying these stories from Don Kingsbury. I don't think he's committed to anybody. I know he's written this novel, FINGER POINTING SOLWARD, which is just lying around. Why don't you get ahold of him?" When David flew back to New York, he ran into me at Lumacon and said, "I was going to give you a phone call; come down and have a beer." He published COURTSHIP RITE and is going to do an expanded version of "The Moon Goddess and the Son." The manuscript for that is long overdue and they're starting to put the thumbscrews on me.

SFR: What about what happened with Dell?

KINGSBURY: I don't consider the top management at Dell very businesslike or very sane. I first got connected with Dell at the Hugo awards banquet at SunCon. The man I was sitting beside, unbeknownst to me, was their editor. He was asking me a lot of questions and I was blabbing away the way unpublished authors do. So he said, "send it to me at Dell." Well, I did send him FINGER, and the first part of COURTSHIP RITE, the novella version I'd done for Ben Bova. He said FINGER needed some work, and since COURTSHIP RITE came earlier in time, it was probably better to publish first. That languished for a while in the offices, as these things often do. David Hartwell at Pocket was very interested in seeing COURTSHIP RITE, so I asked Dell if they would send the sample back to me. They responded by offering me a contract: \$5000 up front; \$5000 more upon completion of the manuscript. I sat down and wrote it. It took me longer than I'd thought; it always does. Don Benson, the man I'd originally dealt with, had left, so it became the responsibility of Jim Frenkel, the chief editor at Dell. He very much liked the book. He gave me an extensive, interesting criticism of it. I made a second version, which wasn't so bad, since I had a word processor. Some of his suggestions I took and they improved the book a lot. The first two chapters are quite substantially improved because of Jim Frenkel's suggestions. I referred to the God of the Sky in male terms. He thought maybe I should do it in female terms. It's kind of a popular thing nowadays to refer to God as a woman. I didn't think it particularly fit. Women gods tend to give the impressions of soft, motherly types that take care of you. On the other hand, it could have been female, because it turns out to be a ship and we normally refer to ships as she. Of course, the Getan language has a different tense structure than ours. The God of the Sky is actually referred to in the neutral gender. They have structures which can refer to an individual without identifying their sex.

When I got the manuscript finished, the upper levels of Dell decided to kill their entire SF line so they never accepted the book. My agent, Eleanor, wasn't displeased. She said Pocket Books still wanted it. They advanced me \$30,000.



SFR: What books can we look forward to seeing by you in the future?

KINGSBURY: I'm under contract with Simon & Schuster for the novel-length MOON GODDESS AND THE SON and they have an option on THE FINGER POINTING SOLWARD. I'm certainly going to do some revisions on it, though. The draft they have was written in 1970, since then I've written COURTHSHIP RITE and "Shipwright," bringing the background details of that universe into sharper focus. My ability to plot is a lot better too. FINGER is about the same length as the book version of COURTHSHIP RITE. I think they'll buy it. They certainly have first dibs on it.

SFR: You were up for the Hugo in 1980: "Moon Goddess and the Son" versus Barry B. Longyear's "Enemy Mine." Barry won and you lost.

KINGSBURY: I went to the Losers' Party and celebrated. When Barry Longyear tried to get in, we kicked him out.

SFR: COURTHSHIP RITE copped a well-deserved Hugo nomination. Are you excited?

KINGSBURY: Oh, yes. I'm jumping up and down. Vote! The competition looks pretty stiff, though.

SFR: The first novels in years by Clarke, Asimov and Heinlein.

KINGSBURY: I really like COURTHSHIP RITE. It's my personal feeling that it can take on anything that was published in 1982. Certainly it'll be a good contest. As they say, may the best man win.

#### APPENDIX: DONALD KINGSBURY'S APPEARANCES IN ASTOUNDING/ANALOG

Courthship Rite.....Feb-May 1982  
The Moon Goddess and  
the Son..... Dec 1979  
The Spaceport (NF)  
(with Roger Arnold)...Nov-Dec 1979  
The First Space War  
(Guest Editorial).....Dec 1978  
To Bring in the Steel.....Jul 1978  
Shipwright.....Apr 1978  
Atomic Rockets (NF).....Dec 1975  
The Right to Breed (NF)...Apr 1955  
The Ghost Town.....Jun 1952  
Letters..... Oct 1945  
..... Jun 1946  
..... Dec 1949  
..... Nov 1960

Jay Kay Klein profiled Kingsbury in his April 1978 "Biolog" column.

# OTHER VOICES

## CLAY'S ARK

By Octavia E. Butler  
St. Martin's Press, 1984, \$12.95

REVIEWED BY DEAN R. LAMBE

Butler's latest short novel continues her preoccupation with groups of more-than-human outcasts and their conflicts with the run-of-the-mill. This time, the out-group, under the leadership of Eli, the only surviving member of the first Proxima Centauri mission, is subject to the alien demands of a symbiotic disease.

Despite the dangers of "sewer rat" attacks on the deteriorated highways of early 21st Century California, Dr. Blake Maslin and his two teenage daughters are heading home from an Arizona visit with relatives. Suddenly, the Maslins are kidnapped by Eli and his followers -- strangely-thin and-strong men and women. When the odd group takes their three captives to a primitive desert farm, the extraterrestrial disease is explained to the horrified M.D., who envisions world-wide epidemic and fears especially for the leukemia-weakened state of daughter Keira. The Maslins are infected and told of their simple options: Survive the initial symptoms and join the secret group, or die of the disease as the extraterrestrial microbe permeates their cells. The three captives escape, however, only to fall prey to even worse kinds of human predators. Their only hope is rescue by the very inhuman people they have fled.

Although Ms. Butler has a fine hand with lean, well-paced prose, the alternation of chapters Present and Past grates. As with a few other lyrical, humanistic writers in our genre, Ms. Butler really must learn some science. Her alien disease is not very credible, and she must get a real crick in her neck searching the Southern California skies for Alpha Centauri.

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## LIGHTRUNNER

By Lamar Waldron & Ron Whigham  
Starblaze Graphics, 112 pp., \$9.95

REVIEWED BY JANRAE FRANK

This is a routine rite-of-passage novel. The son of the retired

Commander of the Empyforce is framed for a crime he did not commit: the theft of the most advanced space craft ever developed. He manages to foil the actual theft, which he believed to be a malfunction, by accident. Then he lands on a forbidden planet, gets arrested with a group of pirates, rescued by a telepathic creature called Tak and a Sybaritic adventuress named Lanie. And then he discovers that the true thieves are actually an underground terrorist organization-alliance formed to take control of the Empyrean Alliance worlds.

It is all pretty routine stuff and has already been done to death in all forms of adventure fiction -- especially science fiction. Sometimes the graphic novels can take an old concept and give it new life with the characterization. This one doesn't. All of the plot devices have been used before. There are no surprises. The protagonist Burne Garret is extremely bland and unconvincing. Lanie is only somewhat more interesting. Tak is the best thing in the book. LIGHTRUNNER should have been about him.

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## IRON TONGUE

By Robert E. Vardeman  
Ace, paper, 1984, 217 pp., \$2.75

REVIEWED BY NEAL WILGUS

IRON TONGUE is Book IV in the Cenotaph Road series, the continu-





ing adventures of Lan Martak, Inyx and the giant spider Krek as they battle with the evil mage Claybore on various Cenotaph worlds. The earlier titles were CENOTAPH ROAD (1983) in which Martak's adventures began, THE SORCERER'S SKULL (1983) in which Claybore emerges as the villain and WORLD OF MAZES (1983) in which our heroes battle Claybore's stooges to a draw.

It should be explained that a cenotaph is a magical opening between alternate worlds, that Claybore begins the series as a skull in a box and that in each book he seeks a different part of his body which has been left somewhere along the Road. By the time we reach IRON TONGUE Claybore has regained his heart and torso but Martak and company have managed to destroy his scalp and facial skin. Guess what they're fighting over in IRON TONGUE.

Lan Martak is a likable hero, a clone of Fost Longstrider from the WAR OF POWERS series which Vardeman co-authored with Victor Milan several years ago. And the Cenotaph series is entertaining -- in fact, it's getting better as it goes along. There is still a certain unevenness to the storytelling, but Vardeman is learning from earlier mistakes and overall this is a well-told tale.

There will be two more titles in the series: FIRE AND FOG and PILLAR OF NIGHT, both of which might be on the newsstand by the time this review sees print. If the recommendation of one who rarely reads swords-n-sorcery means anything, consider TONGUE and its predecessors well recommended S-N-S.

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#### EROS ASCENDING

By Mike Resnick  
Phantasia Press, 1984, 217 pp, \$17.

REVIEWED BY DEAN R. LAMBE

A hooker with a heart of gold and an accountant with a conscience? Yes, Resnick offers that and much more in this, the first of four "Tales of the Velvet Comet." For the Velvet Comet is a brothel, the best little whorehouse in ... eh, the galaxy. No simple cathouse, mind you, but an elegant orbiting collection of the best shops, restaurants, casinos, and rooms to tickle the wildest fantasies.

The Leather Madonna, successful madam of the Velvet Comet has reason to be proud of the profits she generates for the Vainmill Syndicate and she is suspicious of the middle-aged accountant, Harry Redwine,

who the Syndicate sends to check her books. Rasputin, Comet Chief of Security, is even more unhappy with the likeable Redwine, when the accountant immediately ties the brothel's computer in knots. Suma, teen-aged prostitute extraordinaire, does her bedroom best to twist Redwine to her own purposes. And Redwine's mysterious Syndicate boss threatens the whole swinging operation.

Collectors of erotica may be disappointed, for this tale offers more agape than eros, as love of the Leather Madonna sidetracks Redwine from his secret mission. Readers in search of a good story will be pleased with this oft-tender rendering of lovers pitted against the underside of the rock that is humanity, however. Well-realized, thoroughly-adult characters populate this novel, and the sequels may be awaited with interest -- especially in the handsome packaging by Phantasia Press.

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THE YEAR'S BEST HORROR STORIES:  
SERIES XI, Ed. Karl Edward Wagner  
DAW, Nov 1983, Paper, 237 pp.  
\$2.95, ISBN: 0-87997-878-3

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL A. MORRISON

"It's dark now ... time for strange things to stir." So says John Thunstone in Manley Wade Wellman's "Rouse Him Not," one of 17 tales in this latest volume of DAW's annual horror anthology. This is the fourth such collection to be edited by Karl Edward Wagner, himself a skilled author of literate terrors (see his IN A LONELY PLACE, Warner, 1983). Wagner brings to his editorial duties intelligence, sound judgment and a formidable knowledge of the field of horror fiction.

Wagner's tastes are highly eclectic, and the stories in this volume include ED-type pulp horror, traditional ghost stories, Weird-Tales-style stories, SF techno-horror, and some thoroughly contemporary terrors. Nearly all of these stories are well-crafted, and several are downright excellent.

In one of the best traditional stories, the understated "Come, Follow" by Sheila Hodgson, a young student from Cambridge, on Christmas holiday at his farm, encounters a very Jamesian horror (M.R., not Henry). Hodgson's vivid writing beautifully evokes the wintry grey fields and downs on Sussex. Also noteworthy is "A Posthumous Bequest" an EC-type story of ironic vengeance



from beyond the grave. By letting humor emerge naturally from the telling of his story, author David Campton creates a genuinely funny horror story.

The finest stories in this anthology -- meaning my personal favorites -- have a more modern tone. The highly subjective point of view in Ramsey Campbell's "The Depths" brings the reader uncomfortably close to the genuine terror of nightmare. This story deals with matters close to home: the compulsion to write, and the psychology of writing (and reading) horror fiction, especially that of a particularly violent nature. In "The New Rays," M. John Harrison tells of a (nameless) female who undergoes treatment for an (un-named) disease. The relentless onslaught of disquieting images in this original and harrowing story evokes the menace and fear that accompany all incomprehensible medical treatment.

But the cream of the anthology is Dennis Etchison's stunning "Death-tracks," a tale of a couple in an all-too-near future who are haunted by the great unanswered question of the 1960s. Astonishingly, in merely 9 pages, Etchison combines



intense psychic pain, tragedy, social and political commentary, and satire. The last paragraph attains a level of poetic power rare in horror fiction.

Whether or not this book actually contains the best horror stories of 1983 is beside the point. This is a terrific bargain: a wide-ranging collection of very good stories, a few gems, and by my count, only one clunker. (I can't imagine what the predictable and awkwardly-written "The Smell of Cherries" by newcomer Jeffrey Goddin is doing in this company.) What more do you want for \$2.95?

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#### SHADOWINGS: THE READER'S GUIDE TO HORROR FICTION, 1981-1982

By Douglas E. Winter  
Starmont House, 148 pp., \$6.95  
Paper, ISBN: 0-916732-85-1.

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL A. MORRISON

The reader of horror fiction today finds himself in a frustrating situation. On the one hand, a plethora of genre fiction is published every year, some of it excellent. On the other hand, the majority of new horror fiction appears as paperback originals and, not to put too fine a point on it, is execrable dreck. Even the avid reader is likely to be puzzled: He knows that a new book by the likes of Stephen King or Ramsey Campbell is worth his time and money, but how is he to know, for example, that a paperback original with a garish cover and the unpromising title *STRANGE SEED*, by an unknown writer (T.M. Wright) is, in fact, a brilliant, powerful and important first novel.

This situation is ripe for a book like *SHADOWINGS*, which like Winter's regular column in *FANTASY REVIEW*, provides useful guidance to the reader. It is divided into four parts: Following an ambitious survey by Winter of nearly all major horror fiction published during 1981-1982, there are reviews of major books, essays on three writers (Campbell, Morrell and Etchison), articles on important films and a concluding list of representative works. Most of the reviews and essays have seen print before, but Winter's selection is excellent. All of the pieces stand up well to re-reading. Moreover, the reviews are of uniformly high quality: those of familiar books spurred me to want to re-read them, while those of books I had not encountered made me want to rush out and buy them.

Several of the longer articles will be of special interest to the horror enthusiast. Particularly good are Jack Sullivan's article on Ramsey Campbell's challenging horror fiction and Winter's commentary on the novels of David Morrell. Counterpointing Winter's introductory survey of literature is Craig Shaw Gardner's look at films of the period. Because it is organized so as to identify major trends, sub-genres, and directors, this essay is quite valuable (even if I do vehemently disagree with Gardner's appraisal of two of the most brilliant, important and mis-understood horror films of the decade, John Carpenter's *THE THING* and David Cronenberg's *VIDEODROME*). Another high point is a mini-symposium on the question of the role of violence in horror fiction (and film).

One could quibble with some of Winter's selections. For example, although his justification for including a section on horror films ("the inevitable cross-influences between books and film") is sound, one could argue that in a book constrained to 150 pages, this section should have been replaced by more essays on books and/or writers (say, extended articles on recent fiction by Charles Grant or Peter Straub). In addition, the admittedly-hilarious survey of "Safeway horror fiction" by "Billy-Bob Burnette" takes up valuable space.

But these are minor cavils. Winter and Starmont House are to be congratulated on this important volume, which is evidently the first of a series. It is a "must buy" for absolutely everyone who reads horror fiction -- from the casual reader of the novels of Stephen King, to the fan, to the professional critic. All of us should do whatever we can to encourage Winter, Starmont House and series editor Roger C. Schlobin to continue the series.

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#### THE SCIENCE FICTION COLLECTOR'S CATALOG

By Jeff Rovin  
A.S. Barnes & Co, Inc., San Diego  
1982, 181 pp., \$12.95, 11 X 14 "  
Paperback, 8 pp. color photos

REVIEWED BY BILL WINANS

This is the first book of SF collectibles I've come across and it covers a wide range from toys to original manuscripts and art, from pulp magazines to bubble gum cards, from comic books to movie props

and everything in between. The book has a Foreword by Adam West (TV's Batman) and a bibliography of works useful to the collector.

Each chapter has an introduction on that area of collecting, information on and pricing of selected items, where to collect, how to store and other sections where applicable. There are also pictures of hundreds of items, many from the author's personal collection.

This is a fun book to read or browse, but it's not an exhaustive catalog. Many items are omitted due to space limitations, including many relating to my favorites, though the author has tried to pick the most important works in each area.

The book is lacking in some areas. While the author acknowledges that condition has a great impact on the value of each collectible, he states only one value for each item. The book has eight color pages of photos but each color photo is also printed in black & white elsewhere in the book, an unnecessary repetition. There is a photo of the cover of *THE WAY THE FUTURE WAS*, Frederik Pohl's autobiography, on page 175 in the SF wargames section. That book is not mentioned in the text but is included in the bibliography. The book does not have an index, which would be a valuable addition.

In summary this is an enjoyable book, but not the book I'd like it to be. I recommend reading but not buying, unless you think it will become a valuable collector's item.

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VERY STRANGE... WHEN  
THE MOON IS FULL I  
HAVE STARTED TO CRAVE  
OYSTERS!





## H.G. WELLS IN THE CINEMA

By Alan Wykes  
Jupiter, London, U.K., 1977  
176 pages, £5.95

REVIEWED BY BILL WINANS

The book presents photos and brief descriptions of films based on works by H.G. Wells. Some of these are unfamiliar to science fiction fans. For instance, *THE HISTORY OF MR. POLLY* and three films adapted from the novel, *KIPPS* including the musical *HALF A SIX-PENCE*.

The photographic work is very well done and displays over 100 photos, some from rarely-seen movies, but the text is too brief and displays little research. Many other sources offer the reader much more information on H.G. Wells' career, his opinion of these films and his relationships with the makers of these films. The author does have an interesting point of view: He states he saw many of the films during their initial release, and often writes of his reaction to the film at the time, and of the audience's reception of the film.

The reader is cautioned to beware of omissions; for example, neither the chapter on "The War of the Worlds" nor the appendix (both list the cast of the film) mentions its star, Gene Barry.

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## EARTHCHILD

By Sharon Webb  
Bantam Books, 23666-0, \$2.50  
176 pp., cover by John Rush  
REVIEWED BY PAUL MCGUIRE

*EARTHCHILD* is said to be the first volume in the *EARTH SONG TRIAD*. A triad is three persons or things. A trilogy is three novels with related themes. *EARTHCHILD* is neither person nor thing. It is also not a novel. This is one-third of a single novel, which is frustrating to discover when one reaches the end of the book only to learn the novel's finish is two years away. However, that is my only complaint, for this installment of the serial is a moving "story" written in prose as authentic as newspaper copy, with images as true as life and death.

Like *EARTH SONG*, *EARTHCHILD* is in three parts. Part one concerns the first year of the Mouat-Gari process which makes everyone under sixteen years old immortal. That they have to die while children never will so enrages adults that murdering children becomes a world-

wide passion. The children are gathered into concentration camps for their own protection as the new age of mankind dawns.

Part II takes place five years later as the immortals prepare to inherit Earth. There is a chillingly cool portrayal of the soul of evil lurking within the small body of a child who shows signs of becoming a most memorable grown-up villain.

In Part III of *EARTHCHILD* (94 years later), we learn that the Mouat-Gari process severely retards creativity. In fact, as Ms. Webb will have it, being immortal prevents any form of progress. Stop aging and all growth and change stops. Just what the citizens of this world do with all their time is never shown as we watch the upper echelon powers worry about what to do about what the lower echelon peons are not doing any more.

Project Renaissance is their answer. Children with unusual powers or skills are taken to a much prettier and more comfortable camp than those in Part I. There they are trained and encouraged to not take part in the Mouat-Gari process, giving their lives to make the world worth living in for all those lay-about immortals. The villain makes his opening move against the new mortals, and -- for what happens next wait until March, 1984 when Bantam will publish Part II of *EARTH SONG* just in case anyone was not yet confused by this novel being printed in three parts of three parts.

Still, this one-third of a novel is very well written with characters born of a deep understanding of people and emotion.

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## THE WIZARDS OF ARMAGEDDON

By Fred Kaplan  
Simon & Schuster, 452 pp., \$18.95  
ISBN: 0-671-42444-0  
REVIEWED BY KARL EDD

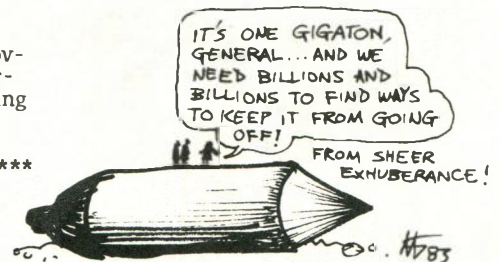
This is Fred Kaplan's story of where we and Russia stand at the moment on the subject of nuclear war, and the political, mathematical and scientific path we mutually traveled to arrive at the brink of the final solution. Kaplan has a Ph.D. from MIT.

*DR. STRANGELOVE*, the movie, was based on a real person delineated in the book -- Herman Kahn, nuclear physicist graduate of UCLA and Cal Tech. He proposed a Domsday Machine. Have we built it? Join Fred Kaplan in speculation,

and learn about the 44-step ladder of escalation that leads to total, all-out war.

Much of the book deals with the development and application of mathematical "games theory" to war. I live almost on top of Cheyenne Mountain, a military computer complex that could unleash World War III, and I worked at one time on Titan Missile covers so am familiar to a slight degree with our underground "war brains." If you have not had this opportunity, Kaplan's book will give you an insightful view of this world within a world. You may conclude that random chance could lead to humankind's blazing finale.

Kaplan reveals objectively the senseless, almost madman, jealousy, fund stealing, and stupidity of our various so-called intelligence services -- ranging from the CIA to Congressional "oversight" committees. The RAND Corporation is exposed as a dummy company that was set up by General "Hap" Arnold of the Air Force so military scientists could be paid higher salaries than they would earn as military officers. As an organization, RAND is made up of an equal proportion of geniuses and idiots, humanists and cold m---f---ers. Some members claim that a war will be considered won if at the end there are two Americans left and only one Russian. Not so well known as our intent toward Russia is that we also have China blanketed for total destruction.



The Navy Polaris (atomic sub) program was begun to siphon funds away from the Air Force, whose expenditures were creating an impoverished navy. Some of the top Navy brass hate the Air Force leadership and consider it to be headed by traitors.

Daniel Ellsberg is the subject of a behind-the-scenes report that alone makes the book worth reading. You realize what a quixotic hero type he was when you learn the facts the newspapers have suppressed.

An "acceptable" first day of atomic war would kill only one million to ten million people, though many "experts" feel that if



"proper and responsible restraint" is not exercised by the participants, deaths might run into the billions.

As you read the book you begin to share the frustration of the "think-tank" personnel. Logic fails. Scientific approach breaks down. There is no logical way to fight a nuclear war. It is the unthinkable, but men are thinking of it. No amount of mathematical constructs or computer readouts make such a war palatable. It is the paradox of our time, the most serious that man has ever faced.

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#### THE ALIEN UPSTAIRS

By Pamela Sargent  
Doubleday and Company, New York  
1983, 181 pp., \$11.95

REVIEWED BY BILL WINANS

As a reader who has enjoyed the works of Pamela Sargent, I'm disappointed in her latest book. The story here is about a near-future America where drought and cold have created an economic depression and a feeling of hopelessness through all levels of society. Business closings are numerous, jobs are in very short supply and the national guard patrols what sections of the country it can -- some counties have been abandoned.

Against this background, Sarah and Gerry struggle to survive and dare to dream of getting ahead. Then Raf Courn moves into the apartment upstairs. He is rich, eccentric, and says he is an alien. From here on the story follows the adventures of these three in many situations and locations.

The novel is short and reads quickly, but does not satisfy. We learn too soon if Raf Courn really is an alien or not, but not enough about what he is doing. The novel could be a juvenile novel if not for references to sexuality.

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#### SUNWAIFS

By Sidney J. Van Scyoc  
Berkley Books

REVIEWED BY ROBERT SABELLA

This novel contains an intriguing premise but does not utilize it effectively. Destiny is an anthropomorphic world struggling to rid itself of unwanted settlers. It causes the colonists to give birth to six children -- the sun-

waifs of the title -- who are her offspring as much as theirs. Each child possesses a different aspect of the planet's power, one controlling storms, another birds and so on. The planet's intent is that when the children mature they will be her agents in destroying the settlers. The problem is that the children grow more attached to the colonists raising them than to their mother planet.

The novel has several powerful scenes scattered through its flawed plot. Its biggest weakness is that events tend to be episodic with little continuity between them. The same is true of the characterization. The sunwaifs often change abruptly without any development. It almost reads as if the author had a page restriction that forced her to leave out important scenes. What remains is worthwhile reading so long as you don't approach it expecting more than it delivers.

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#### BRONWYN'S BANE

By Elizabeth Scarborough  
Bantam Books 23720-9, 286 pp., \$2.95  
Cover art by John Berkey

REVIEWED BY PAUL MCGUIRE

The protagonist in this joyous fantasy is a giant child-princess who, due to a curse, must always lie. Accompanied by another princess, (this one enchanted into the form of a large black swan), a cowardly prince who was raised by gypsies and a witchling somewhat miffed at being the only one not claiming royal blood, Bronwyn sets off on a quest to have her curse removed. On the long and winding way they encounter an ex-genie turned pirate, an ogre's daughter on her way to a family reunion, a talking river, malevolent mermaids, a city of merchant magicians, a prince who has a habit of turning green, growing warts and croaking, and several other persons and things. Conspiracies, palace coups, and war also interfere.

Ms. Scarborough has a pleasant way with a metaphor and a wonderful tongue-in-cheek manner of good ol' fashion' story telling. BRONWYN'S BANE is a hum-dinger and a charmer in much the way as was A SPELL FOR CHAMELEON. Simply put, reading this novel will make you feel good.

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#### THE BEAST

By Robert Stallman  
Timescape, 1982, 192 pp., \$2.50  
REVIEWED BY RUSSELL ENGBRETSON

Here is the final volume of the BOOK OF THE BEAST trilogy. If you haven't read the first two books, don't start with this one. Rush out to your nearest book dealer and procure copies of THE ORPHAN and THE CAPTIVE. Be sure to have a couple of free hours before starting to read, because you will not want to be interrupted.

THE BEAST is a werewolf story in reverse. It's about an enigmatic creature that undergoes a metamorphosis into a human being. In the course of the trilogy there are three humans, each with his own personality, that the Beast changes into. The last two volumes are dominated by the third Beast/human character, Barry. The premise is simple but the story is intricate, filled with a large cast of characters. And what characters! Stallman generates great suspense throughout the story by creating people one cannot help but empathize with. This is not a horror story, but in terms of believable characters and nail-biting suspense Robert Stallman's writing is comparable to Stephen King's.

Some readers may find the revelation of the Beast's origin and purpose too vague and metaphysical (possibly a legitimate criticism, but given the novel's overall thrust it rang true for me); however, all loose ends are neatly tied and the trilogy is resolved in a satisfyingly bittersweet manner.

Robert Stallman's BOOK OF THE BEAST is a marvel, some of the best fiction I have read in years. Don't miss it.

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# CHARLES PLATT

## THE DECLINE OF FICTION

At the risk of sounding too much like my friends Norman Spinrad and John Brunner, I'm going to write this column in a casual, conversational style, beginning with an anecdote about one of my own books. Fair warning.

The book is *THE WHOLE-TRUTH HOME COMPUTER HANDBOOK*, published by Avon with illustrations by Carl Lundgren. I'm mentioning it not only because every reader of *SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW* should own a copy, but because the recent publication of this book has made me realize the extent to which non-fiction has displaced fiction -- in my reading habits, and elsewhere.

In Britain, my computer book was published by Gollancz, who astonished me by offering to pay my round-trip air fare so that I could spend ten days promoting the book in newspapers, radio and television. Like any writer of category fiction, I am accustomed to viewing my work as a disposable commodity that appears fleetingly in a few semi-bankrupt bookstores, only to be swept away thirty days later by a new tide of "product" from the publishers in New York.

As for publicity -- publishers seldom show any interest in promoting fiction at all, no matter how interesting the author or important his message. It's hard to promote fiction: talk-show hosts don't know how to handle it, and journalists seldom seem able to find a workable angle. Christopher Priest recently told me what happened to him when he did a radio interview shortly after one of his novels was published. There were two main questions: "What's it about?" and "What do you think of the picture on the cover?"

But a nonfiction book is another matter. Mine was topical, and had a fresh approach (debunking the whole subject of home computers), which made it promotable, and so I moved from one radio studio to another, endorsing my own work, and indeed self-indulgence never felt so good.

At the same time, I was embarrassed. Perhaps my book is to some extent useful and maybe even clever here and there, but it is not in any sense important. I did not deserve its media exposure. To my mind, the deep statements about our relationship with technology have appeared as novels, from *FRANKENSTEIN* onward.

MICHAELMAS by Algis Budrys says more about our future with computers than any nonfiction guide and says it eloquently. But Budrys was never invited to share his insights with the talk-show audience. More recently, *AGAINST INFINITY* by Gregory Benford explores, in some depth, our use of technology to capture the unknown, conquer it, and destroy it. Did Benford's publisher pay his way to England to talk about this in a two-minute spot on Radio One? In fact, when Benford is invited to speak, it is more often as a scientist than as a novelist (academia apart). It seems that audiences want to hear facts, not fiction.

I returned to New York somewhat confused. The last book I had been able to promote was *DREAM MAKERS*, a collection of profiles of other writers. That had been another strange experience. First, there was the shock of having friends ask to see the book, and actually read it. This amazed me, because I generally find it impossible to persuade anyone to open a work of fiction, whether it's written by me or by somebody else. I find that even novelists now seem reluctant to read novels; they say they are too busy reading nonfiction, "for research." To judge from my experience with *DREAM MAKERS*, people now find a description of a science fiction writer more interesting than the science fiction itself.

While pondering all this, I found the fourth issue of *CHEAP TRUTH* waiting for me in the mail. This intermittent broadsheet is circulated by Bruce Sterling from 809-C West 12 Street, Austin, TX, 78701. He started it when I let *THE PATCHIN REVIEW* lapse temporarily

last year; it has some of the same flavor. Send me a self-addressed stamped envelope to Bruce, and he'll mail you a copy. It's free and indeed, cheap at the price.

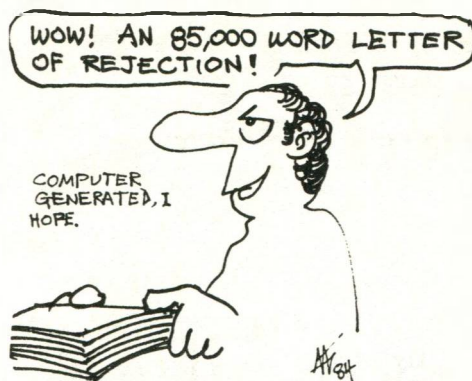
Each issue features a "top ten" of novels that Sterling feels should be more widely appreciated. I'm seldom familiar with more than one-third of them. The ones that I haven't heard of sound interesting -- and yet, somehow, I never get around to buying the books, even though I live less than five blocks from three of the largest, best bookstores in the entire United States. Evidently, I'm now as resistant to reading recommended novels as my friends are. In fact, when I think about it, the only fiction I have read this year has been by Anthony Burgess, William Burroughs, Frederik Pohl, and a few writer friends toward whom I feel some obligations.

Anyway, the fourth issue of *CHEAP TRUTH* no longer includes a "top ten" of fiction. Instead there's a list of nonfiction titles, possibly because even Bruce Sterling has gotten tired of reading novels.

I'm beginning to wonder about reading habits in general. Outside of editors, who are paid to read fiction, and obsessive escapists, who act as accessories to the literary crimes of the del Reys, and sustain the market for fantasy and fantasy-flavored science fiction books that retreat as far from contemporary life as possible ... outside of these deviants, is anyone really interested in novels these days? Yes, I know, people still buy novels; but do they actually read them, all the way through?

On those increasingly rare occasions when I open a science fiction magazine, I start by browsing through the departments, and then as an appetizer before the main fictional course, I turn to the article or opinion piece. Often, I confess, this appetizer becomes the whole meal; I never reach the fiction at all. And if I do, I seldom finish any of it.





Apparently, I am not unique, since the magazines seem to be changing to cater to this bias. AN-ALOG and ASIMOV'S magazine publish more nonfiction than they did a few years ago. In TWILIGHT ZONE the trend has been quite blatant. Where OMNI is concerned, reader responses show that many people don't bother with the fiction at all. Even F&SF has more departments than in earlier times.

I'm not sure that these fragments form a coherent picture, and I'm unable to assemble the pieces myself. One more item seems relevant, however.

While in England I visited J. G. Ballard. His forthcoming novel is a fictionalized account of his childhood in a POW camp in Shanghai during and after World War II. He told me that his British publisher has sold serial rights to the London equivalent of the Sunday NEW YORK TIMES. This newspaper, together with the book publisher, offered to pay him to return to Shanghai and visit the scenes of his childhood, as part of the promotion for his book and maybe a TV show. Meanwhile, in the United States, Simon and Schuster have bought the book for approximately ten times as much money as has ever been offered for any previous Ballard novel.

The book is not yet published, but I understand its style is similar to that of Ballard's earlier work. The difference lies in the form and the subject matter. In the past, he wrote science fiction, surreal fiction and "condensed novels" juxtaposing figures of twentieth-century life with images drawn from the psyche. His work was not directly representational; it was metaphorical, using imaginary landscapes.

Like Vonnegut with SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE, Ballard has now written a thinly fictionalized account of his experiences in World War II. A novel that is "real." Already it has attracted more attention than the earlier work ever received.

From my own reading habits, and the habits of people I know, I sense that fiction no longer seems "important" enough, unless it is anchored somehow in shared reality. I now open a novel with diminished expectations; I'm surprised if it tells me anything new at all. By contrast, I open a nonfiction book, or a rigorously realistic novel, with the definite expectation of discovering new and interesting information. Either my tastes, and the tastes of other people I know, have changed with age; or fiction has deteriorated; or journalism has advanced; or everyday life itself has become more interesting to read about.

I'm not sure whether this is good or bad. I'm not sure who is to blame. And I'm not even sure if this is part of a real overall trend. At the risk of sounding too much like Samuel Delany or Michael Bishop, I'll have to leave it as an unresolved, open question.

"AND THEN I SAW..." CONTINUED FROM P.8

#### TABLE FOR FIVE (PG)

John Voight takes his three kids (one an Asian adoptee) on a cruise to Egypt. During the trip his divorced wife (the kids' mother) dies in a car crash. The stepfather, well-played by Richard Crenna, wants the kids back, because he feels he loves them more than Voight.

On the trip Voight at first discovers three kids are too much trouble...but his fatherhood instincts are good, he discovers he loves them all more than he knew, and earns their love.

Happy, tear-jerking ending.

I enjoyed it a lot! But, then, I almost always puddle up and cry during well-made, honest tragedy films.

#### LEGMEN (NBC)

is probably the best new show I've seen in a long while. Two college boys doing odd-jobs for people always get into trouble with criminals, cops, etc. and in the end always manage to solve the crime in order to save themselves.

The acting is good, but the dialogue is even better---fresh, light, humorous, a touch realistic. The stories are not to be taken seriously ---in this episode Hugh Hefner is sent up---and there is a steady mockery of almost everything, but in passing. Very well done.

#### LOOKIN' TO GET OUT (R)

displays John Voight's remarkable skills as an actor; here he plays a compulsive gambler, secretly dedicated to losing, in terminal debt to a mafia-style gambler, who must flee to Las Vegas for a desperate attempt to 'get straight'---win enough to pay off his debt.

Ann-Margret plays his former girl friend whom he abandoned in Vegas years ago, and Burt Young plays his not-so-dumb side-kick and fellow gambler.

They are pursued to Vegas by his blood-in-the-eye creditor, and the film becomes cat-and-mouse, absurd, amusing, only saved partially by fine acting.

It may be worth seeing again to appreciate Burt Young's subtly great performance.

#### CREEPSHOW (R)

Stephen King's boyhood strikes again! He took his memory/impressions of horror comic books and wrote a five-part book, which became in due time a five-story horror film in the format of stories from CREEPSHOW, a comic book taken from a boy by his father.

Name actors people these well-done stories, and King himself stars in one. He's not bad.

Several of the stories are funny/macabre. The rest are straight grue and retribution.

The special effects are very good. I loved the final story best, which had E.G. Marshall as a Howard Hughes-type recluse in a New York high-rise apartment/office which is all white and pathologically, antiseptically clean. Imagine the horror for this man when his fortress against germs is invaded by thousands of cockroaches!

Well worth seeing.

#### JUST BEFORE DAWN (R)

is a routine horror film about five young campers intruding into forbidden forest land where a mountain family's two huge sons habitually kill strangers.

George Kennedy has a small role as a forest ranger who saddles up in the last reel and saves the spunky remaining young woman in the nick of time.

The one memorable scene is this girl's unique method of killing one of the huge psychopathic retards who is bear-hugging her to death: she sticks her fist into his mouth and into his throat, strangling him. Being very slow-witted, all he could do about this is make urk-urk noises and flap his arms...and fall down---on his back.



# ONCE OVER LIGHTLY

## BOOK REVIEWS BY GENE DEWEESE

### THE MAN IN THE TREE

By Damon Knight  
Berkley, Paperback, \$2.75

As a child Gene Anderson discovers he has the power to reach into other worlds and bring things back, but the power at first means only trouble. Unjustly accused of killing a local bully, he is forced to run away from home, after which the bully's father kills Gene's parents and pursues Gene single-mindedly for the rest of his life. Gene grows to be a giant and, using his power, becomes a millionaire and a prophet, perhaps even a Messiah. All in all, it's an engrossing if slightly schizophrenic book. Parts, particularly those dealing with Gene's escapes from his pursuer, are as gripping and tense as any best seller, and the characters are generally as realistic as they come, even though Gene himself comes off as unbelievably mature at times during his pre-teens. Also, the parallels with Christianity are drawn with an overly heavy and predictable hand. Still, it's one of the more enjoyable books of the season and the best that Knight has done in some time.

### THE BRANCH

By Mike Resnick  
Signet, Paperback, \$2.50

In this one, the Messiah -- and God, for that matter -- are treated a lot less kindly. For one thing, this mid-twenty-first century Messiah is of the Old Testament variety, more interested in vengeance than love. He calls himself Jeremiah the B, and in addition to apparently being invulnerable to death, he's extremely crooked and totally immoral. Not only that, his gospel is being written by his necrophiliac girl friend, and his main opponent, a billionaire pornographer, isn't that much nicer than Jeremiah. Despite this absence of conventionally sympathetic characters, however, "The Branch" grabs you right at the start and doesn't let go until the

final cynical twist. Reminiscent of Lester Del Rey's classic *FOR I AM A JEALOUS PEOPLE*, it will provide an engrossing few hours for anyone who doesn't take his religion too seriously.

### THE STEPS OF THE SUN

By Walter Tevis  
Doubleday, \$14.95

In a bleak, energy-short twenty-first century world where lumps of coal are sold on the black market and Cosa Nostra Industries (a merger between the Mafia and the Teamsters) is listed on the New York Stock Exchange, billionaire entrepreneur Ben Belson, suffering from a stubborn case of impotence, defies the authorities and sets out in his own spaceship to search for new energy sources. Upon his successful return, however, the powers-that-be confiscate his ship and throw him in jail. It's only after becoming a Chinese citizen, spending five weeks as a chemically enhanced male prostitute and being adopted by a high Chinese official, that things turn out moderately all right and he's allowed to save the world.

And that only scratches the surface of the oddities in this new book by the author of *THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH*. More a meandering and often funny character study of Belson and his world than a straight SF novel (the new energy source, for instance, is pure fantasy), *THE STEPS OF THE SUN* has an offhand style reminiscent of J.D. Salinger, and it keeps you interested if not fascinated, no matter how outlandish things sometimes become.

### THE GHOST LIGHT

By Fritz Leiber  
Berkley, Paperback, \$7.95

One new novelet, eight old ones, and 30,000 words of autobiography make up this latest volume

by one of the top SF and fantasy writers of the last several decades. The autobiographical reminiscences may not be as slick or as entertaining as Asimov's, but they give a fascinating, sometimes almost clinical look at an often troubled life, and they add meaning to much of the fiction. As for the stories themselves, they range from the straight SF of "Coming Attraction" to the pure, if unconventional, fantasy of the title story. For the most part, they simply reminded me once again just how good Leiber is, particularly in the way he can take modern, everyday settings and events and gradually turn them into surrealistic nightmares which, without so much as a drop of blood or a scrap of violence, can send chills up your spine.



### WHAT DREAMS MAY COME

By Manly Wade Wellman  
Doubleday, \$11.95

In this latest of John Thunstone's adventures, his "instinct" for the supernatural leads him to a small English village where preparations are being made to awaken something that has slept for ten-thousand years. This is not a book for anyone who wants only fast-paced action or edge-of-the-chair suspense or a lot of sex and gore, because *WHAT DREAMS MAY COME* has none of these. Instead it takes the reader on a pleasant amble



through an everyday world where the supernatural is taken for granted, where everyone is polite and even courtly, and where even the final confrontation between Thunstone and the ancient, awakening evil is low key. This sort of thing wouldn't make a good steady diet, but it does make a nice, relaxing change of pace.

#### GREEN EYES

By Lucius Shepard  
Ace, Paperback, \$2.95

A secret government project in the deep South is using graveyard bacteria to bring the recently dead back to life. The subjects, however, don't remember their previous lives but instead seem to manufacture whole new sets of memories. Not only that, they occasionally "remember" brilliant scientific discoveries which turn out to be quite real. They also sometimes develop spectacular psychic powers, and one after escaping from the project, even becomes a successful faith healer. Unfortunately, their new "lives" last, at most, only a few months as the bacteria, a luminescent green, multiply uncontrollably and destroy their resurrected hosts.

Shepard's detailed and evocative descriptions bring the swampy southern locales and the characters themselves vividly to life, and for at least half of its length, *GREEN EYES* promised to be not only one of the most intriguing books of the year but one of the best. The resolution, however, while certainly spectacular, what with its mixture of voodoo and alternate realities and psychic duels, was too confusing and left too many loose ends for my taste. Even so, the fascinating premise of the story and the superior writing make it a book you shouldn't miss.

#### SOUL RIDER: SPIRITS OF FLUX AND ANCHOR

By Jack L. Chalker  
Tor Books, Paperback, \$2.95

In the World, Anchors are stable oases where the natural laws of science work. Flux is everywhere else, where magic and wizards and chaos seemingly rule. Soul riders are -- well, no one knows, not even the soul riders themselves, but the name seems reasonably accurate.

A plot summary of this first of the Soul Rider series is impossible. Suffice it to say that there are countless groups and

people in conflict, apparently heading for Armageddon, and no one and no thing is ever quite what it seems. There are twists and surprises in every chapter. Just as important, the characters, from the young Anchor girl Cassie to the world class wizard named Mervyn, are fully developed and fascinating. You find yourself not only wondering what is going to happen next but actually caring.

#### ONE WINTER IN EDEN

By Michael Bishop  
Arkham House, \$13.95

In "Saving Face" a man is sued under the Physiognomic Protection Act because he happens to resemble a movie star too closely for the movie star's comfort. In "The Yukio Mishima Cultural Association of Kudzu Valley, Georgia," a town gets really serious about the late Yukio Mishima and commits ritual suicide. In "Collaborating," a two-headed man falls in love, one head at a time. And so on. None of the twelve stories in this surrealist collection are what you could call believable, nor are many of the characters particularly sympathetic. Still, the wealth of evocative detail about them and their surroundings are so well and interestingly presented that it doesn't really matter. While few of the characters -- except possibly the two-headed man -- are as grotesque as those of Flannery O'Connor, or quite as touching as those of Sherwood Anderson, chances are that anyone who likes either of those writers will also find much to like in *ONE WINTER IN EDEN*.

#### THE SHORES OF ANOTHER SEA

By Chad Oliver  
Crown, \$7.95

I'd thought the days of the under-ten-dollar hardcover were long gone, but Crown has just begun their "Classics of Modern Science Fiction" series, all attractively packaged, compact hardcovers, and all for only \$7.95. All are also quite readable, if sometimes a bit dated, but one, Chad Oliver's *THE SHORES OF ANOTHER SEA*, is one of the best novels you're likely to find anywhere, regardless of price or date.

The story is simple and straightforward. Royce Crawford lives with his wife and two child-

ren in a remote section of the African bush, where Crawford traps baboons to be shipped to America for research. One day there is a brief, meteor-like light in the sky and soon after the baboons begin disappearing from their cages only to reappear later, changed and sick. Gradually it becomes clear that an alien ship is out there somewhere, and the aliens, never seen, are experimenting with the baboons and will if they can find a way, do the same with humans.

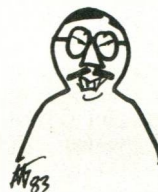
There are, of course, elements of a standard "monsters-from-space" movie in the novel, but that's like saying "2001" had elements of a space adventure movie in it. *THE SHORES OF ANOTHER SEA* is filled not only with tension and suspense but with fully developed, believable characters, a thoroughly realistic and vivid picture of the African bush, a chilling and all-pervading sense of the unknown and a resolution that is, refreshingly, the antithesis of the so-called resolutions found in most "monsters-from-space" movies.

*THE SENTINEL* By Arthur C. Clarke  
Berkley, \$6.95, Paperback

*CHILDHOOD'S END* By Arthur C. Clarke  
Ballantine/Del Rey, Paperback, \$2.95

In my opinion the best SF novel ever written, *CHILDHOOD'S END* has probably never been out of print since it was first published in 1953. For anyone who managed to miss it, here is yet another new edition. And for anyone who likes to make comparisons, there is also *THE SENTINEL*, a new collection of nine stories plus autobiographical introductions. Most notable is *GUARDIAN ANGEL*, the original version of the novelet that eventually grew into *CHILDHOOD'S END*. Also there is "The Sentinel" itself, the short story which contained, as Clarke says, the "seed" of "2001" as well as "Rescue Party," which, despite Clarke's own reservations, I still consider one of the most memorable short stories in all of science fiction.

PRO? YOU MEAN  
PALESTINE LIBERATION  
ORGANIZATION?





# flashpoint: middle

By BARRY N. MALZBERG

This is an Afterword to a collection of stories from and memoirs about WORLDS OF IF which was sold by Pohl and Greenberg to Playboy Press in 1980 which was acquired by Berkley. When will it appear? Title?

So here we sit in the cathedral. The service is over, the elegies are echoes, the mourners have been excused and the coffin itself with due discretion has been trundled stage left, consigned to the fire. (Bodies may be buried but deceased science fiction magazines, coverless, go straight to the crematoria.) Writers have written of their stories, the stories have been exposed once again and three wise men -- Budrys, Pohl and Shaw -- have gone beyond amenities to explain what WORLDS OF IF was and even what it might have been.

And here, nonetheless, I stand alone amongst the eaves, my own eulogy undelivered, the sounds of night stirring beyond the walls. Perhaps I should be out of here myself, but the task of the afterwordist (sic) is not a happy one and furthermore in the shadows there are hints of forms in the pews, heads bobbing, voices muttering special evening prayers. I will do my faltering best.

There are not many science fiction magazines awaiting these services, you know ... just four, as a matter of fact, three older than the deceased. One must not in the ruins of the last fifth of the Century of Print take any departure lightly. No pulp era is bound to come again.

My own contribution to WORLDS OF IF can be taken as vanishingly minimal, granting me if little else a certain objectivity. Two stories: BY RIGHT OF SUCCESSION in the 10/69 issue; WHAT TIME WAS THAT? in that of 12/69. The first was offered to the GALAXY magazine in 1968; another one of my characteristic assassination stories of that period rejected by several magazines, the astonishment was that Fred Pohl bought it at all which after asking for a slight revision he did, placing it in the lesser-pay magazine where as I understood even at that

time, all of the crazy stuff went where it could be buried amongst the adventure stories.

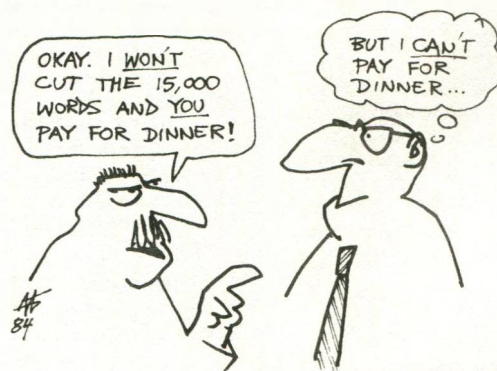
WHAT TIME WAS THAT? was sold to Ejler Jakobssen in the first month of his tenure; it had already, a year earlier, been rejected by Fred Pohl but cunningly (I got cunning early enough in this business although not at sufficient breadth) I changed the title and managed to unload it; it was an energetic but unoriginal time paradox story and \$69 for 2300 words seemed at the time a steal. My name never graced the contents page of WORLDS OF IF again; in fact I sold only five stories to GALAXY, none of them longer than 2500 words. In the period of 1969-1975 I was making something of a reputation for myself, selling stories in spree and welter to all of the original anthologies, to AMAZING/FANTASTIC and to my best and most loyal editor, Ed Ferman of FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION, but if my career had been judged in terms of how I was succeeding with the great traditional magazines which had carried the medium of science fiction through that time, it would have to have been judged disastrous. Five sales to GALAXY, two to WORLDS OF IF, four short stories (again none of them longer than 2500 words) to ANALOG.

I was the paradigm of the science fiction market at that time moving beyond the landscape of the field, finding new outlets, re-treating from the traditional for the simple reason that I could not deal with it. For a long time

most of those stories appearing in NOVA, UNIVERSE, GENERATION, INFINITY, the Roger Elwood anthologies were work that had first been submitted to the magazines.

Despite the fact that the true history of WORLDS OF IF can be compiled wholly without reference to me, however, the magazine had rather larger personal significance than even I might have thought at first and the transfers of ownership were small shocks, each of them, superseded by the large and final shock of its demise which to me took something out of the center of the science fiction market. One could find a certain reading of modern science fiction upon the proposal that it really began to go to pot when WORLDS OF IF folded, that in a strange and subtle way IF's collapse signalled the imminent failures of GALAXY and VERTEX and brought home to writers at every level and a number of sophisticated readers the fact that science fiction had changed: dwindled, narrowed in an irreversible way.

This was so to me because WORLDS OF IF was the only successful magazine in the difficult history of this genre that (at least until its last year under Jim Baen when it became, along with GALAXY, according to Baen himself, a would-be tool of the scientific/military/industrial complex) had no definable editorial bias. It printed stories that the various editors wanted to print (or for reasons of inventory pressure had to print) on their own merits and without





regard to how they conformed to what on the sunnier days might be called "editorial philosophy."

To those not familiar with the field of science fiction -- there might be two or three reading this book -- this may seem an unremarkable statement; a magazine that accepted or rejected work simply on the basis of quality judgment arrived at by its editors. For science fiction as it was constituted from 1938-1970 (and perhaps beyond) it was anything but unremarkable.

Science fiction was a magazine medium until the end of the sixties; its writers and its work moved within the context of these publications (90% of the books were drawn from work and writers which had appeared in the magazines; the book market was a parasite and appendage until the magazines began to run down) and the important magazines were under the aegis of strong-willed, idiosyncratic editors who, in their various ways, perceived of their publications and contributors as extensions of their own vision. Much has been written elsewhere of the canon of Gold, Boucher and Campbell; sufficient to say here that every established science fiction writer knew of their editorial prejudices and slanted their work to conform to those prejudices (or at least not to run up against them) or was unable to sell those publications with any consistency. At the third rank were a slew of penny-a-word magazines through the fifties and early sixties where rejects could be sold to editors whose only prejudice was to accommodate publishable work but there was, with the single exception of *WORLDS OF IF*, no magazine at the second rank ... one which paid a median wage, one which did not impose editorial vision upon the writers was the *WORLDS OF IF* and in its humble way it might have occupied a position in history of science fiction far more important than we are prepared to glimpse, even at this late hour.

The other magazines did the best that they could within their budgets and limitations and some excellent work was published within them but the run of material in these publications was, to put it charitably, the slightly crippled, the glass-eyed, the halt, the lame and the unfleet of foot.\*\*

Although excellences did appear in *SPACE SCIENCE FICTION*, *SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES*, *ROCKET STORIES*, *COSMOS*, *THRILLING WONDER*, *PLANET STORIES* \*\*\* the excellences were overwhelmed by that which surrounded them; most shone later on

if at all when they were extracted for anthologies, author collections or the basis of novels. *WORLDS OF IF*, however, edited by a sequence of men who (until the days of Baen) had nothing to prove and nothing to assay other than what entertained them, and their readers imposed no rigors upon the material which it published. This could only be conceived of as entirely liberating.

Liberation was not what the latter-day *ASTOUNDING/ANALOG* writer felt; what the *GALAXY* crew felt (reminiscences in the companion volume to this book make clear) were the imprint of shackles and the elegant and civilized *FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION* of Boucher/McComas was editing based upon an ignorance of science which amounted to terror; technologically developed science fiction was almost unpublishable in that magazine. *IF* on the other hand -- under Fairman, Shaw, Quinn, Knight (briefly), Pohl and Jakobssen sought and published work whose only criteria in the editorial eye was quality. For that reason, *IF* might have been the only science fiction magazine below the top three which often enough saw manuscripts on first submissions (experienced professionals knowing beforehand that they had written something which fell outside the range of all three major editors and not wishing, perhaps, to prejudice those editors against slanted work) and which was able

\*\*In fairness *INFINITY* edited by Larry Shaw, the shortlived *WORLDS BEYOND* of Damon Knight and James Blish's one issue *VANGUARD* were filled with striking work written on low wages but mostly at direct commission for the editors at the top of the writers' form. These three magazines combined, however, did not publish twenty-five issues and were small factors in the market.

\*\*\*Again in fairness, the large pulp magazines -- *PLANET*, *STARTLING*, *THRILLING WONDER* -- were looking for something entirely different than the digest magazines and getting it so often for a demarcated audience that they might for the purposes of this analysis be considered of another genre ... transplanted science fiction; adventure stories.

\*\*\*\*"Controversial" then as now was editorialese for writing of some obvious quality which was, at least to the editor, not immediately assimilable.

to develop something of an editorial identity.

The three essays in this book are worth consideration from that point of view; Shaw, Budrys and Pohl are diverse people but in their different ways they seem to be saying almost the same thing about the magazine. Larry Shaw was looking for good writing, "controversial" work \*\*\*\*, Fred Pohl was looking for "fun," Budrys recalls "good, crisp tales swiftly told ... better liked as distinguished from institutionalized than the Big Three." Campbell in his way was seeking to change the world, Gold to wall it off like a noxious disease and Boucher and his successors in their amused way to nullify it; less possessed, less inflamed by necessity *IF*'s editors and its publisher who for a long enough period was also its editor simply wanted to get along. To get along was probably more signatory of the mood of the United States in the fifties than the attitudes of the others; one could follow things along from this perspective and identify *IF* as the all-American science fiction magazine, a *Booster* of a pulp published by a genial and hardly insensitive Babbitt, emanating from a version of Zenith which probably would have fit neatly enough into Sinclair Lewis's perimeters.

If George F. Babbitt had been a science fiction editor/publisher he might well have turned out a *WORLDS OF IF* and this is to denigrate neither Babbitt nor the publication because George Follansbee -- hopeless lover of women, ponderer upon mortality, friend of a tortured violinist, gentle and stricken soul in the dead-center of technology's first awful deliverance -- had far more quality and more to offer the world than is generally understood. Read now *BABBIT* is not satire but sullen celebration; its author was neither *Booster* nor Calvinist but Daniel in the lion's den.

This carries far enough from a modestly entitled, modestly budgeted digest sized magazine which did its best for nearly a quarter of a century and at the end died (unlike most magazines) not without a certain dignity but it is worth some consideration; for Gold, Campbell and Boucher science fiction was work at the flashpoint, written to dramatize intensely that intersection between the extant and the imaginary at which conse-





quence begins; for James Quinn and his successors (even the restless Fred Pohl became genial within its pages) science fiction was work toward the middle; working out patiently and not without a certain honor the implications. In the true, unwritten history of science fiction IF will not and does not deserve to take up the space that the other magazines will find if civilization, as we have been given to understand, moves not with the truly great but in the humble toilers who carry forth and pass on the world's business and issue, then WORLDS OF IF, true servant and toiler in the fields may be seen to be the paradigm of this tortured and occasionally unlovely field. Seven lean years gone as this anthology is published to that place in science fiction where all the lost pulps go; it is missed by more of us and more profoundly than genial Jim Quinn could have dared to imagine.

A benediction then, to this quiet and earnest man who asked for so little, a benediction to this man who gave in proportion to his desserts and who no less than any of we brethren and keepers of the flame cared for this field and brought to it measure. Science fiction in Kingston! Citizen of the stars.

-- February 1981: New Jersey

"hard" SF, often involving unusual astronomical bodies. A typical example is Larry Niven's RINGWORLD, a habitat of mind-boggling size and shape, on which however, nothing happens that could not happen on Barsoom or in Oz. The attraction of such backgrounds is not their scientific respectability (Ringworld, as others have pointed out, is not a stable configuration) but simply their scale and novelty: They give the science fiction reader a large new place to go to. This value is not to be despised; the primary attraction of SF, for many people, is the opportunity it offers to escape to other and more fascinating worlds. But novelty is short-lived by definition; if science fiction has any lasting value it must lie elsewhere. "The game" of hard science fiction cannot be at its core; that is as absurd as to imagine that the point of reading Dostoevsky is to try to catch him out on details of the architecture of St. Petersburg.

Let us return to Wells. He called his stories "scientific romances"; he used devices he knew to be impossible -- Cavorite, the elixir of invisibility -- in order to turn the world over and see what it looked like from the other side. The core of science fiction, I suggest, is philosophical speculation.

The cluster of "hard" science and right-wing politics which Benford notes has never been satisfactorily explained. It was evident

in the pro- and anti-Vietnam manifestoes published in GALAXY in the sixties: All the Campbellite writers lined up on the hawk side, with one exception, Isaac Asimov. It may be that some scientists, and many engineers, have an ingrained pragmatic approach to problem-solving which makes them seek simple and pragmatic solutions to human problems (social Darwinism, racism, laissez-faire capitalism, imperialism). Whatever the cause, this right-wing bias is a grave defect in the works of many hard SF writers, because they are philosophically shallow. The only thing we learn from these works is that Man has a glorious destiny to conquer the universe and that if other races get in the way it is too bad.

As a science fiction writer, I believe in getting the science right if I possibly can, just as I believe in getting the facts right in any other kind of fiction; but I also believe that if the only way of making an original philosophical point is to introduce some impossibility, it does not matter a rap that the science is wrong. The novelty appeal of the "hard" science fiction writers is essentially that of POPULAR MECHANICS. We must aim higher than that if we expect to be read twenty years from now.

\*\*\*\*\*

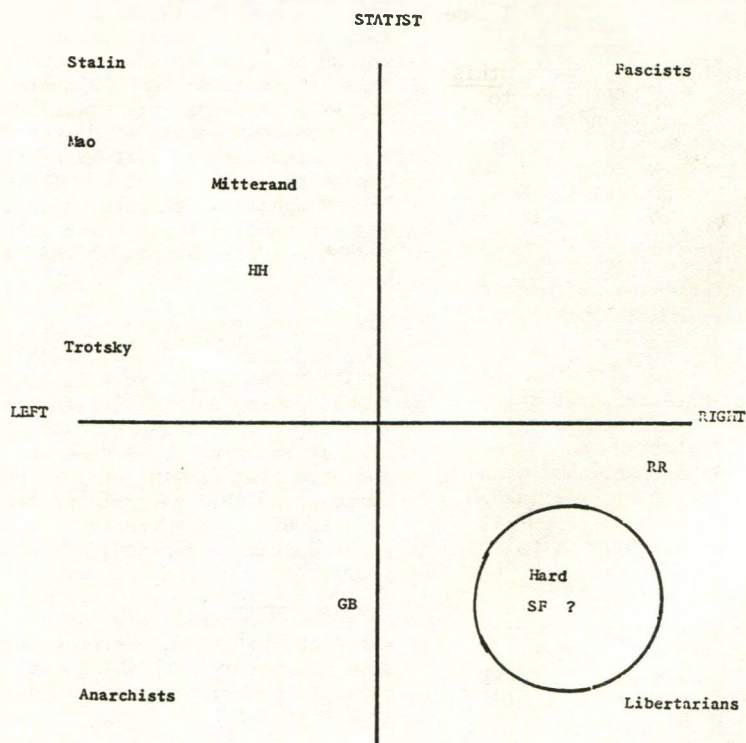
GEIS NOTE: Below is Gregory Benford's visualization of the political spectrum and hard sf's place in it.

#### A REPLY TO GREGORY BENFORD

BY DAMON KNIGHT

Gregory Benford, in "Hard Science Fiction in the Real World" (SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #50) remarks that "hard" science fiction "somehow seems to be the core" of SF. This is a modest claim; Benford is too intelligent to assert, as others have, that hard SF is the only true science fiction, all other varieties being counterfeit. But history does not support even this. "Hard" science fiction in the sense in which Benford uses it, that is, fiction in which speculative science (preferably physics) is an essential element and is rigorously worked out, is a game which very few writers are qualified or inclined to play. Wells did not write hard SF -- he got his characters to the Moon by the use of Cavorite, a gravity-opaque substance. Verne did not write it -- he got his characters there by shooting them out of a cannon.

Science fiction is a literature of novelty and a medium for day-dreaming: Thus the popularity of





# NOISE LEVEL

A COLUMN BY JOHN BRUNNER

WORD PROCESSORS CONSIDERED AS  
FORTUNE-TELLING MACHINES, ETC.

Does your word processor have the facility that automatically generates a fresh reference for every document, and prints it bottom left unless you instruct it not to?

Mine does. It's a Nexos 2200, designed by Logica and now marketed by ICL in Britain, and it runs a Logica program called Word-skil which I must admit I like a lot.

Bar one aspect of it, which bothers me.

You see, the code has six letters (or digits) of which the first three identify the disk you're working on and the second three identify the document. Naturally, the latter begin at AAA and continue AAB, AAC ... in theory to ZZZ.

At first I paid small attention to them, unless I had to break off partway through a letter or whatever and needed to make a note of where I was on what disk when I came back after lunch.

Then suddenly I realized: this damned machine must be trying to tell me something! Because what did I find? The assigned code was JBRRFU: a Big Foul-Up by yrs trly!

So what? -- you may be saying to yourself by now, especially if you have a machine that does the same. Ah-ha! The point is:

It was a ruddy great foul-up and I'm glad I was warned before I put the letter in the post! I erased the lot and started over the following morning in a much more tactful tone, thereby saving me and my correspondent a lot of unnecessary aggro.

There's a kind of gematria at work here. Now, every time I finish a letter, a story or a chapter, I look at the reference. Now and then (ah, happy day!) I find it saying AOK. Sometimes, on the other hand, it says e.g. ADF - A Damned Fool. Or even ASS ...

I think I am going to make a point of throwing away my most-used disks before the machine has a chance to deliver reference NBG -- No Bloody Good!

Because that's always the verdict I'm afraid of from my readers whenever I publish anything, and to have a machine tell me in advance would be unbearable ...!

Hmmmm! What does it say this time? Oh, that's neutral: AEO. I shall choose to consider it an abbreviation for An Excellent Outcome.

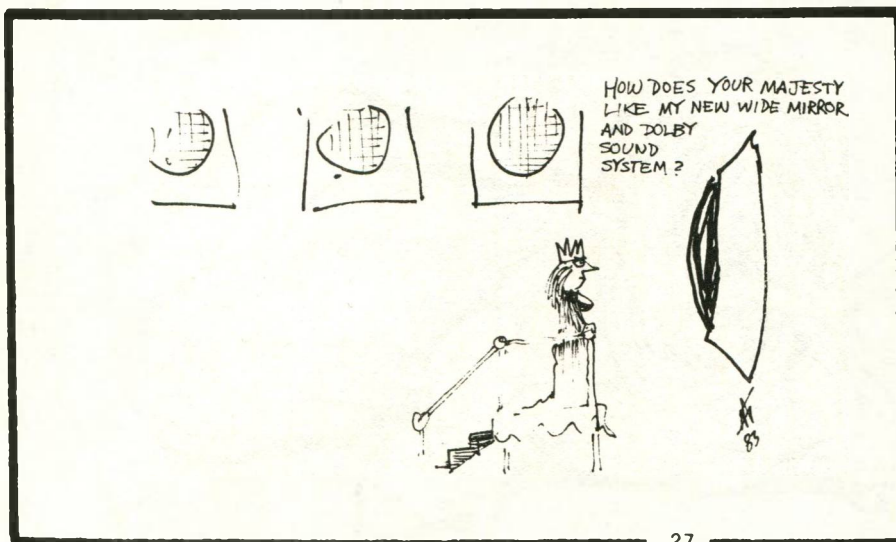
\* \* \*

I'm going to start accumulating appropriate references generated by the system and perhaps eventually I'll have enough to compile a further article on the subject. In the interim, however, what I mainly want to tell readers of this column about is my fiftieth birthday party.

(At that point I had to break off. While working, I listen to BBC Radio Three, the mainly music programme, and the DJ just played the finest setting of Ophelia's song from "Hamlet" that I have ever run across. The composer was uncredited, alas, but the singer was called Shusha or Shoosha -- I transcribe phonetically, since I've never heard of her before. I must track her down and buy the record!

(And then what happens? A charming and delightful young lady -- well, she must be, since Marjorie buzzed me in the study and said, "There's someone here to see you and she is very dishy!" -- comes and tries to sell me a vibrating pad to relieve lower back pain. I held it in my hand for half a minute and lost virtually all sensation; my fingers are still tingling long afterwards, rather as though I were on the verge of pins-and-needles and can't quite make it over the edge into actual pain. Do people really like this being done to them? By me it's actively nasty!

(All of which reminds me of an Israeli dance teacher we used to know in London, also a charming and beautiful lady, with whom I had a most enjoyable relationship right up to the day when she attempted to cure some back trouble I was having at the time. You know, I'm sure, that we were not evolved to walk upright, so our internal organs are far more comfortable when they depend from a horizontal spine, and consequently lower-back pain is a plague on the human species, especially its sedentary members like authors. I had to phone Lea forty-eight hours after she had "fixed" me to ask when her treatment was supposed to stop hurting, and she





told me huffily that it wasn't supposed to hurt at all. But she'd torn one of the muscles in my back which sets into another muscle rather than into a bone, and it took me a week to recover. A dance teacher ought not to be that ignorant of anatomy! I never saw her again ...)

Ah, yes! My birthday party!

Some twelve or so years ago, not exactly by chance because we were deliberately looking for places on the Adriatic coast not yet overwhelmed by package tours, we found our way to Casalbordino Lido, south of Pescara. We waited patiently at a level crossing (US: grade crossing) for a train to pass, turned right, and found ourselves at the Motel Calgary, which faces the Med with nothing between it and the beach save the sea-front road ... and was not, to be candid, a motel at all, but a sort of glorified boarding-house with a bar.

It was one of the most felicitous accidents of our entire lives not only because the people who run it learned their trade in Canada and speak good English, but because

Casalbordino Lido is the kind of resort frequented by Italians, and by a handful of people from abroad who want to go where the Italians go, not where the tourists are shipped in by the plane. They keep coming back year after year for the sake of Italian home cooking and wine made by the local co-operative a couple of kilometres inland. (The grapes, for the oenophiles among you, are of Montepulciano stock.)

Would you believe -- those who know us may find this incredible -- we even like the local chief of police?

So at the risk of ruining absolutely everything we prize about the place ...

I'm going to celebrate my fiftieth birthday there by holding a party on 22nd September 1984, and I'd like as many as possible of those friends I may have met but never properly got to know -- in other words, my readers -- to come and join me, and Marjorie, and the personal friends whom we've invit-

ed directly, in making it a memorable occasion.

Write to Hotel (they've stopped calling it Motel since it was recently enlarged) Calgary, Via Lungomare Sud 22, Casalbordino Lido, (CH), Prov. Abruzzo, Italy. The rate for daily board and lodging is 35,000 lire, at the time of writing about £15 or \$21. The cooking is local-style and always good, and Visa cards are accepted. The Saturday party with a buffet supper and wine is, of course, on us.

An autostrada passes within a few kilometres (take the Fossacesia exit and head south; be prepared for a very sharp left turn across the railway, and don't make for Casalbordino proper, which is up in the hills), and there is a station within easy walking distance of the hotel. We have no data about times of trains, but we know many stop there, from having heard them grinding to a halt.

See you in September -- how about it?

TO BARRY:

DOWN IN THE DREAM QUARTER

While the night  
Falls down  
Choking like a collar  
Seamless nylon images  
Faces of foil  
Arms of entropy  
Legs of flesh  
Pour soundlessly onward  
Down in the dream quarter  
Crying away softly  
Another twelve whales murdered  
The candle of humanity flickers  
In green meadows  
On sandy strips of beach  
While the engines of the night  
Hum onward  
Realities fall from  
Insane laughter

---BLAKE SOUTHFORK





# NOTES ON

## THE MAN IN THE TREE

BY DAMON KNIGHT

"And the Son of God died, which is immediately credible because it is absurd. And buried he rose again, which is certain because it is impossible."

-- Tertullian, DE CARNE CHRISTI

I knew that I wanted to write this novel when I read for the first time the "Infancy Gospels" in THE APOCRYPHAL NEW TESTAMENT, edited by M.R. James. In these stories, the child Jesus withers up a boy who interferes with the pools he has made by damming a stream; strikes another dead for running into him, etc. These incidents became part of the first chapter of the novel. For example:

"One day when Gene was five, after a hard morning rain, he was sailing boats in the gutter. When he tired of this, he brought a bucket full of dirt from the garden and made dams. The mud washed away, but he built the dams up again with twigs and straw, and sent his boats down the stream to watch them tip over the dams and spin in the whirlpools.

"A boy he didn't know came down the street carrying a long stick. Before Gene realized what he was doing, he had broken one of the dams. 'Don't do that,' Gene said, but already the boy was breaking another one.

"Gene got up and rushed at him; he was the taller, although the other boy was two years older. The boy jabbed him with his stick and danced away; Gene could not get near enough to hit him. The boy broke the last of the dams and then hit him with the stick again; Gene was crying with anger and pain. At that moment he felt with his mind where the nerves and muscles of the other boy's arm were; he reached in and turned them in a way he had never done before. The stick fell. Gene picked it up and began to beat the other boy, who ran away crying.

"That evening the boy's father brought him to Gene's house with his right arm in a sling; he said the boy's arm was paralyzed because

Gene had hit him on the shoulder. He was very angry, and shouted at Gene's father. Gene denied everything, but he was frightened, and he reached in again to make the boy's arm well. When the father saw him moving his arm, his face changed, and he took the boy away."

I began with a few assumptions: that Jesus of Nazareth was a real person, that he had an infancy and childhood like other people, that he did and said some of the things attributed to him, that after his death his body disappeared, giving rise to a rumor of resurrection, and that all this became the basis of a new religion which prospered astonishingly over the next two-thousand years.

In a previous story, "What Rough Beast," published in two versions in the 60s (in F&SF and in my collection TURNING ON) I had used most of these assumptions; now I wanted to do it again at greater length, and I also wanted to make fictional use of my own experiences as a child and a young man, something I had never had the courage to do before.

In "What Rough Beast," in one version, my protagonist was a Jew from an imaginary Russian-French country occupying the place of Canada in an alternate universe. I didn't want to do the same thing again in the novel, first because I thought making the new Messiah a Jew was too literal, second because I had no Jewish family experience to draw on, and third because I wanted to approach the question, what would happen if another man with Jesus' power were born here, in this world, this country, and this century?

A further assumption was that some of the Gospel miracles, but not others, really happened. Certain of these stories have the innocent ring of truth, for example the healing of the blind man, Mt. 8:23:

"And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the

town: and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw aught.

"And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking."

This has the sound of an eyewitness account, the sort of thing that would be remembered because it was unexpected and vivid. Compare, for instance, the stiff doctrinal invention of the episode in which Jesus walks on the water, Mt. 14:25.

I discovered that when the obvious inventions are eliminated, all the rest can be accounted for by a single extraordinary ability, the one I gave Mike Kronski in "What Rough Beast" and Gene Anderson in THE MAN IN THE TREE: He is able to see into alternate realities and to rotate parts of them into this world.

"A beetle was crawling across the warped yellow boards of the porch. Gene knelt and put his finger in front of it to make it change direction. Then he reached into the shadows and found the place where it could just as easily have gone the other way. Gene turned it there, and then there were two beetles. He turned the beetle again, and now there were three, crawling away from each other as fast as they could.

"Zelda and Petie were crouching beside him. Petie said, 'Aw, that ain't nothing. You had them in your hand.'

"They argued about this, and Gene lost because he was outnumb-ered. When he left, Zelda and Petie were shouting, 'Liar, liar, you're pants on fire!'"

The Gospel stories also tell us that the act is tiring and sometimes involuntary --

"And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years,

"And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent





all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,

"When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind and touched his garment.

"For she said, if I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.

"And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague.

"And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? (Mk. 5:25-30.)"

-- and that he could not perform it too frequently:

"And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

"Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? (In modern idiom, What do you want from me?) mine hour is not yet come. (Jn. 2:3-4.)

I had to make one further assumption, that Jesus was able to read people's thoughts, because it appears many times in the Gospels, where it has no evident doctrinal value. See, for instance, Jn. 4:17:

"The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband;

"For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

This appears throughout the novel, for example, p. 166:

"'Maybe I ought to read it. Will you put it on my list?'

"She did not quite smile; she had done so on Friday.

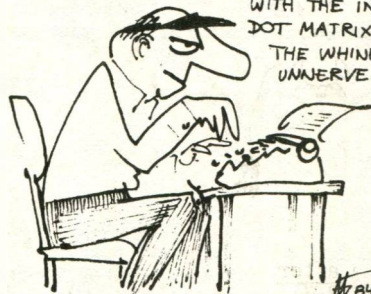
"At the door he turned to look at her. 'Don't be too clever, Maggie,' he said, and was gone."

The parallelism between Jesus and Gene Anderson functions in two ways, forward and backward: the Gospel story illuminates the story of Gene Anderson, and the other way around.

I made Gene Anderson a freak (a pituitary giant) because I wanted to write about the creative person as an outcast. The dialog between Anderson and the Lizard Man illuminates this:

"'I was too big for the seats in school,' Gene said. 'I had to sit with my feet in the aisle, and they called me Feet.'"

THE DECLINE AND FALL  
OF LITERARY CRITICISM  
AS A VIABLE ART FORM WAS COINCIDENTAL  
WITH THE INVENTION OF  
DOT MATRIX PRINTING,  
THE WHINE OF WHICH  
UNNERVED THE MOST  
RESOLUTE!



"'They called me Fish-skin,' said Parlow apologetically. 'One day two kids caught me going home from school and whitewashed me.'

"'Whitewashed you?'

"'That's right, there was a can of whitewash in somebody's basement -- they took me down there, pulled my shirt off and painted me ....'"

I made Anderson a homosexual partly for the same reason, and partly to interpret the Gospel story. Jesus and his followers were all bachelors: this in a religious culture which laid the obligation of marriage on every man.

In THE SECRET GOSPEL, Morton Smith explains the puzzling incident of the young man in Gethsemane, dressed only in a sheet, who flees leaving his garment behind (Mk. 14:51-2): "The business in hand was a baptism; the youth wore the required costume." Smith suggests that the secret ceremony involved a homosexual act.

This is a tenuous argument, but there is a suggestion that the Gospel writers believed Jesus to have been a homosexual. In Leviticus, the price of redemption is given as 50 shekels for a man over twenty, 30 shekels for a woman; 20 shekels for a man under twenty and 10 for a woman, etc. Thus Joseph's brothers sold him for 20 pieces of silver (he was seventeen) but Jesus was sold for 30, the price of a woman.

The attitude toward women expressed in the Gospel stories is curious. In the Gospel According to the Egyptians, Jesus is made to say, "I came to destroy the works of the female." (Compare the Gospel of the Egyptians: "Until when shall men continue to die?" "So long as women bear children.")\* In Mt. 11:11 Jesus says there are

none greater than John the Baptist "among them that are born of women," and in the Gospel of Thomas, "When you see him who was not born of woman, fall upon your faces and worship him: he is your Father."

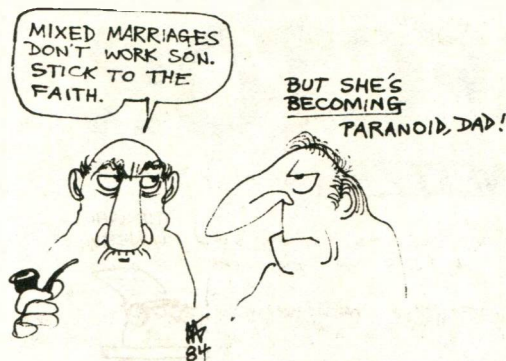
The Crucifixion story in the Gospels was evidently written by gentile Christians with little or no knowledge of Jewish law or customs; the offense with which Jesus is charged in the story (blasphemy against the Jewish God) was not a crime under Jewish or Roman law; even if it had been, the Sanhedrin would not have had jurisdiction. There is no contemporary record of the Crucifixion, and we cannot know whether it ever happened at all. T.W. Doane, in BIBLE MYTHS, refers to one Antigonus, "King of the Jews," crucified, scourged, and put to death by Mark Antony c. 37 B.C. Dio Cassius, Plutarch, and Strabo mention the story; Doane suggests that it was appropriated by the Christians.

There are traces of another tradition in Acts 5:30 ("The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree") and I Peter 2:24: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree ..." Haim Cohn, in THE TRIAL AND DEATH OF JESUS, p. 211, tells us that Jewish law

\* In this schema, nuns are converts recruited from the ranks of the enemy.

There is a suggestion here of a lost myth, opposite in intent from the story of the Virgin Birth: that Jesus himself was not born of a woman but came into existence in some more ethereal way; the Docetists had a doctrine that Jesus had not come in the flesh, had no earthly mother, and had simply "passed through Mary like smoke." (Schonfield, THOSE INCREDIBLE CHRISTIANS, pp. 219-20.)





prescribed hanging on a tree after execution (compare Deut. 21:22-23). He suggests the possibility that Jesus was killed in some other way and then hung up, and that later writers interpreted Hebrew taloh, to hang, as "to crucify." (Aramaic tselov, to hang, is "to crucify" in modern Hebrew.) All we can be certain about is his mysterious disappearance; that was sufficient to make him a supernatural figure.

The title, THE MAN IN THE TREE, came from these thoughts, and from a bronze Cristo hanging on my wall above a potted plant. It refers, on various levels, to the hanging from the tree in the last chapter, to Gene Anderson's tree house in the Oregon woods, and to his inaccessible tower in his Florida house.

I assume that Jesus believed in the imminent coming of the heavenly kingdom on earth (Lk. 24:34: "Verily I say to you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled"), therefore had no intention of founding a church (Mt. 16:18, "on this rock I will build my church" is evidently doctrinal), and that the church must have been organized by others whose aims were different from his. In this connection, I found the story of Ananias illuminating.

"But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession.

"And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

"But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

"While it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

"And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the

ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

"And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

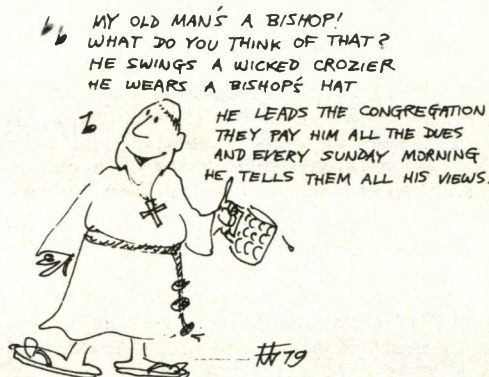
"And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

"And Peter answered to her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

"Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

"Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband."

This is exactly the sort of story that might be told in order to frighten the members of the church into giving up all their assets; it gives a hint of the early church as an organization not unlike the Moonies. Linck, the disciple who betrays Gene Anderson, is the organizer who intends to construct a church out of the grass-roots movement created by Anderson:



"It was Linck's conviction that Jesus of Nazareth had been a man like Gene Anderson, gifted with the same power; all but a few of his reported miracles could be explained in that way, and in addition there was a suggestive passage in the Gospel of Peter, where he was made to say on the cross, not 'My God, my God,' but 'My power, my power, thou hast deserted me.'

"It was even possible, although Linck did not excuse himself on this ground, that Gene expected and willed this betrayal -- as Jesus had given the sop to Judas, saying, 'What you do, do quickly.'

"One of the great puzzles was the fact that within three centuries of the execution of its founder by one of the most degrading methods known to the Romans, the Christian religion had become the dominant force in Europe. That was absurd, and it was true, and this absurd truth, for many theologians, was the ultimate proof of the divinity of Jesus. Linck did not go so far, but he was convinced that if Jesus had not been arrested, tried and executed, the movement he had founded would have remained an obscure sect."

In one sense I believe Linck was wrong: it was not the Crucifixion itself but the mysterious disappearance of the founder that made it possible to construct a church. In the founder's absence, a capable organizer could put together a structure of dogma and doctrine that would be self-sustaining. Linck, the betrayer of Gene Anderson, could not accomplish this, but others could:

"From THE BOOK OF GENE, Chicago, 2036:

"Then his enemy rose up before him to kill him; but GENE touched him with the power that was in him, and he fell dead on the ground. Then GENE said, 'O God, what shall I do?' And God answered, 'Hang this one from a tree, and come to another place that I have prepared for you; and let not your disciples sorrow, for I will return you to them at the proper season and will gladden their hearts: and then you shall come in your glory.' So it was done; so it was told; and so it shall be."



# THE VIVISECTOR

BY DARRELL SCHWEITZER

## THE AMAZING MADMAN

By R.A. Lafferty:

ANNALS OF KLEPSIS  
Ace, 1983, 212 pp., \$2.50

THROUGH ELEGANT EYES  
Corroboree Press, 1983  
237 pp., \$20 + \$1.50 postage

GOLDEN GATE & OTHER STORIES  
Corroboree Press, 2729 Bloomington  
Ave S., Minneapolis MN 55407  
1982, 237 pp., \$20 + \$1.50 postage

I won't claim to fully understand R.A. Lafferty's work, I don't think anyone does, except maybe Lafferty. This is probably a good sign, because if a writer's work is totally, utterly and completely understood by everyone as soon as it is published, chances are there is nothing new in it to be understood. Nothing is easier than the familiar, which is why a lowest-common-denominator medium like network television deals exclusively in the familiar.

At the same time I would be the last person to make obscurity into a virtue. There has to be some sort of fascination in a writer's work, which makes the reader come back again and again, until the mysterious depths are (somewhat) plumbed. (This is called entertainment value. Without it, no one will bother. Clearly, some people find "Finnegan's Wake" entertaining.) It can take time and generations. We need only look at H.P. Lovecraft, whose work is only beginning to be understood now, fifty-some years after he wrote his major work. And there are still a lot of people who are not aware that there is anything to Lovecraft. So will it be with Lafferty. It is all a judgment call, but my judgment tells me that Lafferty's point of view is a genuinely unique one, which will take some getting used to. In the meantime many critics are satisfied with calling him completely crazy, or a madman, or a troll, or indescribable (all these being compliments of a high order), which conveys a reaction but otherwise isn't very useful. The least we can do, I think, is attempt to describe what we find.

ANNALS OF KLEPSIS, the latest Laffertian novel (it does not occur

on those long lists of unpublished novels which appear in some of his books), is a rambling adventure/travelogue set in the universe of PAST MASTER and several of his short stories. Familiar planets are mentioned -- Astrobe, Cameroi, World Abounding -- but the action takes place on a new one, Klepsis, the Pirate Planet, which was settled by Christopher Begorra Brannagan, who set up a fund to encourage the immigration of peg-legged Irish pirates. A grotesque caricature of piracy (not to mention the real thing, with the aid of the Tailed Men of Tarrish, who can teleport pirate ships from the ocean of one world to that of another) is all the rage:

"They wear loose, baggy shirts and loose, baggy trousers ... in shouting yellows and oranges and scarlets, gold and blood-stone, sky-blue and sea-green, saturation-purple. They wear knotted head-kerchiefs that are brighter still. Oh, and they have eye patches, peg legs, short swords dangling in sword sashes ... most of the barefoot ones have their feet painted in one of the bright primary colors ... For a Klepsis farthing they can step into a trough that will color their feet with a color that will last all day.

"Some of the people wear green-and-orange birds, perched on their shoulders as Gaea pirates used to wear ... Some of the pirate-dressed persons also wear snakes. Probably half of the sword-sashes are really living snakes ..."

--(pp. 5-6)

If that isn't enough, hallucinogenic grapes (known as "My God What Grapes!") are distributed to new arrivals, assuming, of course, that they remembered to bring a pinch of salt. The Klepsis oceans don't have salt, you see, so each immigrant is expected to make a contribution.

That's only the beginning. We see all this through the eyes of a would-be historian, who wants to find history on Klepsis, for all the planet is still in its legendary period and doesn't seem to have any. (This being the legendary period, the ghosts of most of the famous people of the past are still around.) Klepsis society is bright, gaudy and viciously violent, but then, people don't always stay dead. After the hero is nearly flogged to death for accidental fraud at a slave auction (only to be bought by the slave he was bidding on), he is healed in a vat of miraculous wine. There is also someone floating in the vat who was murdered fifty years before. He finally emerges, and is known as the Dripping Man for the rest of the book.

And so on. There are many wonders, social and supernatural. There is even a voyage through Brannagan's brain. You will not forget the story-telling session inside the hollowed-out carcass of a whale, or the active corpse who propositions young girls in verse:

"Give up your soul, give up  
your life, Come rot with me  
and be my wife."

There is a lot of strange verse in this book. There is also





(ambiguously) the ending of the human universe, since the crucial pivot of the Doomsday Equation (a hunchback named Quasimodo) dies before anyone can do much about it.

The structure of the book seems to be that of successive tall tales: If you think that's something, wait'll you hear about this one! There is very little that could be called a plot, for all that a tremendous amount happens. The characters mostly watch, or explain things (all in the same voice too), without much development or interaction. Before long there are just too many characters who are nothing but funny names. For all the author does provide a program from time to time, it is hard to tell the players apart. It is harder still to tell why things happen. To Lafferty's credit, he writes clearly enough that you can always tell what happens except for the intentional confusion at the end, where the universe might have been destroyed. (A bit of a problem since this is narrated in the first person, past tense.) His comic invention is going full blast here, but the book doesn't have dramatic power. I don't think it will be seen as a major work in that hypothetical future in which all of Lafferty is unravelled.

In fact, much of his reputation may rest on his short stories. They tend to be more readily understandable, perhaps because in them the typical weirdness is kept to manageable proportions. (Lafferty mentioned in his AMAZING interview that he writes a story "until it busts." Maybe his novels are just short stories that went on and on, because they didn't seem to "bust" at short story length.) The two Corroboree Press volumes are probably the place to start with his work. (Or, I could also recommend the Ace collection NINE HUNDRED GRANDMOTHERS.) Corroboree is a new small press outfit determined to do for Lafferty what Underwood-Miller has done for Jack Vance. They have ambitious plans which include reprints of rare works and publication of several of the (about fifteen) unpublished novels. Typical of a small press, they have very high production values: acid-free paper, sewn signatures, real cloth bindings, and color illustrations. Also, these editions are limited, numbered and signed, but happily not priced like many of the "instant rarity" editions we're seeing these days, which cost three times as much.

THROUGH ELEGANT EYES, subtitled "Stories of Austro and the Men Who Know Everything" collects the Barnaby Sheen series, which has been

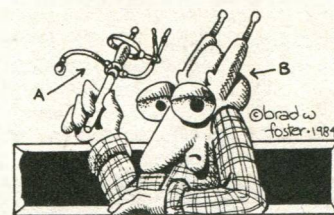
appearing in various anthologies and magazines (including several lost in obscure Roger Elwood anthologies) over the years. Two have been rewritten for this collection. One is an original.

Even if you have read some of these stories before, you should read them again, as assembled. They make much more sense in context. There is definite continuity and development. The second one is sort of an "origin story" of two recurring characters, Mary Mondo, the disembodied ghost of a schizoid secondary personality which has outlived its host, and Loretta Sheen, the sawdust-filled doll whom Barnaby insists (with reason) is his daughter. In the third ("Barnaby's Clock") we are first introduced to Austro, the Australopithecus house-boy from Ethiopia who gets progressively more articulate in later stories (and starts drawing a popular comic strip on slabs of rock). The series itself is in the grand tradition of bar and club and other recurring framework stories. Barnaby frequently meets with three friends who, along with him, "know everything" (or at least they talk like they do) and one who doesn't, that is, Lafferty, the author. They form a "polyander," which is "a group of men who have become one and will remain so."

This is a recurring motif in Lafferty's fiction. You'll find very little romance in his work, but there are many groups of odd folk who stay together for good fellowship and friendship. His novel ARCHIPELAGO is largely about this, the idea being that men may be islands, cut off from the main, but they tend to come in little bunches, or archipelagoes. ARCHIPELAGO (Manuscript Press, 1979 -- still in print, to my knowledge) dealt with the breakup of such a group. In the last Barnaby Sheen story, the "polyander" breaks up, rather grimly. Exactly why and how will be a topic for future analytical essays. A woman intrudes (but most of the members are married, so this isn't as misogynistic as it sounds) and causes the members to mentally/psychically participate in a tragedy/melodrama which brings out the worst in them.

Before that, the stories are exuberant explosions (at one point literally) of tall ideas, taller explanations and pure whimsy, with only slight touches of malevolence.

GOLDEN GATE is a more generalized collection of stories which have never before been in a Lafferty collection (though many have been



in book form, in anthologies). There are also six originals. Most of them are quite good. Why these six did not appear elsewhere first, I don't know. Perhaps it was to increase the attractiveness of the book for the potential customer. It is not accurate to say that Lafferty is an "uncommercial" writer, considering his sales record, and the number of new Lafferty books that seem to be coming out.

This collection also contains his Hugo-winner, "Eurema's Dam."

How to sum up? You should read Lafferty, but it's best to begin with his short stories and work up to the novels. And save ANNALS OF KLEPSIS for the next ignoramus who "knows" that "all" science fiction (or even "sci fi") is like this, or that, or something. Lafferty is great for confusing the sweeping generalizers.

## MUCH LESS HAPPILY CRAZY

### DARK VALLEY DESTINY, THE LIFE AND DEATH OF ROBERT E. HOWARD

By L. Sprague de Camp, Catherine de Camp & Jane Whittington Griffin  
Bluejay Books, 1983, 402 p., \$16.95

While we're on the subject of crazy, we must define our terms. The semantics of madness are quite tricky. I had to wrestle with this when writing the Tom O'Bedlam stories, lest I end up an honorary member of the Crazy Gugenheim Memorial Make Fun of The Handicapped Association. (Remember him? From "The Jackie Gleason Show." First not, well, maybe it's for the best.)

When we say that Lafferty is a "madman" (as so many have), we mean that he is wildly eccentric, that his ideas are striking, whimsical, and seem to follow an alien logic; that he is remarkably creative in his view of reality. This is quite a different phenomenon from the madness/paranoia/Oedipal complex/whatever of Robert E. Howard, which was not an amusing thing at all. It was sad. It was ugly. And it killed him, as thoroughly as heart disease or cancer might. It is not a joking matter at all.



There are two ways to approach DARK VALLEY DESTINY. First, let's talk about quality: This is a fine piece of writing and an amazing feat of scholarship. It is surely the definitive biography of Robert E. Howard. Not only did the de Camps go through vast amounts of papers and records (to the extent of going through the stacks of a college library, gathering together all the books Robert once owned -- his copies, that is -- and examining them page by page to see if he underlined or annotated anything; happily, they found something) but they also interviewed a lot of very old people who knew Robert or the Howard family and who won't be around the next time someone decides to write a book on Howard. Any future biography of Howard will be of necessity so derivative of DARK VALLEY DESTINY that there would be little point in writing it. (Irwin Porges' book on Edgar Rice Burroughs has had the same effect. There can be future commentary, and articles or even books about specific aspects, but all the basic information is there.) You'll learn everything you ever needed to know about Howard: Who he was, what kind of environment he grew up in, what kind of conditions he worked under, what he accomplished, and as much as it is possible to know, why he killed himself. We see his suicide looming like the final act in a Greek tragedy, quite inevitable once all the pieces are in place. More heart-wrenching are the obvious points at which he could have been saved, but these opportunities were closed off one by one. The last chance came when Robert had a love affair -- he was about 28 -- and, while this might not have resulted in a successful marriage, it might have led to emotional independence. But no, his mother discouraged it. In the end, he could not survive without her. (Did she know what she was doing? Was she a monster, or self-centered and oblivious?)

The book also provides considerable insight into Howard's writing. Much use is made of his poetry as a source of autobiographical hints. We get to see exactly what sort of drives and needs he was projecting into his characters. You will come away from this with a much better idea of what made Conan the distinctive character he is, and why no one can ever write exactly like Howard. (For their sake, this is just as well.) I couldn't ask more from a literary biography. It is an excellent piece of work.



This brings us to a second point: What does this book mean? It's clear what it means in the sense of the information it conveys but what does it mean to the fantasy field? I suspect every thoughtful fantasy writer will read it a little bit guiltily, looking for him/herself in the personality of Howard. I thought to myself: Gee, when Howard was my age, he had been dead for several months. After a while I was relieved to find that my personality and his have so little in common. The most striking feature about Howard was his bottled-up rage, directed at everyone and everything (including, I suspect, his mother, although it never showed). His "paranoia" is largely explicable in terms of this. He never forgave a slight, and seething inside, had reason to be genuinely afraid that one day he would lose control and kill someone. He assumed everyone was like that, therefore concluded that he had countless implacable enemies gunning for him. These "enemies" had long since forgotten him, no doubt. But he was astonished when E. Hoffman Price wouldn't own up to having any enemies.

Fortunately, most fantasy writers are not like that. There will always be those who insist that fantasy, particularly heroic fantasy, is "sick," or an "escape"

from reality and point to Howard as an example. I tend toward the Tolkien/Lewis "fantasy as an addition to life" theory myself and can only point out that most adventure fantasists have not been like Howard. Tolkien's life was hardly an Oedipal tragedy. Edgar Rice Burroughs was an ordinary fellow to a fault (the fault being that his books express only the most common ideas and perceptions). H. Rider Haggard was such a paragon of Victorian respectability that he was knighted, not for his literary activities, but for services to the Empire.

In Howard's case, fantasy was an addition to a life that was otherwise pretty bleak.

#### AND NOW, A WORD ABOUT SANITY

#### THE FRINGE OF THE UNKNOWN

By L. Sprague de Camp  
Prometheus Press, 1983  
208 pp., \$16.95

Sprague de Camp may not be as prolific as Isaac Asimov, but he is to my mind, fully as good as a popular science writer. This is a collection of essays, broadly arranged in categories of "Our Ingenious Forebears," "Beasts Now and Then," and "Scientists, Mad and Otherwise," covering a wide variety of odd and fringe topics. Prometheus Press is devoted largely to humanistic philosophy and rationalistic debunking of pseudo-science (they publish Martin Gardner, the Amazing Randi, etc.). THE FRINGE OF THE UNKNOWN isn't a debunk book *per se*, but it does contain a lot of information which may be used to debunk everything from Pyramidology to Atlantis cults to people who berate "orthodox scientists" without knowing what these words mean. He explains how the Pyramids were built, and how various other technical feats were accomplished in antiquity without the aid of Gods From Outer Space. For the fantasy writer/historian/war-gamer, there is a very good piece on ancient artillery. Next time you mention a catapult or a trebuchet or even a crossbow, it will be easier to know precisely what these devices were. There are also entertaining sections of scientific eccentrics, hoaxes, and even the largest theft of all time, "The Great Whale Robbery," all told in a clear style with occasional dashes of wry humor.



# THE GLASS BUSHEL

A COLUMN BY BOB SHAW

IF YOU CAN'T GET ANY  
MORE INVISIBLE THAN THAT  
WHAT GOOD IS IT?



I'm writing this during the Christmas and New Year break, safely esconced in a recently acquired house which -- for reasons too tedious to go into -- is my fifth address in twelve months.

And this one, I can assure you, is PERMANENT. My last house was called BoShkone (an involuted pun which is quite impossible to explain to postman) but now I'm beginning to see why some people give their houses names like Dunroamin'.

It's hard enough being a freelance SF writer when conditions are good, but when all your working gear, reference books and all other possessions have been repeatedly scrambled the job becomes a near impossibility. The last move was four weeks ago and it was complicated by the fact that the house I've just bought is only fifty yards from the one I've just vacated. You might think that would make things easier, but the snag is that nobody with the normal greed for gold is going to hire a removal firm just to go fifty yards. Right? You decide to make the move in a leisurely fashion over a period of days, carrying all your bits and pieces by hand or trolley and save all that money for more important matters. Pints and pints of more important matters.

The migration took a full week.

A week in which we had rather a lot of rain.

It might have been accomplished more quickly but for an unexpected complication. On Day One I came down with a flu bug which made the one in THE STAND seem like a mild case of sniffles. I kept going regardless, dosing myself with whiskey and aspirin, and exacerbated my condition so much that I was out of action for the following two weeks.

The books alone took a whole day -- an endless, grey, wet, miserable day -- and now I hate the bloody things. Out of sheer vindictiveness I've started dumping books I no longer need. Not even trying to sell them -- just hurling them into plastic sacks and hurling the sacks onto the local tip, snarling all the while.

The fact that I can do that reminds me that, although deeply involved with literature, I don't have the instinctive reverence for books which is shared by many fans. Mind you, I'm not as bad as one writer whose biography I read years ago. (It might have been Compton Mackenzie.) When he was going on a train journey in the Thirties he used to buy a hardback novel in the station, immediately rip the back off and drop it in a wastebin. He then split the rest of the book in two and put a half in each pocket of his overcoat. On the train he would read the first half, throw it out the window, and repeat the procedure with the second half.

Most SF fans cringe when they hear that story, so enough of horrors and on to the brighter side of the SF author's life. Earlier in the year, having moved down from the Lake District into Cheshire, I was in need of a new accountant. That presented me with a problem, because I prefer a trier, a man who is good at his job but who is still small enough to value my patronage. There's a kind of Hertz-sprung-Russell diagram for accountants at various stages of their careers, but the main sequence is much shorter than for stars, and one has to exercise nice judgment on this point. After a lot of thought and discreet casing of various premises, I selected

one firm which seemed about right and made an appointment by phone.

On actually going in though, I began to entertain severe doubts. The exterior of the building had seemed to exhibit the correct degree of upwardly-mobile seediness, but inside there were thick carpets, good furniture and smart secretaries. I began to feel uneasy. Perhaps this was the wrong kind of place for a humble SF writer. How could somebody who worked in this kind of environment empathize with an author whose preoccupations were with space travel and galactic empires and such?

At that moment a secretary came over to me and said, 'Mr. Trantor will see you now.'

Honest!

I'd never bothered much about omens in the past, but I immediately felt better. And it turned out that Mr. Trantor was a science fiction reader and we get on well together.

All I need now is a bank manager called Arrakis.

## Discriminatory Sentences

A few paragraphs above I mentioned entertaining severe doubts. Why is it that negative mental processes like doubts always get entertained, while the best that can happen to more worthy cases such as convictions is that they will be firmly held?

This hardly seems fair, especially when you consider our obsequious behaviour with the genuine nasties in this category. Unpleasant examples like grudges are always harboured, and grievances are actually nursed!



We should demand fair play for words.



### Fire Without Smoke

Americans are often surprised at how much the British have to pay for certain commodities in spite of our generally lower earnings. Spectacles are a prime example -- \$100.00 being quite normal -- and I personally suffer in the case of pipe tobacco, which costs eight times as much in the UK as it does in the USA.

At the moment I'm enjoying a pound of properly-priced tobacco which Ramsey Campbell brought back from the States for me last month, but it is amazingly difficult to set up a deal like that. If friends going abroad are smokers they need their duty-free allowance for themselves, and if they aren't smokers they usually forget to bring the stuff or do something else wrong. Dave Kyle was one of the latter.

A few years back, knowing he was due for a trip to the States, I really worked on him with heart-rending stories about my plight as a British pipe-smoker and how he could ease the situation with just a little thought on his part. The piteous pleas must have got through to him, but Dave is a non-smoker and therefore had not fully absorbed the plot.

What I wanted was a big plastic bag of run-of-the-mill US tobacco purchased for an eighth of its British price, but Dave had forgotten that aspect. All he remembered was that he had promised to bring me a gift of tobacco.

He went into a tobacco store and saw lots of really cheap domestic brands and -- being a good-hearted person -- decided it would not be nice to present an old buddy with something he could buy in quantity with some small change. So he looked around for a small tin of a really expensive tobacco -- and he found one.

It was a curious, overpowering weed called Murray's Mellow Mixture and the reason it was expensive in the USA was that it had been imported.

It had been imported from the UK.

To be precise, it had been imported from Murray's factory in Belfast -- about a mile from where I used to live.

Still, it's the thought that counts ...

### What's That On Your Plate?

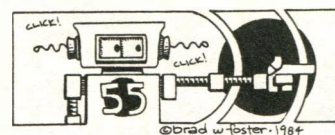
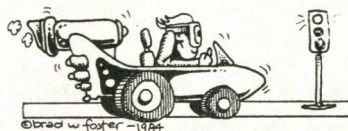
Most people don't care a hoot about pipe tobacco, but there is one facility enjoyed by citizens of the USA which Britishers -- especially SF fans -- would love to have, and which is denied to us by a rigid bureaucracy. I'm referring to the right to personalize one's car license plates.

My old friend Jan Howard Findler publishes a fanzine called WOMBAT and on visiting him in Albany, New York, a few years back I was quite astonished to see that the registration of his car was WOMBAT. I felt a pang of envy when he explained that some states allow a driver to pick any registration he wants, as long as it is unique, while others only insist on an official designation on the rear plate, allowing the motorist to do as he wishes with the front plate.

Dear US readers, have you any idea of how much UK motorists would faunch for that system if ever it came to their notice that authorities with such liberal attitudes existed?

In the UK you take whatever license number is handed to you and -- unless you have lots of money to spare -- that's it. If our baffling area code letters and digits accidentally produce a combination that a car owner particularly likes he is grudgingly permitted, for a fee, to transfer it to successive cars, but clerical unions involved in the paperwork have been grumbling about it for years and are trying to have that privilege suspended.

They want us all to be uniform specks in a grey social porridge, but the natural craving for individuality is so strong that some British motorists go to incredible



lengths to defeat the system. They pay large sums of money for "good" number plates, just to acquire the right to use the registration, and when I say large sums I mean large sums.

In EXCHANGE & MART (our weekly advertising magazine) there is even a section headed "Cherished Numbers" in which specialist dealers advertise. In this week's issue, for example, the motorist who hungers to stand out from the crowd can snap up GNM 1 for a mere \$4,000.00! Or he could have BRV 1 for only \$6,000.00!

The sad thing is that these plates will undoubtedly sell. Somewhere in this country there are a couple of well-heeled egotists with names like George Norman Morris and Brian Robert Vickers who are working up to the point of paying the above sums so that they'll be able to roll up to the pub in cars which bear their own initials. They would prefer it if they could leave off the fairly meaningless "1" at the end, but the law insists on digits and the "1" is the least obtrusive -- and that makes it the most expensive. If Richard Lupoff lived in England and wanted his initials on his car -- and did not mind people perhaps thinking he was also boasting of his age -- he could have (from the same issue of E&M) the registration RL 82 for only \$3,700.00.

I mention all this partly because British SF fans with their fondness for acronyms and word-play, would have had lots of fun devising their own registrations; and partly because I saw an advert quite recently which announced that 1 SF and SF 1 had become available. I wouldn't have minded one of those myself (although BNF 1 would be nicer) but the asking price somewhat put me off the idea. The advertiser was not prepared to consider offers of less than \$39,000.00

I think I'll start keeping an eye on Ian Watson's car ...

### Eisenberg's Big Brother

The dreaded 1984 -- the year of Orwell -- is here at last and it's proving even worse than I expected. Everywhere one goes there's a TV or radio Blairing away on the sub-



ject. Every newspaper or magazine has an article explaining that Orwell wasn't trying to predict the future, that he was actually writing about 1948. I suppose it's a good job he wasn't trying to make realistic predictions, because he was destined to have a personal effect on whatever year he selected.

A temporal version of the Uncertainty Principle?

### Mitty-gating Circumstances

I have always loathed politicians and one of the things I hate them for is their essential hypocrisy.

The difference between a normal person and a politician is that the latter -- secure in his Walter Mitty dreamworld -- believes he is capable of running other people's lives. In short, he wants to be in charge.

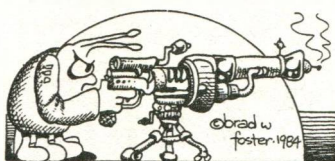
Knowing that his fellow citizens will show resentment if he simply jumps up and shouts, "I want to be in charge," the politician comes up with the Big Lie. He refers to being in charge as "public service." The whole time he is telling us what to do he pretends we are telling him what to do.

And one of the most disgusting perversions these monsters have forced on the rest of us is the concept of the "political crime." If a murderer pleads that his motivation was political he often gets special consideration, and in some cases the government in one country will actually help him evade the punishment another government wants to administer.



Have you ever considered the degree of sheer prejudice in that?

A politician, wrapped in his conviction that it is his destiny to be in charge, can't help but feel a certain sympathy with somebody else who wants to be in charge. The two may have opposing views on many subjects, may even be sworn enemies, but underneath each has a sneaking regard for the other. After all, the subconscious reasoning goes, if he wants to be in charge (as I do) he can't be all bad. The politician tends to regard the terrorist as a man whose



heart is basically in the right place -- he has proved it with his laudable urge to be in charge -- but who is over-enthusiastic in his approach.

Imagine for the moment that some kind of science fiction miracle takes place overnight and in the morning it is found that all the governing politicians of the world have been replaced by, say, stamp dealers. Imagine further that somebody machine-guns a few people to draw attention to his views about life and on being brought to book, gives the authorities a crafty wink and says, "Ah, but my motives were philatelic."

Finally, imagine the outcry there would be if those in charge said, "Oh, that throws a different light on the matter! You're one of us! We'll see that you don't get treated like a common murderer."

The public would kick up hell if they saw stamp dealers giving each other special consideration in those circumstances, but we accept that politicians do it. And what if the aforementioned miracle resulted in all those in charge being replaced overnight by science fiction and fantasy fans?

Would the general citizenry hold still for a member of a Purple Brigade (old-time hard-line coterie of hekto users) mounting a grenade attack on Gestetner owners and then pleading fannish motivations?

Would they approve of lighter sentences for a STAR TREK group who wiped out a cell of BATTLESTAR GALACTICA enthusiasts?

Come to think of it, though, we're getting into serious matters here. I mean, after all ... BATTLESTAR bloody GALACTICA!



## MORE MOVIE REVIEWS BY R.E.G.

### MR. MOM (PG)

is a rehash of the husband-out-of-work-who-must-take-over-the-household-and-the-kids-when-his-wife-amazingly-finds-a-job plot.

Michael Keaton (NIGHT SHIFT) has the energy and comedy flair to make this a fairly good comedy, and is helped by a lot of fine comedy character actors. Ann Jillian, this time a brunette, plays the man-hungry neighbor divorcee.

But the comedy wasn't that good, and I'm baffled by its success at the box office.

### LOSIN' IT (R)

is the story of four boys who go to Tijuana; three to lose their virginity, one to buy fireworks, he being only about 12 and more mature than any of the others (but even Hollywood producers aren't going to involve a pre-teen American boy with Tijuana whores).

The time is the 1960's, and this is a better comedy and picture of its time than you would expect. Tijuana ---rough, bawdy, mercenary, virtually lawless (with the police a law unto themselves)---exists to serve Americans looking for raw sex, booze, and cheap divorces or marriages.

Shelley Long is along for a divorce from a thoughtless, selfish husband, and she feels compassion and sympathy for one of the boys who was embarrassed and couldn't "lose it" in the whorehouse; she takes him to a motel and makes his first time a good time.

Tijuana of 1960s period steals the movie, though: God, I wish I'd gone there then, when I had the chance.

### STROKER ACE (R)

is a smirky, good ol' boy Burt Reynolds car comedy with Jim Nabors doing his Gomer Pyle schtick as Ace's mechanic, Loni Anderson (still with that plastic prettiness and nary a hair out of place---she must use a quart of hair spray per scene or varnished wigs) as a virgin who must inevitably fall for egotist Ace, and Ned Beatty as a fast-food (fried chicken) magnate who gets and holds Ace to a demeaning driving contract (with humiliating commercials and ribbon-cutting on the side).

Burt Reynolds is here mocking himself and sticking it to his fans, who apparently he feels will pay to be insulted while having their buttons pushed.



# SMALL PRESS NOTES

LOVE SONG By Philip Jose Farmer  
Dennis McMillan Publications  
328 Madison Street  
San Antonio, TX 78204

A limited edition (500 copies) hardcover printing of a minor sex novel Phil wrote for Brandon House of North Hollywood in 1970.

It deals with the occult---two strange, warped women (mother and daughter) who live in a huge old creaky mansion, isolated, by the sea, and of their weird relationship with the dead pervert who haunts the old house, and with the young man whom they attract and "seduce" in more ways than one.

Loose ends dangle and it is unsatisfying because the intriguing occult aspect which screams for exploration is left hanging as the young man's lust is examined and endlessly frustrated to satisfy the sex-novel priorities.

As a novel, LOVE SONG fails. As a literary curiosity and memento of Phil's time before Riverworld and financial security, it is interesting and intriguing.

Each copy of this edition is numbered and autographed by the author. A copy costs \$40 plus 85¢ for insurance.

INDEX TO THE SCIENCE FICTION  
MAGAZINES - 1983

Compiled by Jerry Boyajian &  
Kenneth R. Johnson  
TWACI PRESS  
POB 87, MIT Branch P.O.,  
Cambridge, MA 02139

\$4.00

Listing all the contents of all the major sf and fantasy magazines is a dirty job, but somebody has to do it.

A handy and for some a vital yearly reference. There is also an author and a title index. And an

artist index. AND an author index for stories that appeared in more mundane magazines like OMNI, PENTHOUSE, STAG, ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE, REDBOOK, NEW YORKER, STARLOG, etc.

## CIMERA?

A Portfolio By Giuseppe Mangoni  
Editrice Nord  
Via Rubens, 25  
Milano, Italy

Mangoni's latest portfolio---8 bizarre b/w drawings on 16½x11-3/4 heavy white cardstock---shows a talent for graphic symbolism: a woman with a rat crawling from one eye, another woman whose head is framed by a lizard, a child plated inside a Coca Cola can with no arms or legs... A woman in a bondage helmet whose inside is lined with spikes... Grotesque, morbid, naked woman-hating? A scream of protest against modern society/civilization?

These certainly do capture the eye and intrigue the mind.

Available from Editrice Nord, address above, for \$10.00.

## THE LLEWELLYN NEW TIMES

Llewellyn Publications  
POB 43383-835  
St. Paul, MN 55164

If you have an interest in the occult "sciences" and astrology and the supernatural, this newsprint, tabloid-size periodical will turn you on.

The front page article will grab your attention as it deals with the carbon dioxide "Greenhouse Effect" and its predicted consequences: an initial warming of the northern hemisphere and then a swift encroachment of a new ice age and a build up of ice at the south pole and a conse-

quent destabilizing of the Earth's axis---wobbling---until on May 5, 2000 AD, the planet will "flip." This scenario and prediction is based on a new study of the prophecies recorded in the Great Pyramid by Richard Noone. (Noone---No One?)

An interview with Carl Weschcke deals with out-of-body experiences.

The bulk of this publication, however, is a catalog for vast numbers of occult, astrological, etc. books.

STARSHIP Winter-Spring 1984 \$3.00

Edited and published by Andrew Porter.  
P.O. BOX 4175,  
New York, NY 10163

This is STARSHIP's hail and farewell final issue, with outstanding material by Robert Silverberg, Frederick Pohl, Arthur Byron Cover, Joe Sanders, and a Darrell Schweitzer interview of Terry Carr. Of special interest is publisher Lloyd Arthur Eshbach's personal history of the pioneering Fantasy Press. The artwork is as usual very fine, with the purple Dell Harris mer-creature outstanding.

A long editorial detailing the rise and fall of ALGOL/STARSHIP is absorbing reading for small press people.

## STEVE LYON: THE DOCTOR

Mars Management, 478 S. Ashland, Lexington, KY 40502. \$8.00 postage pd.

Steve Lyons sings his mildly satiric, raunchy, clever sci-fi songs in a clear voice and accompanies himself professionally on a piano.

The flip side of this lp is mundanity, present-day, fun songs... "The Wilted Lettuce Orgy" promises more than it delivers.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 41



# RICHARD E. GEIS



# RAISING HACKLES

BY ELTON T. ELLIOTT



I stopped in to the local B. Dalton's the other day. I was waiting for a haircut appointment and thought it would be an appropriate time to do a little preparatory publicity work for my upcoming novel with Dick Geis (THE SWORD OF ALLAH, Ballantine/Fawcett, August 1984).

I noticed some interesting changes in the store. Science Fiction and Fantasy have been combined as a category and moved from a corner in the back to nearer the front next to mysteries and general fiction. I guess it's a sign that SF is selling better than ever. In the SF section they have signs indicating the bestselling, most popular SF and Fantasy authors. When you get past the bs these signs are a good indication what authors in SF and F are hot movers in the Dalton chain. The authors: Piers Anthony, Stephen R. Donaldson, Andre Norton and J.R.R. Tolkien. No Asimov, Clarke or Heinlein. No Niven, Varley or Wolfe. I'm not sure what this means and I didn't have time to ask the store manager.

One thing I did notice and asked the store manager about was the appearance of a new category: Action & Suspense, right next to Fiction & Literature. It seems that now suspense novels are also being genreized, but in a haphazard way. John Le Carre, for instance, was right where you'd expect him to be, in Action & Suspense. But Robert Ludlum was in Fiction & Literature. It's not logical since there is a hell of a lot more action and suspense in Ludlum than Le Carre. I'm not talking quality of action and suspense, just quantity. I inquired about the separation of categories and why Ludlum was not in Action & Suspense. The store manager said it was a decision made at company headquarters. I presume the same holds for the signs by certain authors and not by others in

the SF & F section. As for the Ludlum positioning, it can't have anything to do with expectation of sales, since Ludlum and Le Carre both sell in the millions.

Regardless of the explanation offered by B. Dalton, I see this situation as symptomatic of problems that have beset other American industries in the last several decades, most notably the automobile and electronic industries. The problems start when executives at corporate headquarters make all the important marketing and production decisions without setting up an efficient feedback loop. Skipping all the analogies how it applies to book retailing is simple. America is a vast country with diverse tastes in politics, art and literature. New York is not Utah, New Hampshire is not Texas, Minnesota is not Oregon; Oregon west of the Cascade mountains is different from Oregon east of the Cascades and about the only thing that Eureka and Beverly Hills have in common is that they are both in California.

For far too long in publishing and it holds true today, most of the production decisions were being made in New York. But at least the retail decisions were being made by local bookstore owners. They knew what their customers like and they stocked it and the publishing industry didn't fare too poorly under that state of affairs. But with the advent of the big chains like B. Dalton's and Waldenbooks, all that has changed. Now the marketing decisions to separate suspense novels from other "mainstream" or contemporary novels, are made at a national headquarters instead of on a store-by-store basis. Other decisions like what authors to highlight in a given section are also made on a national basis. This is a recipe for disaster.

When a corporation hires a person to manage a local store they should be hiring a person who knows the area, its people, their tastes and what they are most likely to buy. If that manager and the other employees can't be responsive to local tastes (i.e. feedback, if you follow the Shannon model), then the store stands a good chance of stocking material (and stocking it in such a fashion) that does not appeal to consumers. The end result is less than maximum sales and disgruntled customers. And sooner or later along the line this leads to a company out of touch with the market and for a retail company that spells financial disaster.

Now, there are some people out there who don't like the bookstore chains and the effect they are having on the publishing industry who would say, "Great, who needs the chains anyway, we're better off without them." Well, while that is an argument that can be made in theory, reality shows an industry in greater and greater lockstep with the large chains and it's not likely to change. Once such a trend develops nothing short of a collapse can stop it. And that folks is the danger -- that with the lockstep firmly in place, with the industry more dependent than ever on the chains for advice from everything from how many copies of a novel to print, to what type of cover artist to use, to whether they should even buy a particular book, that if one of the chains, further and further out of touch with the market should suddenly collapse, the entire industry might go under. Or at the least a gigantic shakeout would happen, with writers getting shaken the most. It behooves those who make their livings by the written word to keep a close watch on this situation.

One sidelight to this matter:

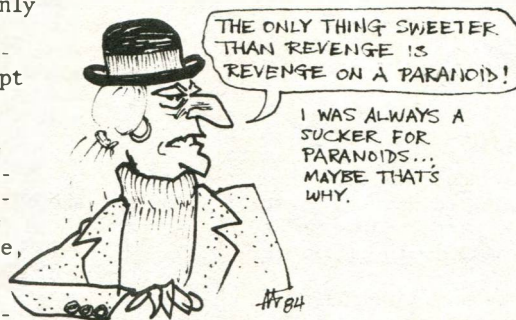


a source tells me that a negative recommendation from one of the bookstore chains on a science fiction mid-list novel can alter the print run by as much as 20,000. With the average run on a science fiction mid-list around 70,000, suddenly taken down to 50,000, the royalties on a \$2.95 book at 6% based on 50% sold come to \$4,500. That extra 20,000 copies could mean almost \$2,000 more. There are also rumors that some companies are allowing buyers for the chains and some major independent distributors advance looks at manuscripts. Their recommendations can affect not only the print run but the advance against royalties and in some extreme cases whether the manuscript will be bought at all. It's bad enough for a beginning writer to break in, and for a lot of other writers to barely hang in, without some know-it-all deciding before the fact whether a book, or in some cases a chapter-n-outline, will be purchased.

Now, while conflict of interest is not a problem for most of the publishing industry, when it comes to the chains and the wholesale independents advising on SF, they often rely on "experts." This is a major problem, for while most buyers in suspense novels, westerns or mysteries might not know the people who write the material they're advising on, the same cannot be said for SF. SF is among the most incestuous fields in publishing. In SF if you go to enough conventions as a new writer, or fan aspiring to be a writer, you will sooner or later meet people who will greatly affect your career. Now, you are not going to meet these people in a strictly defined professional setting, in fact more than half will be stone-cold drunk out of their minds. In such a highly unstructured, personalized situation, likes and dislikes can form easily, likes and dislikes which might affect how your material is judged later on. Now, most editors are professionals who will look at your work with an eye to whether it will sell and whether it suits their tastes; if it passes both those criteria they will probably buy it even if you're the worst son-of-a-bitch to ever step into a Hyatt lobby. But the person who advises the chains has probably also met you and if he or she does not like you or your opinions, he might axe your book out of malice. Most likely conflict of interest works the other way, with the advisor pushing those books of authors that he or she likes, or who can supply favors.

The ugly specter of kickbacks has reared itself in SF. Rumors

abound. This is an important issue that every author is prey to. It's a situation that can deny to the public certain authors whose works are blackballed because those in powerful positions don't like them, their friends, politics, whatever. We as writers don't need this; we work hard enough as it is. This situation should be nipped in the bud. Who needs a bunch of leeches attaching themselves to the field. This is the very thing that destroyed poetry and the popular contemp-



orary short story in America. If you've ever been to a large convention, you know that it's hard enough just surviving the idiots that hang around these places without having to worry about offending some drunken slob who later turns out to be a major buyer for so and so.

#### MUSINGS:

# What do Jerry Lewis and A.E. van Vogt have in common? Well, both are far more popular in France than they are in the United States. Jerry Lewis was recently awarded the French Legion of Honor medal, an award that has previously been given to foreigners such as Dwight Eisenhower and Albert Einstein.

Now comes word that van Vogt has completed a third book in his classic Null-A series, completed the book for a French publisher. The French publisher commissioned and paid for the book completely bypassing any American publisher. This is the first instance of a foreign publisher instigating and buying the work of an American SF writer prior to U.S. publishing involvement, at least it's the first time I've heard of it.

Other popular American SF writers in France include Philip K. Dick and Norman Spinrad. It's not

unusual for some American writers to find their most enthusiastic audience overseas, witness Jack Vance's popularity in The Netherlands. But, Jerry Lewis?

# Now that President Reagan has made the concept of a manned Space Station a ten-billion-dollar budget proposal (the money would be stretched over a period from fiscal 1985 up to 1992 when the Station would go into orbit) it's time to give science fiction and some of its practitioners credit. I think without SF's gigantic popularity among movie-goers combined with the unceasing efforts of many in the science fiction community, this project would not have gotten off the ground. From an economic viewpoint it's been general knowledge for some time that it makes economic sense; the station should pay for itself rapidly with the expected profits from medical drug manufacturing leading the way and metals technology applications, superconductors and a host of other money-making possibilities right behind. But since when has the government paid any attention to economic sense? No, it's clear that without the tireless work of many in the pro-space community, long hours of lobbying the White House science advisor George Keyworth (who initially was against the idea) and others in congress, President Reagan would never have made the proposal, no matter how many good arguments were made in its favor.

Among the groups who worked hard were the L-5 Society and the Space Studies Institute whose Robert Jastrow made such an impressive presentation of the pro-space station side on Nightline. Among the individuals in Science Fiction who worked the longest and hardest was Jerry Pournelle. Those of us in the SF field (and humanity at large) who believe that future survival of the human species depends on our ability to move into space owe Dr. Pournelle and the others who worked with him a large, large debt of gratitude. While others gave up and indulged in chic cynicism he kept the faith. Congratulations, Jerry.

# The space station project will also affect science fiction. When writers want to place a story in the mid-to-late Nineties in near-Earth space the space station will have to be included in the background of their stories, whether they like it or not.

This is a perfect example of what I mean when I write about Today's Tomorrow. Forty years ago when science fiction authors pictured humanity going into space it was usually a couple of good old



Jobs who tinkered in their backyards and cobbled together a spacecraft. That's an example of Yesterday's Tomorrow. Now, while the idea of a few people cobbling together a spacecraft might be romantic, it does fit in with what we observe today. Thus if SF writers write up that concept without dealing with the enormous costs and organization that it takes to get up in space, it's a perfect example of writing Yesterday's Tomorrow today. The same goes if they write a near-Earth story in the late Nineties and don't take into account the space station and the role it will play. If a writer doesn't want to deal with the station directly at least mention it in passing. That would be an example of writing Today's Tomorrow, a writer using the best of present-day knowledge to inform his or her science fiction. If he doesn't he really is not writing science fiction but some weird form of nostalgia. Yes, that's exactly what it would be, nostalgic fiction. If a writer ignores the present and writes as if he or she were still living in the Forties then he's not writing science fiction, he's writing nostalgic fiction.

What most science fiction is today should better be categorized as a strange form of gothic/romance that has a slight patina of technology sprinkled across the top. Science fiction dare not become a fad connected to any one particular era or political point of view or it stands the chance of becoming mired in a rigid format and like the dinosaurs unable to adapt when a new change comes along.

There seems to be a feeling among many writers that in order to become informed about science and technology they have to have a degree in the sciences or have a background in a technical area like engineering. Not true. One good source of technological and scientific information is SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN. If you want something less technical, try SCIENCE NEWS, a weekly newsletter that provides a good overview of upcoming developments. On the technical side HIGH TECHNOLOGY is an excellent reference source. They also provide an analysis at the end of major articles assessing the impact that each advance will have on business.

Most scientists that I talk to are only too willing to help. Make sure that you doublecheck with that person before you put any notions into a story. How a writer uses such information in a story or novel is of course, up to that individual.

## SMALL PRESS NOTES CONTINUED

NEXUS #4 and #6, \$1.75 each  
By writer Mike Barop and artist Steve Rude  
Capital Publications  
P.O. Box 908, Madison, WI 53701

THE FIRST KINGDOM #19  
Written & Drawn by Jack Katz  
Bud Plant, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1886, Grass Valley, CA 95945

ELFQUEST Book 3, \$10.95  
By Wendy & Richard Pini  
The Donning Co.  
5659 Virginia Beach Blvd.  
Norfolk, VA 23502

Nexus the superhero seems to be a success for Capital, having gone to full color and better paper early on. Fine artwork, a very good comix superhero matrix. Some humor during extreme danger: these superheroes and their key buddies know they aren't going to die.

The First Kingdom series has a formula medieval/barbarian who-shall-rule-the-kingdom? storyline involving gods, evil priests, rightful rulers, heirs, usurpers, aliens...

The drawing is first rate, the comix story-telling style is wooden and static, with too many posturing scenes with narrative lines telling the story.

Elfquest #3 continues the quest of the wolfrider tribe of elves, led by Cutter, to seek knowledge of their origins and of the scattered tribes and varieties of elves in a world they must increasingly share with the hated humans.

This is state-of-the-art comix or graphic art storytelling, and is simply superb in its subtle characterizations, its multi-stranded storyline, and its multileveled use of symbol and psyche. Enormous care goes into this series in all aspects, and the Elfquest books will likely never be surpassed---except perhaps by Wendy and Richard Pini themselves.

Available in large quality trade softcover at \$10.95, and in a deluxe hardcover, slipcased edition, limited edition, signed and numbered---\$40.

A word about comix art in general: I've mad this point before, and will now again: the artists seem to master one marvelously muscled body type and use that body for all characters, varying only faces a bit, uniforms, etc. Men and women both. It gets terribly boring and unrealistic. Perhaps juveniles in mind (and age) demand perfection in all their characters, but adults have learned to accept and ex-

pect almost an infinite variety in human bodies and character.

The Pinis have mastered a wonderful variety of characters for their series, but I feel their high and low elves are too idealized and similar.

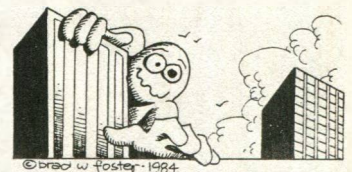
PRIVATE WORLDS By Scott E. Green  
\$3.50 from Bedouin Press  
7 Franklin St.  
Woburn, MA 01801

Being 58 short poems--sorta like haikus--which give the essence of a writer's writing. Thus, Phil Dick is encapsulated thus:

The city full of tears,  
an ocean of tears.  
Tiny isles of hope  
barely holding their own against  
the waves.  
Slowly the isles grow  
absorbing tears in slow, ever slow  
ways.

and "Ellison's World" is:  
The City is the Land of Pain  
Mkkost roads lead to it  
Few roads pass it by

Those poetically commented upon  
range from Anderson to Zelazny.



### FILE 770

Edited and published by Mike Glyer  
5828 Woodman Av., #2  
VAN Nuys, CA 91401

I consider this the prime news/opinion-zine of science fiction fandom. sf fandom is (in the traditional understanding) a small, hardcore of fanzine publishers who are more concerned with the fandom aspect than the science fictional aspect. They talk mostly about themselves, about conventions, fannish scandals, fanzines.

In this 45th issue of FILE 770 the main issue is the huge deficit run up by ConStellation, the last world SF convention.

At five issues for \$4. this is well worth the money to those who want to follow the inside activities and opinions of this enclave which, since the early 1930s, has remained essentially the same in traditions, structure, numbers and interests.

In a very real way, this fannish fandom is the heart and enduring soul of sf fandom as a whole.





# LETTERS

# LETTER FROM PIERS ANTHONY  
Star Route #1, Box 27 R  
Inverness, FL 32650  
Feb. 16, 1984

'Yes, I know what you're asking: if I don't want my address run, how come I have letterhead stationery with my address on it? Because, unlike some I might mention, I answer my fan mail, and I got tired of typing my own address. Last year I typed 702 letters (yes, I counted; I'm compulsive about such masochism), most of which were responses to fans. Those fans have to go through the publishers' mail slushpile, a fate halfway worse than extinction, to reach me; I figure that any that make it through that gantlet deserve to be answered, at least with a card. But if my name were laid open to hard-core fans, the kind who'd rather fight than read fantasy, I'd be in deep trouble.

'Now: starting in on SFR #50 -- a fitting issue for me to read, as I am now in my 50th year and not mellowing with age -- I encounter on page 4 your quote of a letter from a hopeful writer who asks you for information and the addresses of several major writers (somehow he overlooked Anthony...), and your sour remark: "I have not answered." Then on page 5 you launch into the horrors of your experience with a



dentist who left you in pain and ignored you. Now evidently this did not register with you, so I will make it obnoxiously plain: you violated the Golden Rule, and were hoist on its petard. A hopeful writer, desperate for the sort of information that professionals seem to conspire to keep secret, did the sensible thing: he wrote to the most important figure in the genre he knew of and asked for information. His letter was polite and to the point and quite reasonable. And you, you ill-met, lily-livered, ignominious ilk, you canker on the anus of the genre, you deliberately left him to suffer in the juices of his ignorance. I had half a mind to haul you up on charges before the Secret Masters' Guild -- until I saw that the Guild had already acted on the matter by doing the same thing back to you. How does it feel to be ignored while you're hurting? Will you profit from this lesson, or will it have to be repeated?

'Two days after I received that SFR, I answered a bunch of 20 fan letters, five of which were of the type you quoted. I have become experienced at answering this type of letter on a post card, so will show you how to do it. You should have said: "Dear So & SO: Assuming that you do have a story to tell that you believe will interest others enough to pay to read, you should type it in double-space with wide margins on one side of each sheet, with your name or an abbreviated title on each sheet, and send it loose-leaf to the publisher of your choice. You can get the address from a current volume of WRITERS' MARKET or similar reference, which book may also have useful advice for you. But be prepared for rejection, as there is a great deal of competition, and only one hopeful writer in a hundred ever makes it to professional print. Make sure you enclose your address and return postage, or you may not get your manuscript back, and allow several months for the response. Good luck; you will, unfortunately, need it. I regret that SFR policy does not permit me to divulge the addresses of professional writers, but you may be able to reach them in care of their publishers."

'Further along, I note George H. Smith's objection to my remark about Dean Koontz in the DREAM MAKERS II Interview. Now I could say a lot about that interview and the manner that Charles Platt elected to go with my offhand remarks about the likes of Koontz rather than my detailed discussion of the way to abolish Writer's Block, but will content myself with mentioning how

I used his own techniques of selection and innuendo to parody Charles Platt, and sent that to him. I understand that some of his friends found that parody hilarious, though Charles himself somehow failed to see the humor in it. Why SFR chased that interview, instead of the superior one in FANTASY NEWSLETTER is something only REG can answer. I do get turned off by the evident tastes of fandom, as may be seen in my attitude toward it. Let me address just one statement in Mr. Smith's letter, tempting as it may be to take the whole thing apart. He says that Koontz receives advances for every book he writes that are larger than Anthony's yearly income. Frankly, I doubt it; my income has tripled since Platt interviewed me, and is still rising at what I suspect is one of the steepest rates in the genre; very few writers in the genre -- perhaps half a dozen -- actually earn more than I do now, and it would surprise me to learn that Koontz is one of them.

'As it happens, we have a basis for comparison, because each of us had a novel published last October (actually, I had three, but let's not complicate this). Mine was DRAGON ON A PEDESTAL; it spent four months on the LOCUS list, peaking at number 1. His was PHANTOM; correct me if I am wrong, but I don't believe it made the LOCUS list. This may be because it was not considered to be a genre novel, though I would look askance at that exclusion. Very well, call it a horror novel and adjourn to some of the main-stream lists. My novel, DRAGON, made the B. Dalton Best-seller list, peaking at number 1 there too; his novel also made that list, peaking at number 10. Still, that's only one chain of stores; let's go to a more general list. My novel spent four weeks on the PUBLISHER'S WEEKLY list, peaking at number 7; his spent one week there at number 15. My novel also spent five weeks on the NEW YORK TIMES list; I don't believe his made that list. So though his novel did have a larger print order than mine, it does not seem to have sold as many copies. My publisher, DEL REY, has already paid me for 140,000 copies sold in the first two weeks; I doubt his publisher, BERKLEY, has done the same. So if Koontz really is making advances larger than my yearly income, perhaps Mr. Smith will be kind enough to clarify for other interested parties how he does it; it doesn't seem to be from a higher sales base.

'And a concluding chide to your "Vivisector," Darrell Schweitzer:

I am a slow reader, and a busy writer, so I don't read much, but I did read PRINCE OMBRA, partly from curiosity to see whether the hype could be accurate. I found it to be a fine novel, deserving of the accolades, probably one of the best of the year, perhaps deserving of an award, if the sawdust-heads who vote awards happen to read it. Schweitzer's comment is not just wrong, but extravagantly wrong, as though he feels an excess of pejorative language can make his misjudgment true. I remember back about fifteen years ago when you folk in SFR (by whatever title) were taking off similarly on LeGuin's LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS; there too, I raised my voice in protest. But as a poet has said, swinehood has no remedy.'

((Alert to all readers: I'm switching to letter gothic for editorial answers in the letter section: more visibility, more impact, and the italic I had been using for lo these many years has broken a tooth.))

((Now, sirrah! Congratulations on reaching age 50 and for being so successful at your chosen modus vivendi for your workaholicism.

((The text of the letter you excoriate me for not answering dictated my non-response to it. Let me reprint it here for those who don't want to look it up in SFR #50 and for those who don't have a copy of #50 (since #50 is sold out):

'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.'

((He's 'interested' and he wants to know how to do it. He doesn't go to a library and look up books on how-to write, or buy a copy or two of WRITERS DIGEST or THE WRITER, or anything else; simpler to ask a pro to waste his time and postage. No, better, he wants the addresses of five of the better known sf pros so he can bother them with witless questions. He wants the "secrets" of writing imparted to him.

((None of the above listed writers have asked me to send this person's address; they haven't been faunching to respond to his questions.

((If you wish to waste your time and money on this sort of thing, Piers, that's fine---for you. But people like this man---and there are millions of them!---will eat you alive, will suck your time and en-



ergy till you are a dry husk, in unconscious envy/hate activities born of their own failure and lack of talent.

((They cling and cluster like metal filings seeking a magnet. Your postcard response is not what they want, really; it isn't enough.

((I don't condemn genuine fans and admirers here. The self-possessed person who has encountered good work and wishes to compliment the creator is another thing entirely. There are always too few of them!

((Do you really think God or His equivalent was punishing me for not responding to that letter by inflicting that awful toothache upon me at Christmas?

((By the way, I resigned from the Secret Masters Guild some years ago. They're secret, I can't deny that, but masters? Hardly any power at all!

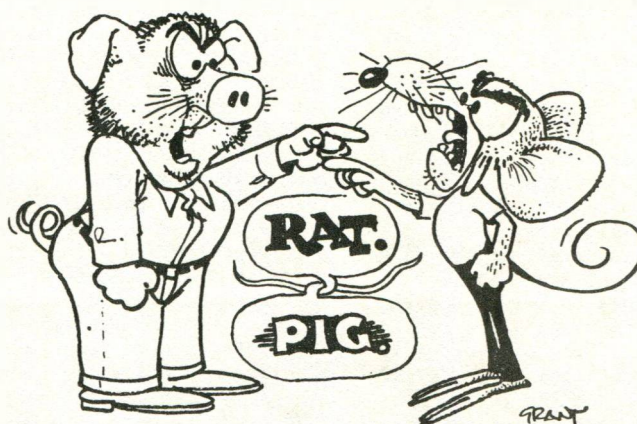
((I chose to use the Platt interview of you because it hadn't appeared in a fanzine before and I wasn't aware of the FANTASY NEWS-LETTER interview, and would have felt in any case that there would have been too great an overlap of readers. And, too, Charles injects some personality and zest in his stuff, whereas the usual Q and A interview is often too dull for my taste.

((I think you misremember what appeared in SFR (or PSYCHOTIC) about THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS; I liked that novel. It opened up sf quite a bit.

((If this be swinehood, make the most of it! Oink, oink.))

# LETTER FROM IAN COVELL  
2 Copgrove Close, Berwick Hills  
Middlesbrough, Cleveland  
England TS3 7BP  
March 3, 1984

'I did think when Piers Anthony said it, that Koontz's "pseudonymous" books and others weren't selling well, that it couldn't be true. I now discover that, as I had suspected, yet another high-selling author -- Leigh Nicholls -- turns out to be Koontz in disguise. Why he continues to write such books under other names instead of using the clout he undoubtedly has to build up a readership is beyond me. Ken Follett wrote under many pseudonyms while "learning" but has stuck to his own name for about five years ... yet, conversely, the English author Chris Nicole continually alters his pseudonyms, most of which sell well. I've yet to understand why they do it...



'Dorothea (HOW TO BECOME A WRITER) Brande said that fiction was most people's only contact with philosophy. Expanding this, could it be that the reading of SF was simply an acclimatisation/coming to terms with the philosophy of technology itself -- or is that too simplistic?

'What is sourly amusing about this review of PET SEMATARY is what it does not mention, just as few other reviews have mentioned. PS is simply an expansion of an old short story, "The Monkey's Paw." Granted, every author is influenced to some extent, but at least it would be courteous to mention (as King does in the book) that the story was so narrowly influenced by one story. (King did the same thing with RITA HAYWORTH in DIFFERENT SEASONS; I'm sure Jack Finney must have recognised an old plot of his ... with one difference, of course: no romance.)

'I agree totally with Schweitzer's dismissal of PRINCE OMBRA and have been rather shocked by the recommendations shown in various adverts for the books -- some of the authors who are quoted I had often imagined had taste, discrimination and so on. Nope.

'"The Archives" are useful as ever, though I'd have preferred more of your own remarks on what's listed, I'm also sure that if you read as much as you received, dear SFR would suddenly go bi-annual. (Do you know, by the way, why Pocket's edition of Morgan Llewellyn's THE HORSE GODDESS demolished the original wrap-around cover by Rowena Morrill and left only isolated glimpses -- something they did also with Don Kingsbury's novel; as a fan of Ms. Morrill I find it somewhat disturbing that she has such odd things done to her work...)

'Ace keeps saying they have now reprinted all of H. Beam Piper's books -- except for the mystery, and the newly discovered third Fuzzy -- but where is CRISIS IN 2140? Speaking of Piper, poor Roland Green; to have laboured so hard on JANISSARIES II only to see himself vanish from cover, and publicity ... Even when mass-marketed.

'I believe I said that if de Camp had done to the final Jorian volume (UNBEHEADED KING) what Schweitzer's review hinted he had done, I would sell my de Camp colln. He had. I'm selling it. Well, half. It is an obvious fact that people change, and authors are no exception. I think there's a cut-off point of about five years beyond which an author should not return to a character or series he's once written. Obvious objectors will point out 2010, or FOUNDATION'S EDGE, but they don't convince me, and neither does UNBEHEADED KING. The thrust and purpose of Jorian's original two books are neither continued nor amplified by the third; the texture, emotions, tone and resolution have nothing in common with the originals. De Camp should have left it alone. (Just as Landis should never have written the third CAMELOT book.)'

((Fiction may indeed be most people's only contact with philosophy--unless you consider the everyday exhibition of basic philosophy in action, as in foreign policy, economic policy, the renewed executions of murderers, the symptom of philosophy betrayed by the return to button-down collars, shorter hair.... There is philosophy in TV drama, too, though severely limited. There, in the soaps especially, the whole fiction is centered on the villains and villainesses who have all the good lines, good scenes and who are always plotting and act-



ing against the beleaguered good people.

((Technology is change; coming to terms with change is difficult because everyone wants security and love; who can love a robot which has just taken your job? "STOP THE WORLD! I WANT TO GET OFF!" is now and will be an increasingly loud cry and may be responsible for the emergence of "nostalgia" and the turning back to "pioneer" life-styles: could be Survivalism has more to do with reaction against technology than fear of The Bomb.

((Ah, wouldn't it be nice to be able to just edit and publish SFR and read sf and fantasy, and be "up" on the new fiction? But, alas, I have to write novels to make ends meet, and.... Or, wouldn't it be nice to only write novels and not have to read and review and publish SFR? Ah, I tell you, life is hard!))

# LETTER FROM DOUG FRATZ  
THRUST PUBLICATIONS  
8217 Langport Terrace  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877  
Oct. 30, 1983

'It seems that every time I open a newspaper or newsmagazine the last six months, there are features on the sorry state of our science and math education, replete with horrendous examples -- 80% of high school graduates don't know that basic scientific fact, and 85% can do this basic mathematical calculation, etc.\*

'It is less often, but just as distressing that I run into horrendous examples of our society's failure to convey a basic understanding of science to those very highly educated, but outside of the physical sciences. (Shades of C.P. Snow's two cultures.) Robert Collins' letter in SFR #48 concerning Elton Elliott's "Raising Hackles" column provides another depressingly splendid example.

'To quote Bob Collins, who is expounding on the difficulties of trying to define such abstract terms as "fiction" and "reality":

"Of course we all think we know what reality means, until we're put to the test of defining it for someone else. (...) The laboratory scientist's naive faith in the "reality" of his data has been questionable, to say the least, for several generations now. Obviously, if you can't pin down the nature of reality, you can't eliminate the possibility that these worlds which El-

ton rejects ("fantasy worlds") have as much validity as the ones he likes ("scientific, technological" worlds). (Emphasis added)."

'Collins goes on, but this much is depressing enough. Does anyone actually think that there is an actual widespread problem wherein laboratory scientists' senses are fooling them, resulting in their misperceiving reality and therefore misinterpreting experimental results? Is there even a single example of this kind of routine intermittent schizophrenia? The concept would actually make a good end-of-the-world horror novel. Collins obviously does not even understand the disastrous consequences of this ludicrous and unfounded statement that he throws out as if it were common knowledge.'

\*(Actually, the USA may be among the few countries to attempt any comprehensive science education for all students. We met two visitors from Holland this summer, both well educated high school teachers, who (we discovered) did not know that stars were "suns" that are much farther away! Honest!)

((Yes, there are two cultures. The rational and intelligent, and the irrational and (often) non-intelligent. I listened to about fifteen minutes of fundamentalist Christian dogma and opinion today as I shaved and was astounded to hear a woman who had written a book (THE BEAUTIFUL FACE OF EVIL) discuss how she had been saved from demons and a false Christ by a friend invoking the correct words: "In the hame of Jesus of Nazareth..." as opposed to "Jesus Christ". She was thus exorcized of her demonic beliefs that certain faith healers and psychic surgeons (who, she insisted, were actually healing people!) were doing good within the christian world view in spite of their individualistic and non-establishment techniques. She went on to say that dowsing and astrology and the game of Dungeons and Dragons...any belief in the occult of any kind...all of the super natural (ghosts, reincarnation, etc.) is of the devil and not to be tolerated in a true Christian. She had been, she sees now, worshipping and putting her faith in the Other Christ...and now, of course, with her worship in Jesus of Nazareth, was whole and saved and pure at last. Great god! Pure at last!

((I got a strong insight into her and her Need: the need for an alliance with the Real Power, a need to Know and for things to

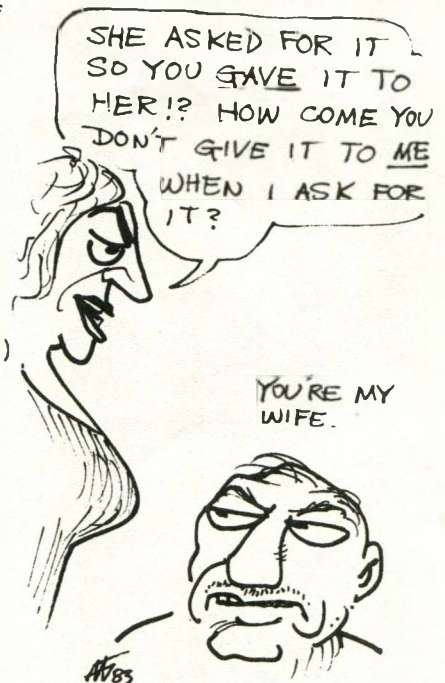
be Settled and Certain. But most important---a need to feel important. Imagine the feeling of worth it must give (if you desperately need it) to know there are vast forces---unseen---which are battling for your immortal soul! Demons plotting to seduce you! Whole complexes of financial and political and cultural power devoted to warping society into unGodly and un-Christian shape in order to gain your soul! Ahhh...it gives me the shivers...the paranoia quiver of delight. If only I could believe it!

((And imagine---given the power ---the self-righteous lengths and ends to which these people would go. It gives one a vision of the past.))

# LETTER FROM TONY ALSO-BROOK  
RENNER 2916 A Keokuk Street  
St. Louis, MO 63118  
Feb. 12, 1984

'Thanks a lot for the copy of SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #50 which you sent in trade for ETHEL THE FROG. If only the faanish-type fans I sent EtF to would trade so freely ...

'A couple of comments about the article on human sexuality: I question the assertion that there is no market whatsoever for lesbian pornography. Perhaps there are no specifically lesbian porn mags as there are for gay male audiences but then the need doesn't really exist as there is plenty of male-oriented porn that would seem to do the trick





if someone wanted sexually explicit photographs of females or graphic descriptions of sex acts. I also strongly question the assertion that the importance of physical attractiveness and youth in determining sexual desirability is innate in men. Our culture teaches us that young and "beautiful" is the most desirable. (Having said that, I see that the counter-argument is "find a culture that doesn't put an emphasis on youth & beauty." Off hand I can't think of one, but I can side-step that question by arguing that if most cultures put youth first in determining sexual desirability it is to insure that people mate with those still within child-bearing years.) (I also see why discussions of sexuality in fanzines go on and on, and constantly keep popping up.)

'I can't top your Christmas-time toothache story, but I did spend New Year's Day sick with some sort of flu bug or mild form of food poisoning.

'It was rather amusing to find that Piers Anthony is still feuding with Dean Koontz. That's one of the nice things about fandom: there are always things that remain constant.

'Another of those constants is that Ted White will be embroiled in some controversy or another. I'm of two minds about the fan Hugo awards: In a way, taking you and LOCUS out of the fan category makes sense because it had grown boring, and a little absurd, to see the Hugo alternate between only those two publications year after year. The current issue of SFR though, makes it clear that you are just as "fan-nish" as Mike Glycer and it's totally unfair to take SFR out of the fan category simply because it keeps winning Hugo awards. Apart from the fact Mike Glycer is almost certainly going to win for a fanzine which appears to me to be little more than a smaller-scale LOCUS, it will be refreshing to see a new fanzine win the award.

'I enjoyed the Kurt Vonnegut interview. It seems that Vonnegut has lost most of his status as a "major literary figure." I only saw one advertisement for DEAD EYE DICK and only a couple of very brief reviews. Apparently sales for his new works aren't very high as I don't believe PALM SUNDAY ever came out as a mass market paperback. I don't know what it all means, or even if it means anything. For my own part, I still read Vonnegut -- and have come around to liking him again after a brief period of finding him useless -- mostly because his writing is funny, not because

he has anything IMPORTANT to say.

"And Then I Saw" ...is by far the strongest evidence I can think of that SFR is too a fanzine. Your comments were interesting, Dick, but dammit, I can find movie reviews anywhere and everywhere. I would have been happier to see that space used for your comments on what you have read, which I probably could not find anywhere else.

'The first part of "Raising Hackles" was very interesting to me because I'm fascinated by "How I Met and Became Friends With A Famous Person" tales. Elton's counter-anti-D&D crusade worries me a little because it doesn't look as though Elton has done any more research on his foes as they have done on D&D. Elton says, "I have heard" this and "I have heard" that but if he is so whipped-up about the whole thing WHY DOESN'T HE WRITE TO GARY GREENWALD AND GET THE INFORMATION FIRST HAND? By basing his opinions on hearsay evidence Elton is being just as bad as Greenwald. It occurs to me that there are already several anti-censorship groups that one could join that are probably more likely to do anything positive than Elton's rather narrowly-focused "Save Science Fiction" movement. Hasn't it occurred to Elton that his pro-science fiction fervor isn't all that different from their pro-God fervor? Oh, yes, I almost forgot, Elton is RIGHT. But, wait, Gary Greenwald is RIGHT, too. Wouldn't it make sense to put this mess on the back burner for a while and wait to see if Greenwald and his crew really are trying to ban D&D before going off on a holy war and convincing Greenwald that D&D is bad? One last comment: How do those poor little kids who haven't seen STAR WARS get along in this world?'

((Ah, but I haven't won a Best Fanzine award for four or five years---it's been a Locus Hugo for all that time. We haven't "alternated" winning that Hugo for a long time. And now that SFR is ruled a semi-pro zine and in that category with LOCUS, I'm sure that category will be dominated by LOCUS forever more.

I do get nominated, though, and I'm humble and proud to be (probably) the most-nominated fan of all time, for Hugo awards. But that's a func-

tion of endurance and egotism. ("Why would a man spend his entire adult life publishing a fanzine?") Now Mike Glycer, who seems to have the drive and peculiar insanity required, can have a long-term go at "my" records. I really don't think I'll be publishing SFR for more than, say, five years longer.))

# LETTER FROM RICH BROWN  
1632 19th Street NW, #2  
Washing D.C. 20009  
Feb 14, 1984

'It seems Bjohn has been too busy playing Secret Master of Trekdom and L. Ron Hubbard sycophant to look at a calendar, else he'd realize the irrelevance of pointing out that a few small-circulation fanzines beat out zines with larger circulations 20 years and more ago. For the record, worldcon attendance in Them Thar Days was counted in the hundreds -- with 600-700 eligible voters, FANAC and CRY (with circulations in the 300 range) stood a reasonable chance against FANTASY (later SF) TIMES (with a circulation in the 500-600 range) -- which incidentally had already won a Hugo. CRY even had a "home field" advantage -- it won its Hugo at Seacon, put on by its editors. Those who get off on reading BAT-TLEFIELD EARTH might claim FANTASY/SF TIMES won two Hugos on the basis of quality -- but I tend to doubt anyone who can read without moving their lips would agree. When the quasi-literate FT won, it was over a zine called HYPHEN, which I'm sure John G. realizes many people consider to be one of the finest fanzines of all time. If John can think of a reason besides circulation to explain this, I'll listen.

'If I'm puzzled by being twice WAHFed in my attempt to straighten out Arnie Fenner, it's not from a belief that my Deathless Prose should not at times be buried alive but because Mr. Fenner is allowed to go uncorrected in his contention that what I was "really" saying was "it's unfair that an amateur magazine that 3000 people buy regularly gets more votes for the Hugo than a magazine that sells 500" and "because BOONFARK and FILE 770 don't have an equal amount of success (despite contending for the attention span of the same active SF readers), the Hugos have become meaningless." While I'm willing to make a case for the unfairness under the old rules, I did not do so in SFR, as you well know, Geis -- although I can see why it may suit your pouting pose better to leave me accused of making such a dumb statement.





'In the letter to which Arnie was ostensibly replying, I said circulation can be a gauge of quality among fanzines published with the same or similar aims and goals. It was at least implicit in my statement that not all fanzines are published for the same (or even vaguely similar) aims and goals. Unable to comprehend this simple distinction, Arnie is of the opinion that FILE 770 and BOONFARK are "contending for the attention span of the same active SF readers" (my emphasis) as LOCUS and SFR; and, like the editors of SFR and LOCUS, want to "sell" as many copies of their zines as they can, or are gauging their success by how many copies they sell." I note that while he is upset at having his qualifications challenged by Ted White, Arnie does not so much defend them as dismiss what was said because he thinks Ted is "as ignorant of me and my reading background as he claims I am of fanzines and Hugos." In fact, not only is Arnie's ignorance inferable from what he said, but "ignorance" is a charitable description of his remarks -- since if ignorance is not at fault, it must be stupidity.

'Having access to Dan Steffan's mailing list, I feel it's unlikely Mr. Fenner has read BOONFARK; Dan's next door neighbor, Ted White, has had similar access. BNF is not sold on newsstands or by huxters at conventions. If I'm wrong, and Arnie has actually read a copy, it is certainly clear that he has failed to understand what he has read, since no one who has read and understood it could believe it was being aimed at the "same" active SF readers as LOCUS or SFR. At least, Ted White knows better; I know better; John G. Trimble knows better -- even you, Dick Geis, know better. Arnie, apparently, does not. He won't own to ignorance, so call it stupidity; it must, you see, be one or the other and I'm of a mind to let Mr. Fenner have his pick. (Yes, I know, my generosity is overwhelming.)

'SFR and LOCUS actively seek subscribers, but as most zines not sold for profit, they do not. Almost all are self-published, most (if not all) the expense is borne by the editor -- so adding 100-200 "new" readers could turn a hobby into an expensive and time-consuming drudge. Most of these are not "contending" for the "same" readers as SFR and LOCUS but are aimed at a smaller and generally quite different group of readers -- so neither their "success" or "quality" is gauged by circulation.

'Further, since few fans are wealthy, the "average" fanzine sel-

dom has a circulation higher than 300. To argue, as Arnie does, that because zines designed to make a profit have greater circulations, it follows that they must be "better" is like saying THE READER'S DIGEST must be better than any SF magazine, since no SF magazine has ever had a circulation over 1 million whereas THE READER'S DIGEST is read by 33 million people worldwide.

'While I agree with those who changed the Hugo rules to the extent that I think there was some unfairness involved in the earlier setup, the thrust of my comments in SFR was that the new "semi-professional magazine" category (designed to keep zines like ALGOL, SFR, LOCUS, &c. from being voted on as fanzines) substituted unfairness by design for something that is unfair by accident. I didn't and still don't, think two wrongs make a right.

'Arnie doesn't know enough to see unfairness in the earlier rules -- but you do, Dick. When a hobby fanzine with 300 circulation is nominated for a Hugo and 1000 ballots are cast for SFR or LOCUS, the hobby editor knows at least 700 ballots were cast by fans who never saw his fanzine. Obviously, no quality comparison is involved, although the award is ostensibly for the "best" (not "most popular") fanzine. (I suspect the same occurs in other categories, i.e., people who have read only a few -- or sometimes only one -- of the nominees vote anyway. In the case of fanzines, sheer numbers make it obvious this is the case.)

'This has been so for quite some time, although the numbers were not all that lopsided until worldcon attendance rose into the thousands and more fringe fans -- who see but few of the zines nominated -- were, under those old rules, qualified to "vote in ignorance" -- the Arnie Fenners of our microcosm, who feel no qualms about proclaiming LOCUS and SFR "the best," even though it might be evident from what they have to say that they've neither read nor seen the zines they are effectively casting votes against. Under the circumstances, I do think their qualifications might be questioned -- albeit not, it seems, in SFR.

'But I dig it: You print Arnie's obvious inanities and -- although you may "know better" yourself -- no one can really blame you for not pointing out (to them or your readers) that you're well aware SFR and you have both benefited from the unfairness of those

old rules. John and Arnie can say things in defense of the Hugos you have received which would be seen as absurd if you said them yourself -- since, again, at least some people know you do "know better."

'No one can accuse you or Charlie Brown of "manipulating" the rules so they would be to your advantage, since they were in place before you began publishing. I suppose they can say, with some justification -- although again perhaps not in SFR -- that not once in all the years you and Charlie played Hugo volleyball did either of you attempt to make this known to your readers. If either of you cared about the value of the Hugos you were receiving, it would have been a simple matter to say something like, "While I sincerely appreciate being nominated for and winning so many Hugos, I'd like to urge my readers to vote this year only if they have read all the nominees." It might have been worth a try -- it might have made your Hugos really mean something. It may well say something about your insecurities -- or Charlie's -- that all either of you ever said in that period was, "Vote for me/my fanzine." Neither of you is responsible for the unfairness in those old rules but obviously you both took deliberate and calculated advantage of it. And I trust neither you or Charlie are naive enough to claim your exhortations to vote for you or your fanzine were not made in the certain knowledge that a vast number of your readers read few, or no, other fanzines.

'Well, I've been maintaining -- and will keep on maintaining -- that two wrongs don't make a right. But perhaps because fringe fans are unlikely to refrain from voting in categories about which they are somewhat, if not totally, ignorant -- or because neither you or Charlie ever cared enough about the unfairness of your circulation advantage to bring it to your readers' attention -- my point has been ignored. Under the circumstances, it doesn't really surprise me. No, the only thing that surprises me is that it surprises you.'

((No, Rich, you were not cut from previous issues to protect my ego or to prevent you from venting your bile or to prevent you from imparting your Truth to the SFR readership. Your letters were cut because I am always short of space and I considered other letters of greater interest at those crunch-layout times. This perennial savagery over the fanzine Hugos gets tiresome and is of interest to only a few. But I enjoy a



certain amount of it. As you do, obviously.

((You say 'SFR and LOCUS actively seek subscribers...' I suppose LOCUS does. SFR does not. I have not advertised SFR for years. I have deliberately whittled away the number of bookstores which handle SFR by insisting they pay for copies in advance. Fewer and fewer are willing or able to do that. Fine. I have a standard procedure for SFR subscribers: one notice that their sub will expire "next issue" and a final notice when that final issue comes out. I do not follow up with letters or mailings after that.

((I could have built SFR's circulation up and up but chose, years ago to stay with 64 pages, sort-of amateurish layouts and mechanicals, and this Selectric typer's "balls" and ragged right-hand margins.

((Many, many pure fanzines look far more professional than does SFR. Fiendishly clever of me, eh?

((I also chose/decided years ago to let SFR's circulation sink to its natural level by attrition. Little by little the circulation has shrunk, settled lower and lower... until now the number of those who are paying subscribers number about 1200. Soon...soon...Rich, horror of horrors, SFR's circulation (if I cut out bookstore sales) will be below the magic 1000 number and will OHMIGHOD! qualify as a pure fanzine again! I could even stop making token payments to contributors of major pieces and be utterly pure amateur.

((How would that grab you? Be prepared.

((The truth is I intend, sooner or later, when the circulation is low enough, to "convert" SFR from this format and style to a personal-zine. Maybe it'll be RICHARD E. GEIS again, or PSYCHOTIC, or some other manifestation of me. But I will do that, in my \*sob\* declining years, and then...yes, maybe then... we'll have a true test for the fan Hugo awards. Or maybe not. Life isn't fair.

((I make no bones about liking to win Hugos. And I may have in the past asked readers to vote for SFR; I don't recall. I certainly haven't in recent memory. I know better because asking or begging or cajoling readers for votes is contra-productive and is humiliating to boot. \*Oh, Ghod, just one more Hugo!!\* No, no, it's beneath me.

((I'll even do as you suggest. Yes, yes, all you SFR readers out there, hear me! Attend! While I sincerely appreciate being nominated for and winning so many Hugos, I'd like to urge...to urge my...my readers to v-vote t-t-this year only if---if---(you don't know how hard this is for me!)---if you have read all thenominees!

((My Ghod, I'm trembling! Why

am I trembling? My blood is running cold!))

((Are you happy, Rich? No, you're not. You think I'm making fun of you. You're right.))



# LETTER FROM DARRELL SCHWEITZER  
113 Deepdale Rd, Stratford, PA  
19087 Jan 30, 1984

'Help! I find myself agreeing with both Charles Platt and Elton Elliott in the same issue! You have no idea how disorienting this is. They should be worried too. I think they're both slipping ...

'Actually, there are slight differences, so the world hasn't quite ended yet. It never occurred to me, as it has to Charles, that reader-participation books are a menace to literature. I suppose this is because it never occurred to me that they are any more related to literature than a crossword puzzle or a pacman game. Of course, he is right -- a do-it-yourself adventure-type book by its very nature cannot have any merit as fiction. No one has ever produced one that has, and no one ever will. The only thing like this I've ever enjoyed was Charles' own specimen of the genre, published in QUARK many years ago. But that was a comic strip, which is a medium more suited to such games.

'We could be optimistic and say that at least these participation books involve more reading than a video game (or a crossword puzzle). I suspect that they are read by kids (or adults) who otherwise would be playing video games, not by people who would otherwise be reading real fiction. The illiterate audience is larger than the literate audience. The reason these books are so successful is that they enable the publisher to reach further into the illiterate audience than ever before. That means serious money.

'An optimist might speculate that these books can form a bridge between television and videogames

on one hand and real books on the other. (Comic books used to do that. Maybe nowadays one progresses from videogames to participation books to comic books and then into real fiction.) I know someone whose nine-year-old son won't read anything else. If his participation books were taken away, I'm sure the kid would go back to television. At least he is getting the idea that there is enjoyment to be found in books and that it is possible to get a story from the printed page. (High school teachers I know tell me many of their students haven't gotten that far.)

'But on the dark side, I do agree with Charles that there is a menace: If these things make more money than real fiction, publishers will decide this is the way to go. They will publish more quest-by-numbers books and less fiction. I can envision some Pocket Books of the future dumping a future David Hartwell because his science fiction didn't sell as well as the reader participation line did. That's bad news for all of us.

'The menace Elton sees is a bit more familiar. His column has a certain born-yesterday feel to it. The fundamentalist threat has been around for a long time. It has been in its present, particularly virulent stage for over a decade. Before Elton goes off and starts a defense fund, he ought to do his homework and find out what has already been done in this field. There may be some already existing group which deserves our support. Starting a new one from scratch might not merely waste a lot of effort, but divide the defense.

'Ironically, the best way to defend science fiction against such an attack is to emphasize its kinship to fantasy. Fantasy, once you point it out to even the dimmest school board member, is literarily respectable. Just about every major literary figure in history of the world has written some fantasy. (Including Moses and the Four Evangelists, you might add, but we won't say that.) If you argue that science fiction is a form of fantasy and therefore part of the main tradition of the world's literature, you have just annexed a lot of prize material. It seems to me that the old cry of "These people are trying to ban Shakespeare and Mark Twain" still packs some punch. A real dishonest-to-God fundamentalist would like to ban Shakespeare and Mark Twain, naturally, along with all imaginative literature and anything else that might expand the reader's mental horizons, but if you force them to admit it, only the extreme lunatic fringe will go along.



'Another thought: As long as Richard McEnroe is looking for reactions to the Pocket Books fiasco, I might mention that when it was all over I asked myself, "Well, what does Pocket Books do under the new arrangement?" They don't acquire books. The packager does that. They don't deal with artists. The packager does that too. They don't print books. They don't typeset them. They don't distribute them. They don't sell them. You see the point?

'The Pocket Books office is someplace you may pass through on the way to someplace important. Or maybe not. The publisher has been reduced to a middle level management operation, possibly extraneous to the real business of publishing books. What happens when the packager and the writers and the distributors and Walden Books and the printer all get their heads together, glance over at the so-called publisher and say, "What do we need him for?" What happens when they figure out how to cut the publisher out entirely?

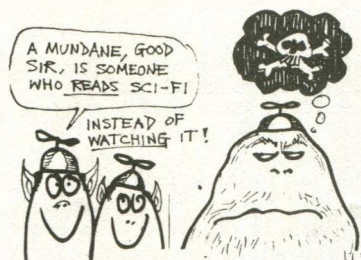
'It'll serve him right, as I see it. That's what he gets for surrendering all his responsibilities.

'If we want to get historical about it, we might say this is the tail end of a 500-year devolution into senility. In Caxton's time, the guy who owned the printing press was the publisher. He did everything except (sometimes) write the book. He acquired the manuscript. He set type, bought paper, printed, bound and finally sold the books. "To be sold in his shop," as many 15th and 16th Century title pages say. But the process has been subdividing ever since, and nowadays some publishers don't do much of anything.

'Aside: It seems that, as editor, Caxton was meddlesome in the finest 20th Century fashion. He changed LE MORTE D'ARTHUR considerably. This was not discovered until the Winchester Manuscript turned up in the 1930s. It took almost 500 years for the book to get into print as the author wrote it. How's that for a publishing horror story?

'One last comment on the issue: Gilliland's cartoon on page 17 is terrifyingly accurate. The media trekkies who have overrun eastern conventions have developed a jargon of their own, loosely based on the fannish, but with little awareness of the original meanings of the words. Indeed, these people have been overheard referring to all non-costumed attendees as mundanes. That is, anyone you or I

would consider a fan, is to them a mundane. Of course, such people do not read SFR and have probably never heard of Gilliland. If they saw the cartoon, they wouldn't understand the propellor beanie symbolism.'



((I suspect that a lot of mainline publishers are thinking the same thoughts you are and seeing the same writing on the wall: short-term advantages may backfire into longterm disaster if they become mere conduits and assemblers and dealers.

((It may be already too late. Could not a small group of specialist packagers get together under an umbrella publishing name, in alliance with a printer and a distributor/bookstore chain and say goodbye to the Name Publishers?

((In 1985 and 1986 when the next down-leg into deeper recession settles over this land, cost-cutting and bottom-line factors may force some monumental shifts and adjustments in Big Name Publishing.))

# LETTER FROM DAVID LASS  
D.U.S.F. Society  
Regent House, Trinity College,  
Dublin 2, EIRE

'As a new reader and subscriber, I would like to compliment both the Editor & Associate Editor, for their remarkably high standards achieved in all sections of SFR, No's 49-50.

'Particularly enjoyable in #49 were the Charles Platt column (whose controversial erotic novel THE GAS I read in the Savoy Books edition, before it was banned in the U.K., and the publishers forced out of business); and the comprehensive interviews both with Darrell Schweitzer and Piers Anthony.

'I would like to query one point in the Schweitzer interview on p.28, where he stated that "Julian the Apostate" participated in the siege and conquest of Jerusalem by the Crusaders (in 1099 A.D.), and attendant slaughter.

'According to various historical reference sources in our College library, Julian the Apostate reigned as Roman Emperor from 361-363 A.D.,

and died fighting the Persians in a military campaign!

'Mr. Schweitzer is quite entitled to transfer historical figures from Roman history, into a medieval romance & theological fantasy setting, provided he acknowledges the real-life existence, and established facts about individual characters!

'Turning to our own activities, the Dublin University S.F. Society, has about 300 members (founded 1983), and we are affiliated to the Irish S.F. Association (founded 1976), which has several hundred members.

'The I.S.F.A's patrons are James White, (The S.F. author from Belfast, writer of the "Sector General" series), Harry Harrison & Anne McCaffrey, both of whom have been living in Ireland for many years, (under the income tax-free artists' status), and lastly Harlan Ellison in the U.S.A.

'Proceeding to SFR #50, I greatly appreciate Gregory Benford's article, "Hard S.F. in the Real World," on pp. 29-34.

'As a devotee of the genre myself, and having read his 2 novels, TIMESCAPE, and IF THE STARS ARE GODS, it was most revealing to perceive the author's own in-depth analysis of the subject.

'Finally, I would like to comment on a point raised in Buzz Dixon's letter on p. 23 in SFR #50. He stated that VARNEY THE VAMPIRE (attributed to T.P. Prest), (published originally in the "penny dreadful" magazine REYNOLDS MISCELLANY, 1845-7)...sold quite well, but somehow fell from view, while its competitor DRACULA, (written by Bram Stoker in 1897) has indeed become a classic work of fiction"---

'As a founder member and Hon. Librarian of the Bram Stoker Society (founded in Dublin 1980), we have been engaged in serious study of the sources of DRACULA, both in the English Gothic novel, and in the Anglo-Irish literary tradition.

'The latter was directly influenced by Sheridan Le Fanu's celebrated vampire novel CARMILLA (published 1872), as well as the earlier THE VAMPIRE OF POLIDORI (1816).

'The Chairperson of the Bram Stoker Society is Leslie Shepard, currently living in Dublin, and Editor of THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF OCCULTISM, (1st ed. published Gale, 2 vols. 1978) (Paperback ed. Avon, 1980, 1st Suppl. 1982).

'Any of your readers who would be interested in receiving further details of our activities (we publish a newsletter), may contact Leslie Shepard, Editor, ENCYCLOPEDIA OF OCCULTISM, c/o Gale Publishers, Book Tower, Detroit, MI 48226.

'We are quite separate from the

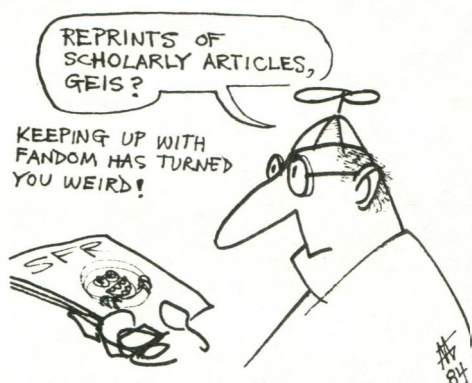


American Count Dracula Fan Club, which is a somewhat light-hearted, frivolous Society, that does not engage in serious literary studies!

'Should any of your readers wish to contact us directly, they should write by air-mail to:

Mr. Leslie Shepard,  
Chairperson,  
The Bram Stoker Society,  
1 Lakelands Close,  
Stillorgan, Co. Dublin,  
EIRE.'

((Thanks for the compliments, and for the phone call from London, and for the most interesting letter. As Hon. Librarian and founder of the Richard E. Geis Society (founded 1927), and sole member and founder of the R.E.G. Pornographic Literary Society (founded 1959), I wish to express my sincere gratitude for your contribution to literary awareness in this dross, vacuum-minded world of zombies who... Ah, but why go on? You understand.))



# CARD FROM ROBERT A. BLOCH  
2111 Sunset Crest Drive  
Los Angeles, CA 90046  
Feb. 3, 1984

'Congratulations on your Golden Anniversary issue! It seems to me that Gregory Benford's rapidly becoming the very best essayist in the SF field, and I hope his work will meet with the appreciation and recognition it deserves. Unlike so many other voices, his doesn't go shrill, and as a result his thoughtful and perceptive analyses carry credibility and conviction.

'I think Charles Platt is right on too in his conclusions regarding interactive fiction. I deplore its ascendancy, but in an era where button-pushing is regarded as a creative endeavor, and the average attention span is equivalent to the length of an orgasm, it may be that what Platt anticipates may soon take the place of what Benford describes. As if we didn't have

enough trouble with elections and Olympics this year -- now writers must face obsolescence! -- and just when I've learned to spell it, too!'

# LETTER FROM DAVID GERROLD  
Box 1190, Hollywood, CA 90078  
Feb 2, 1984

'Charles Platt's article, "The Fiction They Deserve" is undeniably one of the best analyses I've ever seen of the whole interactive fiction "genre." His is the kind of stuff that Platt is best at, and I hope he continues in this vein.

'I think Platt is absolutely correct in his estimation that interactive fiction, by its very nature, cannot be good literature. It may be that the name "interactive fiction" is actually a misnomer. It's not really fiction at all. What we're really talking about here are role-playing adventures -- that includes Dungeons and Dragons, Choose Your Own Adventure books, computer adventure games, and all the variations of same. The only real characterization that's currently possible is the player's.

'My own experience with role-playing games goes back over a decade. I was exposed to the original adventure on a computer terminal at Boskone in 74 or 75, and was so captivated, I was there from nine PM until two in the morning. I remember being extraordinarily involved in the game -- there were moments of very real exhilaration as well as moments of stark terror as well. I was playing on a noisy old teletype machine, but I felt as if I were actually in the Colossal Cave. It was truly a mind-boggling experience -- and I remember thinking that if this game were ever made available on the consumer level, it would have extraordinary impact. I admit it freely, adventure games were one of the reasons I bought my Northstar computer way back in 1978. (I've also written a few books on it, but that's a mundane concern.)

'The point is that a role-playing game -- like a book -- can only be as powerful as the reader makes it, because the experience of it occurs in the privacy of his own head. Granted that the illusion of free will is only an illusion (it may be that way in the real world too ...) but even that illusion can still be a pretty powerful one. The player does have control to the extent that he is the one who chooses.

This is probably the real appeal of the games -- they allow a sense of power for those who might have little power in the real world. (Look at who are the most active role-players.)

'It may not be fair to condemn interactive fiction for its failure as literature. I don't know that anyone ever claimed that it was. Literature is about human beings in the process of transformation, that is a story is about how a human being grows (or fails to grow). Because the real hero of an interactive game can only be the player, an interactive game would have to be about the player's growth as a human being before it could even be considered anything more than a very complex, interesting puzzle.

'Which leads me to this speculation: What if interactive games were designed as simulations? Just as flight simulators are used to train pilots, couldn't game simulations be written to allow people to play at various roles -- and learn in the process? What if you had a game where the hero was trapped on the floor of Hell and had to find his way out? And ... what if the only way out was not through any specific set of problem solving actions, but rather through the upgrading of your karma by continually performing unselfish actions until you reached the level of saint? Would this give the player a sense of the value of cooperation and community with other human beings? (It's a worthwhile experiment.)

'Of course, this kind of simulation would require a much greater complexity in game design. Monsters in the dungeon would have to stop being obstacles and would have to become actors, with personalities, emotions, motivations and weaknesses. The reactions of any given character to the presence of the hero could then be determined by that character's emotional state, his history of experience with the hero, and so on. The hero/player might find a much more real sense of characterization if the character's actions were determined by something more than a random number generator. So far, of course, nobody has really solved this programming problem.

'I think the creation of well-rounded actors in a computer game is a soluble problem. It requires first, the construction of a model of human emotional states; second, a model of expectations based on experiences; third, a model of purpose or goal. I have some thoughts on how to model the first two parts of the problem. Human emotional states can be conceived of as a



two dimensional array; the vertical dimension ranges from apathy at the bottom, up through fear, anger, mild interest to enthusiasm and joy at the top. The horizontal axis would be the intensity of the emotion -- the level of expression. The second model could be based on trend prediction. The character might encounter a situation, make an expectation of it, and react positively or negatively depending on how well his/her expectations were met. The third model (purpose) is one I still haven't figured out. (Though, I can think of a couple of ways to "fake" a solution.) Like I said, I think the problem is solvable, but I didn't say the solution would be easy.

'There are probably a lot of other ways to do it too. What we really do with a computer program is build models and manipulate them to see what happens. The more accurate the model, the more appropriate the results are to the real world. The question is not "Can we program a human personality?" I don't think that's possible right now. The question is "Can we build a model of a personality complex enough to create an illusion of character?"

'That's all that an author does in a novel -- create an illusion. That's probably the best that can be done in a computer game too. Some of the programmers I'm friendly with are very much aware of the limitations that Charles Platt has discussed. One programmer I know says that so far, there isn't a programming language that can handle the classes of objects, actors and events in the real world that would be necessary to create a game with the depth of even a bad novel; but even a shallow adventure game often involves the player to a much greater degree than a novel -- certainly it requires more time to play than a novel takes to read. (When I did get Adventure on my computer, I spent a couple of weeks with it. The longest I've spent with a book was six days: ZEN AND THE ART OF MOTORCYCLE MAINTENANCE.) The first real problem may be the creation of an Adventure language, developed from one of the object-oriented or artificial intelligence languages.

'But it's still way too early to analyze the "genre" -- it's still in the process of being created. After all, after fifty years of intense scientific research and development, the computer industry has only now reached its infancy.

'But enough. The public discussion of one's computer is worse than the public discussion of one's favorite TV show. (It's a kind of intellectual masturbation, isn't it?)

((David, your speculation that interactive computer games could be used (will be used is more accurate!) in role-playing educational and 'moral' games takes me along into a future in which such "games" are used to 'socialize' children to government or religious ends---to create obedient citizens motivated by lessons learned in the captivating, highly charged, highly effective role-playing games...or obedient soldiers...or obedient, right-thinking dogmatic worshippers of God...or Allah...or what-have-you.

((And if Dungeons and Dragons is causing a storm now, think of the hurricanes caused by such "loaded" computer games in the future. Think of the legislation! And going to school may be a series of cassettes as "you" learn to be a better lover, a better worker, a better manager, a better parent...))



# LETTER FROM STEVE PERRY  
14575 SW Village Lane  
Beaverton, OR 97007  
Jan. 26, 1984

'Charles Platt's, "The Fiction They Deserve," SFR #50, also deserves something -- an anatomical resting place in a body cavity south of his sacrum and north of his knees. I don't have a lot of use for literary critics (save Mark Twain), and I tend to agree with the old saw about those who can't do or teach becoming critics. Someone who misses or ignores a major facet of an issue upon which he has chosen to pontificate is wasting space and his reader's time.

'Which brings us to Charles Platt. Oddly enough, I have to agree with much of what he says in his article. I don't mind sounding old-fashioned in wanting structure and character and depth in my fiction. Good fiction should be about those things. But railing about the advent and growth of interactive fiction doesn't make much sense. We are talking about apples and oranges here; it is like comparing television to novels. Certainly, I would rather read than watch the tube, and just as certainly I would rather read a complex book, full of intricate characters and a rich plot and setting than I would want to read a CHOOSE ... book. And I don't think for a New York second that most readers in our society prefer interactive fiction to the more traditional kind. Nor am I saying anybody should. But let's

get to the point I think Charles missed.

'Not everybody reads. Readers tend to forget that. Most people in our society don't read anything they don't have to read. A novel which sells, say, five million copies, is a best-seller; everybody connected to it is pleased. How many people are there in the country? 225 million? What percentage of that is even five million? Not much.

'As a writer, I'd love to see everybody reading. Preferably my books, but anything would be a start. And that's what Platt missed. Comic books, interactive fiction, cereal packages, anything is better than nothing. I'm sure you have heard the story of how some teachers use porno to interest some students in reading. (Probably used some of your stuff, too, Dick.)

'If a kid will pick up and read CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE or a TIME TRAVEL or a WHICH WAY or a WHAT DO I DO NOW? book, it is a damn sight better than him (or her) being a couch potato, watching DUKES OF HAZARD or THE BRADY BUNCH reruns. That kid might just find he/she likes reading and move on to something a little more complex, once the spark is ignited. Maybe not. But at least there is a shot.

'I like good wine, especially champagne. My taste has outrun my money, and the fifty-buck-a-bottle stuff is what I lust after, comes the time to sip the bubbly. But I didn't start out with Moet & Chandon; I started fifteen years ago with Boone's Farm -- Strawberry Hill. I went through Annie Greensprings (which makes Ripple look like imported French wine) and eventually worked my way up. My first true love in literature consisted of DC and EC and Dell and Classics Illustrated comics. My parents thought it was all trash, but at least I was reading, so they let me alone. I don't read too many comics these days, but I appreciate what they did for me. Maybe without that trash I wouldn't have gotten started. I dunno, but I do know this: a kid who reads today, with all the visual media available, is rare. If there is a market for CHOOSE and the like, somebody is reading them.

'It might be that for some, interactive fiction is all they deserve. It might also be that for some, such is all they can handle -- for now. Anybody who jumps up and down and moans about how terrible this kind of stuff is compared to the real writing is shooting fish in a barrel. I know that, and so does anybody with any experience



reading. Trouble is, not everybody has Charles Platt's vast and varied experience. Some of us had to start a bit lower on the vine to begin our climb into literacy. Can you imagine giving a six-year-old child WAR AND PEACE and expecting him to make any sense of it whatsoever?

'I've got children of my own; fortunately, they are both readers and they read whatever comes into the house, should they so decide. But they both read CHOOSE books when they were younger and enjoyed them. They don't read them anymore.

'Oh, yeah, just so nobody wonders about my motives in all this, I'm one of those "quantity-writers" who cranked out a couple of CHOOSE spin-offs for Byron Preiss. I needed the work, it was honest and it was hard. I probably won't do any more because I have other projects working, but I'm not ashamed of those books. Some child new to reading is maybe going to pick up something I wrote and maybe get interested in reading because of it. (Maybe I'll scare him away, who can say?) But at least I tried, within the limits of what was possible, to write a book which was interesting and had something to say, which is more than some critics do.

'As for Charles Platt, my kindest comment about him is that I think he would be a very difficult man to libel.'

((Write on! I started reading the comic page in the daily paper, and then comic books, and then pulp magazines... And a lot of times as I read sf and fantasy today, in paperback and even hardback, I think I'm still reading pulp magazines.... No, cancel that. The pulps were often better written, better paced, more captivating and intriguing. But that's from 50 years of reading. The kid of seven who dipped into a pulp in 1937 was very uncritical. Everything was NEW!

((Why do so many people dislike Charles Platt? He has always been pleasant, agreeable, cooperative, generous and reliable in my conversations and dealings with him. I like him! He doesn't take anything, especially himself, very seriously, even as he holds strong opinions and expresses them well. He likes to stir up the animals and poke pins in pretentious balloons. We often disagree but we never let it marr our friendship.

((There must be a lot of me in him, for me to like him so much.))

# LETTER FROM LAURA CAMPBELL  
216 W. 14th Street  
Davis, CA 95616  
March 21, 1984

'I'd like to put in a few words on those CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE books. Besides having children of my own (ages 9 and 12), I am currently the manager of a dance studio. In any given week 150 to 200 kids pass through there, and I see them with those books. None of the kids reads them, they play them! They take each other's copies and make a game of it -- who can get the main character through to the "good" ending the fastest. Maybe that teaches skimming, as some of the parents suggest. My own guess is that the kids who are good at it know how to catch key words, signposts of some sort. After they finish they usually can't tell you what has "happened" in the "story." That wasn't important. Only getting to the end was.

'My own kids, read-aholics both, do take some of these books out of the library, but I don't find them being hauled around to meals, to the toilet, being read instead of school work being done, etc., as some of the "real" books are. They are left discarded under the couch, outside, in the car. (Ever read one? They are BORING!)

'I think most kids regard the CYOA books as throwaway products. For the kids who already read, they know there ain't nothing like the real thing. For the kids who don't read, well, at least they learn what a book-like thing feels like. Maybe it might encourage them to try a real one someday.'

# LETTER FROM K.J. COHEN  
37 Preston Lane  
Syosset, NY 11791  
March 28, 1984

'Re: Charles Platt's Essay, The Fiction They Deserve.

'Mr. Platt chooses to castigate a new genre of fiction which it seems he does not fully comprehend. His confusion stems from a failure to separate adventure games from arcade/action games. "Dragon's Lair" is not an adventure game, and "Zork, 1,2,3" are not arcade/action games, although their evolution may have a common branch. Comparing them is faulty logic of the don't-bother-me-with-the-facts type.

'Mr. Platt complains about a lack of plot and "whimsical...yes/no decisions". If Mr. Platt had bothered to play any of the better adventure

games on the market, seldom would he have encountered anything as mundane as a yes/no decision. Indeed, without some cartographic skill, one becomes hopelessly lost.

'He further grouses about a lack of "memorable characters". Again, he shows a failure to understand his subject. The robot, Floyd in Infocom's "Planetfall" is about as memorable a character as you'll ever meet. And when he says "most computer adventures...are written in the second person", to nullify or obviate a complex central character, he is wrong. These are role-playing games requiring the ability to project, not identify.

'I could go on but the basic flaw in Mr. Platt's argument is his inability to differentiate adventure games from arcade games (I won't further cloud the issue with a discussion on fantasy role-playing games). "Dragon Lair" is not an adventure game.

'There seems to be a rift developing between computer games and science fiction aficionados and for no reason. They are separate vehicles for storytelling and should be able to coexist.'

((There's probably some hostility involved because in a real way the electronic "games" or adventures or role-playing vehicles are in direct competition for the leisure time and money of the younger generation(s). In any case, the market decides who wins and who loses.

((I begin strongly to see that reading and books are heading the way of grand opera and ballet---the cultural reserve of the middle and upper classes. Perhaps "reading" will always be taught, because basic reading skills will be necessary for basic living---street signs, etc.---and for specialized work purposes. But for entertainment---reading will be/is the province of (shall I say it?) snobs...or those who will be perceived as snobs by their visually-oriented, electronically-oriented friends and relatives. I sense a feeling developing now: "Real men don't read novels!"))

# LETTER FROM JOHN BRUNNER  
The Square House, Palmer St.  
S. Petherton, Somerset  
England, TA13 5DB  
March 1, 1984

'Remember I was talking about the way my word processor generates system references appropriate to the subject? In the "Futures" section of today's GUARDIAN there is an article by Dr. Norman Myers,





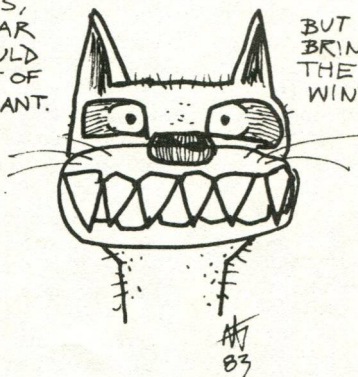
complaining that world leaders have ignored the scientists' warning about the Nuclear Winter. I was prompted to write to him suggesting an international competition for computer users, to develop strategies that will result in our arriving at the year 2000 without a drop in population due to war, employing all the best available data concerning modern weapons and their effects.

'(As a matter of fact, that's an entirely serious proposal, and I'd be interested in hearing from any computer firms willing to supply the necessary programs and offer prizes.)

'Guess what turned up in the systems reference assigned to the letter? With no intention whatsoever on my part, it concluded with ND -- for Nuclear Disarmament ...

'I think one machine at least is on our side!'

WELL, YES,  
A NUCLEAR  
WAR WOULD  
BE SORT OF  
UNPLEASANT.



BUT IT WOULD  
BRING ON  
THE FIMBUL  
WINTER!

'Lindner was obviously familiar with a lot of SF other than that of ERB (E.E. Smith's, in particular) and exploited it ingeniously to disguise the identity of his patient. But I find John Carter more credible than Robert Grandon!'

'Ads in the backs of paperbacks would be one of many solutions, but surely some of these authors, editors and publishers who have a hand in both fields could come up with something. As it is there are readers who never realize magazines exist, if they see only books.'

# LETTER FROM JOHN BRUNNER  
BRUNNER FACT & FICTION LTD  
The Square House, Palmer St.,  
S. Petherton, Somerset TA13  
5 DB, England  
28th January 1984

'THE CASE OF THE JET-PROPELLED COUCH

'Dear Dick,

'I see from your latest issue that people are still trying to identify Paul Linebarger with the patient in Lindner's THE FIFTY MINUTE HOUR. Oh, dear: I thought that cancer had been laid to rest years ago!

'After I left the RAF and moved to London, for six months or so I was a technical abstractor on "The Industrial Diamond Information Bulletin," standing in for Sam Youd ("John Christopher") while he did the boss's job until the latter got out of hospital. My duties involved spending two weeks per month in the Patent Office Library, checking the current scientific journals for references to industrial diamonds (what else?) and since one of the things you can use a diamond for is as a radiation detector, I had to cover publications from inter alia the US Atomic Energy Commission. I can therefore state categorically that at the date in question (1955) there was or had very recently been a guy working for the AEC who was named John Carter; that he co-authored more than one published paper; and that -- to the best of my recollection -- he vanished from the abstracts lists just about the time I moved on to my next job.

# CARD FROM POUL ANDERSON  
3 Las Palomas, Orinda, CA  
94563 Feb. 14, 1984

'The late Dean Dickensheet once told me that years before, while working in defense industry, he met a John Carter who admitted to having been the patient of "The Jet-Propelled Couch." I have no way now of verifying this, but Dean was a truthful man, and the story certainly seems reasonable.'

((I don't see how books, with up to two-year lead times, can review magazines. The "magabook" concept works for reviews of other books because of the availability of advance copies and because a reviewer can review a hardcover and be fairly sure that novel will appear later in paperback.

((As noted elsewhere in this issue, SFR will not be carrying a review column devoted to sf magazines, after all. ))

# LETTER FROM DONALD FRANSON  
6543 Babcock Ave., N. Hollywood, CA 91606  
February 7, 1984

'I was struck by the connection between two items on page 4 of SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #50: an announcement of a new SF magazine that will, among other things, review books; and a letter from an old-time fan (Roy Tackett) complaining that magazines are being hurt by lack of publicity, and your concurrence, with a praiseworthy promise to review same again in SFR.

'But that is not the solution. The above two items only strengthen my belief that, since about the 1950s, when SF book publication boomed and magazines began to decline, magazines have reviewed books, but books have not even mentioned magazines. Is there some way to reverse the traffic on this one-way street?

# LETTER FROM NORMAN KAGAN  
408 East 64th Street, #3C  
NYC, 10021  
August 28, 1983

'I have read and enjoyed SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW for a while and noticed that one ongoing theme of your magazine is the inability to define science fiction in a way that most people will agree with. Towards this end, I recently devised a way of representing genres, including science fiction, which I think will be of interest to you and your readers.

'The chart proposes a unified genres theory with regard to the film medium, organized among ten genres in three modes. While it is organized around films, I believe it is equally applicable to SF books, most obviously suggesting their tendency to fade into fantasy or straight war stories. On a more basic level, all other genres are rooted in strong assumptions about social and individual behavior. Only SF, in tension between war's No-Man's-Land



and dream/fantasy counterparts of life, is interested in an "unknown" tomorrow. Much of the difficulty and confusion in strictly defining SF has to do with "futuristic" films and books which are just other genre works set in the future -- e.g. OUTLAND (western), DEATHRACE 2000 (contest), HEART-BEEPS (outlaws). These are weak satires in those genres at best, and significantly, usually despised by SF aficionados, who sense their lack of the genre's characteristic themes, mood and tone.

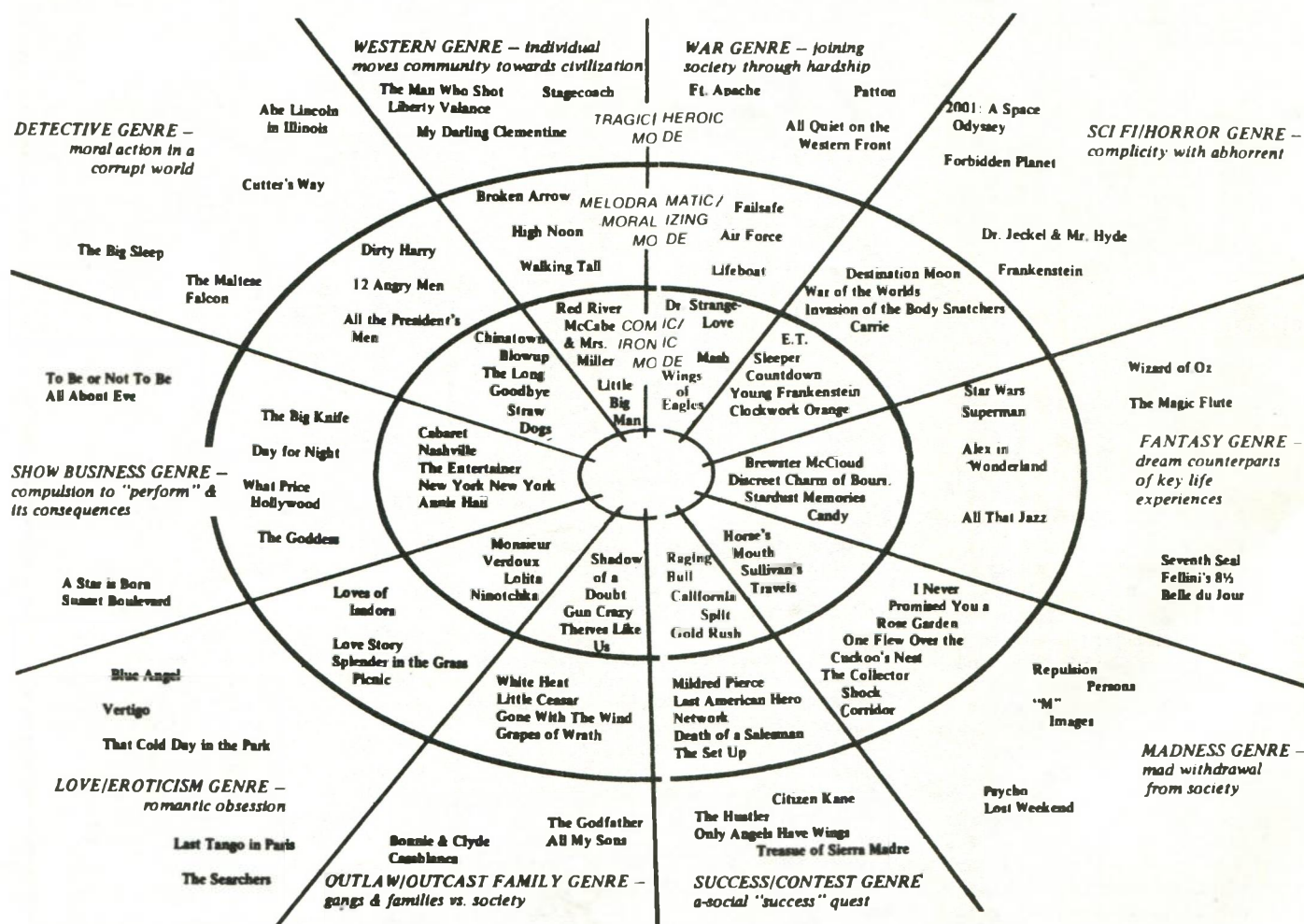
'By contrast, most SF films are in tension between the war and fantasy genres: DESTINATION MOON fantasies the high-tech mission (as in AIRFORCE); THE THING the all-powerful enemy (as in LIFEBOAT); NINETEEN EIGHTY FOUR

enemy occupation as in THE SEVENTH CROSS; 2001 "transcendental combats" as in POTESKIN and PATTON. STAR WARS and E.T. seem to be, at least "formally," fantasies, dream counterparts of key life events such as friendship and "good" and "bad" parents.

'Attempts to construct SF works in other genres besides borderline war and borderline fantasy seem upon reflection to be "empty" in terms of the other genre. Consider the successful "SF detective" works, THE CAVES OF STEEL and THE DEMONISHED MAN. Both actually use war contexts (the Spacers/City War; 23-century Hitler), fantastic detectives (a mindreader, a perfect logician), and crimes that are Cosmic Turning Points rather than products of a

familiar corrupt society. Likewise an SF "political thriller" like BUG JACK BARRON ends up with a villain who is a virtual Dracula (by destroying ordinary individuals, he can live forever).

'An interesting relationship in the theory is that SF/horror represents a "sublimated" form of the madness and amoral contest/success genres. (e.g. DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE sublimates PSYCHO or PERSONA; DESTINATION MOON the ambition of THE SETUP or TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE. Compared to their "subversive counterparts," SF works tend to be bleak, stiff and repressed, but such is the way of sublimation! The rich interior landscape of personality is externalized as spectacular art direction and special effects. Again THE MAN IN THE WHITE SUIT is



**A UNIFIED GENRE THEORY**—ten genres in three modes (tragic/heric; moralizing/ (e.g. are of mixed genres/mixed modes). Genres resolve tensions between two bordering center. As genres tend to "masuline dreams," their comic/ironic modes act as feminist subvertive/counterparts (e.g. outlaw outcast family), linking the "primordial" genres of doughnut, with darkest ironic films merging, on the back, into mythic and then heroic/ melodramatic; comic/ironic), with exemplary films. Acclaimed films often lie near margins genre themes. Minor genres (e.g. musical, epic) may be charted as narrow rings about the critiques. Note upper curve holds social sublimation genres (e.g. western) and lower curve fantasy and performance (show business). Last, the chart is not pleshaped but a torus or tragic ones.



interested as SF/horror genre as irony which amounts to what critics call "demystification" -- note its climax in which a raging, wheelchair-bound capitalist (publisher? producer?) leads citizens in a mad attack on the film's innocent "Dr. Frankenstein," diverting them from their class interests.

'To tell the truth, I've grown a little nervous about the theory since I can't seem to find anything in SF I can't fit into it. For example, Heinlein's *THE MAN WHO SOLD THE MOON*. No war, no fantasy, just pioneering in space or maybe Moses. But if it resembles anything closely, it's a fantastic extension of "command saga" war films created about the same time -- *TWELVE O'CLOCK HIGH* and *COMMAND DECISION*. Heinlein even wrote a sequel, in which ground-bound commander dies happily, like the Air Force generals in the movies who have nervous breakdowns after succeeding. Likewise, his *THE ROLLING STONES* can be seen as a fanciful version of *MRS. MINIVER*, *TUNNEL IN THE SKY* or *STARMAN JONES* versions of films about combat training like *I WANTED WINGS*.

'In proposing the theory I don't really seek to belittle SF by claiming that it's just fanciful versions of old war movies or *THE WIZARD OF OZ* with technology (though a recently critical paper argued that idea about Niven's *RINGWORLD*.) Rather it is that SF is not "privileged" as a genre, it does not contain or "transcend" the other genres, as many enthusiasts have argued. The theory, if correct, seems to suggest that the genres are organized around tension between two basic irrational forms of human behavior, fantasizing and performance, or play-acting. Most successful SF, books or films, seems to deal with fantasies linked with social behaviors and social contexts. One of the main reasons for my faith in it, in passing, is that Asimov's story "Nightfall," voted the best SF story of all time, embodies this tension in perhaps its most naked upsetting treatment." T.S. Elliot put it the other way round; people can't stand very much reality.

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'P.S. One more thought. A lot of correspondence in your publication deals with the decreasing amount of SF, and rise in the volume of fantasy. I would suggest that one reason for this is that the older generation of SF writers experienced World War II as the central event of their lives, and their work has tended to fantasize it. The younger generation, on

the other hand, has turned away from that great socializing experience, and prefers its "dreamlike counterparts of key life experience" straight -- dad, mom, friends and foes, etc. Anyway, don't blame me for any of the above, I'm just a well-meaning part-time film theorist.'

TEN YEARS AGO IN SF -- SPRING, 1974

BY ROBERT SABELLA

Award season was in full swing with the usual announcement of deserving winners intermingled with some overrated works ... The Nebula Awards for 1973 went to *RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA*, by Arthur C. Clarke for Best Novel; "The Death of Doctor Island," by Gene Wolfe for Best Novella; "Of Mist, And Grass, And Sand," by Vonda N. McIntyre for Best Novelette; and "Love Is The Plan, the Plan is Death," by James Tiptree, Jr. for Best Short Story ... The John W. Campbell Memorial Award was a tie between *RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA* and Robert Merle's underrated classic *MALEVIL* ... Harlan Ellison picked up two awards. One was the Writers' Guild Award for Best Dramatic Episodic Teleplay for "Phoenix Without Ashes," the premiere episode of *THE STARLOST*. The other was the Mystery Writer's of America's Edgar Award for Best Short Story for "The Whimper of Whipped Dogs" ... *THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION*, in a sort of award of its own, devoted its April issue to celebrating the career of Robert Silverberg. This was the latest in a series of special issues which in the past had featured such writers as Isaac Asimov, Theodore Sturgeon and James Blish. The highlight of the issue was the publication of Silverberg's major novella "Born With The Dead."

## THE EXPERIMENT

By Michael Carson  
Signet, March 1984, \$2.50

REVIEWED BY PAULETTE MINARE'

Young Doctor Vicki Blake hears the supposedly demented rantings of Alice Greenway as she babbles incomprehensibly about "where they hide the babies"... "Upstairs. Babies everywhere"... "Glass eggs"... "Floating"... "Not hatched."

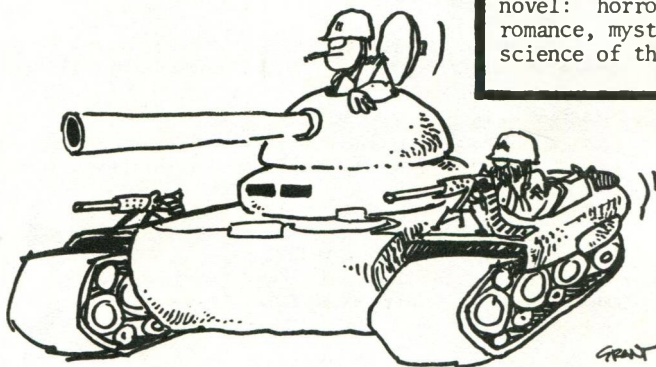
In this novel, *THE EXPERIMENT*, written by Dr. Charles D. Smith-deal, M.D., who writes under the pen name Michael Carson, he explains and very graphically portrays little-known procedures for abortions without regard for the reader's shocked disillusionment. The protagonist, Dr. Blake, has her first residency in Manhattan's Eastside Women's Hospital where she finds it impossible to remain objective about the number of stillbirths and those born with congenital anomalies, plus the late-pregnancy abortions performed. Not until much later does she discover the secret experimental laboratory on the seventh floor where "computer pregnancies" are the project of -- someone I had not suspected.

After Dr. Blake first watches an abortion performed, she faints from shock. Later:

..."But she couldn't get the scene from her mind of Dr. Braymer taking that child from its mother's uterus, piece by piece, like gutting a live chicken with a bent grapefruit spoon... 'That wasn't an abortion, she thought. That was brutal, barbaric mayhem.'" --(p. 206)

An independent continuing narrative in italics heads each chapter, a different facet in the same setting, providing a fascinating mystery which is revealed at the end.

Both heart-wrenching and stomach-retching, this medical thriller has all one can desire in a novel: horror, intrigue, murder, romance, mystery, credibility and science of the near future.





# THE ARCHIVES

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

THE ARCHIVES IS A DATA BASE AND MAY SAVE THE READER MONEY AND TIME.

## A

**A MIDSUMMER TEMPEST** By Poul Anderson, TOR, 1984, \$2.95 'Welcome to the world of Puck and Caliban, Oberon and Titania, Ariel and Neptune, to the world of Faery, where a single night can while away a century and gold can turn to dross in the twinkling of an elfin eye... but what in the world of Faery is that steam engine doing there -- and King Charles: he wasn't even born when Shakespeare wrote!'...

**THE UNICORN TRADE** By Poul and Karen Anderson, TOR, April 1984, \$2.95 Stories and poetry, first publication in book form.

**THE PIG PLANTAGENET** By Allen Andrews, TOR, 1984, (c) 1980, \$2.95 In 13th Century France, a spy, a pig named Plantagenet, acts to protect the beasts against the wealthy farmer who seeks to slaughter them.

**INTERGALACTIC EMPIRES -- ISAAC ASIMOV'S WONDERFUL WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION #1**

Edited by Isaac Asimov, Martin H. Greenberg, and Charles G. Waugh Signet, Dec. 1983, \$2.95

Nine stories, introduction by Asimov.

**X STANDS FOR UNKNOWN** By Isaac Asimov Feb 1984, Doubleday, \$13.95, 218 pp.

17 essays on physics, chemistry, math and astronomy. "...my tendency...is not to describe knowledge flatly, ... but instead, when I can, to describe that manner in which what is known became known ..."

-- Isaac Asimov

**DAVID STARR -- SPACE RANGER**

By Isaac Asimov writing as Paul French, Ballantine, 1984, (c) 1952 \$2.25, a Lucky Starr Novel.

SF adventure. Poisoners are trying to get control of the Mars Farming Syndicate. "Lucky" Starr is assigned to the case.

**LUCKY STARR AND THE BIG SUN OF MERCURY** By Isaac Asimov writing as Paul French, Ballantine, Feb 1984, \$1.95 'If Mercury's Project Light succeeded, desert heat and polar cold would vanish from the Earth, and the seasons would be rearranged to Man's liking. But now something was wrong on Mercury so the Council of Science sent Lucky Starr, its ace investigator'...

**100 GREAT FANTASY SHORT STORIES** Ed. by Isaac Asimov, Terry Carr, Martin H. Greenberg. Doubleday, March 1984, \$15.95 ...'100 of the greatest, shortest fantasy stories ever written.'...

**THE GREAT SF STORIES** Ed. Isaac Asimov & Martin H. Greenberg, Vol. 11, DAW, March 1984, \$3.50

'Relive the mythic moments of 1949 with the now-legendary giants of yesterday and today.'...

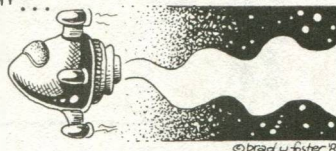
**ISAAC ASIMOV'S MAGICAL WORLDS OF FANTASY, #2**, Edited by Isaac Asimov, Martin H. Greenberg, & Charles G. Waugh, Signet, April 1984, \$3.95. Anthology of 14 witch stories.

**HITOR MYTH** By Robert Asprin Starblaze, 1983, \$6.95, 127 pp. Illustrated by Phil Foglio, paperbk. Others of the series: ANOTHER FINE MYTH, MYTH CONCEPTIONS, MYTH DIRECTIONS. 'Skeev and Aahz are back for the fourth book of the best-selling myth series by award-winning Robert Asprin. The young sorcerer's apprentice suddenly finds himself alone when his demon mentor is lured back to his own dimension-- for good! Now Skeev must deal with his own apprentice applicant, a king who's skipped "kingdom," and a medieval version of the Mob!'

## B

**THE WAY OF WYRD** By Brian Bates The Book of a Sorcerer's Apprentice Harper & Rowe, April 1984, \$12.95

... 'a young man's initiation, a thousand years ago, into Anglo-Saxon shamanistic healing methods, the spirit world and the secrets of "wyrd."'



**QUEST OF THE DAWNSTAR** By Gordon McBain, Avon/Flare original, March 1984, \$2.25 A legendary scientist named Truostar discovers ancient maps and charts left by the ancient lost civilization of Atlantis, the land of his ancestry.

**CORONA, THE NEW STAR TREK NOVEL** by Greg Bear, Pocket, April 1984, \$2.95. 'An awesome, sentient force of protostars -- Corona -- has taken control of a stranded team of Vulcan scientists.'...

**AGAINST INFINITY** By Gregory Benford March 1984, (c) 1983, Pocket Books, \$3.50 An alien has ruled Gany-mede for millennia destroying efforts to make the planet habitable.

**IN THE OCEAN OF NIGHT** By Gregory Benford, Pocket, 1984, (c) 1972, 1973, 1974, 1977, \$3.95

The first of a trilogy, followed by ACROSS THE SEA OF SUNS. A complex alien comet is on a collision course with Earth.



THE GIRL FROM THE EMERALINE ISLAND By Robert S. Blum, Del Rey, May 1984, 288 pp., \$2.95 In his first novel, 'Blum has drawn an engrossing and sympathetic portrait of a young girl at war with a restrictive, postholocaust society.'...

OUT OF THE SUN By Ben Bova TOR, Feb 1984, \$2.95 'The experimental USAF fighter Arrow One was cruising eight miles over the Arctic Ocean when Ground Command came online to direct the pilot toward a mysterious object with a trajectory that traced back to the USSR.'...

WEB OF DARKNESS By Marion Zimmer Bradley, Starblaze, 1983, \$6.95, Paperbk. 'An unholy alliance between the High Priest of a strange cult and an innocent girl result in an unspeakable act of the blackest sorcery. The results are devastating -- dynasties fall, lovers are parted and a great nation crumbles.' ...'Concludes the Atlantean Saga which began in WEB OF LIGHT.'

THE PRACTICE EFFECT By David Brin Bantam, April 1984, \$2.75 A baffling alternate universe where laws of science are changed.

THE JAGGED ORBIT By John Brunner DAW, March 1984, (c) 1969, \$2.95 Set in 2014 in an apartment-fortress, when street-fighting is the norm in a dangerous world and the world power is a weaponry combine.

STAR REBEL By F.M. Busby Bantam, 1984, \$2.50... 'At thirteen, Bran Tregare was stripped of his home his name and his family, and sent to the brutal space academy known as the Slaughterhouse.'...

CLAY'S ARK By Octavia E. Butler St Martin's Press, 1984, 201 pp. \$12.95. An SF future world of violence. Survivors of Clay's Ark go into exile to prevent the spread of infection contracted by an encounter with sinister aliens.

C

THE COMPLEAT ENCHANTER By L. Sprague de Camp & Fletcher Pratt, Ballantine, 1984, (c) 1975, \$2.95.

The magical misadventures of Harold Shea complete in one volume. By the use of mathematical equations, Shea can time-travel, with many unexpected adventures.

BEST FROM THE UNIVERSE Ed. Terry Carr Doubleday, Feb 1984, \$11.95, 204 pp. 9 stories, including index, of UNIVERSE Vol. 1-10.

THE EXPERIMENT By Michael Carson Signet, March 1984, \$2.50.

Doctors in a medical center are performing experiments on pregnant women without their knowledge.

KELLORY THE WARLOCK By Lin Carter Doubleday SF, March 1984, \$11.95

Crossing the Sea of Sands with its spells and night spirits, Kellory must find the Book of Shadows and decipher its magic for his use.

THE RIVER OF DANCING GODS By Jack Chalker, Ballantine, 1984 \$2.95 '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.'...

DEMONS OF THE DANCING GODS By Jack L. Chalker, Del Rey, June, 1984, \$2.95, 272 pp., sequel to RIVER OF DANCING GODS. A journey to the unknown. Ruddygore again demands the aid of two humans -- Joe of the magic sword and Marge, who is now a flying fairy woman.

SOUL RIDER BOOK I: SPIRITS OF FLUX & ANCHOR By Jack L. Chalker TOR, March 1984, \$2.95. 'Cassie did not feel the soul rider enter her body ... but suddenly she knew that Anchor was corrupt, and that far from being a formless void from which could issue only mutant Changelings and evil wizards, Flux was the source of Anchor's very existence.'...

VOYAGER IN NIGHT By C.J. Cherryh DAW, April 1984, \$2.95. Two ships on a collision course, one asteroid-size, enroute for over a hundred thousand years.

1984: SPRING, A CHOICE OF FUTURES By Arthur C. Clarke, Ballantine 1984, \$14.95, 259 pp.

A collection of articles, essays and speeches by Arthur C. Clarke treating war & peace, frontiers of space, need for global communication etc.

2001 A SPACE ODYSSEY By Arthur C. Clarke, (c) 1968, New American Library, \$2.95 Based on a screenplay by Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke. 'Man's control over the machines he has created is absolute. He has manipulated his natural environment, conquered the problems of interplanetary travel, and is ready for what comes next.'

From Ballantine: five books By Arthur C. Clarke, 1984, \$2.95 each; 2010: \$3.95

THE VIEW FROM SERENDIP (c) 1967 ...'hums with life, offering glimpses of Clarke the Adventurer that will delight those readers who know him only as a superb popularizer of space science'...

RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA (c) 1973 'In the year 2130 a strange object is discovered, hurtling through space on what could be a collision course with Earth. What is it? Where did it come from?'...

IMPERIAL EARTH (c) 1976 '2276. Welcome to Earth for America's quincennial! The time of Troubles is over. War and Poverty are dead. And Duncan Makenzie, benign ruler of the distant world of Titan has returned to the planet of his forefathers to solve a mystery and create a son. A clone.'...

THE FOUNTAINS OF PARADISE (c) 1978 'Sri Kanda, the Sacred Mountain, was the holiest place in the ancient land of Taprobane. It was also the only possible site for the most daring feat of engineering in Man's history.'...

2010: ODYSSEY TWO (c) 1982 Sequel to 2001. ...'Who or what transformed Dave Bowman into the Star-Child? What purpose lay behind the transformation?' ...'What alien purpose lay behind the monoliths on the Moon and in space? What could drive HAL, a stable, intelligent computer to kill the crew? Was HAL really insane? What happened to HAL and the spaceship Discovery after Dave Bowman disappeared?'...

CHILDHOOD'S END By Arthur C. Clarke Ballantine, 1984, (c) 1953, \$2.95

'Without warning giant silver ships from deep space appear in the skies above every major city on Earth. They are manned by the Overlords ... mysterious creatures from an alien race who soon take over control of the world.'...

SPACEWAYS #16: THE PLANET MURDERER By John Cleve, Berkley, March 1984, \$2.95. Adult SF mystery. Gelor enjoyed murder. For help he kidnapped two women: a maker of lifelike androids and a microbiologist.

THE CRYSTAL CROWN By B.W. Clough DAW, April 1984, \$2.75. Lars will ascend the throne, having his mind dominated by the Crystal Crown, and married off to a barbarian.

THE WOLF WORLDS By Allan Cole and Chris Bunch, Ballantine, 1984, \$2.95. The Mantis Team is a small band of problem solvers. They are needed to stop the piracy of the Wolf Worlds, using only two men.



**MANNA** By Lee Correy, DAW, 1984, (c) 1983, \$2.95 'On the first day of the 21st Century, the first practical "utopian" state declared its independence. With all the world looking on with skepticism or outright antagonism, the Commonwealth was neither in the capitalist nor the communist bloc -- it called itself the first truly free state. To continue to exist, it would have to outwit -- and outfight -- the entire world.'...

**TRAUMA** by Robert Craig Signet, Feb 1984, \$2.95

A lady doctor take part in a top-secret project, code-named Trauma, and meets her medical school lover who had died years before.

**THE SPECIALIST** By John Cutter Signet, March 1984, \$2.25.

The first novel of THE SPECIALIST, followed by MANHATTAN REVENGE. Jack Sullivan hands out his own brand of revenge and justice.

## D

**A SCANNER DARKLY** By Philip K. Dick DAW, 1984, (c) 1977, \$2.50.

...'Sifting and analyzing the nature of reality against a background of a future drug culture.'...

### DEUS IRAE

By Philip K. Dick and Roger Zelazny

DAW, 1983, (c) 1976, \$2.95

'Set in bizarre future America, you will encounter a bunch of backwards, a tribe of foul-mouthed giant bugs who worship a dead VW sedan, an automated factory that can not 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 LAST MASTER** by Gordon R. Dickson TOR, 1984, \$2.95 'Etter Ho took a gamble when he took the R-Master treatment. Sometimes it turns the subject into a supergenius; more often it turns him into an idiot.'

**JAMIE THE RED** By Gordon R. Dickson with Roland Green, Ace, April 1984, \$2.95. Sword-wielding Jamie the Red is banished in a land of magic.

**DAUGHTER OF REGALS & OTHER TALES** By Stephen R. Donaldson, Ballantine, April, 1984, 312 pp., \$14.95, Fant. Nine tales by Stephen Don-

aldson, including "The Conqueror Worm" and the novella "Ser Visal's Tale." Also "Gilden-Fire," which was omitted from the published version of THE ILLEARTH WAR.

**WHITE GOLD WIELDER** By Stephen R. Donaldson, The Second Chronicles of Thomas Covenant, Book III, Ballantine, 1984, \$3.95, Hardcover in April 1983, Fantasy.

Covenant journeys to Revelstone and learns to control his awesome power for the showdown with Lord Foul, the Despisier.

**THE FORLORN HOPE** By David Drake TOR, Jan. 1984, \$2.95 ...'a band of Star Mercenaries is driven across the face of a planet by enemies bent on their destruction. With only the guns in their hands, this tiny band, this "forlorn hope" must battle star ships, artillery, treachery -- and the most powerful tanks in the universe.'...

**THE MEMOIRS OF ALCHERINGIA**, Part I of The Erthring Cycle, By Wayland Drew, Del Rey, 256 pp., \$2.75, May, 1984. SF fantasy. ...'What began as just another Alcheringian raiding party -- sanctioned by the chief and approved by the Gods -- had gradually become a war to the death.'...

**THE DOOR INTO SHADOW**, By Diane Duane Bluejay Books, Inc., April, 1984 6X9 Trade Paprbk, \$7.95, 300 pp. 500-copy ltd hardcover signed Collector's Ed., \$40.00, Fantasy Vol 2 in Epic Tales of the Five

A story of magic in the Middle Kingdoms. The eternal Shadow is going to destroy all the goodness of the Goddess's creation.

**WORLDS BEYOND: THE ART OF CHESLEY BONESTELL** By Frederick C. Durant III and Ron Miller, Starblaze Special, 1983, \$14.95, 8 1/2 X 11", Trade Paperback, illustrated color & black & white, 136 pp. ISBN: 0-89865-195-6 Same size hardcover, in slipcase, 300 signed & numbered, \$50.00 ISBN: 0-89865-226-X

...the first and only collection of this great artist's work. This volume not only contains Bonestell's meticulous depiction of our universe as it was imagined to be, but covers his career as cover artist, motion picture matte artist, architect, portrait painter and fine arts technician.'

**THE TRELLISANE CONFRONTATION** By David Dvorkin, Pocket, Feb. 1984, \$2.95, Star Trek Novel.

'The Enterprise has rushed to war-torn Trellisane! Kirk is on

the bridge of a Klingon warship. McCoy is dining with cannibals, and the ship is surrounded by Romulans. In the Neutral Zone, power is up for grabs...'

## E

**CASTLE OF WIZARDRY**, Book IV of The Belgariad, By David Eddings, Del Rey, May 1984, 416 pp., \$3.50

'... a fantasy set against a background of a war of men, Kings, and Gods that had spanned seven thousand years ...'

**HARLAN ELLISON DEATHBIRD STORIES** Bluejay Bks Special, Trade Paperbk, \$6.95, Dec 1983, 297 pp., (c) 1975

Collection of 19 stories by Harlan Ellison.

### CLOCKWORK WORLDS: MECHANIZED

**ENVIRONMENTS' IN SF** By Editors Richard D. Erlich & Thomas P. Dunn Greenwood Press, ISBN: 0-313-23026-9 369 pp., \$35.00, Dec. 1983

....'This anthology is about mechanized environments in "SF," broadly defined by the editors as a genre which encompasses science fiction, utopian and dystopian literature, and related genres. The volume has been organized to define and expand for the reader the concept of "clockwork worlds."'

## F

**ISLANDIA REVISITED** By Richard N. Farmer, 1983, Cedarwood Press, \$10. 216 pp., paperback. ...'a fantasy of unknown worlds with Model T Fords in it'...'There are also girls, diplomats, a tricky international problem, and for you World War II buffs, a slightly different outcome to that war. And 1984 comes out different, too.'...

**THE FLAME UPON THE ICE** By William R. Forstchen, Del Rey, April, 1984, 288 pp., \$2.95, sequel to ICE PROPHET.

A tense action-packed novel of revenge. ...'Michael Ormson, called the Prophet -- revolutionized Icewar, and his ramfleets destroyed armadas that had terrorized the frozen seas for two thousand years.'...'Ormson lived in an impregnable fortress on a small island guarded by awesome fleets, fanatical armies, and diabolical ice traps. Somehow the brotherhoods would have to lure him onto the ice -- then make him mad enough to chase them...'

**WHO NEEDS ENEMIES?** By Alan Dean Foster, Del Rey, SF, June 1984, 272 pp., \$2.95, sequel to WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE.

Collection of a dozen SF stories



SLIPT By Alan Dean Foster, Berkley, April 1984, \$2.95. Jake Pickett is a telepathic magician who becomes involved in an ecological problem: seeping wastes in a chemical dump.

## G

THE ALCHEMISTS By Geary Gravel Ballantine, 1984, \$2.95 '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.'...

NEUROMANCER By William Gibson Ed. Terry Carr, Ace SF Books, July 1984, \$2.95, 288 pp., Ace SF Special Series. ..."Gibson shows how strangely warped our future might be if this trend continues. NEUROMANCER is a look at the 21st Century's criminal underground as it (literally) interfaces with the high ground of tomorrow's rich and powerful corporations, people ... and not-quite-people."

--INTRODUCTION by Terry Carr

J.R.R. TOLKIEN; THIS FAR LAND Ed. Robert Giddings, Feb 1984, \$27.50, Barnes & Noble Books., Critical Studies Series, ISBN: 0-389-20374-2. (U.S.) ISBN: 0-85478-355-0. (U.K.) ..."what are these needs, emotions and attitudes which THE LORD OF THE RINGS satisfied, and what is the nature of the moods and the aspirations which this reveals?"... -- Introduction by Robert Giddings

THE FIRE WHEN IT COMES By Parke Godwin, April 1984, Doubleday, \$11.95, SF. 8 stories, in 179 pages; "The Fire When It Comes" was a 1982 award-winning novella.

THE PRINCESS BRIDE By William Goldman, Ballantine, 13th Printing, April 1984, \$3.50, Fantasy. 'What happens when the most beautiful girl in the world marries the handsomest prince in the world -- and he turns out to be a son-of-a-bitch?'

THE WARRIOR REARMED Terrilian III By Sharon Green, DAW, 1984, \$2.95 'Terrilian's ability to project her mind empathically enabled her to control wild animals but when it came to the human beast she was in trouble.'...



APERTURES: A STUDY OF THE WRITINGS OF BRIAN ALDISS by Brian Griffin & David Wingrove, Contributions to the Study of SF & F, #8; ISBN: 0-313-23428-0; Greenwood Press, 261 pp., \$29.95, Feb. 1984. 'APERTURES will be enjoyed by fans of Aldiss and science fiction in general. As a work of literary criticism, the book can be used in courses on science fiction and Western literature.'

## H

IDENTITY PLUNDERERS By Isidore Haiblum, Signet, March 1984, \$2.50 A New York City reporter stumbles onto a secret on a distant world. He meets a "Blank", a memory-erased worker on an isolated prison planet.

THE MUTANTS ARE COMING By Isidore Haiblum, Doubleday, April 1984, \$11.95, 183 pp., SF. Earth in 2075 is an automated "Eden," with self-repairing computers, subliminal education and freedom to pursue the entertainments of the Leisure Guild, but politics hasn't changed.

THE LADIES OF MANDRIGYN By Barbara Hambly, Ballantine, 1984, \$2.95. The women of the City of Mandrign, in order to free their enslaved men, kidnap Sun Wolf to train and lead the ladies against Altiokis, the evil wizard king.

THE TIMEKEEPER CONSPIRACY By Simon Hawke, #2 in Timewars, Ace, April 1984, \$2.75. Second in the time travel adventure series. Due to the discovery of minus time, battles can be fought in the past instead of in the present, but attempts are made to change the past.

HERETICS OF DUNE By Frank Herbert, Putnam, April 1984, \$16.95 hrdcover, \$75.00 Limited Edition. ISBN: 0-399-12898-0, 480 pp., #5 in the Dune series. This novel begins after the death of the God-Emperor. Putnam is simultaneously reissuing a hardcover edition of DUNE, \$16.95.

DUNE By Frank Herbert, Putnam, Apr. 1984, \$16.95 hardcover. ISBN: 0-399-12896-4. Orig. Pub. 1965. The first Dune novel, introduces the planet Arrakis, sandworms, "spice", and Paul Atreides. Subsequent Dune novels have been: DUNE MESSIAH, CHILDREN OF DUNE, GOD EMPEROR OF DUNE, and the just-published HERETICS OF DUNE

SHRINE By James Herbert Signet, 1984, \$3.95 'Just a short time ago, the child had been a deaf-mute. That was before it happened. Now Alice can suddenly speak and

hear. Now she has it in her power to work miracles. And as soon as it becomes clear what Alice can do, the town -- and then the entire world -- begins worshipping her.'...

TIGERS OF THE SEA by Robert E. Howard, Ace, 1984, (c) 1979, \$2.50. Howard's 'Other Great Hero, Cormac mac art'; a warrior of Arthurian times in thrilling adventures.

GOLD STAR By Zach Hughes Signet, Dec. 1983, \$2.25 ...'As far as anyone knew, Rimfire had suddenly disappeared without a trace while heading out on its maiden voyage. But Pete and Jan knew better, for they had stumbled across the one clue that could take them where no space tug had ever been before, on a galaxy-spinning journey with a salvager's pot of gold -- Rimfire -- hopefully waiting at the end....'

## J

THE LAST DAY OF CREATION By Wolfgang Jeschke, Translated by Gertrud Mander, St. Martin's Press, April, 1984, \$12.95, 224 pp. 'Vividly written, exciting and evocative, THE LAST DAY OF CREATION is the compelling tale of a time when travel into the past becomes a reality. The U.S. Army and Air Force send a task force back in time to pump oil from the primeval Middle East into present-day America. The experiment goes horribly wrong; not only is the time travel process a one-way ticket, but other visitors from the future have arrived before them.'...

THE LAST DAY OF CREATION By Wolfgang Jeschke, Translated by Gertrud Mander, Afterword by Brian Aldiss St. Martin's Press, First U.S. Ed. (c) 1982, \$12.95, 222 pp. First published in Great Britain by Century Pub. Co., Ltd., this novel is an adventure set at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea 5 million years ago.

DR. ADDER By K.W. Jeter Bluejay Book, March 1984, \$7.95 240 pp., Illustrated by John R. Howarth ...'It's a near-future world where one's deepest sexual desires can be granted with the flick of a surgical knife. In this nightmare vision of Los Angeles, Dr. Adder reigns supreme, challenged periodically by small-time pimps and down-and-outers -- and by John Mox's Moral Forcers. While Mox, the last TV preacher, broadcasts sermons to tranquilize the mind, Dr. Adder continues to rule, with



his body-sculpting scalpels and soul-searching hallucinogens.'... Also collector's ed. -- 350 copies, \$32.00, ISBN: 0-312-94100-5 Trade paper: ISBN: 0-312-940099-8

## K

**THE TYRANT OF HADES** By Colin Kapp III of Cageworld series, DAW, March 1984, (c) 1982, \$2.50 ...'As each of the great planetary shells approached population maximum, the surplus mass of humanity was transported out'...'But at Uranus shell the flow stopped'...

**WINTERMIND** By Marvin Kaye & Parke Godwin, Bantam, April 1984, (c) 1982, \$2.95. Set in the same post-apocalypse future as their novel **MASTERS OF SOLITUDE**, two cultures rediscover one another after centuries of isolation: The City, a race of immortals and the Coven, pagan pastoralists who have mastered telepathy.

**OUTRIDER** By Leo P. Kelley, Doubleday, March 1984, \$11.95, Western. Luke Sutton, outrider, searches for a man taken by the Apaches 20 years ago in a raid.

**THE MAN IN THE TREE** by Damon Knight Berkley Original, Jan 1984, \$2.75 ISBN: 0-425-06006-3 ...'A poet, a millionaire, a circus freak. Gene Anderson was all of these and much more...Gene is an incredible eight-and-a-half-foot giant possessing ... the gift of telekinesis... Like all prophets he is feared as much as loved -- and hated by one tortured soul who is determined to see him die ...'

## L

**THE UNFORSAKEN HERO** By Sterling E. Lanier, Ballantine, First paperback April 1984 (Hardcover pub. 1983), \$2.95, Sequel to **HIERO'S JOURNEY** A novel of the far future where civilization is about to be destroyed by the Brotherhood of the Unclean

**RETRIEF TO THE RESCUE** By Keith Laumer, Pocket, 1984, (c) 1983, \$2.95. ...'The diplomat extraordinaire faces his ultimate challenge on the embattled planet Furtheron -- to keep the peace and keep himself in one piece! ...

**THE WORLD SHUFFLER** By Keith Laumer Ace, 1984, (c) 1970, \$2.75. O'Leary is trapped in a world of magic, giants, etc., where exist doubles for him and his associates.

**TAMASTARA OR THE INDIAN NIGHTS** By Tanith Lee, DAW, March 1984, \$2.50 'All the magic and mystery of fabled India is woven into these marvel tales of seven strange nights'...'Here are hidden gods and demonic possession, here are were-beasts and subterranean terrors,'...

**OUR LADY OF DARKNESS** By Fritz Leiber, Ace, 1984, (c) 1977, \$2.50 Horror novel. Chosen by an ancient evil, Franz Westen soon must give in to his lover's cold embrace.

**A QUIET OF STONE** By Stephen Leigh Bantam, Feb. 1984, \$2.75

'Gyll Hermond was spawned in the dark streets of Neweden, a world torn apart by intrigue and blood-feud. He'd molded a ragged band of kinless outcasts into a trained killing force -- the Hooraka Assassins' Guild -- only to be deposed as leader in a bitter struggle for power.'...

**SALVAGE AND DESTROY** by Edward Llewellyn, DAW, Jan 1984 \$2.95 'The quarrelsome, belligerent beings of Earth already had space satellites and planetary probes. Soon they would find the Ultron's orbital beacon. The Ultrons who controlled hundreds of civilized planets knew that Earth meant trouble -- its history proved that. If the beacon transmitting data was found there'd be no end to mankind's interstellar mischief.'

**THE CLAW** By Norah Lofts TOR, 1984, \$2.95 'When Mary Anderson's handsome husband, Greg, dies suddenly one evening, she cannot bear the loss. Mary Anderson's mother, an herbalist from the West Indies, loves Mary too much to let her suffer. She puts her daughter to bed with a strong sedative. And then she goes to work.'...

**CHANNEL'S DESTINY** By Jean Lorrah and Jacqueline Lichtenberg DAW, Dec 1983, \$2.95

'Sime/Gen: Zeth Farris' 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 millenium of strife.'



## M

**THE LAST WARRIOR QUEEN** By Mary Mackey. Berkley, \$2.75, April 1984. Orphaned Inanna sets out to find the fabled City of the Dove, where women rule and love is not a crime. Set in pre-historic times.

**THE EDUCATION OF JENNIFER PARRISH** By Russ Martin, TOR, April 1984, \$3.50. Spencer Academy, a coed boarding school of the rich, is controlled by a satanic organization; students learn savage sensuality, but with a price.

**THE NONBORN KING** By Julian May, Ballantine, 1984, (c) 1983, \$3.50. Vol III of The Saga of Pliocene Exile, first time in paperback. In six million B.C., aliens rule Earth. Then men from the twenty-second century Earth arrive through a one-way time tunnel.

**THE FORGOTTEN BEASTS OF ELD** By Patricia A. McKillip, Berkley, \$2.50, April, 1984. Fantasy novel, winner of the World Fantasy Award.

Three "What-Do-I-Do-Now" Books:

**ZORK #1: THE FORCES OF KRILL**  
**ZORK #2: THE MALIFESTRO QUEST**  
**ZORK #3: THE CAVERN OF DOOM**  
By S. Eric Meretzky  
TOR Books, 1983, 126 pp. each, \$1.95 each. 'A fabulous kingdom in which you decide what happens!' ...'And you decide the outcome! Based on the most popular computer game of adventure/fantasy.'

**PROCURATOR** By Kirk Mitchell, Ace, 1984, \$2.75. A novel of alternate history; Rome never fell and it seems Rome will continue ruling until the Zaims learn murder by mental control.

**STORM BRINGER** By Michael Moorcock Berkley; 1984; (c) 1963, 1965, 1967, 1977; \$2.50, Book 6 of the Elric series. ...'Elric's fate begins to be revealed to him as the forces of Law and Chaos gather strength for the final battle which will decide the future of Elric's world...'

## N

**THE PLAYERS OF GOR** By John Norman DAW, March 1984, \$3.50 To clear himself of a charge of treason, Tarl joins a troupe of traveling players, but life here is risky among monsters of form and of mind.

**EXILES OF THE STARS** By Andre Norton Ace, 1984, (c) 1971, \$2.50, Sequel to **MOON OF THREE RINGS**. The



starship Lydis is carrying incense for the temples of Kartum when they must war against ancient powers of evil.

**LORD OF THUNDER** By Andre Norton  
Ballantine, Feb. 1984, (c) 1962  
\$2.50, sequel to **THE BEAST MASTER**  
... 'No human had ever gone into the Blue and even Storm, the Beast Master, balked at guiding an off-worlder into the forbidden land.'....

**DARK PIPER** by Andre Norton  
Ballantine, 1984, (c) 1968, \$2.25  
Refugees of a long interplanetary war escape into an underground labyrinth and become trapped.

**THE WINDHOVER TAPES, PLANET OF FLOWERS** By Warren Norwood, Bantam, March 1984, \$2.50. "Norwood's strength lies in his inventiveness -- he's imagined an unusual life-style for the far future, and filled it with intriguing details."  
-- Publisher's Weekly

## P

**A MIRROR FOR OBSERVERS**, By Edgar Pangborn, Bluejay Books, Inc., Dec 1983, (c) 1954, \$5.95, 229 pp, paper  
Refugees from dying earth, live in vast underground cities, observing and waiting. They may be able to enlist the help of a young boy genius, with the potential of a Ghandi or a Hitler.

**ELF QUEST BOOK 3** By Wendy & Richard Pini, Starblaze Graphics, 8 1/2 X 11 Trade Paper, 168 pp., Illustrated color, ISBN: 0-89865-329-0, \$10.95. Same size hardcover in slipcase, color print, limited ed., 4000 signed & numbered, 168 pp.; illus. color; ISBN: 0-89865-328-2, \$40.00, 1984. 'Featuring state-of-the-art full process color separation and reproduction, sophisticated story line and 3-dimensional characters' ... 'made the best-seller lists at Walden Bookstores and at Baker and Taylor.'

**ELFQUEST** By Wendy & Richard Pini  
Berkley, March 1984, (c) 1982, \$2.95. **ELFQUEST** is a comic about elves, which started out as a black-&-white magazine. The novel expands upon the original story.

**HEECHEE RENDEZVOUS** By Frederik Pohl  
Del Rey, Hardcover Original, May, 1984, 320 pp., \$14.95, SF.

Benevolent aliens, the Heechee, once ruled the galaxy, but were forced to flee to a black hole. Now with the future of man at stake, Robinette Broadhead must journey into space to meet the Heechee.

**MEN OF WAR** By J.E. Pournelle  
**THERE WILL BE WAR, VOLUME II**  
TOR, Jan. 1984, \$2.95 'High tech war -- and how to avoid it. The answer is simple: you would have peace? Then prepare for war. This wisdom is as old as armies. Yet after a few generations, the peace that was paid for with soldiers' blood comes to seem the normal thing, the ordinary thing, and the guardians of peace come to be the symbol of its opposite. That is the theme of the second volume in this series.'...

**MASKS OF SCORPIO** By Dray Prescott:  
31. DAW, April 1984, \$2.50.  
(As told to Alan Burt Akers)  
... 'Aided by his warrior daughter, ... Dray invaded the capital of the secret order ... it became a battle of golden masks against silver masks'...

**TALONS OF SCORPIO** By Dray Prescott  
DAW, 1983, \$2.50 '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. For he had also to rally all the world's forces to combat the onslaught that was on its way from the unexplored Southern Hemisphere.'

**TIME MACHINE 1: SECRET OF THE KNIGHTS** By Jim Gasperini and illustrated by Richard Hescox  
**TIME MACHINE 2: SEARCH FOR DINOSAURS** by David Bischoff and illustrated by Alex Nino  
Byron Priess Books, Feb, 1984, \$1.95 each, 144 pp each.  
... 'a new line of interactive books for readers ages 10-up.'...  
... 'the only to the goal is the path of historical accuracy'...  
An entertaining way of learning history.

**SHADOWEYES** By Kathryn Ptacek  
TOR, March 1984, \$3.50, Horror  
... 'The people of Albuquerque are suddenly unsuspecting prey for something swift and unseen. Something with golden eyes and razor-sharp teeth. Something eternally evil, unspeakable powerful and totally hungry.'...

## R

**THE SHATTERED WORLD** By Michael Reaves, Pocket, April 1984, Trade Paperbk \$6.95, Hardcover \$15.95.  
A tale of necromancers, magic and the power of Runestone.

**CHAOS IN LAGRANGIA** By Mack Reynolds  
TOR, March 1984, \$2.95. Ed. Dean Ing, first printing, SF. 'Rex Bader has finally solved the mystery

of who is trying to kill the Director of the first L-5 space colony. The Mafia? The KGB? Anti-Space fanatics? Answer: all three!'...

**SHAPECHANGERS** By Jennifer Roberson  
Chronicles of the Cheysuli: Book I  
DAW, Feb. 1984, \$2.95 'They were the Cheysuli, a race of magical warriors gifted with the ability to assume animal shape at will.'...

**THE WILD SHORE** By Kim Stanley Robinson, Ace SF, \$2.95, Ed. Terry Carr. An Ace "Science Fiction Special," all of which will be first novels & paperback originals. The story of the U.S. after a nuclear strike. (371 pp.)

**THE SWORD AND THE CHAIN** By Joel Rosenberg, Signet, April 1984, \$2.95, #2 of Guardians of the Flame. Stranded in time where their only protection is in healing spells and their wits, in a world where magic replaces science.

**THE LAST OF DANU'S CHILDREN**  
By Alison Rush, TOR, 1984, \$2.95  
Fantasy. 'Yesterday, the stone house behind the woods was filled with books and ancient tools of alchemy. Today it is in ruins, a mystic design chalked on the floor. Lovely Anna Marchant has vanished into Otherworld, bewitched and delivered into the power of the terrible Horned God, Cernunnos.'...

## S

**THE FIRST BOOK OF SWORDS** By Fred Saberhagen, TOR, 1984, (c) 1983, \$2.95. A fantasy epic. After a war which changed the laws of nature, humans contend with gods and giants.

**BERSERKER** By Fred Saberhagen  
Ace, April 1984, (c) 1967, \$2.75  
Berserkers are world-sized battle machines guided by intelligent computers; they must be stopped.

**THOUSAND SHRINE WARRIOR** By Jessica Amanda Salmonson, Ace, March, 1984, \$2.75. A Tomoe Gozen SagaFantasy #3. ... 'For Tomoe Gozen, the legendary Thousand Shrine Warrior, honor is life itself and it is for honor that she will unsheath her splendid blade, the Golden Naginata, and defend a weak and wretched village from the powerful and evil shadow of her destined adversary, the priest from Hell, Kura the Darkness.'

**IMARO II: THE QUEST FOR CUSH**  
By Charles R. Saunders, DAW, 1984, \$2.75 'The Kandiss of Cush charged me to seek he who was the greatest of all warriors -- seek



him and return with him to Cush.  
For the Mashataan, the Demon Gods,  
are once again astir'"...

**NATIVE AMERICAN ANARCHISM: A STUDY OF LEFT-WING AMERICAN INDIVIDUALISM** By Eunice Minette Schuster, VOL XVII Loompanics Unlimited, 1983, Reprinted from the Northampton, MA edition of 1932, 202 pp, Index included and Bibliography. SMITH COLLEGE STUDIES IN HISTORY, Ed. John C. Hildt, William Dodge Gray, Harold Underwood Faulkner.

**PILLARS OF ATONIA, A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME AND SPACE**, By Fouad E. Shaker, Exposition Press, Inc., April 1984, \$10.50. In the coded symbols of the Egyptian pyramids is found the key to saving the world.

**GREEN EYES**, paperback original Edited by Terry Carr, By Lucius Shepard, May 1984, \$2.95, Berkley  
First novel by Lucius Shepard.  
The dead have been revived, but not in the same condition as previously, with icy flesh and green glowing eyes and minds of geniuses. One of these "zombies", formerly an alcoholic, comes back as a poet who can work miracles, searches in strange places for the secret of his reincarnation.

**BORN WITH THE DEAD** By Robert Silverberg, Bantam, April 1984, \$2.75  
'Three novellas about the spirit of the dead.'... 'Bantam's republication program of the finest work of Robert Silverberg.'

**DYING INSIDE** By Robert Silverberg Bantam, 1984, (c) 1972, \$2.50  
'David Selig was born with ... the ability to look deep into the human heart ... he used his talent in the pursuit of pleasure ... Then one day his power began to die ...'

**THE SKYLARK OF SPACE** By E.E. Doc Smith, Berkley, 1984, (c) 1958, \$2.50, First in the classic space adventure series. Power is discovered to convert matter to energy, making the H-bomb obsolete. It must be kept from evil men.

**SKYLARK THREE** By E.E. "Doc" Smith. Berkley, \$2.50, April, 1984. Second paperback printing by Berkley of this second in the classic Skylark space adventure series. First published in 1930.

**VAMPIRE JUNCTION** by S.P. Somtow Donning, hardcover, June 1984; Berkley, 1985, mass market edition. Hardcover: \$15.95, Limited Ed 150 copies: \$35.00, Horror Fantasy. Author's name is a pseudonym for Somtow Sucharitkul. 200 pages of an aged vampire, come back as a 12-year-old Rock star. a nightmare

of his struggles to survive the 20th Century. Explicit scenes of sex and violence.

**E PLURIBUS UNICORN** By Theodore Sturgeon, Pocket, 1984, (c) 1953, \$2.95, Fantasy. ... 'A blood-sucking teddy bear, a murderous cat, a four-year-old with terrifying memories -- of the future!'--13 tales.

## T

**TWO BOOKS BY KEITH TAYLOR:**  
**BARD**, (c) 1975 & 1981, 3rd printing April 1984; **BARD II**, April 1984. Both from Ace, \$2.75 each.

Fantasy. Ancient Ireland, where lived the clan of mandrake, who are vegetable folk; land of unicorns and Druidic human sacrifice.

**FOUR EPIC FANTASIES BY J.R.R. TOLKIEN**, all published by Ballantine, authorized editions, each \$2.95.

**THE HOBBIT**, Prelude to **LORD OF THE RINGS**, Revised Ed., 8th printing, Jan. 1984 (1st Ballantine ed., 1965). This adventure fantasy begins the tale of the hobbits, continued by J.R.R. Tolkien in:

**LORD OF THE RINGS: PART ONE: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING** 79th printing, June 1983

**PART TWO: THE TWO TOWERS** 75th Printing, June 1983.

**PART THREE: THE RETURN OF THE KING** 70th Printing, Jan. 1983  
Epic fantasy involving the Ring of Power which could destroy everything good in Middle-Earth.

**ANGADO**, Dumarest of Terra: #29 By E.C. Tubb, DAW, Feb. 1984, \$2.50  
'On Angado's planet, there was a man who knew the whereabouts of the lost Earth, the original planet of mankind. Angado himself was a fellow traveler of Earl Dumarest, a man who had been born on Earth and who sought the way to go home...'

## V

**THE FACE** By Jack Vance, DAW, (c) 1979, \$2.50. The Fourth of the Demon Prince novels. Kirth Gersen is hunting a villain who has enormous sadistic power.

**THE BEAST** By A.E. Van Vogt DAW, 1984, (c) 1943, \$2.50 'That strange machine held the potential for peace in all the planets of the Galaxy. Jim Pendrake, who found the machine, was only dimly aware of its incredible powers. But others knew,...'

**DEMON** By John Varley, Berkley, June 1984, Trade Paper \$6.95, Hardcover from Putnam, June 1984, \$14.95, 480 pp. Conclusion of the trilogy, beginning with **TITAN** and **WIZARD**. The story of Gaea, the alien, and an account of the end of the world.

## W

**THE SECRET GUIDE TO COMPUTERS VOL I** By Russ Walter, Birkhauser Boston, Inc., March 1984, 350 pp., \$14.95, 0-8176-3190-9, Softcover, 8 1/2" X 11". **VOL II**: May, 1984, (0-8176-3213-1). ... 'More than just programming manuals, these books contain a buying guide, equipment survey and even access to your own private advisor...' 'the combination of Walter's irreverent style and expert information fills a gap in the computer publication industry.'...

**THE BOOK OF SHAI** By Daniel Walther DAW, 1984, \$2.25 'After science had slipped out of the hands of scientists into the hands of political fanatics, there finally came the time of the Great Burning, followed by centuries of disaster, the tilting of the world's axis, the shifting of the continents, and the slow horrid rise of a Newer Order of mankind...'

**THE SWORD IS FORGED** By Evangeline Walton, Pocket, March 1984, (c) 1983, \$3.95 Antiope, Queen of the Amazons, becomes wife and queen to the king of Athens. Amazons attack the gates.

**THE LURE OF THE BASILISK** By Lawrence Watt-Evans, Ballantine, 1984, (c) 1980, \$2.75. Book I of The Lords of Dus. Garth must capture the dweller in the ancient crypts beneath Mormoreth, a basilisk, whose breath is poisonous and whose gaze turns one to stone.

**THE SEVEN ALTARS OF DUSARRA** By Lawrence Watt-Evans, Ballantine, 1984, (c) 1981, \$2.95. Book II of The Lords of Dus. Garth has the task of stealing what is on the 7 altars of the gods in Dusarra -- Terror, Destruction and The God Whose Name is Not Spoken.

**EARTH SONG** By Sharon Webb, Vol. II of Earth Song Triad, Bantam, 1984, (c) 1983, \$2.50. Earth dwellers must choose an eternal life of stagnation or a brief lifetime of genius.

**AMBASSADOR OF PROGRESS** By Walter Jon Williams, TOR, first publication, April 1984, \$2.95 'From across a sea of stars, like Earth-



borne humanity before them, they thought they were the center of the Universe...But...they were not alone...'

**KAHAWA** By Donald E. Westlake, TOR, 1984, (c) 1981, \$3.95. ..."KAHAWA is about a (conspiracy) to rip off a trainload of Idi Amin's coffee. The story is intricate with intelligence"...Westlake throws out meaty insights about Africa, about character, about love"...

-- Playboy Magazine

**HEALER** By F. Paul Wilson, Berkley, March 1984, (c) 1976, \$2.50.

Steven Dalt is host to an invisible force which gives him the power to heal, but even he is marked for destruction by an ancient one.

**AN ENEMY OF THE STATE** by F. Paul Wilson, Berkley, 1984, (c) 1980, \$2.50, first time in paperback.

A multi-world rebellion to overthrow the entrenched Outworld Imperium.

**ELSEWHERE, VOL. III**, Ed. Terri Windling & Mark Alan Arnold, Ace, April 1984, \$3.95, 404 pp., with index. 36 tales of fantasy, second in a trilogy; contributors are the who's who of the fantasy field.

**WOLLHEIM'S WORLD'S BEST SF Series 7 DAW**, (c) 1977 by Donald A. Wollheim \$2.95 'In Series 7 of this annual of the best, you will find a stellar group of the best of the award-winning writers of science fiction.'

**THE SEVEN TOWERS** By Patricia C. Wrede, Ace, March 1984, \$2.50, fantasy. ...'Seven players in a game of deadly magic. Seven kingdoms at the edge of destruction. Seven towers holding a dark and dreadful secret.'

Y

**JEHAD** By Nicholas Yermakov, 1984 Signet, \$2.75....'Dr. Paul Tabarde would have died before he'd reveal the truth about Boomerang and about the Shades -- the alien race of immortals whose existence he'd sworn to keep secret as long as he lived. But Paul couldn't control what happened after he was dead. Or could he?'...

**AMAZING STORIES** combined with **FANTASTIC STORIES**, May 1984, Edited by George Scithers, \$1.75.

Includes conclusion of the novel **GATEWAY III -- HEECHEE RENDEZVOUS** by Frederik Pohl; other fiction by Somtow Sucharitkul, Christopher Gilbert, Alan Slate, F. Gwynplaine Macintyre.

## RECORDS-----

**FRANK HERBERT READS HIS HERETICS OF DUNE, CHAPTERS I AND II.** Caedmon, TC 1742.

An incredibly complex opening sequence which presents intrigues and plots and awesome plans. You gotta read the books!



**SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #49** features Piers Anthony, Charles Platt, John Brunner, Gene DeWeese, Orson Scott Card, Darrell Schweitzer....

**SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #48** "The Treasure of the Secret Cordwainer" By J.J. Pierce; "Raising Hackles" by Elton T. Elliott; "Once Over Lightly" by Gene DeWeese; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; letters from Platt, Foster, Busby, Bloch, Ellison...

**SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #47** Interviews with Janet Morris and Charles Platt; "Philip K. Dick--A Cowardly Memoir" by Peter Nicholls; "Of Ground, and Ocean, and Sky" by Ian Watson; "Once Over Lightly" by Gene DeWeese; "Alien Thoughts" by REG.

**SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #46** Interview with John Sladek; "How NOT To Write Science Fiction" by Richard Wilson; profile of Larry Niven; "Standing By Jericho" by Steve Gallagher; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; "Raising Hackles" by Elton T. Elliott.

**SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #45** Interview with Keith Laumer; "Pulp!" by Algis Budrys; Interview with Terry Carr; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; "Raising Hackles" by Elton T. Elliott.

**SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #44** Interview with Anne McCaffrey; "How Things Work" by Norman Spinrad; "Fantasy and the Believing Reader" by Orson Scott Card; "Raising Hackles" by Elton T. Elliott.

**SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #43** Interview with James White; "The Porno Novel Biz" by Anonymous; "How To Be A Science Fiction Critic" by Orson Scott Card; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; "Once Over Lightly" by Gene DeWeese; SF News by Elton T. Elliott.

**SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #35** Interviews with Fred Saberhagen and Don Wollheim; "The Way It Is" by Barry Malzberg; "Noise Level" by John Brunner; "Coming Apart at the Themes" by Bob Shaw.

**SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #36** Interview with Roger Zelazny; A Profile of Philip K. Dick by Charles Platt; "Outside the Whale" by Christopher Priest; "Science Fiction and Political Economy" by Mack Reynolds; Interview with Robert A. Heinlein; "You Got No Friends in This World" by Orson Scott Card.

\$1.75 PER COPY FROM #37 ONWARD

**SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #37** Interview with Robert Anton Wilson; "We're Coming Through the Window!" by Barry N. Malzberg; "Inside the Whale" by Jack Williamson, Jerry Pournelle, and Jack Chalker; "Unities in Digression" by Orson Scott Card.

**SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #38** Interview with Jack Williamson; "The Engines of the Night" by Barry N. Malzberg; "A String of Days" by Gregory Benford; "The Alien Invasion" by Larry Niven; "Noise Level" by John Brunner; SF News by Elton Elliott.

**SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #39** Interview with Gene Wolfe; "The Engines of the Night"--Part Two by Barry N. Malzberg; "The Nuke Standard" by Ian Watson; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; SF News by Elton Elliott.

**SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #40** Interview with Robert Sheckley; 4-way conversation: Arthur C. Clarke, Harlan Ellison, Fritz Leiber & Mark Wells; "The Engines of the Night"--Part Three by Barry N. Malzberg; Darrell Schweitzer; SF News by Elton T. Elliott

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view with George R.R. Martin; In-  
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views with George Scithers, Poul  
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Factor" by Ray Palmer; ONE IMMORTAL  
MAN--Part One.

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views with Gordon R. Dickson and  
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views with Ben Bova and Stephen  
Fabian; "Should Writers be Serfs  
...or Slaves?"; SF News; SF Film  
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IMMORTAL MAN--Part Three.

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view with C.J. Cherryh; "Beyond  
Genocide" by Damon Knight; ONE IM-  
MORTAL MAN--Conclusion; SF News;  
SF Film News & Reviews.

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views with John Brunner, Michael  
Moorcock, and Hank Stine; "Noise  
Level" by John Brunner; SF News;  
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views with Joan D. Vinge, Stephen  
R. Donaldson, and Norman Spinrad;  
"The Awards Are Coming" by Orson  
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Level" by John Brunner; "On the  
Edge of Futuria" by Ray Nelson.

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Two; Interview with Orson Scott  
Card; "You Got No Friends in This  
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