ALIEN THOUGHTS BY THE EDITOR..............4

COME IN PLEASE, NUMBER 666: YOUR TIME IS UP
A REVIEW OF ROBERT HEINLEIN’S NEW NOVEL,
THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST
BY PETER PINTO..................................10

INTERVIEW WITH DONALD WOLLHEIM
CONDUCTED BY RICHARD E. GEIS..............13

WHAT IS HARLAN ELLISON REALLY LIKE?
A PROFILE BY CHARLES PLATT....................16

AND THEN I HEARD.....
RECORD REVIEWS BY THE EDITOR...........20

SMALL PRESS NOTES
BY THE EDITOR..................................21

INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES SHEFFIELD
PART TWO
CONDUCTED BY KARL T. PFLOCK...............24

THE VIVISECTOR
A COLUMN BY DARRELL SCHWEITZER..........30

AND THEN I READ.....
BOOK REVIEWS BY THE EDITOR...............33

AND THEN I SAW.....
MOVIE REVIEWS BY THE EDITOR.............36

OTHER VOICES
BOOK REVIEWS BY NICHOLAS SANTELLI,
NEAL WILGUS, STEVE LEWIS, DAVID A.
TRUEDALE, DEAN R. LAMBE, STEVEN
EDWARD MCDONALD, LYNN C. MITCHELL,
JAMES J. WILSON, TERRENCE M.
GREEN, FREDERICK PATTON, W. RITCHIE
BENEDICT, L. CRAIG RICKMAN..............37

HUGO NOMINATIONS BALLOT..............51

YOU GOT NO FRIENDS IN THIS WORLD
A REVIEW OF SHORT FICTION
BY ORSON SCOTT CARD.........................53

THE HUMAN HOTLINE
PUBLISHING AND WRITING NEWS
BY ELTON T. ELLIOTT..........................60

REVIEWS-----------------------------
The Number of the Beast.................10
The white Dragon.......................20
Journey to the Center of the Earth...20
The Rabelaisian Letters of
Jack Woodford.........................21
Jack Woodford on Writing..............21
Pandora #1...............................21
The Iron Law of Bureaucracy............21
The Best of Elmer T. Hack.............21
The Runestone..........................21
Foundation I............................21
The Best of the Bushel...................21
The Eastercon Speeches.................21
Eternity Science Fiction #1
Fantasy Newsletter.....................21
Science Fiction Chronicle..............21
Watcherower.............................21
Tales of Newerion.......................21
Heavenly Breakfast......................21
The Dying Earth.........................21
Juniper Time............................21
A Dreamer’s Tales.......................21
Millennial Women.......................21
The Cosmic Trigger.....................21
The Wicked Cyborg......................21
The Lost Ones...........................21
On the Brink............................21
The Courts of Chaos.....................21
Pulsar 1................................21
Malafrena...............................21
The Douglas Convolution..............21
Lagrange Five............................21
The Road of Kings.......................21
Windows..................................21
Lord of the Rings, (Movie).............21
Watership Down, (Movie).................21
Meteor, (Movie).........................21
Star Trek, (Movie).......................21
The Third World War—Aug. 1985........21
The StarFollowers of Cormodene.....21
The Haunted Man: The Strange
Genius of David Lindsay..............21

COLIN WILSON: THE OUTSIDER AND
BEYOND................................37
MINDSONG..................................38
THE WEIRD GATHERING & OTHER
TALES.....................................38
SONG OF THE PEARL......................39
THE PURPLE DRAGON AND OTHER
FANTASTIES...............................39
LEGION..................................39
GATEWAY TO LIMBO......................39
SOVEREIGN...............................40
THE GENTLE GIANTS OF GANYMEDE......40
THE YEAR’S BEST HORROR STORIES
SERIES VII..............................40
GATHER, DARKNESS!......................41
WEB OF SAND................................41
THE PHILOSOPHER’S STONE..............42
THE DOPPLEGANGER GAMBIT..............42
EMPIRE OF THE EAST.....................42
IN SOLITARY.............................42
STAR TREK—THE MOTION PICTURE.....42
THE GUEST OF EXCALIBUR..............42
OTHER CANADAS: AN ANTHOLOGY OF
SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY.....42
STAR-ANCHORED, STAR-ANGERED.....42
THE GENTLE DRAGON.....................42
STARS OF ALBION.......................42
AN OLD FRIEND OF THE FAMILY........42
THE PROPHET OF LAMATH..............42
[See page 57 for the list of short
fiction reviews.]

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LETTERS

TED WHITE
GEORGE HAY
HARRY ANDRUSCHAK
GREG BENFORD
BUZZ DIXON
A.D. WALLACE
BARRY MALZBERG
BEV ROMIG-PARKER
GEORGE H. SMITH
DEAN R. LAMBE
HOWARD THOMPSON
HOWARD H. HUGGINS
RON LAMBERT
WAYNE KEYSER

INTERNET ART

TIM KIRK---2,4,20,21,33
ALEXIS GILLILLAND---3,17,18,23,24,26, 29,37,38,39,46,53,54,60
PAUL CHADWICK---5,8,25,27,31,32,40, 41,44,46,47,59
KURT ERICHSEN---6
VIC KOSTRIKIN---3,56,57
BRUCE CONKLIN---3,11,42,43
ALLEN KOSZOWSKI---22,23
JAMES SHULL---3,14,15,38
MIKE GILBERT---19
WADE GILBREATH---19
JAMES MOQUADE---30,36
GRANT CANFIELD---44
RICHARD BRUNING---45

HE HAD A LONG BEARD, AND A LONG, LONG NOSE, DARK GLASSES, A TALL, POINTY HAT, AND A SCRUFFY BLACK ROBE WITH A HIGH COLLAR. HE SEEMED UPSET WITH OUR GUIDE-LINES FOR P# 94-613.

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FRED SABERHAGEN
BARRY MALZBERG ON SCIENCE FICTION
THE CURSE OF CONAN
BY NEAL WILGUS
PLUS MORE AND EVEN MORE GEIS REVIEWS
PLUS THE REGULARS

ITS A ZIPCODE FROM 46 BC... GEIS WILL BE SO PLEASED!
---they may choose SFR. I like to think that's what'll happen, anyway.

A bit of recanting is due here, on my part, in me and concerning the comment I made about sf editors being difficult to talk to on the phone...at least for me...as they rush and dominate and don't let me get a word in edgewise.

(Not only editors are this way, of course; I could name a few authors....)

Since I wrote that entry I've talked twice to Hank Stine, who now edits both GALAXY and the Diving's sf line, and I must say that Hank's phone manner has eased up, become relaxed and calm...a pleasure to speak with.

The latest GALAXY news is that the publisher mandated a cut to 128 pages to conform with several of the firm's other magazines, and as a result my book review column and some other items were necessarily cut from the September/October issue which was distributed earlier this month.

Hank gave permission for me to run those reviews in SFR, so here they be, leading off my "And Then I read..." column.

This new GALAXY has a different look---a more fact/fiction cover layout, and contents. A move toward the OMNI format? Except that GALAXY's artwork has suddenly become small and amateurish again, with the exceptions of the JEM illos, which are merely small.

A new GALAXY is due in the Nov-Dec. period. We'll see if the transition from JJ Pierce to pure Hank Stine continues.

---

LETTER FROM TED WHITE
635 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022
November 19, 1979

'It's interesting that you find GALAXY's editors all talkers; I wouldn't know about Baen; Stine certainly is and always has been, for as long as I've known him (15 years?); Pierce always struck me as rather shy in person. But I don't think you can blame it on 'the high-pressure atmosphere of New York or big-mag editing in general...'

'GALAXY simply isn't in that league. Gold edited it from his apartment; Pohl from New Jersey. I don't know about Jakobsson, Baen or Pierce, but Hank Stine was doing it from Baton Rouge, and now from southern Virginia. In fact, no SF magazine has ever been in the Big Time of New York publishing -- not even ANALOG -- and I doubt any of their editors ever felt that kind of pressure. Other pressures -- deadline pressures, asshole publisher pressures, yes.

'But it's hard to think of any editor I know who fits your image of the New York Editor. Most of the book editors are shy, introverted sorts; editing is a profession one comes to out of a love for the printed word in its various manifestations, and we all know what kind of person reads...

'The closest thing to 'the big-time of SF editing' in the magazines these days is OMNI. Ben Bova just moved up to Executive Editor, and now Bob Sheckley is the fiction editor -- Ben's former position. Bob's a pretty quiet guy, too.

'I think the problem is that you have this image of the New York Scene. One visit here would disabuse you of it.

'I haven't seen what I assume are the most recent pair of AMAZING and FANTASTIC issues -- they aren't on any of the stands I check out any more, either in NYC or Virginia -- but I must say I've been amazed (yes) at your reaction to what strikes me as sleazy packaging and inept art. You can call it 'radical' but I'd call it reactionary: a return to pulpish garishness and low artistic standards. It's impossible to know how their readers are responding to the magazines, since the publisher firmly believes in publishing only favorable letters (one of his complaints against me was that I ran the unfavorable letters), but I've heard only negative comments. (Chip Carter stopped buying them when they changed...)

'In theory the more lavish use of art is a good idea -- in fact, a number of the changes of the magazines are ones that I suggested, in theory, to the new publisher -- but the execution is pretty lame, with the exception of Fabian's work. A lot of the art is recycled, too: the same illo is blown up and then cropped into two or three different illos. The reprints were apparently chosen at random, the new fiction was dreadful -- slush pile stuff that I would have rejected without hesitation -- and the idea of running the type in a single column across the page hurts readability, although it improves the wordage per page.

'Oh, well.
ed in a science fiction magazine. ("When I want to read pornography, I'll buy ..." etc.) But "a lot of mail" translates to "less than two dozen letters". It's just that I published a lot of them. And that brought out mail from readers who liked the story -- as I'd known it would.

'Sol Cohen never read the stories -- either before or after publication. And he never told me to stop publishing stories of any type at all. His response to the fiction we ran was one of benign indifference, God bless him. So I had no pressure from the one person who could have applied pressure legitimately, and I remain grateful to him for that.

'On the other hand, Arthur Bernhard wanted me to send him the entire inventory so he could "read it and size it up". I didn't care for that -- I don't care to have someone reading over my shoulder, second-guessing me from a position which I consider to be one of ignorance -- and that was one factor in my quitting.

'From the point, about six months after I became the editor of A/F, and I had developed an idea of what I could do and wanted to do, I publicly declared on any number of occasions that I had a "no taboo" policy. This policy held firm for the remaining 9 and a half years of my editorship. It included a Silverberg serial, a number of stories by Lisa Tuttle, and a lot of other fine stories. So I can't agree that it was "brief" or that I stopped.

'Finally, while I have often agreed with John Brunner about the iniquities of copyeditors, I have read both "My version" and "Her version" and I honestly can't see the superiority of his version over hers. Perhaps the fact that both versions are shrill of their context blinds me to the virtues of John's version, but "Her version" seems clearer and more concise. If John honestly feels that this pair of examples reveals anything other than the fact that his version is slappier, I'd say he's too close to his story to view it dispassionately.

'And finally, by destroying the copyedited version of the ms., rather than "decopyediting" it, John has cost his publishers money and guaranteed himself nothing, since the fresh copy of the original ms. he supplied will simply have to be copyedited all over again, and who knows how much of an improvement that will be.

'I am "happy as a clam" here at HM, by the way. It's a pleasure to work in a decent office for a publisher who has decent budgetary standards. (The editorial budget for a typical issue of AMAZING or FANTASTIC was never over $1,000, including salaries; here we try to stay within a per-issue budget of $20,000, exclusive of salaries!) It's also a pleasure to meet old idols like Will Eisner, and work with talented new artists as well.
My first issue as editor is the January, 1980 issue. On sale first week in December. Pick up a copy and check it out; I'd like your reaction to it.'

# LETTER FROM GEORGE HAY
38B Compton Rd. London, N21
United Kingdom
October 5, 1979

'Those who were present at the Brighton SeaCon just passed may have noticed, or perhaps utilised, the 'computerised SF' programme set up by Brian R. Smith, of INTELLIGENT PROGRAMMES and George Hay of STARLIGHT RESEARCH LTD. The programme consisted of an adapted version of Fred Pohl's GATEWAY, which was fully interactive, one of Olaf Stapledon's STAR-MAKER, which was mildly so -- in effect, it talked to itself -- and one of Arthur C. Clarke's THE NINE BILLION NAMES OF GOD which simply permuted five-letter words indefinitely. In view of the latter item, and to ensure the safety of all present, if not of the entire universe, I had obtained Brian's assurance that this programme could not be exhausted for several days....

'Brian and I would like to acknowledge the permissions and active assistance given us in this project by Victor Gollancz Ltd and Eyre Methuen Ltd. As a historical note we would add that, to the best of our knowledge, this was the first ever public presentation of the interactive SF novel.

'Attention, all authors. You have been warned. The Reader can now Strike Back."

'([I don't believe in literary democracy; let readers write their own damn books. They can keep their thoughts out of mine.]

([As for God; His name is mud.])

# LETTER FROM GEORGE HAY
38B Compton Rd.
London, N21, England
November, 1979

'The purpose of this letter is to announce an important new project in science fiction scholarship: THE LETTERS OF JOHN W. CAMPBELL, to be published in several volumes by Authors' Co-op Publishing Inc. The letters will be edited for publication by George Hay, in consultation with Malcolm Edwards, Administrator of the Science Fiction Foundation in London.

# LETTER FROM HARRY ANDRUSCHAK
6935 N. Rosemead Blvd., #31
San Gabriel, CA 91775
1979

'Please announce, in SFR, that I am the new editor of SOUTH OF THE MOON, the compleat (ho ho) index to the fannish apas. Lester Boutillier turned it over to me when he was unable to get the next issue, #16, out. It should have been out in September. I am now trying to get the info I need to get that issue out in December, probably as a part of Mike Glyer's annual listing of SF clubs and fanzines. I welcome any and all information about any kind of apa.'

'(Hmmm. There was once a Pornographic Amateur Press Association (PAPA); is there anything comparable now? And if not, why not? It might be fun.)

# LETTER FROM GREG BENFORD
1105 Skyline Drive
Laguna Beach, CA 92651
December 13, 1979

'Beautiful article by George Martin. I heartily second his suggestion that we begin nominating book editors for the Hugos. The immense change in the face of published SF in the last five years has come from a handful of people -- Hartwell, del Rey, Frenkel [and Don Bensen, the oft-neglected name at the Quantum office], Baen ... It is criminal that we don't even give them a nomination.

'I look forward to the rest of the Charles Sheffield interview. I
dunno if I have "two styles of writing" because it seems to me the point of each new piece is to tell it the way that will best penetrate to the core of the subject. Maybe what Charles means here is (1) a style that's spare-and-direct, just-plain-talk; (2) anything else that fits the subject. That's two styles, I guess.

'I was interested to find that his list of people he likes to read coincided pretty nearly with mine. One of the most interesting pieces of SF I've seen in a great while is Charles's own THE WEB BETWEEN THE WORLDS. The coincidences with Clarke's THE FOUNTAINS OF PARADISE were nearly Fortean. (I've had the orbital tower idea in my notebooks since 1964, but never used it, alas. I heard it from the lips of the originators, John Isaacs and Hugh Bradner, while I was a graduate student, before it was published. Lost opportunity...)

# LETTER FROM A.D. WallACE
306 E Gatehouse Dr. H
Mentairle, LA 70001
Dec. 1979

'It may be, as George R.R. Martin says, that editors are natural enemies. But publishers are the natural enemies of readers. Far too much gunk is published at exorbitant prices. Of course, editors must share the blame since they recommend to publishers what is to be published.

'Charging $7.95 for a first-novel by an unknown is no less than an offr, pure extortion. I have yet to find any reason why the reading public should be required to pay for the education of the novice writer. One reason why the publishers can continually scalp the readers is that the latter do not complain about being gipped to the publishers. They complain about the poor quality of the novels, and damn the writers, neglecting the part that the publishers play.'

((Rapacious publishers are an iron law of nature: they exist, they have always existed, and they will exist. The answer to your problem is simple: don't buy hardcover books written by unproven writers. Wait till the verdict is in. That's what reviewers and artio are for: verdicts. Isn't that simple? Any more problems you want taken care of?))

# LETTER FROM BEV ROMIG-PARKER
1950 Fisher Rd., NE
Salem, OR 97303
November 17, 1979

'George R.R. Martin's piece, "A Writer's Natural Enemy: Editors" (SFR #33) was a pleasure for me to read. I don't know why I enjoyed it so much, since I have no personal knowledge of the more enraging side of editors and won't pretend to have, but the piece was entertaining anyway.

'Reading it was a lot like listening to one of those TV talk shows where all those decrepit old-time celebrities get together and reminisce about the good old days. You, the non-show-business viewer, don't know what in hell they're talking about half the time, but the celebrities manage to make it all sound like fun in spite of -- or because of -- viewer ignorance.

'Back to Mr. Martin's editors' analysis, ahem! Like I said, who am I to talk, but it's possibly a masterstroke of genius, that suggestion of his that editors -- especially book editors -- should get their share of wolf whistles and catcalls. The author sounds friendly, even sympathetic toward editors at the end, but I suspect his trump card is really the ultimate revenge, after all. Bravo!

'By the way, no slur on editors or Mr. Martin's work are intended. I have no reason to think maliciously of anyone, and this has been merely an expression of appreciation for an entertaining piece of writing.

'An afterthought deals with a statement of yours from the review of SUSPERIA:

"I weary of the continual kill-the-girls basis for all these horror films (and most occult and murder films-for-TV). It smacks of an unconscious male hatred for women that disturbs me," you say. It surprised me. Not because I think you're a 'male chauvinist' as they say (although sometimes I wonder when I read SFR, and that ad for your STAR WHOLES novel gets me every time, because it sounds so one-sided, and you probably wouldn't notice that because you're obviously not female). It's just that a statement like that, coming from someone who's not an aboveboard feminist, female, that is, always seems to come as a surprise to me. I am so used to media hype about women -- even though I am a woman -- that like many who are aware of it, I am also used to sort of erecting a mental wall against the popular myths.

'The "kill-the-girls" (and any
female is always referred to as a "girl" regardless of whether she is four or forty-four, beautiful or ugly, dumb or competent, and whether she has a name or a number, while one seldom finds people -- of either sex -- referring to males as "boys" if they're of post-puberty age) as you call it, syndrome which provides the plot upon which many TV and film stories are based in one case in point.

'It's not only the sense of "unconscious male hatred" but that the rape-murder syndrome is used as a source of hooking viewers through sexual titillation which gets to me. The idea of the "good girl degraded" including the recent rash of prostitution themes on TV seems to be something that is getting more prevalent instead of less so. The entertainment media is in a rut -- to put it nicely. And why is it so popular?

'I notice that the world of SF is no exception. (And you know why I say that!) I wonder why a male writer can in one breath profess to support women, or seem to support their dignity, and then in the next breath announce the completion/publication/availability of a novel which deals with the age-old theme of female prostitution with the fond notion that that's the way it will be in the future. I am not a prude, recognizing that prostitution will probably never be out of style, regardless of what the human race makes it to, but is there some reason that SF writers -- as well as anyone else -- seem to like to omit in their visions of the fantastic future such things as homosexuality, bestiality, etc. (with a few exceptions)?

'If there is a current conflictual movement to recognize the gay community as human beings who deserve no less equal treatment than heterosexuals, for example, why should it be assumed that the future will hold only, say, male asteroid miners starved for sex who employ only female galactic whores to satiate their carnal needs? (Has anyone brought up this argument before, by the by?) Is the common female pin-up such a cherished notion among men that they feel compelled to keep it alive regardless of how liberal-minded they profess to be? (Women: How about cherishing the notion of the male pin-up?)

'My strong suspicion is that the future will hold a variety of sexual preferences -- even as today's society does. Perhaps genetically-bred prostitutes, including two of everybody so they can have sex with their cloned selves, who knows? Or sex with the ultimate computer. These aren't revolutionary or completely original ideas, I admit: Mr. Geis, you can probably think of some really kinky ones if you put your (and Alter's) mind to it.'

(Here I go on the weary defensive again... Many/most of my editorial and authorial decisions are simply masculine based; I like to write about heterosexual sex and I like to see/print female nudes. There is a small commercial element, too. (Beautiful female bodies are sex objects. So are beautiful male bodies to others, but not to me. I have and will publish male nudes, of course, as good art and as beauty. (In STAR WHOES I do not see a future radically different sexually from now, 200 years isn't enough time, in my view, for sexual mores to change significantly. Too, the reason for three members of the Companions Guild to be employed by a giant interstellar corporation to serve the sexual needs of a starship load of all-male miners and crew is explained thusly: experiments with mixed-sexx crew were failures because of sexual problems on long voyages. The sex-pressure needs of the men were met by the Space Guild insisting on contracts with sex clauses calling for Companions on board, and calling for X-number of visits per month. (In STAR WHOES Too King, a Companion Too, is the leading character, a competent person, and is proud and happy in her profession. She is treated with respect and is admired. (One of the Companions had to be killed to make the story viable. She is killed not because she was a Companion or a woman, but because --- I don't want to give away a key element. (I might someday write a story or novel detailing the variety of sexual preferences and life in such a society that might develop with gay liberation and child sex liberation and kinky liberation fully legitimized. But I think heterosexuality will always be the major---

10-31-79 Since I've opened up this area --- trying to sell ONE IMMORTAL MAN to a major publisher --- for your inspection and information, I'm duty-bound to continue.

When last we left OIM it was on the way to Playboy Press. Sharon Jarvis is the s-f editor there, and she responded with a letter that is encouraging: she thought it a good read, wasn't turned off by the sex and violence, and was interested in taking the book... except that she wants revisions in re information about Viek and his motivations. At the moment she is overbooked, and would be interested in seeing the novel again in six months.

In the meanwhile, she suggests I continue trying to sell it to another publisher, if I wish, who may take it as-is.

Or, I suspect, may want revisions, too.

So... I'm at the moment baffled as to which editor to send it. I'm not at all conversant with editorial needs and taboos.

An agent would know these things, you say? Yup. But I have not yet found (after three tries) the agent for me. I want and need feedback, some guidance in my career, and a feeling of worth. Most agents haven't time for that if they're any good, and I end up impatient, pissed and on my own again.

So it goes.

Whatthehell, I'll send OIM to Ballantine and see what happens.

UPDATE 1-3-80 Judy-Lynn send OIM back, saying it isn't the kind of thing Ballantine has been publishing, and she's surprised I offered it. I'm surprised, too, in retrospect.

I sent OIM to Avon, next. It has been there for six weeks as of today.

#  LETTER FROM GEORGE H. SMITH
4113 W. 180th Street
Torrance, CA 90504
November 7, 1979

'A slight correction, please... only one small letter but an important one to me. In your Book News section of SFR #51, you list the author of THE SECOND WAR OF THE
WORLDS as George O. Smith. It should have said George H. Smith. I don't believe George O. has written any science fiction in years but still this mistake continues to be made.

'THE SECOND WAR OF THE WORLDS is a reissue by DAW of the book published in October, 1976. It is a sequel to KAR KABALLA and the third one in the series is THE ISLAND SNATCHERS, all belonging to my Chronicles of Annwn. The reissue will be seeing light again the same month as THE DEVIL'S BREED, the first volume in my American Freedom series for Playboy Press.'

# LETTER FROM DR. DEAN R. LAMBE
10 Northlake, Route 1
Vincent, OH 45784
November 7, 1979

'Mundane Thoughts about #33: I disagree with most of Sheffield's notions of science vs. SF, save for his statement that scientists tend to be idea-oriented and find it more difficult to write a story qua story well.

'What the hell is that Steven E. McDonald record review column and is it (I hope not) going to become a regular feature? Not only does it overlap your own record reviews, but you seem to be listening to entirely different recordings by the same title. ROLLING STONE stuff mayhaps, but what the hell is it doing in SFR?

'Enjoyed your large number of movie reviews: Avoid METEOR at all costs (many of the disaster scenes therein are clips from previous, bad movies!).

'Appreciate the end of Archives, would appreciate more the end of similar efforts in Elton T. Elliott's column. Should LOCUS ever drop such lists, of course, then you might consider bringing them back; as it stands now, SFR and LOCUS complement each other well, and those who care should support both zines.

'I am no longer amused at Darrell Schweitzer's repetitiously inane putdown of his betters at ANALOG. Not at all surprised that his LOC advocated prior censorship!

'Was all hot and lathered for "Railroad" Martin's piece on nasty editors, and thought it started off very well, but oh, what a piss-ant second half! Sure, t'was easy to kick soft targets like Hoskins and Elwood; they don't matter any more. But did he grab balls and name names? Noooood. Did he say, "Hey, you anthology and paperback magazine editors, howcum you sit on our so fucking long?" Nooooo. Did he mutter curses about the ass. eds. who sign the editor's name to rejections? Noooo. What he did say is that editors is overworked and underpaid and we all gotta be nicer to them. Geezus Alth Kayrist, Martin, what are you, anywho, somebody who writes for a living, somebody who's gotta take all this shit, kiss all this ass, just to make a buck? Yeah, me too ... fun, ain't it.

'Pleased to discover that John Brunner is also a car nut -- funny I never noticed that in his fiction.

'News of the Day: Am very disappointed with the GALILEO people. Still haven't received my November issue, even though it went on the newstands two days after I got the Sept. ish in the mail -- this is a bimonthly? My letter of 3 Oct. remains unanswered, with regard to the above situation, and more importantly, my polite request for either a copy of the mythical SCIENCE FICTION TIMES (for which they cashed my check in June ... yeah, June!) or a return of my money. Given that level of discourtesy on their part for a SCIENCE FICTION TIMES that they began advertising back in May, I'm wondering whether I have any other recourse but a claim of mail fraud at the Post Awful? All this certainly supports the very good policy you have stated with regard to single-copy-only prices in your SMALL PRESS NOTES.

'To buy a copy of STAR WHORES or not to buy a copy of STAR WHORES: The question is, can I spare a hand from this typewriter long enough to read it straight ... ah, through? H'mmm, Playboy Press for OIM? Well, I sure hope so, but doubt it, as they're on record as wanting sexy stuff from a "galaxy far, far away", not future Earth. That problem, me thinks, is not the sex, but the race.

'I'm aghast at the crap I see in the liberal press these days about how race relations have ever so improved; shit, they've gotten worse! The turds of anti-nigger wisdom I heard on CB radio while driving to Cincinnati last week were ample confirmation; and that was before the Klan shot down the "commie niggers" in North Carolina. With years of politics as usual and economy as bad joke ahead of us, I worry a lot. I'm afraid your problem with OIM is the same problem the NBA has with its predominantly-black basketball teams: Power junkies and middle class ain't buying no more ... sour ending.'

ALIEN THOUGHTS CONTINUED PAGE 47
heinlein-knocking has been fashionable for a long time now even though some of the most popular new authors openly admit setting out to copy --- and hopefully improve on --- one or other of his periods. it's been an awfully long time since anyone's stood up to say "THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS is a superb SF novel" (or DOUBLE STAR, or ORPHANS OF THE SKY), or "I really enjoyed STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND" (or CITIZEN OF THE GALAXY, or I WILL FEAR NO EVII), or even "there are parts of TIME ENOUGH FOR LOVE that really did make it worth reading once."

heinlein's more recent books have come in for harder knocks than his earlier, of course, and with good reason. they are over-long, short on believable characters other than the central patriarch and tend toward the maudlin. however, it is possible to make out a case that heinlein has been attempting, in his adult novels since STARSHIP TROopers, to perform a feat he has several times declared impossible: taking the bible-belt out of the boy.

in STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND heinlein re-examined as many of the learned "gut-reactions" of his culture as he could and ended up throwing out the vast majority as both barbaric and senseless. in GLORY ROAD he went further and decided that any way of living is fine as long as it is acceptable to those who live it --- and that uptight, middle-class, white america fails this test more comprehensively than most other cultures tried or imagined.

FARNHAM'S FREEHOLD, a novel i found thoroughly nasty, manages to dismiss worries about incest and illegitimacy --- i'm sure more people will have been put off by this than the casual and overt bigotry that so annoyed his critics (and myself).

THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS, possibly heinlein's best novel to date (although some swear by the juveniles, and DOUBLE STAR has a strong claim too), shows heinlein talking himself into further advances (or relapses) from the morally strait-jacketed thinking his upbringing gave him, including a dismissal of fears about inter-racial miscegenation, and a clear statement that any family arrangement that gives a stable and loving environment to kids is a good one, and in

I WILL FEAR NO EVII he manages, finally, to accept homosexuality
calmly (in his major attack on traditional values, STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND, the most he could manage was to avoid condemning "the poor in-betweeners" --- and even then he was sure he was possessed of a "wrongness").

I WILL FEAR NO EVIL and TIME ENOUGH FOR LOVE both approach the ultimate taboo of heinlein's culture --- and still, of our own world, too ---. i think the world of sf has still something to learn from a man who can discuss death coolly and reasonably, even if he is restricting himself to monologues.

and heinlein remains one of the at most-a-dozen sf authors most paperback buyers will have heard of. together with asimov, moorcock, clarke, wyndham, verne and wells, heinlein is sf to most people.

so THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST is important to us. for good or ill, it will be the best sf seller of 1980-81 and will showcase just how much more than STAR WARS sf has to offer --- as far as the trade is concerned.

which is: bugger all.

STAR WARS comes out ahead on plot and characterization, and even in inventiveness and originality there's nothing to choose between them.

there is no point in my advising you not to read this book --- it is predestined to be the most widely-read story of '80-'81 simply because it bears heinlein's name --- but at least i can explain why i recommend you to borrow a library copy rather than waste the £10/$20 you'll have to shell out for a hardback copy, or the £2/$3 or so the paperback will eventually cost.

oh, and one last word before we're off, the plot precis i start with is less of a spoiler than the actual book --- you needn't worry about me giving away any surprises.

the number of the beast
robert a. heinlein

686 pp typescript --- to be published by fawcett/columbine as an illustrated trade paperback spring 1980. u.k. edition to be published by new english library.

professor jacob burroughs has invented a device that shifts between all possible continuia --- universes that have/do/will exist, haven't/don't/ won't exist, and fictional creations also. wishing to gain the services of the foremost mathematician in the world, in order to puzzle out what it is his invention is doing, and how, and why, professor burroughs uses his sexy and beautiful daughter, deety, as trap bait at a party thrown by his old flame hilda conscious.

on the basis of a couple of minutes verbal fencing, and mutual lust, zebediah carter and deety decide to get married --- after which jacob burroughs discovers that his man-trap has misfired. he's caught the cousin of the man he wants. nothing daunted, the professor invites zeb home with deety and himself and they are being walked to the burroughs' car by their hostess when it explodes. zebediah rushes them all to his supercar (all-but-a-spaceship, complete with computer "programmed to sound intelligent." it isn't, we are told, but it acts precisely as though it were.) and after they narrowly miss being nuked when zeb's home mushroom clouds in front of them --- together with the rest of the city --- professor burroughs directs them to his hidden laboratory complex, where both women get impregnated during a twice-over nuptial night.

shortly after, while finishing off preparations to take zeb's all-but-a-spaceship through the continua, they kill someone dressed as a national parks' ranger because he seems 'wrong,' they then discover 'he' is not human, and immediately flee into the unknown continua looking for a safe haven where the two baby-factories can set up shop. (it has taken about one-third of the book to get this far.)

to begin with, they search through "real" alternate universes, the differences may be great or small, but the only one we are shown at length has a mars on which imperial russia and great britain maintain penal colonies. a pleasant interlude turns into an almost-adventure when the party gets caught up in the russians' attempt to gain control of the entire planet. but with their vastly superior technology (super spacecar vs. ornithopters and balloons), our gang is never in any danger --- except from themselves.

there is in fact as much hot air expended over internal disagreements as anything else --- the four find it almost impossible to sort out the problems of ship-board life. four back-seat drivers in search of someone to pester, but the absence of advanced medical facilities rules out this universe from consideration as the safe haven they want.

they move onto the fictional continua (they share memories of --- oz is safe, but no good to them for a reason implicit in the original books --- pass rapidly through lilliput and the gray lensman's universe without stopping,... and end up in heinlein's future history universe with lazarus long. marriage into the long family, the "rescue" of maureen smith...
and a bloody drawn battle for primacy between their captain and the patriarch himself. . . . end up with the first intercontinental meeting of Heinlein's favorite people, real or fictional, his own or other authors' creations, if Heinlein likes them, they're there during the course of the jamboree, they spot that alien --- you know, the one they killed previously --- and chase it. but they don't catch it.

Comment

although I found nothing original or exciting in the plot (such as it is), it does offer enormous scope for adventure and the development of characters' personalities as they survive and interact. Unfortunately, none of the endless opportunities [is/are] taken: all five 'major characters' (zebediah, deety, hilda, jacob, and gay deceiver---zeb's car) are reflections of the same person, presumably Heinlein, since they all spout the ideas set out in previous books --- sometimes in the identical phraseology --- indistinguishably from one another and equally unbelievable.

In fact, the final celebration is advertised as "the first centennial convention of the intrauniversal society for eschatological pantheistic multiple-ego solipsism." Could all six hundred and eighty-six pages have been intended as one long, drawn-out joke?

Towards the end of the book Lazarus long, his twin sisters, his household computer and Maureen Smith are added to the list of major talking parts --- but they, too, are interchangeable with one another and the first group.

Opportunities for development of this one character are bound to be limited: all conflicts being between reflections of itself reduces them down --- once the necessities for life are sufficient to provide for all --- to failures in communication. The sole possibility for the role of antagonist --- the mysterious alien --- is abandoned as soon as created . . . . . possibly because of the emotive effort that would be demanded of Heinlein by re-inventing manichaeism, or catharism, or simply because Heinlein can no longer put himself in another person's shoes. His utterly unbelievable treatment of Deety and Hilda as women --- people --- is just one facet of this latter problem.

The resultant overall effect is amazingly similar to John Brunner's realisation of catalepsy from the inside (the "cataphatic" groupings of Brunner's excellent novel, THE WHOLE MAN A.K.A. TELEPATHIST) a closed fantasy world in which nothing happens, happens to, or intrudes in any way on, the central character and his "real" reflections. Cardboard cut-out spear carriers walk on stage to die, or to walk off again.

But even allowing for Heinlein's apparent conviction that we are all "the other end of the same earthworm" (or, possibly, that only he exists --- and everyone else is either in disguise or not a real person), remarkably little happens in THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST. There are only two "real" conflicts in the six hundred odd pages --- one of which is evaded by Lazarus Long's fooling everyone into believing he's given in when he has not --- and both of which arise from the failure of the "characters" to realize they are identical. The first conflict arises from the inability of the four individualists who flee earth in "gay deceiver" to shake down into a tight crew/survival/combat unit. All are sure they know better than the others --- and sometimes one is on top, sometimes another. The other conflict occurs, or fails to occur, when sky yacht Dora and gay deceiver meet and their captains fail to agree who has precedence.

That's nothing like enough to write some two hundred thousand words round. And since all the ideas have had interesting stories written round them, THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST is an object lesson to those who proclaim "SF is about ideas, to hell with characterisation and style."

I hope you'll take notice of this review. As I said, I don't expect to put people off reading a new Heinlein --- but the only way people in the trade will ever change their ideas of SF, and which authors to stock, is when the old known names cease to sell. There are plenty of excellent new novels, new authors and new points of view coming into print --- and a couple of massive 'bombs' from the authors the trade recognises is the only thing that will get the new titles distributed.

Borrow your copy from the library --- you probably won't bother to finish it.

Why "the number of the beast"? Oh --- for no very good reason Heinlein has decided that the number of possible continua is six to the power six, all to the power six again, (6^6)^6.

And revelations reveals 666 to be the number of the beast.

As I said at the very beginning of this piece --- come in please, number 666: your time is up."

You're boring us.

Geis Note: The above review was possible because, as editorial consultant to Hamlyn Books, Peter Pinto was able to read a ms. copy of the new Heinlein novel. This review first appeared in FEETNOTES #4, Peter's fascinating personal journal. His address: 42 Breakspears Road London SE4, England
AN INTERVIEW WITH DONALD WOLLHEIM

SFR: You are the dean of science fiction book editors, with more years and experience than anyone. What is your short-run opinion of the health of book publishing in the genre?

WOLLHEIM: At this point of time, June, 1979, science fiction/fantasy as a genre in paperback books seems to be enjoying its greatest boom ever. Obviously it is healthy -- for the moment. Space allotted to science fiction in paperback shops is more central and with more slots than such formerly strong and staid categories as mystery, Goths, Westerns...

Whether it will continue to stay strong and manifold remains to be seen. There are some signs of a leveling off and even a drop-off showing -- note Ace's pulling back a bit. On the other hand, some imprints announce increased entry to the field -- Pocket Books, Berkley, etc. Can the genre stand it? I think it must retreatr at some point, though I also believe that when it does find its normal level it will be a lot stronger than it had been at any previous leveling-off point. DAW is remaining conservative, holding to five releases a month and will not venture into hardcovers or "trade" paperbacks. We intend to hold our own, no matter what happens to the latecomers.

SFR: If you intend to stand pat with five releases, this suggests that you are content with DAW's position and market share and also, I'd guess, that you don't want to add to your workload. True? This leads to a question of your retirement. When you do retire, does that mean DAW stops?

WOLLHEIM: DAW is holding its own quite nicely and has been profitable to both myself and my co-partners, the New American Library. I see no sense in adding to my own workload or helping to overload the already overloaded racks of book shops. As for retirement, the thing is that after carrying a list of up to 20 books a month for many years (for Ace and Avon), my present workload is a snap. I consider this to be something of a retirement job already! I work my own hours; I can knock off a week every month without worry. If I were to officially retire, what would I do? Not being athletic, I would probably publish books. And what am I doing now? Exactly that! As for DAW stopping there is no such likelihood while it is profitable (and it is).

My daughter Betsy is working with me, understanding what I do and what I buy, acting as associate editor, and preparing herself to take over control if and when I might have to step down for physical reasons. So I expect DAW Books to continue someday under her control -- and if then she wants to expand or add other lines, why that will be her decision. Being young, I assume she would want to do things of her own choice. NAL, by the way, knows all this and is allowing for it.

SFR: Do you feel that hardcovers and trade paperbacks are more vulnerable to a "bust" in SF than paperbacks? If so, why?

WOLLHEIM: If there should come to be a "bust" in science fiction, obviously it would hit the most expensive products first -- and hardcovers and "trade" paperbacks are more expensive than the standard mass market books.

As it is, it is probable that fifty per cent of the SF hardcovers fail to make their costs ... and I suspect that many of the trade paperbacks will eventually prove to be losers. I noticed that in the Fall-Winter, 1979, catalogues from Harper & Row and St. Martin's (recently received) that no SF hardcovers seem to be listed -- although both these publishers have produced many in the past years and some that presumably went for high prices to reprinters. Could this be meaningful as to the real financial bottom line returns for the last couple years?

SFR: For the benefit of ritters who might like to submit to DAW: Do you have any advice about manuscript preparation? Should the complete ms. be sent? How many manuscripts does DAW receive per week?

WOLLHEIM: We have a form letter which we send to writers who ask how to go about submitting a manuscript. If anyone would like a copy of this, send a SASE to DAW Books, Inc. and ask for it. It contains simple answers to the often elementary queries people ask about the publishing business (which is a deep mystery to most would-be writers).

The flow of manuscripts varies according to the season. However, consulting our entry book I see that 75 manuscripts were clocked in from August 1 to August 30, 1979. Most of these were complete novels. I prefer complete mss. to outlines requiring answers. Many such outlines sound very good, but then it too often develops that the party cannot write well or even cannot write at all.

CONDUCTED BY RICHARD E. GEIS
SRH: You seem to have discovered and exclusively published some very good new (to science fiction) writers, such as Tanith Lee and C.J. Cherryh. Do you have them under long-term contracts; do they prefer to write for you alone, or is it that no other editor wants them?

WOLHEIM: That question is really poorly worded. I don't much care for its implications. I have discovered many new writers and I am proud of the fact that writers realize that I am a rarity among SF editors -- a fixed star. I am going to be here as I have been for the past eight years and I trust for the next dozen years. Unlike other publishers, writers are not going to find a new wet-behind-the-ears editor at the SF slot every time they submit a new novel or a new outline. They are going to find the man who gave them a break and will continue to do so. That is why DAW writers are loyal. Add to your list the names of Andre Norton, Marion Bradley, Michael Moorcock, E.C. Tubb, Lin Carter, Ron Goulart, Ian Wallace, Doris Piserchia, Ken Bulmer, Mike Foster, Bertram Chandler, John Brunner, Jo Clayton, Brian Stabelford, etc., etc.

Some write for us only, some write for others as well. We have nobody under long-term contracts whatever that means, though we have given multiple-book contracts on occasion. Our rates are competitive, our royalties on time and regular, our credit rating is the best. We are always open to reason and discussion. As for other editors wanting them, you can just bet they do! Sometimes they even get them. But we like to think that our authors are also our friends -- and the feeling is mutual.

SFR: Can you give us a fairly detailed look at your weekday?

WOLHEIM: This is a rather tricky question since no two days are ever exactly alike in this field. However, in general I drift into the office about 9:40 AM, read the mail, answer pertinent letters, and take care of essentials of the day. Lunch at 12 noon sharp (because of the congestion at mid-Manhattan restaurants) usually with Elsie, sometimes with authors or agents, returning about 1:30 PM. Continue with essentials of the day -- coffee break and business chat with Elsie and Betsy (my assistant editor, first reader, daughter and eventual successor) at 3 PM -- and after 3:30 back to whatever is the day's essential. Leave at 4:30 PM.

The key to all this is the term "the day's essentials". Our work schedule calls for the production of four original works a month, plus one reissue of an older and out-of-print but in-demand DAW title. This means that during one month we must contract or arrange for four new works -- which means a certain amount of manuscript reading or book reading (much of which I do at home). Betsy is now first reader and when she turns up something interesting in the unknowns and unsolicited, this she reports on and I must read. I also am usually first reader for works by our regular writers or works that come in that have been on "project" contracts -- though sometimes I may let her read them in advance.

Essentials of the day then also include the actual buying of these works, assuming that I have previously asked for revisions or written to say I want them, which means doing contracts, determining advances, possible publication dates (we work eight months ahead -- and having an inventory on hand plus various assured products like "years, best" anthologies, and space open for series novels such as Dumarest and Dray Prescott -- this may mean in practice twelve to fourteen months ahead) which is done by the writing of contracts which I do personally and mail out. (When signed, checks for the advances are sent by Elsie, who handles the accounting dep't.)

Since each book to be published requires a cover painting, lettering for the front and back cover (blurs), this is my responsibility, so I am usually seeing artists at various times during the month, checking sketches, accepting finished paintings, haggling over payments, etc. I do the blurbs and cover lines -- I also do the front matter pages for the books (the first four pages must be written and I do this) and any ads that may be called for. The manuscripts due the first of the following month must be copy-edited, which is done by another person on my staff or farmed out to NAL's copy-editing department (as our contract with NAL permits us to do).

Our busy weeks are the last and first of each month. The last week winds up the preparation of the work to go to the book designer the next month and via him (NAL's chief designer) to the printer (W.F. Hall in Chicago). Also this week must have all the cover paintings on hand and they go, with cover copy, to our cover designer (a freelance agency) to style, select type faces and sizes -- which must be okayed by me usually the second week of the month.

The first week of the month the covers go out, the manuscripts delivered to NAL production, the books for the next month to be scheduled (eight months in the future) finalized and ISBN numbers assigned and our own sales numbers assigned, too. Manuscripts due for that month gathered and taken for type analysis and page approximations (by NAL staffers), and covers assigned for what must be ready by the first of the following month (assuming the covers have not been done in advance -- which they usually are -- but there is always a laggard somewhere that has to be worried about).

Payments for books published are worried about by Elsie. Likewise books received are sent for review for that month (by another staff), and all sorts of things.

So ... at any particular day, an artist may be coming with a sketch, a writer may be delivering a manuscript or a suggestion for a future novel, and of course, proofs will be coming in, both in galleys for the bodies of novels coming out two months later, and the front matter proofs (which come separately). Proofs are read by NAL staff, and gone over by Betsy or another DAW staffer -- front matter proof I read personally. Cover color proofs and type may come in about the middle of the month and must be checked -- if I'm around, I will do it, if I'm not around someone else will.

In quieter times (the second and third weeks and spare afternoons) I will read manuscripts or books, sometimes take them home to finish. Since this is all old stuff to me -- I've been doing this for 35 years -- this really takes up not too much time, and I could take the third week off -- and about eight times a year, my wife and I do just that: cover off on trips to conventions, just to visit. We go to Europe about four times a year (for nine-day spells, no longer), usually England and Italy, and occasionally France or other parts of Western Europe. Otherwise, California or some place else in the USA or Canada.

marmalade?
I may have forgotten something, probably have, but as you may suspect, life for me is really not very hectic. This is probably as close to a retirement job as I am likely to get.

SFR: It's been said by a few critics that DAW's covers are "bad", in the sense of too much action, too raw in color ... Yet I suspect a canny policy in the DAW color style. Would you care to confirm that, and explain the reasoning behind it?

WOLLHEIM: A few critics? Since when does one card make a full hand? However, all kidding aside, we constantly get praise from readers, book salesmen, and retailers for our covers. And if you stop and think about them, are they any different in style and approach from the covers on ANALOG, F&SF, and the other magazines? Our "canny" policy is simply to present what SF readers prove by their Hugo nominations to want. Our first years at DAW relied extensively on Kelly Freas and Jack Gaughan, who have enough Hugos between them to make a picket fence. We introduced, before DAW's founding, the first paperback covers of Frazetta, Thole, Krenkel, and Jeff Jones. These days we continue the tradition by using Barr, Michael Whelan, Don Maitz, Josh Kirby, Doug Beekman, Froud (yes, that Froud), Richard Hescox. Our only problem is that when we start using an artist, all our paperback SF competitors sit up and take notice -- and try to sign them up for their own products.

SFR: I was thinking primarily about your use of yellow in the DAW cover/spine package. It's said that yellow is a strong attention-grabber color; is that why you use it? Has it proved out?

WOLLHEIM: Yes to both questions.

SFR: Is the Cap Kennedy series defunct now? I haven't seen a new one since #13 in 1974. Are you in a position now to let us know who the author, Gregory Kern, really is or was?

WOLLHEIM: The Cap Kennedy series has been defunct for a long time now. The last one was #16, December, 1975. Gregory Kern was a pen-name for E.C. Tubb who wrote the entire series single-handed. It may be of interest to know though, that Cap Kennedy is alive and well and living in Japan ... with a television series in the offing.

SFR: You were a leading science fiction fan in the thirties and early forties before turning professional. You were one of the original Futurians and one of the founders of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association. What is your opinion of fans now? Has fandom changed significantly?

WOLLHEIM: I really do not think that fans have changed. After the publication of THE FUTURIANS a number of young fans talked to me about it and told me they enjoyed the book because they kept finding similarities between the Futurian antics of the Thirties and Forties and the people they met and the things they did in their own 1970s fan clubs. Obviously, fans are a type and the type has not changed.

But what has changed significantly from my viewpoint, is how the sex balance has adjusted. In my day, fans were about 90% male. Today, they seem to have equalized ... and girls are no longer closet SF readers, but present and active on their own account on an equal basis. I recently had the experience of being a guest at the Darkover Grand Council convention in New York -- with over 300 registrants and about four-fifths female! Outnumbered on all sides! And you know what -- the con seemed no different from any other with the same bounce and vim and enthusiasm. You could spot every type of fan there as at any other general gathering -- except they happened to be non-males.

SFR: Are you content with the picture of you as a fan in the late Thirties presented by Harry Warner in his ALL OUR YESTERDAYS and by Fred Pohl in THE WAY THE FUTURE WAS? Any clarifications or additions you'd like to make?

WOLLHEIM: I don't feel any pain at reading these accounts of myself in my fan days, including Damon Knight's THE FUTURIANS. I do not think the picture is as I saw myself, but then nobody sees himself as others do. Having become a sort of living legend (that is when today's fans are even aware of my history), I suppose I must endure it. Obviously, I did a lot of dumb things and also I did a lot of good things ... as what active fan cannot also say.

Anyway, it's interesting to be a character in someone else's book.

SFR: In your 1971 book on science fiction, THE UNIVERSE MAKERS, you showed an optimistic view of the future and of humanity. Have your views changed any in the last nine years?

WOLLHEIM: No, why should they change? Just because the temporary condition of the world is in crisis in 1979 does not alter the long-range picture of the future. We are, humanity, at the beginning of The Beginning. We are into space, and going to go into it more in the next century or so. Science continues to unveil more of the secrets of the universe that, when mastered, will continue the advance of human society that has gone on more or less continuously since the dawn of recorded history.

As for 1979, just ask yourself if you would rather be in the last month of 1939, 1929, or 1919, instead of 1979? Sure, we have an energy crisis but not a disastrous one. There's time to solve it and solve it we shall. Perhaps we shall have some temporary hardships for the next few years -- but consider again 1939, 1929, 1919 and what they meant for those who had to confront the years that immediately followed. I remain what I have always been -- an Unreconstructed Utterian.

SFR: Thank you, Don Wollheim.

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PRO AMT NUT IN

BUT FAN

MISSELEDD
WHAT IS HARLAN ELLISON REALLY LIKE?

a profile

By Charles Platt

The house is full -- every niche occupied, all surfaces covered, with books, art, ornaments, records, sculpture, curios, awards, objects collectables, knack-knacks, mementoes, trophies, toys, gifts, gadgets, treasures and trivia. Walls are completely hidden behind paintings crowded up against one another -- there are even paintings hung on some of the ceilings. And there are 37,000 books, some stacked in drawers because all available shelf space has been engulfed. And there are conversation pieces -- a 1940s jukebox, a genuine subway-style candy vending machine, a photograph of Mars framed in red neon tube, a complete framed set of Kellogg Pep giveaway buttons. In the master bedroom there is a waterbed atop a platform upholstered in red shag carpet, in the attached bathroom a Jacuzzi, an art-deco lamp and ceramic tiles imported from Italy.

There's a guest room, a secretary's office (full of unassembled plastic model kits and Japanese monster toys), a living room (with bizarre modern sculpture, giant TV and two video recorders), a newly-built library featuring a beige competition-size pool table color-coordinated with the walls, long shelves of heavy reference tomes, boxed collections of ESQUIRE and PLAYBOY and Marvel Comics back issues. Behind one bookcase is a secret soundproof grotto with walls of genuine volcanic rock and a soft floor, like one big custom-fitted contoured mattress.

Upstairs, the writer's work space, featuring a desk on a dais, tiers of filing cabinets, arrays of awards (seven-and-a-half Hugos, three Nebulas, two Jupiters, one Edgar) along with certificates, signed photographs, plaques and testimonials. Outside on the roof, past the Paolo Soleri wind chimes and an authentic British dart board, our tour ends amid the Robert Silverberg memorial cactus garden.

Daily life here is a Los Angeles carnival of people and phone calls, diversions and discussions, women and dinners out, sudden arguments, impulsive decisions and mad errands. While gardeners spray fungicide on the lawn and spread nets over the peach tree, builders and craftsmen debate the architectural complexities involved in the $20,000 kitchen extension, all glass-brick, neon and stainless steel, now under construction.

Usually there is one long-term house guest (a fellow writer or protege) as well as various acquaintances passing through. Ellison trades quips, smokes one of his 400 exotically carved pipes and plays pool with his full-time assistant, Linda Steele. Then, a conference with lawyers to finalize his metamorphosis into The Killmanjaro Corporation for tax purposes.

The day, mired in trivia, seems timeless and yet it devours time. Suddenly it's 5:00 and Ellison is still wrapped in his brown bathrobe with "Don't Bug Me" embroidered on the back of it. They do bug him, though, constantly. They tie up his telephone lines, they jam his mailbox with letters, they accost him, nag him and pick fights with him, when all he wants is some peace and quiet. Here he is now, at 5:30, still attempting to secure this peace and quiet. He is calling the distributors of a free local newspaper, which is thrown onto the doorsteps of home owners in this area. Ellison hates the newspaper. He becomes enraged. He demands that the free deliveries must stop. He's called them about this before, several times. Once they did stop delivering the paper, but apparently out of spite they then threw hundreds of rubber bands onto his driveway instead. Now the deliveries have started again. It's driving him crazy, he can't stand it, he warns them he will sue, on grounds of invasion of privacy if the unwanted newspaper deliveries do not cease.

He adjourns for another game of pool. The phone rings. He answers; the calling party immediately hangs up. This happens frequently; it's some kid in San Francisco who likes to bug Ellison. Why? Why do these crazies home in on him? Once, he says, he spotted someone in the distance on the hillside overlooking the back of the house, aiming a rifle at him as he stood in the kitchen. He had to sneak out and circle around behind the guy, to catch him. Then he had to have all his windows specially coated, like mirrors, to be sure that he wouldn't be seen as an indoor target in future. And now here's another phone call -- from some weird woman who
He must answer the doorbell. Tonight's date, a Hollywoodesque creature in thigh-hugging Levis and a red satin blouse, has just arrived in her own Porsche. Ellison receives her, wearing only a towel around his waist. He explains he was on his way to the shower, but first, he has to Xerox one of his own stories in his library. She accompanies him, docilely, and sits watching him, demurely, as he feeds the copying machine. It goes clunk, clunk, clunk, clunk, clunk. She sits and watches. Clunk, clunk. A fragment of conversation is exchanged, but most of the time she sits and watches. Then he adjourns to the delayed shower, but first he must pause in the immaculate kitchen to reposition a couple of ornaments that someone has carelessly shifted out of alignment and then he turns the knives on the magnetic knife rack so that their blades are all facing the same way, and -- what's this? Ants have invaded the mansion. He thumbs them methodically, one by one, then stops to polish the white ceramic stove top with a special cleaner, then opens the refrigerator or vegetable drawer, which is crammed full of an obscure brand of soft yellow candy that he enjoyed as a child. When he heard the manufacturer was going broke a few years ago he bought up their last stocks, so now, here, in this refrigerator, is the only remaining supply of this candy anywhere in the world. He allows himself to eat one piece. The phone rings. A couple of New York friends are in town ... meet for dinner? Why not? A foursome ... he knows the perfect barbecue restaurant in the valley ... And so on. The question is, when does Harlan Ellison, the writer, find time to do any writing?

Sometimes, he does it in bookstore windows, for Ellison is more than a writer, he is an entertainer. It is as important for him to reach people in person as it is via print. He is aggressive, even hostile -- he insults his audience, ridicules their simple ideas and tastes, complains about their intrusiveness. But his life seems intentionally structured so that he is seldom alone, and his hostility is an act of courtship: The more he badmouths his audience, the more they love him for it. I have seen him tell 5,000 science fiction fans that they are stupid, unilliterate; they give him a standing ovation and gather around him for autographs.

He has been known to treat his house guests as though they are raw recruits and he the drill sergeant; they shoddily ask to stay on for an extra week of basic training. (He knows he has 37,000 books because he once detailed an idle guest to count them for him.

By setting up his typewriter and producing stories in bookstore windows, or in a plastic pyramid at a world science fiction convention, he has converted even the most solitary act of creativity into a social event -- and an exercise in uppermanship (I'm on this side of the typewriter and you're not). Onlookers gather, muttering "Who does he think he is?" but they gather, nonetheless, as he knows they will.

The stories themselves cry out for audience response. They are often melodramatic, angry and controversial in their advocacy of extremism. The writing style is direct, reaching out to accost the reader, and its rhythms are conversational, so that each piece is a stand-up monologue (indeed, Ellison often reads his work in public). And the stories are frequently preluded with introductions; after all, any entertainer likes to have the audience warmed up before he starts his act.

Ellison is frank about his need as a writer to reach people. "It is very necessary for my work to have an impact. The most senseless cavil that's ever been leveled against me is, 'Oh, you only wrote that to shock'. I say 'Of course you idiot, of course that's the reason I wrote it. What do you expect me to do, lull you into a false sense of security? I want people's hair to stand on end when they read my work, whether it's a love story or a gentle childhood story or a story of drama and violence.'"

He is sitting behind his desk, on its dais, overlooking the grand panorama of the upper level of his library. I'm on a collapsible wooden chair to one side of his desk. It's an inferior, slightly uncomfortable position, but it is the closest I could get to spatial equality with my interviewee. The alternative would have been to sit on a contemporary modular couch, fifteen feet distant and one foot lower in altitude.

I ask if it bothers him when people are amused by his acts of writing in public or when they say, in effect, "Who does he think he is?"

"I think I'm the guy who can write a story that's as good as "Count the Clock That Tells the Time" while sitting in a goddam pyramid while thousands of people are trying to break my bones", he snaps. 'I think that's who I am, you bet your ass I am, I love pulling off the trick no one else can pull off, I love it, man. I mean, my fantasies are not of -- of sleeping with the entire Rockete line from Radio City Music Hall, they are: Suddenly, while the jazz band is playing, I get up and say to the sax player, 'Can I borrow your ax for a minute? And I begin slowing better than Charlie Parker. Or: There stretches the rope across Niagara Falls and I say, 'Oh, excuse me for a moment', and walk across it. My fantasies are pulling off the stunt that everyone said couldn't be pulled off.

"I love it, and I know it pisses people off, because people hate an over-achiever, because when they see someone is capable of doing the grand thing, they realize how little they have demanded of themselves. I take great pleasure in that, in saying to them, you poor fucking turkey, you could have done it too, all you had to do was do it, but you didn't. And the stories that I write in those windows are good stories, man, they're not shit, they're good stories. I wrote 'The Diagnosis of Dr. D'ArqueAngel', which is one of my best stories, sitting in the window of Words and Music, in London.

"'Hitler Painted Roses', for Christ's sake, which is a dynamite story, I did that over the radio, two-hour sessions, sitting in a radio booth. The story that was in HEAVY METAL magazine a couple of months ago, "Flop Sweat", I wrote that in one afternoon to read on a radio programme that night. If people want to laugh, that's fine; let them try it and see how easy it is".

Tough talk, frequently backed up by tough actions. At age 45 Ellison has built a formidable reputation as a fighter in print and in person. Caution and compromise do not figure in his life-style, and he does not usually allow himself the option of retreat.

'ренд а нерд' week? who thinks up these goodies?
My background is that I came from Painesville, Ohio, which was a very quiet town, but within it I was the object of an awful lot of violence and an awful lot of hatred and bigotry and alienation. I don't take this as a singular state, most people go through a similar thing in one way or another. But there was never a niche for me when I was a kid, so I was never able to get complacent.

"Early on I learned to take risks, doing the things that a kid does to gain attention, to prove that he's as good as anybody else. And I learned that I can't really be damaged. I can be momentarily hurt, I can feel emotional pain, my heart can be broken, but as I was saying the other day, real pain only lasts twelve minutes; the rest of the time is spent in justifying it to yourself to make what you went through seem valid and important. So I always took risks, and when I saw how it shook up everybody around me, because I was a kid seeking attention, I would do it all the more. Climbing a sixteen-story building on steamblasters' ropes, bare-handed, just to do it - they called the fire engines. It was always my intention to be noticed.

"Now, as an adult, that's a very bad thing; seeking attention is a very childish thing. But I still do it. It manifests itself in other ways."

One big risk that he took at the start of his writing career was to join a Brooklyn teenage gang in order to write about gang life and gang warfare. It culminated in a knife fight in which he was almost killed.

"Joining the gang came naturally to me, because I had read Hemingway, who wrote 'One should never write what one doesn't know'; so I figured if I wanted to write about juvenile delinquency I must go and do it. These things seem to other people like a death wish or something, but it's not, it's stretching myself to the absolute limits of my abilities and finding out what my boundaries are for me. Taking risks is inherently important; I see around me the people who don't take risks, who worship security and comfort, and I see that as a living death.

"Left to their own devices the human race would settle into a soft and lazy, like hum, a state in which they would just mmmmm along. I think that what keeps the society going along the path that it wants to go, and big systems and big units, multinational corporations, armies and governments will keep things pretty much in line, and it's only the occasional firebrand or troublemaker who shakes things up enough to get a few people thinking. Those mavericks advance the cause of history. You know that thing from Thoreau that I'm so fond of quoting, 'He serves the State best who opposes the State most.'"

I ask if he is arguing that any kind of radicalism is good and change is desirable for its own sake.

"There is good change and there is bad change, but I think all change eventually brings about an advancement of one kind or another. Clausewitz said, 'any movement is better than no movement at all'. If you sit still you die, you atrophy, your legs fall off. And besides, I don't think I'm important enough, that any change I make is really going to shake things up. I'm not Ralph Nader, and I'm not Eve Curie, and I'm not Joan of Arc. I'm just a paid liar, and my perceptions of the world seem minuscule by comparison with the work of any of the really, really great writers, like Isaac Bashevis Singer or Tom Disch."

This sudden note of modesty is injected casually and yet I think it is deliberate. Ellison reminds himself to be humble now and then much as a high-living sinner reminds himself to confess to his priest occasionally. His modesty, when it crops up, is certainly sincere. There truly are writers whose work he admires more than his own, and he is constantly quoting these people: "because they're wiser than I, and they know the way to say things."

In fact, his house (Ellison Wonderland) is named in tribute to one great fantasist, and his corporation is named after a Hemingway short story. Ellison is a fiercely independent individual, and the style and mood of his writing are unique; paradoxically, he is in awe of the words of other writers, to the extent that he embosses their epigrams on bits of Dymo tape and sticks them on walls and work surfaces around his desk. It is as if he needs the wisdom of elder statesmen of literature around him as he works.

So he pays homage to his heroes, but he has only impatient scorn for those who don't dare to be great. As an entertainer, or as an activist he hates his public to be unresponsive and apathetic. He despises the notion that people might be happier leading lazy, unimaginative lives.

"Are they happy? I don't think they are. Anybody who settles for anything less than the moon, anything less than painting the Sistine Chapel ceiling, or voyaging to the center of the earth, is taking less than what the world holds for him. This thing about ignorance is bliss, and they're happy as drones ... I don't think so. Circumstances and indoctrination and a lack of self-esteem are the deterrents that keep people from doing whatever that golden thing is within them to do.

"I've seen the meanest clay do the most remarkable things. Look at the Watts Towers (a huge piece of sculpture built in a back yard in the Watts district of Los Angeles). Here was an uneducated, illiterate day laborer, Simon Rodia, who built something considered great art, with his own hands. All you need to see is one of those, and you say, 'Everybody's got it'. I do truly believe that in every human being there is the capacity, from birth, to reach the stars, if only we try. When we don't we are denying our heritage, what we can be. So I struggle toward that...."

"I have been many things in my life. I was not always a writer; I was an extraordinarily fine actor when I was a kid, with an opportunity to go to Broadway. I was a sing-
er, and can still sing, and could have made a living, not a terrific living, but a good living, as a singer. I'm very good with my hands, I was a bricklayer and that's noble too. There is nothing to which I could have turned my hand at which I would not have excelled. Because that's what I strive for -- excellence. Very early in life when I read Robert Heinlein I got the thread that runs through his stories -- the notion of the competent man. I've always held that as my ideal. I've tried to be a very competent man. When I fuck up, which I do regularly, I pillory myself far more than I pillory anyone around me, because I feel I should be above error, above stupid mistakes."

Indeed, one senses that Ellison rates himself, critically, and imagines how others might rate him, in his ability to live up to his ambitions and ethical standards. It's a preoccupation with looking good in two senses: First, as a stylish godfly with an inimitable image, and second, looking like, well, look at me, Ellison has conscientiously done no wrong. He often makes a point of "doing the right thing" and doing it publicly; he has ostentatiously supported such causes as the anti-war movement of the 1960s, civil rights for southern Blacks, and, most recently, the Equal Rights Amendment. As guest of honor at the Arizona world science fiction convention in 1978 he publicized the fact that Arizona had not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment, he advocated that attendees at the convention should camp out rather than spend money on hotel rooms (he himself slept in a van parked outside the hotel) and spent no money at all in Arizona on anything, and he used the convention to campaign for the E.R.A. and raise funds for a local feminist organization. Many science fiction people hated him for politicizing their field, but they had to admit, here was someone being true to his principles, looking so good, it hurt.

Ellison has no false modesty about the event. "I came back with the sure and certain knowledge that I had done something heroic. I really felt like an honest-to-god hero. I had stood up for my principles, I had done something that I knew in the core of my being was ultimately good for the human race, and I had put my body on the line and nothing had deterred me. The convention was enormously successful, we got $2,000 for the Arizona E.R.A. women and did a thing that was a good thing, it was a good thing that we did, and I just burn with pride in it, that I was able to do it. There are so few occasions when one is presented with a clear-cut choice of being courageous or cowardly, and I was courageous. I don't take all the credit -- if it had not been for Linda Steele I probably wouldn't have done it. But she held me to it, frequently, which is why I treasure her friendship, because she is a woman of great conscience, not afraid to say to me, 'You're acting in a cowardly fashion, you're talking the talk and not walking the walk'."

He adds that ethical questions are a frequent preoccupation, in his life and also in his fiction. "I don't put much stock in morality; it's ethical behavior I care about."

I ask if he has ever been criticized on ethical grounds for a lifestyle that some would call extravagant or self-indulgent.

'Well, I feel I've paid my dues. I came from a poor background. My father died intestate, I paid off his bills, I supported my mother for the last ten or eleven years of her life, so I know what poverty is and I know that it is not necessarily true that poverty is noble and if you live in a garret you will write better than if you live in a nice house. For me, to write well, I must be in an environment that pleases me. I got my home, I got my nest, for myself, and it's filled with my toys and my music and I can come back to it when I need to. The house is an outward manifestation of me, an extension of me. I don't pay much attention to people who say, 'Well, gee, if he was really such a humanitarian he'd be living like Gandhi or Albert Schweitzer'. That's bullshit. I don't live in an exorbitant fashion. I make an awful lot of money but I give a lot of that money to places each year where I think it should go.'

Organized charities?

'You never know what you're supporting these days. Everybody is owned by somebody else. I prefer to invest in individuals. Like Dawn Johanson who carved the sculpture, the gargoyle, out in the back yard. I bought it from her and sent her to art school with the money. Octavia Estelle Butler, the novelist whose work I have supported -- I encouraged her career and sent her off to Clarion so she's now a successful writer. There are no actual organized causes to which I would subscribe or give large amounts of money, but then I don't want to be rich. I really don't. I used to think $10,000 a year was a lot of money and that was the pinnacle to which I aspired. I'm alarmed that I make as much money as I make now. They are postulating that I'm going to make $200,000 this year and I've had to incorporate. I've spent all my life distrusting and fighting against corporations," he smiles, "and now I'm rich. I personally find it distressing and disturbing."

This from the man building a $20,000 extension to his kitchen. And yet -- the architect of that project is a woman who just finished college, and this is her first project, a unique opportunity to enjoy total creative freedom. The builder runs a small business and is a friend. A young Chicano, newly in business, has been hired for his talent working in stainless steel. And so on. Ellison's whole house is full of art and artifacts commissioned or bought from artists who could not survive without his kind of rich patronage. Truly, he invests in individuals; he might not like the label, but he's the image of an enlightened capitalist as a positive social force.

An old-fashioned notion, but in some ways Ellison is old-fashioned. His references are often to 1950s culture (the Rockettes, Charlie Parker); he hates fads (he ridicules disco rollerskating and dislikes
AND THEN I HEARD....

BY THE EDITOR

THE WHITE DRAGON
Read by the author, Anne McCaffrey
Caedmon TC 1596

To get the most from these THE WHITE DRAGON chapters (3, 4, 5, and 6) you will have to have read at least one of the Dragonrider books. There is much background of this alien world unexplained in the context of what is given in the record.

Anne McCaffrey speaks clearly and pleasingly, with good dramatic emphasis and timing. I was impressed. However, she tends to give some of her dialogue a tone of cuteness --- like children trying to speak as adults in a school play --- and there is in some parts of her writing a soap-opera quality involving intricate personal relationships exhaustively worried over that is just Too Much and a drag to listen to.

JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH
Read by James Mason
Caedmon TC 1581

James Mason is a professional actor, of course, and a professional reader of highest quality; he has recorded ten other classic books for Caedmon.

His work in JOURNEY is at that high level. His voice seems to lend itself to narration that does not require much dialogue, though he handles dialogue by means of a deepening of the voice, an accent... just enough to tell the listener another character is speaking. Some readers go to heroic, throat-rending lengths to give each character's voice distinction and an excessive differentness. Mason does not say to the listener, "I'm the star!" He lets the text be paramount.

The text was, for this recording, abridged, necessarily.

(This is one of 30 profiles of SF writers that will be published by Putnam-Berkley in May, 1980, in one volume tentatively titled PROFILES IN SCIENCE FICTION.)
THE RABELAISIAN LETTERS OF JACK WOODFORD Edited by Jesse E. Stewart

JACK WOODFORD ON WRITING Edited by Jesse E. Stewart

Woodford Memorial Editions, Inc.
POB 55085, Seattle, WA 98155.

Jack Woodford, whose real, legal name was Josiah Pitts Woolfolk, spent the thirties, forties and fifties writing how-to-write books and 45 sex novels. Sex novels that were considered hard stuff in those days.

He sold well, was the backbone of several publishing houses, and was a very contentious, neurotic, hated/fearred/loved guy in the writing game.

His letters, especially those to agent Donald MacCumber, show a man who was eaten alive by rip-off editors and publishers, who knew it, ragged against it, fought, retaliated, roared, threatened... Jack claimed to have a network of spies and agents in the publishing/editing/distribution business, and claimed to be able to ruin various and sundry of his antagonists... He was full of gossip, charges, contempt, anger, prejudice and (let's face it) paranoia. I suspect the paranoia was grounded in reality about 60%. You can't blame a writer going that route when publishers steal ms's, violate contracts, spread lies to cover their sins...

I have been similarly ripped off, too: novels published without a contract, missed payments, foreign rights sold and no payment, no royalties when due, second and third printings and editions never reported or acknowledged...

So I believe Jack in his endless raggles and rages about his endless problems with lying, cheating editors and publishers.

He had a very close attachment to his daughter, Louella, who sank into the pit of incurable hebephrenic schizophrenia and was a terrible emotional and financial burden to him for many years.

He went to federal prison on a tax rap and spent his last years in a state mental hospital--in a geriatric ward...senile. At the end he had completed a book on "teleesthesia", a form of hypnotically administered thought-control via mental telepathy.

The letters from prison to Jess Stewart are sad; he seems a lonely, half-broken man reduced to asking for small monies to spend on needed fruits, foods, cigarettes, etc. But he was ever helpful to Jess, with advice and comments on life's problems.

His letters to Arnold Gingrich, long-time editor of ESQUIRE, show a more professional me, a writer seeking work, who also discussed his interest in mental disease (he was an expert due to his intense, wide-range reading of the literature due to his daughter's disease) and who was himself suffering from high blood pressure, aphasia attacks, and side-effects. He shows a man declining writing powers putting up a front of books almost/probably sold, etc.

For many years after he left prison on parole (after one year of served time) he lived in a $21-a-week hotel room in a small town and apparently spent very little money on food. He sold articles here and there... (I vaguely remember seeing/reading some of his writing in ADAM, SIR KNIGHT, etc., when I was selling short sex fiction to them. I was both surprised and happy to be in the same magazines with the man whom I considered to be my Teacher.) And he sold a book to a small-time, very-low-pay pb publisher in Chicago on his year/life in prison. He sold an article to ESQUIRE on the same theme.

THE RABELAISIAN LETTERS OF JACK WOODFORD costs $6.95 postpaid. It's worth it to anyone who has read and admired Jack in the past--or present. What was Jack Woodford really like? Here's a partial but revealing look.

JACK WOODFORD ON WRITING includes the complete text of WRITER'S CRAMP, and long excerpts from TRIAL AND ERROR, HOW TO WRITE AND SELL A NOVEL, HOW TO WRITE FOR MONEY, and PLOTTING. Plus samples of Jack's fiction, including his motion picture treatment of his novel, DELINQUENT.

Jack's instruction/advice/commentary on writing, selling, living in these books is, for the person who wants to know how to write commercial fiction, superb. I read them repeatedly in my teens and twenties, and when I started to write fiction I sold my first story and kept on selling and selling and selling...

His advice, his observations are of timeless value, because the dynamics of fiction are timeless, because they are based on the needs/demands of the human psyche.

You can take with a grain of salt if it suits you his diatribes against Communists, gays, politicians...but his writing about writing is conversational, absorbing, funny, and oh-so-accurate.

JACK WOODFORD ON WRITING costs $8.95 and is worth every cent!

PANDORA #4
Edited by Lois Wickstrom

At $2.50 per single issue, PANDORA, a Feminist s-f/fantasy zine, seems expensive. 64 pages plus covers, half-size offset format.

The cover subtitiles it as "an original anthology of role-expanding science fiction and fantasy." But the stories are all Feminist in viewpoint, and are all by women. Some of the artwork and poetry is by men. The roles expanded are primarily female, in this publication.

It's okay by me.

The fiction is uneven, with "Death Ring" by Janet Fox of a quality worthy of any prose.

Address: 1150 St. Paul St., Denver, CO 80206.

THE IRON LAW OF BUREAUCRACY
By Alexis Gilliland

LOOIR 4.95

Loompanics Unlimited, POB 264, Mason, MI 48854.

For many months readers of SFR have suggested I gather the best cartoons of Alexis Gilliland into a book.

I was too busy.

Now Mike Hoy of Loompanics has done it. Two hundred Gilliland cartoons! But not THE best cartoons...two hundred of his best, a vital distinction, because Alexis is so prolific, so fertile in mind and humor, that there are easily another 200...400...best cartoons extant, waiting.... With Alexis, I doubt there are many true 'best' cartoons, because each editor is tickled by different aspects of the Gilliland wit and satire.

This offset volume has a fine Introduction by Bill Rotsler.

Buy a copy.
THE BEST OF ELMER T. HACK
By Jim Barker and Chris Evans
BSFA/Hack Press, 113 Windsor Road, Falkirk, Stirlingshire FK1 5DE, Central Scotland. $2.25 postpaid.
[Autographed, with a small cartoon added just for you. Mention SFR.]

Elmer T. Hack is a cartoon character whose life incidents (insults, put-downs, disasters) have been appearing in VECTOR for several years. He is a hack writer with some residual dignity and who definitely gets no respect.

Jim Barker is a professional-quality cartoonist. Chris Evans conducts a funny interview with Hack in the beginning of this collection. At the back of the book is "A Day in the Life" of Hack, and a review of Hack's new novel, LUCIFER'S BRADAWL, written by Christopher Priest. Very good humor...and some devastating satire.

THE RUNESTONE by mark E. Rogers
Burning Bush Press, POB 7708, Newark, NJ 07111.
[Limited Edition-170 copies--signed by the author. $5.75 per copy.]

I didn't expect much, but this novelette in booklet offset format, is a hell of an exciting, gripping read—if you like blood, guts, a supernatural menace...in present-day New York City. Rogers can write!

FOUNDATION 17
Edited by Malcolm Edwards

By far the most professional and best s-f commentary-zine in England—and perhaps the world. This issue has articles (all excellent and absorbing) by Philip K. Dick, Fritz Leiber, Brian Aldiss, Ba-ricington J. Bayley, Charles Platt; reviews by Ian Watson, Brian Stableford, John Clute...And D.G. Compton writing about science fiction as a profession. A superior magazine about s-f.

THE BEST OF THE BUSHEL By Bob Shaw
THE EASTERCON SPEECHES By Bob Shaw
[Available from Joyce Scrivner, 2528 15th Av. S., Minneapolis, MN 55404. $2.20 each.]

Most of you, I suspect, think of Bob Shaw only as a fine science fiction novelist and short story writer.

HAL! He is a FAAN! He dates back to the legendary Walter Willis era and that legendary willis-zine, HYPHEN. And in THE BEST OF THE BUSHEL are collected 13 of his deliciously humorous columns from HYPHEN.

The collection is delightfully illustrated by cartoonist Jim Barker.

THE EASTERCON SPEECHES (also illustrated by Jim Barker) consists of marvelously interesting and funny convention speeches from 1974-78.

I urge you to discover this other Bob Shaw...or BoSh as he is known in fandom.

ETERNITY SCIENCE FICTION #1
Edited by Stephen Gregg and Henry L Vogel II.
POB 510, Clemson, SC 29631. $1.75.

A shakedown issue: good basic format, balance between fiction, science and features. Big names present with fiction: Roger Zelazny and Andrew Offutt.

An attempt, I presume, to follow the route of GALILEO to bookstore distribution, then national newstand display.

And, like GALILEO in its early issues, the artwork is the only breakdown. The cover of ETERNITY is bad! Amateur drawing, poor color choices. If a cover sells or kills a magazine (gets it picked up and looked through) then this cover sent a dose of cyanide into this issue—it messages corny amateurism and implies the interior of the magazine is on the same level.

The interior art, with the exceptions of Steve Fabian's work and a few of the headings, is of the same good-amateur level of technique and skill.

To survive, this magazine MUST acquire better artwork.

FANTASY NEWSLETTER (JAN. & FEB.)
Edited by Paul Allen
1015 West 36th St., Loveland, CO 80537. $1.50.

In contrast, Paul Allen shows a shrewd understanding of the importance of cover art—Steve Fabian is used for both months—and he knows exactly what he wants FANTASY NEWSLETTER to be and how to do it. He uses a lot of photos of book covers, of s-f and fantasy personalities, and very little artwork in the interior.

He probably rightly includes s-f in the NEWSLETTER, reasoning that s-f is a part of the larger body of fantasy...in a literary definition.

His 32 page format (large-size) on a monthly schedule is going to cause him problems: the workload and the money overhead will soon get to be hard to manage. He does cover the news well, and attractively, in a professional manner. Give this a try, but I'd be wary of a long-term subscription.

SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE (JAN. 1980)
Edited by Andrew Porter
Algot Press, POB 4175, New York, NY 10017. $1.00.

S-F CHRONICLE is another news-zine, more restricted to writing, editing, publishing news, media news, a few letters, a few reviews.

16-page format, set up in the true newsletter style—no cover as such, no art—just lead stories.

Andy and his staff do a thorough job (as do LOCUS and FANTASY NEWSLETTER). He uses a few photos of covers, and no interior artwork.

LOCUS is the leader of this pack of news-zines, and will likely survive as long as Charley Brown wants to publish it. I haven't seen a copy of LOCUS lately, since Charley doesn't want to trade, and I don't see any point in subscribing.

But I wonder if there are enough buyers/subscribers to support at least three s-f/fantasy news-zines? The end of the recession year of 1980 should answer that question.

I SEE I HAVE RUN OUT OF REVIEWING ROOM. OKAY... NEXT ISSUE WILL HAVE REVIEWS OF:

STARSHIP
STARSWARM NEWS
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...AND OTHERS.
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PS Form 3526 (Page 1) (See instructions on reverse)
Concerning the matter of the relationship between the worlds of science and science fiction, you mentioned earlier that there's a kind of one-way membrane that exists between the two -- that it's easy for a scientist to move into SF but that it's virtually impossible for an SF writer to move into science.

I don't know if anyone has ever tried to make the move from SF to science....

Sheffield: Yes, the father of us all: H.G. Wells. In the 1930s, Wells felt that he should be a respected scientific figure because many of the things he had predicted had in fact happened. His life's ambition was to be elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. But he never was. They said he was not qualified, that he did not have the appropriate training, that he didn't have the right degree, that he wasn't wearing the right college tie.

So that's a glaring example. He probably was infinitely more qualified to be a Fellow of the Royal Society than 90% of the people who were Fellows of the Royal Society, but he didn't have the 'club card' to be let in.

SFR: To what extent would you say that this 'club card' is still important? To what extent would you say that this rejection of SF by science is a consequence of an unreasoned -- unscientific -- prejudice against SF, and to what extent it's a matter of science fictioneers being not really scientific?

Sheffield: Let me quote you an example. About three months ago I was sitting in an Executive Committee session of the American Astronautical Society, discussing a forthcoming meeting. Somebody said, "Why don't we get Asimov as the kickoff speaker?" And the reaction of several present who are considered qualified scientists was, "No, no, no. We don't want anybody like that standing up giving our guys half-baked ideas".

Now, Asimov is somebody I've been reading and admiring as long as I've been reading science fiction and he has excellent scientific credentials, too. What I should have done was stand up and walk out -- no, stand up and punch 'em in the nose. But, since I'm a coward, I didn't do anything at all like that. Instead, after the meeting, I got together with the then-president of the AAS and said, "Don't get guys like that to control meetings, and let's get them off the Executive Committee." And we agreed that the way to solve the problem is to make sure boneheads don't organize our meetings or set out policies.

The whole point is, there is no acceptance of science fiction writers in science, that I know of -- with two curious exceptions. Arthur Clarke is accepted by scientists, but not because of his science fiction. He's accepted because he is recognized as the father of communications satellites. It's his scientist role that he's accepted by scientists. They permit him his other foibles.

The other exception, curiously enough, is at the very highest levels of science. I'm not talking about the middle level of scientists, I'm talking about the Nobel Prize winners. You get people like Gell-Mann, who was asked by the government to come in for a special session and predict the nature of technology as it would be in the next hundred years. Gell-Mann said, "You've got the wrong people. You should have asked science fiction writers. They're the ones who are able to make predictions. But guys like us, who are into science, are too busy proving what you cannot do."

What he meant was that scientists become enslaved by the constraints of their theories. After a certain time, a theory ceases to be an abstract concept; it becomes a basic belief, almost like a religion. And when an Einstein comes along with something radically new, many of the older generation never do accept it. It finally gets accepted when the older generation dies off and the newer comes along, having no preconceived notions that prevent them from accepting.

At the highest levels of science, science fiction and science fiction concepts are much more accepted than at the middle level. At the middle level, people have learned a little bit and can't go beyond that bit. And, in a sense, their refusal to accept SF ideas is consistent with a very basic principle of biology: The territorial imperative. You've carved out your little patch of jargon, your little area of expertise, and you're sure as hell not going to let some "unqualified" outsider come in and pee on your peapatch. At the highest level, people don't need to defend their territories; their territories are much bigger than they could ever occupy.

SFR: What sort of reaction have you gotten from your scientific colleagues as a result of your success as an SF writer?

Sheffield: There's been very little reaction. The most frequent question I've had is, "What name do you write under?" That's quite common. They don't read SF usually, and they assume that I wouldn't write it under my own name. They think that would be like signing into a motel for a "dirty weekend" under your own name.

I don't go around saying, "Hey, I write science fiction", to people that I meet. So a relatively small number of people know I do it, and most of those are people who already read it.

Even so, I do find I'm constrained in my SF activities. I think I mentioned to you that I was asked by Ace Books if I would contact some of my colleagues in the non-SF world -- the president of Rockwell Inter-

Conducted By Karl T. Pflock
national, a couple of astronauts -- and ask them for their opinions on THE WEB BETWEEN THE WORLDS. I did not say anything at the time, but afterwards, I realized I couldn't do that because I had the wrong relationship with those individuals. I had a certain equity with them, and that equity I could expend only for something very important -- like trying to get a certain clause put into Fxqua's space industrialization corporation bill. But I couldn't use it to get one-liners for the cover of one of my SF books. In that respect, I'm as two-faced as anybody.

SFR: The most recent annual meeting of the AAS had as one of its co-sponsors the Science Fiction Writers of America. How did that come about?

SHEFFIELD: For the 25th anniversary meeting in Houston, I arranged that the SFWA and the L-5 Society should be joint sponsors, with L-5 running a session. That proved very unpopular with the AAS board of directors and officers -- to the point where the people running the Los Angeles meeting this fall don't want any of those associations.

SFR: Why?

SHEFFIELD: They say the people are flaky. They say they stand up and make technically unsound statements -- which is often true -- that they don't have the right, "reverential" approach to science -- which is true but good -- and that, basically, they don't know what they're talking about.

The problem is, the way these meetings are usually run is that the local AAS chapters are relied upon to do all the leg work. And you can't afford to say, "We're going to impose our profile of the meeting on you". If you do that, you get no cooperation and no meeting.

What has to be done is to get the right balance between controversial and noncontroversial, from meeting to meeting. You can hold meetings in San Francisco that you could not hold in Houston, because of the different profiles of the two aerospace communities. So the national AAS office (mostly me) has the juggling problem.

All these things that are said about flakiness, lack of technical competence, lack of reliability, lack of engineering, lack of physics, lack of mathematics -- they are often all true. And they're not relevant. The time scale we're looking at is such that the objectives of our technology are more important than our ability to project the technology.

What I mean is, we can project from now to twenty or thirty years out -- but it's going to be wrong. So the objectives are what count -- the things you're going to try to do with whatever tools you have, rather than getting there with the specific tools you have now. We know the tools are going to change, and no one knows quite how.

For these reasons, I'm very interested in having SFWA, L-5 and the National Space Institute as sponsors and co-sponsors of AAS meetings because I want that thinking, the thinking that's out thirty years and more. But it's quite hard to sell, because there's a very conventional and conservative core in the AAS which you can't have too -- otherwise you can't build the damned things. You've got to have the right engineers to make rockets that get off the ground. So it's complicated. Space may be the High Frontier, but first and foremost, it's a high-technology frontier.

SFR: So the problem is to bring about a symbiosis between the enthusiasts, the visionaries and the hard-headed practical men, the nuts-and-bolts guys?

SHEFFIELD: Yeah, that's exactly the problem. And there is a division -- which is a strange one -- a division of generations in many cases. The problem with the U.S. space program is that in the last twenty years it has been phenomenally successful, but the people who carried it for those twenty years are not going to carry it for the next twenty years.

If I look at the people in the AAS, at the people in the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, at those running Houston, they're not going to be working in twenty years. They'll be retired. So who's going to carry the next twenty years? And who's going to have the enthusiasm and new ideas to make the next twenty years as interesting as the last twenty?

That has to come from men and women who are in college now. And the AAS has the specific goal of being a meeting place that student community -- and students are not conservative. But the people who are running the programs, who control the funds, are, because they're 55 years old. Don't get me wrong. Some 55-year-olds have younger views than some 20-year-olds. But as a generation, they're not ready to consider concepts which won't mature until 2040, because they expect to be dead. Whereas the students in college expect that their working careers are going to be spent in that time frame -- and they want interesting things to do. They want to talk about solar power satellites, industrialization of space, permanent space stations, lunar colonies, manned Mars missions, unmanned missions to the fringes of the Solar System -- they'll grab for them. And they'll do so without any constraint of respectability or conventional approach.

There is one thing that, in retrospect, may have been very significant about my own academic background. As I said, I attended St. John's College at Cambridge and read mathematics, quite a conservative institution and subject. But my supervisor at St. John's, was Fred Hoyle. At that time, Hoyle was not writing science fiction, and yet in a curious way, when I now look back to that period, the science fiction influence was very much at work.

The way things went, twice a week two students at a time would get one hour with their director of studies to cover any problems with the mathematics courses or to ask any questions they might have. Now Hoyle is an extremely fertile mind, who will speculate at the drop of a hat. We would ask him a question, which involved, say, Coriolis force or something. Hoyle would take off from there into a discussion of fictitious forces that arise in rotating reference frames, to a discussion of the Newtonian view of the universe with absolute space and time, to a comparison with the Einstein view with no absolute space and time, and so on. And these things, in a sense, were the highest form of science fiction. You don't get stories like that because the readership is not there for them, but they're fascinating. They're 99% mathematics, pure intellectual speculation.

Hoyle's a very extraordinary man. I was lucky to have him as my
director of studies. What's curious to me is that there are people -- fans -- who know him only as a science fiction writer. Yet he is probably the most innovative theoretical astrophysicist to have appeared in Britain since the Second World War.

SFR: The attitudes of those in the sciences, pure and applied, toward SF writers and science popularizers seem to be similar. Why is this, do you suppose? For instance, Carl Sagan seems to be looked upon with some disfavor by certain of his colleagues in the sciences. Interestingly, Sagan has recently written, in the NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE, I think, an article about how reading SF as a kid inspired him to go into a scientific career.

SHEFFIELD: The somewhat cool attitude of scientists toward science popularizers is there, but for a different reason than the one behind the similar attitude toward science fiction writers.

It's there because they're jealous as hell of the fact that Sagan can get a forum for his ideas that is a thousand times as big as they can get in the professional journals. So I think there is a good deal of simple envy. The people I know whom I consider to be good scientists have a high regard for Sagan. For them, the fact that he popularizes doesn't make him less of a scientist. In a sense, it makes him more of a scientist because ideas, if they're good ones, should be expressable to a very large audience.

Sagan is an example of someone who is resented by his less articulate colleagues and respected by those who don't have any pretensions to be like him. The latter don't underestimate the value of the popularizer, the man who can push the idea. The L-5 Society took O'Neill's ideas and put them out to a larger audience, but O'Neill began the popularization. You can't ignore the importance of that. The popularizers are, in my opinion, as important as the doers.

Which brings to mind NASA's big problem: It has a pitiful public relations campaign. It has not understood the need to explain the importance of the doers by suitable use of the popularizers.

SFR: I think it was Robert Heinlein who noted that, putting aside the fantastic achievement of putting men on the Moon, NASA's greatest accomplishment was making one of the most exciting events in the history of mankind over into one of the dullest damned things you can think of.

SHEFFIELD: I have my own version: NASA discovered the Inverse Philosopher's Stone, which will turn gold into lead.

SFR: I recall at just about this time last year, being on a panel at the AAS meeting here in Washington, sitting between Jerry Pournelle and Brian O'Leary. O'Leary was talking about the mass driver and its applications, while Jerry "whispered" in my ear: "They're doing it to us again!" What Jerry meant was, these are ideas that SF writers have been thinking up, kicking about and using for a long time, working out the difficulties of application in their stories, and now here we have a scientist coming along and introducing it as being a new notion out of science without giving due credit to SF writers. Have you noted this kind of thing yourself? And why do you suppose this happens?

SHEFFIELD: I think Jerry assumed malice where there was only ignorance. The reason that no credit is given is that the scientist has never heard of the prior "discovery". And this not only happens to science fiction writers, it happens to scientists!

All the time somebody is reinventing the wheel, and when he finds out that Tsioolkovsky talked about the same idea in 1890 or that Lord Rayleigh had used the same technique in 1902 or whatever, then he gives attribution to it. I don't believe that O'Neill stole the mass driver concept from Heinlein. I believe that O'Neill may have been influenced by people who talked to Heinlein, but that certainly doesn't make O'Neill a villain, any more than a scientist who discovers a theory or discovers it independently at the same time as someone else is a plagiarist. Generally, what happens is that over the years the sequence of discoveries is traced back.

Let me give you an example that goes back to Beanstalks, or Orbital Towers. The first Western reference to Orbital Towers was given in 1966 in a paper by a group at Woods Hole, who were interested in lowering long cables down into the sea. And then a Russian, Ivov, wrote a letter to SCIENCE magazine, saying, "Hey, wait a minute. This idea was invented by a Russian, Artsutanov, in 1960." And it was. You can't really blame Isaacs and his people at Woods Hole for not giving an attribution -- theirs was an independent rediscovery.

Then in 1974, a fellow at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Jerome Pearson, who did not know of the Isaacs paper or the Artsutanov paper, also wrote a paper about Orbital Towers. Now, you can argue that's irresponsible, but it's not.

I had the same experience myself. I developed an analysis for resonances of orbital satellites with gravity harmonics of the Earth's field. I wrote a paper on it. Then I had a letter from Kaula, who is at the University of California. He wanted to know why I didn't reference his earlier paper, which did the same thing. I wrote back and quoted Samuel Johnson, who when asked why he had defined the pastern as the "knee" of the horse, said, "Ignorance, Madam, pure ignorance". I had never heard of Kaula's paper. That goes on all the time.

But I think SF people believe they are unusually susceptible to getting screwed. The reason for that is a simple one: The scientists read the journals, but they don't read the science fiction magazines. Occasionally, you get a scientist who does read science fiction, and he writes to a journal, saying, "With reference to such-and-such a device mentioned in Professor So-and-So's paper, see..." and then you get a reference to a story by Clarke or Asimov or Heinlein. So things do eventually get the attribution.

SFR: With fairness to O'Neill he does give credit to SF writers -- I think particularly of his book...
Einstein's papers, they realized at once, Born said, that a genius of the first magnitude had arisen.

What that says is, if you've really got it and you have something profound to say and know how to say it well, you'll get published. If you have something profound to say, but you can't say it in the language people can understand, you might get published. But if you go too far away from what people are used to seeing, and if you have the bad luck to get someone who is not one of the top people in the field to read it, then the chances are you'll never get published if you come from outside the field. I think it is much harder now than it was in 1905 to get published if you don't have the right 'calling card'. But the Ph.D degree is depreciating to the point where you will soon need it to collect the garbage. When that happens it will perhaps be easier to get along without credentials.

SFR: Shifting gears: The space program is at a very critical juncture today. It could be renewed with great vigor, it could go down the tubes. A two-part question: Where do you think it will go? And if you had your druthers, where would it go?

Sheffield: That question is worth about an hour and a half of answer. Let's do it in pieces.

How's the U.S. doing compared to other countries? Well, the U.S. is doing badly. And the antitechnological intelligentsia in Washington isn't going to make it much better. It is still the case that in twenty years the Soviet Union, Germany, and Japan will have space capabilities that we lack. But in the long haul, considered over many generations, humanity is moving off the Earth extremely fast. To say that the space program is dragging, even in the United States with its reduced effort, is not true from any sort of multigeneration perspective. We're exploding off the Earth, and we're exploding around the Solar System. So from that point of view, we're going fast.

But you have to measure that against how much time we have. In my opinion, the critical problem of humanity is not that of getting into space quickly. It is population. Without population control, and soon, anything you do in space becomes irrelevant. The one thing that's absolutely guaranteed is that you won't be able to use space as a place to put extra people. We can breed too fast. Therefore, we may have only two generations before we begin some sort of technological slide backward. I don't know how far it will go; it depends how bad it will get. But if you talk in terms of populations of 10 to 12 billion, I don't think Earth can support that with anything like the lifestyle to which we are accustomed.

It's a very complex question, but I think that if I were to put my priorities on one problem, it would not be space. The space program is great. I think it's fascinating, the most interesting thing that has happened to the human race in hundreds of years, but it is not the solution to mankind's worst problem, which is excess people. And unless we can get some handle on that, and get a limit defined on the number of people that the Earth can rationally support, and then move to achieving that goal of population control, we won't get anywhere much in space. We'll play games in space, we'll try to solve the problems with space solutions, but we'll keep losing.

To look at some specific space programs that I think we should have, I'll go back and quote from congressional testimony I gave a year ago, in which I defined three near-term goals. One is the reusable Space Tug. The Shuttle gets you to low Earth orbit and back. The Space Tug gets you to geosynchronous orbit and back, and will allow you to carry humans up there. But it requires a significant technological jump, almost certainly a liquid-propellant Inertial Upper Stage.

The second thing to get the space program reactivated is an active manned lunar exploration program. We haven't finished with the Moon; we've only really just started it. We have to set some goals to get back up there, because I feel sure that with the next ten years the Russians will be developing spacecraft to take people to the Moon, and perhaps developing
permanent colonies there.

The third thing is a combined applications platform for weather, Earth resources, and communications which will sit at geosynchronous altitude and be staffed by a permanent crew. A space station, to look down.

Now, to achieve all these goals, there's one enormous hurdle that we have yet to get over: man's long-term ability to live without drastic physical damage in a low-gee environment. I was speaking a couple of months ago to the head of the medical programs for the European Space Agency, who has access to the medical records of the Russians and the longest manned space missions. There have been severe medical problems, which have not been discussed in any detail in this country. There's the long-term loss of calcium, which still goes on. And then there are these peculiarities of the vestibular functions of the inner ear, which does not get right at once when we come down and which stays wrong for quite a while.

These problems must be sorted out. Otherwise, you can't decide whether or not you must have an artificial gravity environment or whether you can get away with the Skylab type of environment. So, to reach my three goals, you also have to lick the biomedical problems.

What worries me about the proposals introduced in Congress is that they hardly say anything about biomedical problems. The three bills, two in the Senate and one in the House, virtually ignore these matters.

SFR: Of the three bills in Congress at the moment, which do you consider the best?

SHEFFIELD: Well, I think what will happen is that the Schmitt bill will be combined with the Stevenson bill to get one with less ambitious objectives than Schmitt's. Schmitt proposes a NASA budget of $1 billion a year to start with, two-and-a-half times the current NASA budget, with no specifics on how to absorb it into NASA programs. That would blow NASA's mind. They might love the money, but I'm sure they couldn't use it effectively.

So modify that -- it has to be more realistic -- and accept the idea of long-term objectives in space, the idea that you will not have programs that will be on-again-off-again, that there will be ongoing projects. Then take the Stevenson bill and give it some emphasis on medical activities, the continuous survival of man in space, and that's a good bill.

SFR: One of the problems with the space program is that it's subject to political whim. The Puqua bill is directed at trying to get private industry up there. As Jerry Pourvelle has often said, once you get the entrepreneurs up there making money, there's no way in hell you're going to stop space development. That'll give you your continuity. What do you think about that?

SHEFFIELD: It sounds great -- but ... I wish we had Don (Puqua) here with us. But, anyway, there's no evidence at all that industry is willing to put more than token money into space right now. There's a very simple reason: They can't see the return on investment, because the risks are too great and the benefits are too ill-defined. True, once people are sure they can make money, they'll go up there and do it. But we're a long way from that.

One of the things that really worries me about the space program is that it can't attract and hold guys like Rusty Schweikart. There is a really interesting guy, not at all one of those carbon cutouts the public thinks of when it thinks of astronauts. Once, NASA was it. There was no place someone like that would rather be. Now, NASA is beginning to look like a branch of the Social Security Administration.

SFR: Shifting gears: Dick Geis has suggested that despite all the new writers, the Big Boom, etc., very shortly the whole SF racket is going to come apart? Where do you see SF going?

SHEFFIELD: Well, first of all, I agree with Geis, perhaps for different reasons. Science fiction will probably go through its boom peak and back down before too long. That because my own experience tells me that a lot of what's being published is real garbage. Losing that garbage doesn't weaken the field, but it means there's less money in the field. So hard times may come -- one, two, five years from now -- and the people who couldn't write it but were being published anyway ought to disappear, in any logical world. But it could be that the people who can write it, and write it well, will disappear; I don't know. There will be an attrition process when hard times come, and the people who stick around will be the readers who want to read. Of course, it's possible that the readers will prefer the junk to the good stuff, and we'll be left with the Perry Rhodans of 1987. I don't think that will happen.

I have never seen a time when hard science fiction, really good hard science fiction, didn't sell. There have been times when it's been hard to get published, but Niven arose in the midst of the New Wave. And he will tell you he was very lucky, because he was the one who was writing anything of that style worth reading in that period, so he got off to a flying start. But you will continue to get the Nivens, the Varleys, the Clarkes, the Andersons, the Benfords, the Haldemans, the Asimovs, the Pohl's and the Hoggans, who will be writing good hard science fiction. And there will always be a good market for them.

The ideas won't dry up, and as long as there are people who are interested in ideas more than anything else, that's what they'll prefer to read.

I agree with the old statement, science fiction is the literature of ideas. And the people whose lives are primarily focused on ideas, quite often young males, I'm not knocking young females, but young males, at a certain time of their lives seem to go through a phase when they're only interested in ideas to the exclusion of all
else. They'll always want to read good science fiction. I have a character in a book whose motto is "ideas, things, people", and he believes in them in that order. Well, there are many people like that. They're not well represented in the literary field, because they tend not to write. They tend to be muto inglorious engineers and tongue-tied physicists, but they certainly read. And that audience will be there.

How much fantasy will survive is hard for me to tell, because I'm not a fantasy specialist. I suspect good fantasy will survive, because it too serves a real need.

My hope is that there will be hard times and a shrinking of the field, to the point that the average person can hope to read what is produced in a year, and not be flooded with so much material that he can't possibly read it all.

SFR: This brings to mind the problem of awards in the field –

SHEFFIELD: The Nebulas? They're supposed to be the SFWA members' personal best book, novella, novelette, and short story of the year. That's absolute nonsense, because people who are so busy writing, the SFWA members, don't have time to read it all. They didn't have time to read enough ten years ago, when there was a tenth as much stuff being produced as is being turned out today. It's a farce.

The Nebula Awards should be quietly disposed of, because they represent an unreal situation. They no more are a true reflection of what really is the best of the year than the president of the United States is the person best qualified to run the country. That isn't the way it happens. Awards that are as artificial as that shouldn't continue. We have recently rationalized the membership requirements for SFWA. We next should rationalize the Nebulas -- perhaps by rationalizing them out of existence.

SFR: How about the Hugos?

SHEFFIELD: I generally approve more of the Hugos, because they're voted on by people who have more time to read simply because they're not, most of them, writing. I know from personal experience that if you're not writing, you have a hell of a lot more time to read. I'm sure you know that too.

SFR: Well, what's Charles Sheffield working on in the time he doesn't have for reading?
THE VIVISECTOR

A Column By Darrell Schweitzer

WATCHTOWER
By Elizabeth Lynn
Berkley/Putnam, 1979, 251 pp., $9.95

This is the book that was allegedly rendered an instant collector's item by a flood at the Berkley warehouse a while ago. Until it was discovered that more were available, there was quite a run on it. I imagine many SFWA members grabbed copies in order to read the thing by Nebula time, since by all indications it's going to be a finalist, which is just as well because WATCHTOWER should be read. It deserves attention as something other than the target of a natural disaster. It is a superb novel, although not the sort one would expect to see nominated for a science fiction award, or even published as science fiction/fantasy prior to the past five years or so when the practice of disguising non-SF books as SF in order to insure their sales became common. (Remember when the reverse was true?)

But enough of that. If you're one of those sorts who demands lots of weirdly magic, heroic swordsmen, monstrous critters and the like in your "fantasy", head for the hills. Aside from a hint of prophecy, there is no fantastic element in WATCHTOWER aside from the setting. It is a "historical" adventure set in an imaginary land, rather on the order of Leslie Barringer's JORIS OF THE ROCK, etc. It is also very, very good. Lynn is an extremely polished stylist with a touch of poetry. Anybody can describe a bunch of thatched houses, but she sees them as the back of old men hunched in a row, which strikes me as a novel but fitting image. She is deft with understatements. A chapter begins, "It was an ugly fight", and it is indeed, ugly and intensely real.

Her greatest gift is for characterization. All the major figures and some of the minor ones come alive as believable people without black and white stereotypes. The man who would be the "villain" in a pulp novel has his own motivations and is even sympathetic at times.

The background is a very loosely organized feudal society, and for the most part it is well realized. Apparently there is no government beyond the level of the local warlord. (The obvious question is why someone doesn't try to conquer the castles one by one and set up an empire. Not only has Lynn thought of that, but most of the plot derives from it. A prince is deposed and must win back his realm, and happily few of the expected developments of a conventional swashbuckler actually develop.) The place has a gritty, down to earth feel about it, and one is convinced.

The only thing that bothers me is a total absence of religion or, aside from the few followers of one man still living, any belief system at all. Not only are there no gods to swear by, but nobody seems to have any ideas about humanity's place in the universe, where people go after death, or why things happen. Such are present in every known society, even though sometimes there are no deities involved (as in Communism or pure Buddhism), and usually at the stage of development Lynn describes, the supernatural abounds, as it did in the Middle Ages of our world. Because no attempt is made to fill this niche, the picture of the societies is incomplete.

This is not to say the novel is without social ideas. It can best be described as quietly Feminist. Most of the women are married to men, have families, etc., but there are few who chose otherwise, and Lynn is clearly saying that's their business and no one else's. The messenger, Sorren, who wants to go off and have adventures is able to do so, breaking free of the traditional roles, and this is seen to be a Good Thing. But there are no preoccupations, even in a section which borders on utopian. I am reminded of THE DISPOSSESSED at times, in that all this comes across as the story moves along, instead of being part of a lecture tour.

This is only Ms. Lynn's second novel. She will go far. (Most recently into a sequel, THE DANCERS OF ARUN, which Sontow Sucharitkul tells me is "sublimely good". I'm eager to find out.)

TALES OF NEVERYON
By Samuel R. Delany
Bantam, 264 pp., $2.25

I don't know what to make of Samuel Delany these days. It's easy to say that he's lost it, that he has grown hopelessly self-indulgent (What was DHALGREN except 800+ pages of a writing exercise exploring ways to depict sensory experiences?) and unable to reach the levels he did ten years ago, but one must keep in mind that if an author chooses not to do something anymore, that doesn't mean he is no longer capable of doing it.

What Delany has stopped doing is telling stories. Since this is the primary function of fiction, I don't think TALES OF NEVERYON is of much interest to the story-reading
public. Had it been by John Doe, I doubt it would have been published, brilliant as some of its parts are, because it is a collection of fragments which don't add up to anything, rather like the sort of thing authors leave behind in their papers after they die.

Sometimes such works are published as curiosities. Sometimes they are fanned out to other writers to complete. In this case the other writer would have to do most of the work, because what we have is a prologue, a few episodes, and various bits of exposition which could be either digressions or appendices. Probably the best comparison is to Peake's TITUS Alone. It is a tantalizing glimpse of a novel that might have been, had the author completed it.

However, even if it has little to offer to most readers, I think fantasy writers practicing and would-be should read it. You see, TALES OF NEVERYON is nothing short of the reverse-image of the average fantasy novel. It contains all the elements which are usually omitted, and vice versa. A typical book of this type is strongly plotted.

Delany's vestigial plot only begins to move at the very end, and when it does, it gets silly fast. We have a handful of people taking castles and freeing slaves so easily that if it were at all possible, no one would have ever kept slaves or built castles. The final section, for sheer stupidity, is surely the worst writing Delany has ever done, and the only part which actually suggests that his talent may be failing him. Otherwise, maybe the book is a series of false starts, and it never jells, but it's often fascinating along the way.

Your typical sword and sorcery novel takes the hulking barbarian hero as a given, and as a result he is completely cardboard. "The Tale of Gorgik", which is better than the rest of the book put together, the only part which actually works as a piece of fiction instead of a writing exercise, explores in splendiferously, wholly human detail, how a society would produce such a character and then comes to the conclusion that he's not a "barbarian" after all:

"...the optimum product of his civilization. The slave mine, the court, the army, the great ports and mountain holds, desert, field, and forest: each of his civilization's institutions had contributed to creating this scar-faced giant, who wore thick furs in the cold winter and in the heat went naked... an easy man in company and yet able to hold his silence. For the civilized man in which he lived he was a civilized man." (p. 55)

The average sword and sorcery novel is usually set in a kingdom, where a king sits on a throne and the political system is no more complicated. Delany produces an intricately structured court which is one of his finest creations. You may wonder what scar-faced giants do for kicks. You find out. There are fascinating social situations, a marvellous parody of the concept of penis envy, a creation myth which is fully as female-chauvinist as GENESIS is male-chauvinist, and lots more. Delany can bring across the actual experience of a fictional event, what it felt like, tasted like, smelled like, better than almost anyone else, certainly better than many of those writers who are still-story-tellers.

Which is why "The Tale of Gorgik" promises so much and the book as a whole is such a disappointment: the skill is there; the prose is a joy to read, but Delany isn't doing anything with all the ingredients. I think fantasy writers should read this so they can see how Delany does so many things well, so they can learn from him, and go on to the things he hasn't bothered to do at all.

The cover, by the way, has nothing to do with the text. Nobody battles huge dragons in the book. The only dragons are tiny ones, mentioned in passing. The painting is superficially attractive, but awkward in its details, including a man holding a bow in an impossible fashion.

Well, Bantam art direction has been none too smashing of late, as their Conan books show.

HEAVENLY BREAKFAST
By Samuel R. Delany
Bantam, 1979, 127 pp., $1.95

An account of Delany's life in a New York commune, 1967-68. Bohemian squallor seems to have gotten less hygienic of late. Those of you who read fanzines frequently encounter articles about everyday experience in which the writer is just recording what he did (went to a con, went on a trip, moved) or else trying to understand the same and draw some larger meaning out of it. This is the same sort of writing, only at a professional level of competence and a lot longer. I enjoyed it and read it with interest. Delany gives a definite sense of what it was like to live with about twenty people in a four room apartment, how the interactions between individuals subtly shifted, and how such a situation can be supportive and worthwhile if you can stand living in someone else's amplit.

A counter-cultural period piece, of literary interest because it shows where a lot of the material in Delany's work comes from. Certainly anyone who thinks IHAGLEON is a great novel will devour this religious. (A curious phrase, "to devour religiously". Ritualistic bibliographic cannibalism?!) My feeling is that perhaps this is the book IHAGLEON should have been, or even a book which by its publication renders IHAGLEON unnecessary.

At $1.95 it is badly overpriced. Thin, high-priced books don't sell, of course. If this were an Ace book it would have huge print and be twice as thick, martyring trees. Doesn't anyone have the courage to publish a thin, low-priced book?

THE DYING EARTH
(A noteworthy reprint)
By Jack Vance
Pocket Books, 1979, 156 pp., $1.75

This collection of six related stories is one of the authentic classics. The first edition began to command fabulous prices after its very limited release in 1950, and there were those who doubted the work even existed. Happily it has been more available in recent years, and more happily yet the new Pocket Books edition has the most attractive cover it's had in quite a while.

THE DYING EARTH is the tale of a time so distant that all we know has been forgotten, science has turned into sorcery, and this world is a magical realm. Sometimes Vance's writing is very beautiful; sometimes it shows a sparking wit. His images and ideas can be astonishing. While Clark Ashton Smith
JUNIPER TIME
By Kate Wilhelm
Harper & Row, 1979, 280 pp., $10.95

This is not Kate Wilhelm's best novel, and I don't even think it's as good as the last one of hers that I read (THE CLEWSTON TEST), but it is certainly worth reading. It is one of the better novels of the year, although admittedly that isn't saying much. Maybe I am getting bored, cynical and jaded, but I doubt it, and am convinced we really are living in an era of blandly competent science fiction. The archtypal magazine of the late 70s might be called JUST OKAY SF. Terry Carr might edit THE YEAR'S AVERAGE. Still, JUNIPER TIME has strengths which would be outstanding even in the best of times.

Wilhelm doesn't write pretty; she writes well. Her prose is vividly descriptive when there is something interesting to describe. It is lean where it should be lean. The dialogue sounds like people talking. She knows how to depict human beings so that their humanity comes across to the reader. In this novel there are easily five or six well-developed characters and a host of plausible spear carriers.

What goes wrong? Certainly the subject is worth writing about. We have a world plagued by vast climate changes, droughts which render most of the western United States all but uninhabitable. In the face of this an international space station is abandoned before it is completed. But several of the characters are obsessed with it and revive interest. They are the dreamers, the doers, the pioneers. They are also the sort of people who will stop at nothing to get what they want, and in the end everybody has been compromised and the ideal is sadly tarnished. This is an important and timely theme: Long-term goals in space contrasted with the immediate needs of the people on earth. It is handled with intelligence. There are no easy answers, no heroes riding out of the sunset, no marvelous inventions which save the day. Certainly everything that goes on is convincing.

One problem is that the book is too talky. The long explanations of how the seeming alien message was deciphered bored me, and there are perhaps too many discussions of what everything is all about (including the title of the book) which tend to stop the novel dead when it should be moving. Now I can understand why an author might go to these lengths to be clear. If she has something to say, she will get it said, since communication is the whole point of writing. But showing is better than telling sometimes.

Possibly the cast is too large. The book lacks focus. Repeated shifts in viewpoint, often within a scene, tend to dilute the characterizations to the point that when one of the less well developed characters undergoes an important change at the end, it seems like a rabbit out of a hat. The best parts are those from the viewpoint of the linguist, Jean Brighton. Her experience in the Newtown (a refugee center) is nightmarish. Her perception of American Indian culture as an admirable, but alien way of life is sensitively portrayed. At least one other viewpoint (Cluny, one of the space-obsessed ones) is needed in the interests of the plot, but beside these two the rest suffer by comparison.

At least the book does have its high points. It is a worthy effort, though not a flawless one.

A DREAMER'S TALES (Important Reprint)
By Lord Dunsany
Owlswick Press, 1979, 160 pp., $12.75
Illustrated by Tim Kirk

This may very well be the best fantasy short story collection available in English. I can only think of a few nearly as good, and they are all by Dunsany and tend to contain much of the same material. Exhavant praise? Well, Dunsany has commanded the same for the better part of a century now. Lovecraft went on at length in THE SUPER-NATURAL HORROR IN LITERATURE. Yeats, writing about one of the stories in this book, said that if he'd read it as a young man, he would have looked on it as the creation of his world, and his whole career might have been different.

Whenever anyone talks about Dunsanian-style fantasy, or says that a writer went through a "Dunsany period", as so many have, it is the material in the early fantasy collections, of which many consider A DREAMER'S TALES to be the best, that they are referring to. In brief, it is one of the parameters of fantasy. Now, fantasy, in my experience, does not appeal to everyone, and it may not even be able to reach as many people as science fiction, but when it moves a reader, it does so like nothing else. Give the beginner A DREAMER'S TALES, Tolkien, the Earthsea books and maybe Peake, and if he doesn't like any of them, give up.

All these stories are beautifully written and some are just outrageously good. They achieve what few other writers can, even though many may have tried. In a few pages Dunsany could build the impression of a magnificent city, then wipe it away with a comment that a stone from that city found by the author, may be one of four yet discovered ("In Zaccarath"). He could have commonplace articles in a dump tell their stories and make those stories epics ("Blagarross"). On a bet, he wrote a brilliant story about the mud at the side of the Thames or, more specifically, about a restless corpse which lies there, watching eternity pass by, until at last nothing wrought by mankind drifts on the river ("Where the Tides Ebb and Flow").

Then there is "The Hashish Man" which drew a fan letter from Aleister Crowley, but had little to do with real drug experiences and was all the more fantastic for it. Some of the stories would, with more pedestrian handling, seem like sketches and fragments, but then so do those of Borges. One has to be a Dunsany or a Borges to pull some of these things off. Only the right phrase will do. Only a Dunsany would describe a desert as: "all yellow it is, and spotted with shadows of stones, and Death is in it, like a leopard lying in the sun". Need anyone say more?
THE COSMIC TRIGGER by Robert Anton Wilson
And/Or Press, $4.95

This man is incredible. He is vastly learned in the occult, in paranormality, in psi science, on everything on the fringe of what we are so sure of... and he is in tune with the underground sea that is the individual and collective unconscious.

In THE COSMIC TRIGGER he weaves this knowledge and personal experiences into a mosaic of speculation and assumption into a kind of unified field theory of the unspeakable.

Through it all runs the feeling/belief that there is a Plan, a Secret Group, a Destiny for humanity, for Earth. There are hundreds of major and minor clues pointing to this, and Robert Anton Wilson has discovered many of them and is pointing the way.

He reaches back into prehistory ---Babylonia, Egypt, Sumeria, you-name-it, incorporates the John Kennedy assassination, the murder of Christ, UFOs, the Sufis, witchcraft, the mysterious Illuminati, the Sirrhus mystery, sex magic, tunnel-realities and imprints... Every odd phenomenon seems to fit into this jigsaw puzzle that seems to make breathtaking, mindblowing sense.

Wilson makes you gulp and think seventeen times about this safe, solid world we live in: is it all a facade, a thin veneer? Are there entirely ugly/lovely/alien/good/evil Things Going On?

THE LOST ONES by Raymond F. Jones, adapted from his novel THE RENEGADES OF TIME.

This package is a 30-minute audio cassette plus a booklet illustrating the spoken/acted drama (with music).

It's like listening to a radio drama (sound effects, music, very fast pace, extremely short scenes...) while you assist your visualization by referring to the 36-pages of full-color drawings which also tell the story.

The tape drama is professionally one, with good voices speaking clearly, with effective sound background. But the action is so fast, and the dialogue so brief and devoted to necessary information, that no real characterization survives and no motivation for many plot twists is given. Why Will and Joel are willing to risk life and limb to find and rescue Tamarina is never explained. It is enough, I suppose, that she is young, pretty, and a woman. And it is also hard to believe that Joel could fall in love with her after a few of these thirty-second exchanges of shouts and commands.

The story illustrations are very well done by James C. Christensen. An unfortunate aspect of the package these cassettes & booklets come in is that its destruction is virtually required to free the...
ON THE BRINK by Benjamin Stein with Herbert Stein
Ballantine, $1.95

This disaster novelis of the new sub-genre dealing with financial catas-
trophe for either the world or the U.S.A.

This time, in the very near future [1981] a fanatic Chairman of the
Federal Reserve combined with a cowardly President manage to flood
the country with gargantuan amounts of debt money and trigger an infla-
tion of horrendous proportions—weekly raises to compensate for the
price rises--100% over three months and worse come...

The good people are the econo-
mists in the White House who try to
dissuade the President from this
course, futilely, because he is afraid of
becoming the "new Hoover" by plung-
ing the country into depression if
he tries to stop the inflation engine.

This was copyrighted in 1977,
perhaps written in 1976...perhaps
before Carter was elected. Herbert
Stein was, if I remember correctly.
A high economics advisor to Nixon.
His contempt for Presidents shows in
this book. He is the source for the
fascinating arguments between the
Good Economists and the Bad
Chairman and President in this novel.

In the end the inflation becomes
so bad that people go crazy and others
riot--as the glue of a society
dissolves: stable, "hard" money is
the bedrock of a stable society, and
when a government debaches the
currency, that progressively under-
mines all other morality in the
nation.

There are subplots and some sex
and some interesting characteriza-
tion here, but it is essentially a
lesson in basic economics--and basic
morality.

The miraculous ending is pure
fantasy.

THE COURTS OF CHAOS by Roger Zelazny
Doubleday, $7.75

Avon 47175, $1.75

This is the fifth and final vol-
ume of the Amber saga. At last! Now
you can find out what really happened
in The Hunting of the Green. And why...
And will the forces of evil and confusion
ripen over the Pattern that is the
bedrock of order, coherence and
cause-and-effect relationships in the
universe? Will Brand, the evil son
of Oberon be foiled in his alliance
with the Courts of Chaos? Will Am-
ber, the true and only center of
reality, be dissolved?

Who cares? I do. I like Roger
Zelazny's unique style of writing.
He seeks to write with great casual-
ness, almost sloppiness at times,
but there is that, fantastic, subtle
easy-read dynamics, the involvement,
the ability to make fantasy real be-
cause his characters--especially
Prince Corwin, the central figure of
the saga--are downright human:
warts, flaws, selfishnesses...and
noble aspects, too. Zelazny's per-
sona are not just cardboard cutouts--
they fiddle this way and that for a
three-dimensional effect.

In this final volume Corwin
spends an awful lot of time in the
Shadows, fleeing a Chaos storm, be-
ing attacked, attacking in turn. The
Shadows are alternate, progressive-
ly strange variations (Shadows) of the
one real land--Amber. Earth
as we know it is one such Shadow.
But our Earth is not a factor in
this final Amber novel.

The third and fourth volumes of
this saga were disasters as novels,
being so obviously mere continuations
of the saga and very dependent on
previous volumes. This last volume
has problems, but it's good enough
to merit a recommendation from me.
Read it, but it would help tremen-
dously to have read the first four
volumes.

PULSAR 1 Edited by George Hay

This is a singularly good-idea
anthology; it pairs s-f stories
with non-fiction articles and com-
mentary on the themes of the sto-
ries.

A.E. van Vogt's "Death Talk"
is followed by David Langford's
"The Still Small Voice Inside"
dealing with the probabilities and
possibilities of "wiring" the body-
brain with a computer to monitor
our selves.

Ian Watson's "Immune Dreams"
brings "Infectious Science" by
John Taylor, an examination of the
relationships between cancer, the
brain, dreaming, reality, and
catastrophe theory.

In the middle of the book is
"The Time Travellers," an inter-
view with Isaac Asimov: Isaac is
not optimistic about mankind's fu-
ture as a civilized, high-technolo-
gy creature; he sees famines, raw-
material depletion, wars...

"Small World" by Bob Shaw, and
"The Skytank Portfolio" by Chris
Boyce deal with life in space habi-
tats, their likelihood of coming to
pass, and their future.

Michael Conen's story, "In
Search of Professor Greatrex," is
the most intriguing to me: the idea
that mankind's reasoning ability
is dependent on a long child-
hood, and that if childhood is
shortened or is gradually shorten-
ing, mankind's ability to solve
problems will diminish...and we
will dwindle back to the cave--or
worse.

Stan Gooch, in "Once More,
With Feeling," discusses intelli-
gence, intelligence tests, and the
TNT possibility that intelligence
differs between men and women.

Josephine Saxton's "Nue, Bliet,
and in Heaven, Laugh a Grim House-
hold Tale" is a convoluted, fasci-
nating "story" about the travail of
writing, living, and what we've
been taught to expect of life.

In "The World as Text: The Post-
literate World as Meta-narrative"
Angela Carter juggles words at mer-
cifully short length; she had noth-
ing to say.

The final item is a discovered

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MALAFRENA by Ursula K. Le Guin
Putnam, $11.95

This new novel by Ursula Le Guin is not science fiction or fantasy in the true sense of the words. It is a true-to-life story about a fictional mid-European country, Orsinia, in the early 1800s. It concerns itself with Le Guin's favorite themes: gaining political freedoms, gaining personal freedoms for women, the emergence of strong, competent women in a male-dominated society, character development to wisdom and maturity (though some men break and fail the tests).

On the surface it is the story of idealistic Itale Sorde, heir to Malafrena, a large estate in the country, who feels wasted and who goes to the capital, Krasnoy, to write and agitate against the puppet government controlled by neighboring Austria. Eventually, after arrest, imprisonment for years, a revolution in which he participates, and after involvement with a lovely baroness, he returns for good to Malafrena.

But Itale is the center only; around him and his concerns orbit the women in his life, and they are the real focus—their struggles, their development, their eventual triumphs. In a real sense, this is written in the 19th century style—detail great, much interior thinking about life and politics and personal relationships...yet an almost complete absence of sex and physical concerns. That aspect of life is always implied, understated, ignored. It is, in this novel, not a fit subject for polite discourse.

This is an intellectual's novel, dealing with the lives of aristocrats and (at the lowest) the upper middle class. It is a very readable novel and it contains wisdom, but it does seem like a building without a basement, and for all its thinking seems curiously empty...and pointless.

THE DOUGLAS CONVOLUTION by Edward Llewellyn
DAW UEl495, $1.75

The story of an ex-marine, a mathematician, who discovers a "convolution" of forces which makes occasional time-travel possible. He investigates—and is caught in the time warp.

The novel details his survival in the future of 2170: he assumes the identity of a Guard Captain and helps fight the onslaught of mindwarped savages as the East coast of America struggles to maintain a semblance of civilization.

There are leftover machines and technology from our near-future before a Final War, and the world of 2170 is ruled by a matriarchy/religion and local "autarchs". There are/ have been other time travellers, it seems... One of whom is an extremely evil man who wants to overthrow the existing status quo.

Interesting plot technique: telling 99% of the story by way of a woman pilot assigned to the "Captain". She gradually loses her intense mental-set conditioning and falls in love with Douglas.

There should be at least two sequels to this novel; the potential of this future world and the time convolutions virtually demand it. Pretty good for a first novel. In fact, Llewellyn's writing skills are impressive.

LACRAGIE FIVE by Mack Reynolds
Bantam 12806-X, $1.95

The main interest in this display of life-in-huge-1.5-space-islands is the philosophy of elitism and exclusiveness stressed to insure only the best minds and bodies for space colonists. The plot involves the attempts by a private detective to find a missing VIP in the extant space islands in Earth orbit. Reynolds does his usual good job of pacing and structuring, but he is a hack and his dialogue and narrative is reflexive and often careless and dumb.

THE ROAD OF KINGS (a new Conan adventure) by Karl Edward Wagner
Bantam 12026-3, $1.95

The formula is familiar: Conan gets into trouble with the local city/kingdom authorities (desperate trouble, this time—he's got the noose around his neck!) escapes or is rescued and finds himself embroiled in a rebellion. He is the key fighter/actor in the upheaval, in spite of himself, and in the end goes his way—to further adventure in the next novel.

The only question the would-be reader asks is: how well is this story told?

Very well! Karl Edward Wagner ranks with Andrew Offutt as an excellent choice to continue the high-tension, bloody, dramatic, realistic life of the mighty Conan.

It may be heresy, but I think Offutt and Wagner do better Conans than Robert E. Howard. But we'll never know how well Howard could have done in today's world of writing freedom.

WINDOWS by D.G. Compton
Berkley/Putnam, $10.95

This is a sequel to THE UN-SLEEPING EYE. Compton continues the story of the man whose eyes had been replaced with miniature TV cameras and transmitters, and who, in terrible guilt and rage at what he was doing to people as a reporter, blinded himself.

WINDOWS is a drag as Rod spends huge chunks of the book feeling sorry for himself, goes through character/personality changes due to his blindness, and finally runs away to the home of an old friend in Italy. There, with his wife, he is gradually involved in espionage, murder and smuggling. In the end he and his family escape the isolated estate and Rod has reconsidered his decision to stay blind. (Advanced surgery can do wonders.)
AND THEN I SAW....

BY THE EDITOR

LORD OF THE RINGS (PG) is an abortion committed by Ralph Bakshi on the body of Tolkien's work. All the excesses and misjudgments evident in Bakshi's WIZARDS is in this movie.

Clearly, as the movie progressed, it was obvious that Bakshi's love for using human actors with hideous masks and grotesque color effects in endless violence scenes overcame his critical judgement and his obligation to the material. The story was lost in battle after battle, and Frodo's quest and mission receded to occasional short, time-wasting bits.

The animation sequences, and even some of the human/animation scenes were very nicely done. Character, personality and motive emerged and were consistent. There was a beautiful artwork.

But Bakshi butchered the movie as it progressed—whether due to a need to reduce costs or simply because he indulged his obsessions—is beside the point. The result is a boring, distasteful botch. And the movie ends incomplete, in mid-point of the story. Will there ever be a completion? I hope not, if Bakshi is in charge.

WATERSHED DOWN (PG) seemed a bit awkward and childish at first, but the story triumphed (though simplistically) over the less-than-perfect animation and script.

Martin Rosen wrote, directed and produced this version of the best-selling Richard Adams book.

I enjoyed the film, made allowances for the sometimes garbled dialogue and confusion, and sniffled at the end. (I cried as a child when, in Bambi, Bambi's mother was killed.)

It has a couple admirable heroes, some vicious villains, and a happy ending. So what if it's essentially a translation—humans in rabbit form. It extolls freedom and says boo/hiss to tyranny. [It also encourages revolt and disrespect for established authority, but wotthell!]

METEOR (PG) convinced me that any Samuel Z. Arkoff movie is going to be second rate. This one is full of scientific howlers and plot cliches.
THE THIRD WORLD WAR -- AUGUST 1985
By General Sir John Hackett and other Top-Ranking NATO Generals and Advisors
Macmillan, 1978, 368 pp., $12.95
Hardback
Reviewed by Nicholas Santelli

TWW has been in print in Europe for over two years and has received considerable acclaim and derision. In this country it has been on the best seller list for 22 weeks and is still going strong. While marketed strictly as a mainstream novel, its title (subject) may attract quite a few SF readers, particularly when it appears in paperback in '80 or early '81.

TWW is not a novel in the usual sense. There is no plot, no character development, in fact there are hardly any people at all. It is a "report" drafted in 1987 by a group of British Generals on the recently concluded war between the Warsaw Pact and NATO. The "report" is thorough, containing numerous battlefield maps, charts and tables. There are some good, realistic "battlfront accounts". (The book opens with U.S. Sheridan tanks slugging it out with some Russian T-72s.) It also reveals the authors' awesome knowledge of modern weapons and warfare.

Unfortunately the "report" is also dry and didactic, the battlefield accounts are too few, and the brief encounter between a U.S. Shuttle and a Soviet Soyuz is unimaginative. The final chapter in which a single nuclear exchange ends the conflict is unconvincing and too pat. General Hackett's main reason for writing the book is contained in the "report's" numerous conclusions. These conclusions are actually thinly veiled pleas (some quite persuasive) for the U.S. and Britain to increase defense spending, strengthen NATO, and reinstate the draft.

Conclusion: If you are looking for a good novel, SF or otherwise, stay away from this one. If, however, you're militarily inclined and interested in/worried about U.S. military strength...OR...you are looking for good source material to lend accuracy to some of your own stories, the book may be worth the price.

THE HAUNTED MAN: THE STRANGE GENIUS OF DAVID LINDSAY
By Colin Wilson
Paperback, 63 pp., $2.95

By Clifford P. Bendau
 Paperback, 63 pp., $2.95
Milford Popular Writers Series, Vol. 20
The Borgo Press, Box 2845, San Bernardino, CA 92406.

Reviewed by Neal Wilgus

Colin Wilson is a writer with an obsession and he's written compulsively about it for more than 20 years now, producing 33 books on an amazing variety of subjects, yet managing always to relate his latest variation back to the basic underlying theme. That theme is the prob-
of the Outsider and appropriately the title of his first book was THE OUTSIDER (1956), the first of a six-volume Outsider cycle in which he worked out a basically optimistic philosophy of evolution which he calls the New Existentialism. The Outsider may be poet, artist, magician, scientist or visionary mystic, but in every case his main problem is to get past the sleepwalking state of daily 'reality' and down to the underlying meaning of life and the rational management of evolution.

Wilson remains somewhat of an outsider himself in the science fiction community, but he has turned to SF and fantasy from time to time, both as critic and as novelist. THE HAUNTED MAN, his latest publication, is typical of his critical essays and is of interest both as another variation on the Outsider theme and as a critical evaluation of one of the strongest fantasy writers yet.

David Lindsay (1876-1945) is best known for his SF "classic" A VOYAGE TO ARCTURUS (1920), but according to Wilson, his other novels (THE HAUNTED WOMAN, SPHINX, DEVIL'S TOR) also contain important fantasy elements which make his neglected works worthy of wider attention.

Lindsay was certainly the archetypical Outsider, a sort of cross between D.H. Lawrence and William Blake, seeing visions of the "reality" beyond everyday life yet somehow always unable to communicate what he had seen. Colin Wilson seems to take delight in seizing on total worldly failures such as Lindsay or Lovecraft and turning their negative philosophies around to serve his own optimistic New Existentialism. It's ironic sometimes to hear Wilson's "Lovecraftian" novels (THE MIND PARASITES, THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE, THE SPACE VAMPIRES) criticized as rehashes of HPL's gloomy work, when in fact they are glorious transformations of eldritch doom into existential glory. Significantly, in discussing what he calls "the existentialist temperament", Wilson comments in THE HAUNTED MAN that "it is extremely common among writers of science fiction... so common that I am tempted to describe it as the driving force behind science fiction".

Borgo Press has followed its analysis of Lindsay by Wilson with an analysis of Wilson by Clifford Benda and for anyone with an interest in Wilson it's a valuable reference to have around. Alas, Benda is not much of an Outsider and THE OUTSIDER AND BEYOND is pretty tame, academic stuff. The first half of the booklet is an unimaginative rehash of the Outsider/New Existentialism theme which is unnecessarily repetitive and only marginally rewarding. The remainder is a book-by-book discussion of Wilson's work and although you may not always agree with his comments they are usually to the point. The only thing missing is reference to Wilson's short novel, THE RETURN OF THE LLO- GOOR in August Derleth's TALES OF THE CTHULHU MYTHOS which, though entertaining, is of marginal importance in any case.

In the long run Colin Wilson will probably turn out to be a literary figure of first importance, comparable to Shaw, Huxley and Orwell as 20th century writers, and perhaps more important, he writes in a crisp, entertaining prose that is often difficult to put down. Borgo sorcery thrown in for seasoning. The adventures of a renegade misfit and a gift for prophecy are told lyrically and well, and at times with a surprising amount of delicate sensuality.

In the second half some of the more mysterious things that have been happening are gradually explained, but on a scale of reference suddenly blown up ten times the size. Before the book is done our hero and his friends have been whisked back and forth across the galaxy more times than you can shake a transgalactic portal at.

This is a novel of epic proportions, and there's a lot going on. If you're a reader and you stick around long enough, you're going to be challenged and rewarded and delighted for taking the trouble.

Overall, I still can't call it altogether successful as a novel. It's worth the time put into it, but perhaps its greatest failure is that of simply not measuring up to its own ambitions.

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THE WEIRD GATHERING & OTHER TALES
Edited by Ronald Curran
Fawcett Crest, 574 pp., $2.50
Reviewed by David A. Truesdale

This exhaustive tome is certainly not for the average science fiction or fantasy buyer. It is best suited to the college classroom, ideally in any one of a number of Women Studies courses, either integrally or peripherally. The subtitle says it all: "SUPERNATURAL" WOMEN IN AMERICAN POPULAR FICTION, 1800-1850. The material is arranged under headings such as: Witches, Covens & Sabbats, The Solitary Sorceress, Water Spirits & the Demonic Power of Women, Diabolical Fairies & the Romantic Spirit, American Indians & "Natural" Passion, Shrews, Vixens & Viragos: The Villainous Women, with many of the archaic and hard to read pieces listed as anonymous.

The source material is culled from magazines of the period and is listed in a lengthy, but representative bibliography running from The Period of Beginnings: 1741-1794 to The Period of Nationalism: 1794-1825 to The Period of Expansion: 1825-1850. Gift-Books and Annuals, Articles and Excerpts on, by, and about Women, as well as Witchcraft are covered mainly from esoteric periodicals, women's magazines, portfolios, journals, and more respected national and English monthly magazines and gazettes of

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MINDSONG
By Joan Cox
Avon 43638; c. 1979; 1st printing, April 1979; $2.25, 282 pp.
Reviewed by Steve Lewis

A curiously split novel. The first half is slow and leisurely paced, with a hint of swords-and-
the period. Pretty dry stuff to wade through, but a good research source for the scholar or historian wishing to learn how women were thought of, treated, and written about during this limited period of our literary history ... at least from the standpoint of 'The Enchanted World of Dark Legends'.

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SONG OF THE PEARL
By Ruth Nichols
Bantam for June, 1979, 120 pp., $1.75
Original pub. date 1976.
Cover by Elizabeth Malcynski
Reviewed by David A. Truesdale

Sparked by an allegedly true occurrence on the evening of April 4, 1935, Ruth Nichols relates the fictional account of Margaret Redmond, who died at an early age to find herself in an otherworldly, romanticized dreamheaven where she comes to grips with herself, and the conflict between heaven and the mortal world. Margaret confronts private sexual guilt, comes to free herself of its harmful effects, is introduced to an enigmatic lover and is subsequently involved in his family's internal intrigues, all part of the process of cleansing herself in order to ready herself once more for life.

The slim volume closes with the words, 'We will return to Earth, where lovers lie together and children are born, and some men, having forgotten their true nature, walk in fear of death. The time has come to resume our pilgrimage'.


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THE PURPLE DRAGON AND OTHER FANTASIES
By L. Frank Baum
Fictioneer Books, Ltd., Lakemont, GA 30552
Hardcover, 201 pp., $8.50
Reviewed by Neal Wilgus

In a roundabout way, L. Frank Baum is probably responsible for more SF fans than anyone short of H.G. Wells. Although he wrote little outright SF, most of Baum's work is definitely in the fantasy realm and since the Oz books and his other surviving 'fictions' continue to be popular juvenile fare unto the fourth generation, more often than not it's a Baum fantasy that first turns young readers onto the intoxication of freewheeling imagination. He was a Wiz.

Unless you're a real Baum fanatic and member of the International Wizard of Oz Club, however, you are probably not familiar with the Master's short fairy tales, and it is this gaping gap that THE PURPLE DRAGON goes about filling. It fills that gap very well indeed, for there are selections here from Baum's four fairy tale books and editor David L. Greene has skimmed off the cream of each, probably saving us considerable boredom which might have accompanied a Complete Fairy Tales of L. Frank Baum. Boredom, let me hastily qualify, stemming from the fact that these are fairy tales, after all, and for most adult readers a fairly small amount tends to go a long way.

Briefly then, THE PURPLE DRAGON contains representative tales from a NEW WONDERLAND (1900), MOTHER GOOSE IN PROSE (1897), AMERICAN FAIRY TALES (1901) and ANIMAL FAIRY TALES, which were published around 1905 in various periodicals and collected into an Oz Club edition in 1969. Baum gets better as you go along, for the NEW WONDERLAND tales of Phummynland are rather too simple and sickening-sweet and the Mother Goose material, while imaginative, doesn't really rise to the level of the originals. But the AMERICAN and ANIMAL tales more than make up for this, especially gems such as 'The Glass Dog', 'The Dummy that Lived' and 'The Forest Oracle'.

Baum was a real American origin-

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LEGION
By Charles L. Grant
Berkley, 1979, 213 pp., $1.75
Reviewed by Dean R. Lambe

The casual reader is treated more than a bit unfairly by this third novel in the 'Parric family saga', for that reader enters LEGION in the middle of the story -- and stays there.

Matthew Parric, grandson of the man who did his best to preserve civilization after the Eurecom War and Plague winds devastated the Earth, continues the efforts of his forebears. At the insistence of ContiGov Chairman Robbins, Matt sets out from Town Central to capture the renegade Solomon Quilly. Quilly's forces represent the only challenge to ContiGov's attempts to reunite scattered towns and re-establish the former cityplexes. In the company of android Will Dix -- essentially a Parric family retainer -- and four humans, Matt hunts through wild country around the Delaware River. The party is attacked and separated, the ensuing battle reveals the real murderers of Matt's wife and children, and the secret of the Quilly plan is finally discovered.

Since this book does not stand well alone, only the motivation of the central character makes much sense. There is action enough, and fairly routine plot twists, but overall, the writing seems tired. Once upon a time, the distinction between android and robot was clear; Hollywood has hopelessly muddled the waters and Grant is not helping with this series.

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GATEWAY TO LIMBO
By Chris Lampton
Doubleday, $7.95
Jacket by Robert Silverman
Reviewed by Steven Edward McDonald

The book is passable, the sort of semi-filler that used to turn up beneath the Ace logo, someplace below Zelazny's less impressive work. Take one self-possessed cynical
young bastard with high-level mentality, kick him in the ass, and progress from point A to point B, not necessarily in a straight line. In that sense, it's workable; the writing is competent and fairly concise, and the story is no worse than a few dozen others of its type, and certainly okay for a rainy day sit-down.

Problems do abound, however. The character of Allison Carstairs (clumsy name) is described as a genius of a cyberneticist, yet he's never seen to do anything that defines him as such—he's just there to be in the shit. The Lecch, a computerised djinni of sorts, I can take, as a gimmick. Various other things I can take. However, the book has a bad habit of reading like the James Bond of 1990, rather than a zapgun thriller set a few hundred years away -- a security compound is ringed by machine guns that fire in a preprogrammed pattern, rather than relying on computer-guidance, radar and infrared sensors; the "Sherlocks" mini-robots reminiscent of the Hunter in THE PRISONER, have everything but hearing, which would allow them to catch the hero rather inconveniently.

And so forth. It might make a nice low-budget movie, and it makes a moderate hour's entertainment, but, despite a slightly fascinating alien race that is culturally conditioned towards its own extinction, the book is ultimately forgettable.

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SOVEREIGN
By R.M. Meluch
Signet (NAL), 1979, 230 pp., $1.75
Reviewed by Dean R. Lambe

Any writer who, just as an aside, can put an aardvark aboard an interstellar warship, and make you believe it belongs there, is something above the norm. References to M.Z. Bradley, Leigh Brackett, and Zenna Henderson would seem apt.

At least four stories are presented in SOVEREIGN, spanning over 50 years. On the planet Arana, Teal Ray Stewert, 33rd generation Bay Royalist, heir to the Royalist crown, is tortured in his soul at his father's rejection. Kaela, Teal Ray's father, is challenged for sovereignty over the selectively-bred Royalists by the rival Brekk line. In wider scope, the whole Royalist people must battle the Northern Caucons for living space during climactic changes that occur throughout the 40.6 year "Star Year" of Arana's binary star system. And, in broadest scope, Arana -- with her two separate human species -- is an inter-galactic pawn between the forces of Earth and her allies, and the humanoid Uelsons. Teal Ray flees the emotional chaos of his father's house, and the Royalist war with Caucan dictator Tras, and secretly joins the defense of Earth against the Uelsons in Armageddon I. Teal loses his ship, is captured and tortured by Uelsons, escapes, and successfull passes into service with the United Earth Fleet. Interpersonal entanglements, love, hate, and his indelible Royalist roots plague Teal throughout the final resolution of these complexly interwoven conflicts.

The details at the beginning and the ambiguity of the ending cry out for prequels and sequels -- perhaps the reason for Signet's unusually good promotion of this first novel.

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THE GENTLE GIANTS OF GANYMEDE
By James P. Hogan
Ballantine/Del Rey 27375; c. 1978,
Reviewed by Steve Lewis

Back in 1977 I called Hogan's first published novel, INHERIT THE STARS, the "SF puzzle of the year", and I think with some justification. In that book the discovery of a space-suited 50,000-year-old corpse on the moon is the opening of a detective story plain and simple, but one for which the greater part of the solution is a greatly revised history of the entire solar system. This is the sequel.

One of the things that Hogan would have us believe is that the planet Minerva once existed in its place around the sun where the asteroid belt is now. (Yes, I know that's not a new idea. Of course, there's more to his theories than that.) Although the rest of the Minervan civilization mysteriously disappeared over 25 million years before, even before the destruction of their home world, a ship of survivors miraculously finds its way back from an ill-fated expedition across the galaxy. This time the surprising discoveries that are made as a consequence are about the very origin of mankind, which has some far-reaching implications for the homeless aliens as well. Hogan is trying no small potatoes, folks.

The nature of a sequel being what it is, before you start this one I think you're better off reading the full version of the part of the puzzle that's already been solved. Maybe you can piece both of them together at the same time, but since there's an easy alternative, I don't believe you're going to find it worth the effort. With fewer details still left to fall into place, you'll also miss out on the mind-dazzling depth of ideas that dominated the first book -- but never fear, the same bold scientific extrapolation that also characterized that first book is just as convincing now as it was before.

And in the meantime Hogan has also increased his skills as a writer, enough so that his scientists from Earth are finally recognizable as people (well, almost!), and so that the tremendous empathy that builds for the plight of the unhappy and embarrased refugees is what it is that works to make this a true rarity, a sequel that rates a notch higher than the original.

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THE YEAR'S BEST HORROR STORIES: SERIES VII
Edited by Gerald W. Page
221 pp., $1.95
Cover by Michael Whelan
Reviewed by David A. Truesdale

Fourteen stories are again collected in this fine annual collection. As a matter of curiosity eight of them have varying "contemporary" settings (USA or England), four take place in sword & sorcery milieu, one could have taken place anytime, and one takes place within the confines of a frightening future-world arcade.
Dennis Etchison tells the tale of a Veggematic (Variveger) salesman who removes the safeguards from the slicing blades after selling forty of them to unsuspecting housewives at a kitchen appliance demonstration.

Stephen King, Charles Saunders and Lisa Tuttle offer three variations on the "switcheroo" gimmick, where, generally speaking, a demon or beast or android assumes the shape of a human, only to revert to their true form upon death. In Tuttle's case, it is more precise to say that an android believing herself to be human is found to be the machine she is.

Manly Wade Wellman turns in an average vampire story dealing with a troupe of actors staging a Dracula play in a Connecticut town where they find that their lead actress is a vampiress who must eventually be destroyed.

Tanith Lee gives us an inventive little morality piece involving an unwary warrior who enters a monastery where he is duped, then drugged by two ersatz nuns. They seek to exchange his soul for that of their dead master, who has lost his during a prolonged astral projection. The ending is quite fitting.

Janet Fox, a relative newcomer with several impressive stories to her credit, writes a touching piece about an aging wife in the midst of a bout of psychological reminiscing on all the many boys she freely made love to as a young girl. The sadness of the tragedy comes from her total self-delusion as she seeks the innocence and beauty she can never recapture. You can't go home, try as you might.

Jack Vance sketches youthful, carefree islanders as they one by one discover the horror that life is not an endless series of fishing, loving, laughing in a perpetual paradise, when they confront "The Secret" -- that all must eventually perish.

Charles L. Grant has written one of the most powerful, and best pieces (there are two or three) in the book. An overprotective, but loving father must watch helplessly as his wife is wounded and one of his three beautiful daughters is shot and killed by vengeful hooligans while on a peaceful picnic. The horror is in the randomness, the unreasoning, blind aspects of this sort of crime, and his inability to come to grips with it.

Durrell Schweitzer envisions an army of disembodied hands strangling the populace of a terrified countryside, and our heroic knight Julian finding himself in the midst of it all, held captive and near death by the sorcerous King Tikos and The Master. Well told, but more of a sword & sorcery effort than straight horror, though the latter is certainly evident.

Ramsey Campbell gives us the shortest and possibly best story in the book. It is a classic, excellently told shocker you will not forget. The title, "Heading Home," is hilariously apropos, and is all I'm afraid I can tell you about this one.

David Drake takes us on an excursion with a pair of adventurers seeking a fortune in lost gold, only to find it has a deadly life of its own due to the artificial nature granted it by a long-dead wizard.

Michael Bishop is again in top form with his touching, sensitive, slyly humorous account of a two-headed mutant wishing to be treated as a normal human -- and the kinship developed between the two "brother" heads and the body they jointly term The Monster. A highlight.

Robert Aickman, a virtual master of the macabre and an underrated craftsman, ends the book with the psycho-sexual reinterpretation of Oedipus (ala Freud). An adult virgin "momma's boy" falls in with a pair of kooky female roommates, one who screws him silly, the other who tempts him endlessly. He prefers, however, his safe, secure mother, who while seducing him croons, "You know who loves you best of all!" Now, that's a horror story, right?

Traditional themes, new treatments ... a few gems evincing originality in theme and treatment make this one again a good buy.

GATHER, DARKNESS! is a warning, and I strongly recommend it!
arena -- against a huge snake-like sannak. He loses but his fight attracts the love interest of Ellain Kiran, a singer who chafes under the thrall of a ruling family member. Finally, the only hope for money and escape for Earl and friends is an expedition to sannak lairs, the only place where valuable trammek stones may be found. Predictably, Dumarest battles the elements, snake-things, and his fellow man, and gets the girl at the end.

Tubb is just going through repetitious motions here. Earl Dumarest has not moved any closer to Earth or any further from the evil Cyclan since #15. Cover art and blurb are inaccurate; and it's past time for Dumarest to retire.

THE PHILOSOPHER’S STONE
By Colin Wilson
Wingbow Press, 2940 7th St., Berkeley, CA, 94710
Paperback, 268 pp., $4.95
Reviewed by Neal Wilgus

Colin Wilson is one of the best mainstream writers to turn his hand to science fantasy in a long time and THE PHILOSOPHER’S STONE is a first rate addition to the Cthulhu Mythos originally created by H.P. Lovecraft and his disciples. First published in 1969, STONE is the story of two men obsessed by the same philosophical riddles Wilson has written so often before -- the problems of the Outsider and the potential for superhuman achievement which somehow eludes our best efforts at self-improvement. Through a simple brain operation the goal is at last achieved and Wilson's philosophical savior at last perceives the alien conspiracy that has for so long hindered human development...

Essentially the same story, with different characters, was the meat of THE MIND PARASITES (1967) and an improved version of the theme is to be found in THE SPACE VAMPIRES (1976). This Wingbow reissue of STONE lacks the introduction by Joyce Carol Oates to be found in the Warner paperback edition at $1.95, but for collectors and libraries, at least, the Wingbow quality paperback is the one to have.

Colin Wilson has written better books, both fiction and non-fiction, but PHILOSOPHER’S STONE is still several cuts above the average and is well worth reading if you enjoy anything above the grossest sword-and-sorcery. Highly recommended.

THE DOPPLEGAWER CANDIT
By Lee Killough
Del Rey/Ballantine, 1979, 261 pp. $1.95
Reviewed by Dean R. Lambe

Police procedural SF is rare -- that makes Ms. Killough's fun romp all the more appreciated. For all the advancements in computerized gizmos, late 21st Century police work is likely to be much as it is today -- patient, methodical sifting of clues and hours of legwork among reticent witnesses.

That is just what Killough gives us here in a well-detailed portrayal of the Shawnee County (Kansas) Crimes Against Persons squad led by Jorge Hazlett. Sgt. Janna Brill, blonde and tough, investigates the apparent suicide of Andy Kellener, a colonial contractor, who dies of an overdose of the illegal drug "trick" after the colony ship Invictus exploded. At first it seems that Kellener fraudulently short-changed the 400 colonists who were aboard the lost ship. But Jann's screwball partner, Mama Maxwell, has a gut feeling that Kellener was killed by Hazlett, even though the suspect has an iron-clad alibi.

Thanks to the near-universal ID/credit card system, Hazlett can prove that he was nowhere near his associate in the colonizing firm when Kellener died. Sgt. Brill discovers evidence of a doppleganger ring using unregistered societal dropouts, and she must struggle to contain Maxwell's violations of official procedure in order to convict the murderer. Within herself, Janna Brill also debates whether to continue with the frustrations of police work, or take her former, now injured, partner's advice and ship out to a new colony world.

The characters, plot, indeed the whole future society, are very well developed in this novel. No CRIME AND PUNISHMENT, but closer than most, and well worth reading.

EMPIRE OF THE EAST
By Fred Saberhagen
Ace paperback, 558 pp., $6.95
Reviewed by Neal Wilgus

Fred Saberhagen is probably most widely known for his Berserker series, which is unfortunate in a way, for his best work is outside the Berserker framework. Probably his best yet is EMPIRE OF THE EAST which, if you must categorize, falls into the swords-n-sorcery genre -- and lord knows there are plenty of swords.
and lots of sorcery to go around. Far from being an airy fantasy, however, EMPIRE is done in a realistic style with all the convincing detail found in Saberhagen's hard SF books, and although there are some magic devices that are sometimes a bit hard to accept, the overall effect is that of a gripping, fast-paced adventure.

EMPIRE is a trilogy, actually, consisting of three previously published novels -- THE BROKEN LANDS (Ace, 1968), THE BLACK MOUNTAINS (Ace, 1971) and CHANGELING EARTH (DAW, 1973). Although somewhat revised for this "omnibus" edition, the three novels are still essentially separate entities and each stands alone as a separate adventure. This large size (6x9) trade edition, with a Prologue by Roger Zelazny and illustrations by Enrico, is one of the initial volumes of the new Ace line of quality paperbacks.

The main characters in EMPIRE are Rolf, a young farmer who becomes a soldier when the armies of the East invade his home in the Broken Lands of the West, and Chup, who begins as one of the Satrap's of the East and eventually joins Rolf and his allies of the West. The action takes place in the distant future when technology is a forgotten relic of the Old World and magic and brute strength rule the day. This unusual play between magic and technology is one of the things that gives EMPIRE a unique flavor not to be found elsewhere.

In THE BROKEN LANDS, for instance, the magic is to be found mostly in the powerful demons and elementals that both sides (but especially the East) can conjure up and in the two stones of the desert which have powers that strain reader credulity, while the technology is in the ancient nuclear powered tank which Rolf learns to master and turn against the invading Easterners.

In THE BLACK MOUNTAINS, the magic is in the form of two gigantic creatures, Draffut and Zapranoth, who engage in a fight to the finish while Rolf and his allies invade the Eastern citadel; the technology is found in the balloons which Rolf uses to aid the invasion. And in ARDNEH'S WORLD, the retitled final book, the magic is summed up in Orcus, the ultimate personification of Eastern magic and evil, while Ardneh itself is the ultimate in technology -- a super computer with near magic powers which is the force behind the eventual Western triumph.

But there is much more to it than that. Despite some minor flaws, EMPIRE OF THE EAST is one of the best science fantasy epics to come along in years and Fred Saberhagen can be justly proud of this addition to his canon. Highly recommended.

IN SOLITARY
By Garry Kilworth
Avon, 1977, 125 pp., $1.75
Reviewed by Dean R. Lambe

Rarely do I wish that a novel had more pages. This English writer, whose work is just now reaching these shores, could have used far more detail in this tale of a conquered Earth. Over 400 years prior to the beginning of the story, the birdlike Soal escaped their dying planet and moved into man's home. A preconquest earthquake drastically lowered sea levels, and the remnants of humanity are relegated to mudflats and islands, while the Soal control all major land masses.

Soal Law restricts human intercourse (both meanings), but when young Cave is exiled from his house pet status in Soal-ruled England, he meets the mysterious Stella, and becomes involved in a revolution against Earth's masters. Cave, Stella, and one other escape to Polynia via a pneumatic tube system, and join with Tangiia in an attack on the Soal's "mushroom tower" climate control/defensive system. The ending has several nice twists.

While there are holes in the plot, and in the science, large enough to accommodate a brontosaurus, real people are found herein. Use of a dating system of months, rather than years, is unexplained and irritating. Cover art is good, but cover graphics which obscure the name of a promising new writer are inexcusable.

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STAR TREK -- THE MOTION PICTURE
By Gene Roddenberry, Pocket Books
1979, $2.50, 252 pp., Novel.
ISBN 0-671-83088-0
Reviewed by James J.J. Wilson

I think STAR TREK fans will not be disappointed with this book, and if the movie is anything like the book, they will not be disappointed with that either.

The first few chapters are very weak but after that I found the novel almost impossible to put down. I had a hard time getting into the characters at first, but about halfway into the book I felt I was watching an episode of the old STAR TREK TV series.
Here are a few questions for people who have seen the movie and/or read the book (I am writing this two days after the release of the book and three weeks before the scheduled release of the film): At the end of the book Kirk never relays the self-destruct order; why didn't he ship blow up? Why is the self-destruct order so much simpler to invoke than it was before? And lastly, why didn't Kirk mention having been in a very similar situation before ('The Changeling')? He could at least have said, 'Hey, Spock. This happened to us before. Remember Nomad?' Oh, well, I hope these flaws are not in the film.

I found this an extremely enjoyable book. It is far above the quality of most film novelisations.

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THE QUEST OF EXCALIBUR
By Leonard Wibberley
Borgo Press, Box 2845, San Bernar-
dino, CA, 92406
Paperback, 190 pp., $4.95
Reviewed by Neal Wilgus

Leonard Wibberley is the author of THE MOUSE THAT ROARED and its companions, which I haven't read, and this 1959 King Arthur fantasy, which I have. Judging by EXCALIBUR, I can see no reason for ever looking into the Mouse books at all.

The idea of EXCALIBUR is a good one -- King Arthur's return to modern England to search for the lost sword Excalibur. Unfortunately, Wibberley does nothing with it whatsoever. Yes, there are some wacky characters -- Ciber Brown, Sir Timothy Bors, Princess Pamela, Chuck Manners -- who become involved, sort of, with Arthur and the search, and yes, there is a mild bit of satire directed against the British bureaucracy. Alas, it doesn't go anywhere or do anything and the reader often wonders why the author bothered to write the thing in the first place.

Borgo Press has the right idea in establishing a line of Discovery books to resurrect forgotten classics. But this book is no classic and is better left forgotten. Recommended only for Wibberley fans and King Arthur completists.

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OTHER CANADAS: AN ANTHOLOGY OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY
Edited by John Robert Colombo
McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd, Toronto, 1979, Cloth, 360 pp., $15.95
ISBN 0 07 082952 7
Reviewed by Terence M. Green

OTHER CANADAS is an outstanding volume for many reasons. It is the first anthology of Canadian science fiction and fantasy, and it is edited by John Robert Colombo -- a major name in Canadian publishing and letters. Colombo has written, compiled or translated more than 50 books, and is nationally known for such popular reference books as COLOMBO'S CANADIAN QUOTATIONS (1974) and COLOMBO'S CANADIAN REFERENCES (1976); he is a poet in his own right, and has done much to create a Canadian consciousness by collecting the thought and literature of the country. The publisher for this book, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, has provided him with a magnificent physical product and major national distribution -- both tributes to his established reputation as a serious anthologist.

Colombo, a reader of SF&F from his teens, has responded wonderfully to the challenge and the opportunity. The book is a large one, containing excerpts from 4 novels, 17 short stories, 27 poems by 13 poets, 2 critical articles, 1 prophetic essay (written in 1883 about the Dominin in 1883), and a film script (the National Film Board's UNIVERSE). What we have here is the definitive retrospective survey of Canadian SF & F.

There is a brief preface by Colombo in which he confronts the question: "Canadian science fiction and fantasy -- is there any?" He decides that not only is there such literature, but that it is worth a serious reader's attention. He then proceeds to point out that there are over 500 separate books which fall into the category of Canadian SF & F, and heroically suggests what he considers to be the 4 characteristics of Canadian SF & F: The theme of the Polar World, the theme of the National Disaster Scenario, the theme of the Alienated Outsider, and the observation of the Prevalence of Fantasy over Science Fiction.

Colombo is perhaps generous in his definition of what constitutes Canadian SF & F: "By Canadian SF & F I refer to writing in prose or poetry form by all of the following: Canadian citizens, new Canadians, former Canadians, even non-Canadians (when their work is set in Canada)." Using this criteria, we have fiction by Cyno de Bergerac, Jules Verne, followed by such as Stephen Leacock, A.E. Van Vogt, Laurence Manning, Gordon R. Dickson, Phyllis Gotlieb, Michael G. Coney and Spider Robinson; there are also extremely fine pieces by such authors as Hugh Hood, Margaret Laurence, Yves Theriault and Stephen Scobie -- all known primarily as serious writers of non-SF in Canada.

Poetry is represented by Archibald Lampman, Bliss Carman, James Reaney, Jeni Couzyn, Judith Merrill and Douglas Barbour, to name some. The two critical articles are by Margaret Atwood (probably the dominant writer in Canada today) and David Ketterer (Ketterer's 'Canadian Science Fiction' is invaluable to anyone doing serious research into the field).

There is even a brief annotated bibliography of some 36 books -- a virtual excerpt from CANADIAN SF & F. A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY (Toronto: Hounslow Press, 1979), compiled by J.R. Colombo, M. Richardson, J. Bell and A.L. Amprioz...

What more can I say? This book accomplishes what it set out to do; it is highly recommended to anyone who thinks that he/she might be interested. Every library should have a copy as well. Hopefully, there can be more collections of this calibre from Colombo -- perhaps surveying the current scene more fully next time. The potential for such a book still exists.

**********************************************
THE GENTLE DRAGON
By Joseph K. Coates
Lane & Associates, POB 3063, La Jolla, CA 92038, 1979, 329 pp., $4.95.
Paper. ISBN: 0-89882-001-4
LC 79-84574 Novel, 12 up.
Reviewed by Frederick Patten

This charming fantasy is set about the time of the spread of Buddhism. A young dragon, Quick Fire, develops a thirst for human civilization. He befriends a small Japanese village and becomes its protector against more predatory dragons. The story develops episodically as the dragon and the villagers hesitantly come to know each other. Quick Fire barely survives the attack of the vicious Lightning Flash. He finds a mate and introduces her to human ways, and they and their children are eventually adopted as disciples of the Faultless Master to spread His teachings throughout the world.

According to a biographical note, Joseph Coates is a retired naval commander who spent years living in Japan and researching its culture. THE GENTLE DRAGON is certainly the most authentically Oriental fantasy that I have read by an Occidental author, other than the works of Lafcadio Hearn. The story contains an acknowledgment to Tolkien, and there is an impression that Coates has tried to write an adventure similar to THE HOBBIT, utilizing Oriental cultural roots as Tolkien utilized Anglo-Saxon and Nordic roots.

This is both the novel's strength and its weakness. Its success may make it too alien for some American readers. The story is slowly developed and elaborately mannered. Some of the dialog reads like Japanese translated too literally into English. There are unfamiliar cultural nuances. As a result, the writing may require a comprehension level more mature than is customary for this type of adventure.

Speaking as a fantasy addict who is getting jaded with the unending stream of novels that are too faithful to Tolkien, I found THE GENTLE DRAGON to be excitingly fresh.

The richness of the Oriental setting makes it a secondary universe unlike most, yet completely believable. The unusual relationship between the dragons and the humans evolves both of them in intriguing ways. The characters are likeable and the story is intelligently developed. THE GENTLE DRAGON is the type of book that may not be for all tastes, but those who like it will like it very much indeed.

Readers who enjoy it enough to want other genuinely Oriental heroic fantasies might be steered to Wu Ch'eng-en's THE PILGRIMAGE TO THE WEST, also called MONKEY or THE MONKEY KING (apparently available currently only in Arthur Waley's translation as MONKEY, from Grove Press).

STARS OF ALBION
Edited by Robert Holdstock and Christopher Priest
Reviewed by W. Ritchie Benedict

"For richer, for poorer, for better, for worse, until death do you part" -- these words are part of the traditional marriage ceremony, but they also serve to describe an avid SF fan, particularly a British SF fan. This new book contains 12 stories, and was brought out specially by Pan to coincide with Seacon '79, the 37th World Science Fiction Convention held in Brighton, England. The names of the authors, besides the aforementioned editors, include such luminaries as Ian Watson, Keith Roberts, John Brunner, Bob Shaw, and J.G. Ballard.

Generally, anthologies are a pretty mixed bag, but I will say the standards in this one are higher than most. There is one absolute knockout of a story, 'Warlord of Earth' by David S. Garnett, which is a serio-comic tale of a sword-and-sorcery type of barbarian transport- ed to present-day California. Another strong vivid entry is 'Weihnacht- abend' by Keith Roberts, and it describes a present-day version of an alternate world where the Nazis won World War II by crushing the British at Dunkirk. The atmospherics are very vivid, as the story takes the reader into a post-war British Christmas.

Several stories probe the relationship of mental stability in a schizoid reality, or at least a reality that is unpleasant, such as Aldiss' 'Sober Noises of Morning in a Marginal Land', Christopher Priest's
"Whores" and "Dormant Soul" by Josephine Saxton.

The piece by Robert Holdstock, "The Time Beyond Age: A Journey", is a particularly horrifying tale of an experiment to study the aging process beyond 100. Bob Shaw contributes an amusing vignette on the real story behind the smile of the Mona Lisa, and in "The Vitamuls", John Brunner gives an insightful look into the East-West cultural differences on the day that the world runs out of fresh souls.

If you prefer more traditional fare, albeit with a variety of new twists and turns, you might try "The Radius Riders" by Barrington J. Bayley, which features a voyage into the depths of the earth (it is a long time since I have seen something new in this area). If there is a common theme that runs through these stories, it appears to be war and the mind, or perhaps war in the mind. The humorous stories stand by themselves.

Although I have seen one or two of these stories anthologized elsewhere, most of them will be unfamiliar to readers in North America, and as such, the collection is well worth buying for your library. I thought the balance was nicely wrought between those stories of a rather grim and foreboding nature and those which were lighter in tone. If these stories are an example of what the British have been doing in the field of science fiction lately, it is no wonder that the 1979 convention was held over there.

There is also a concise introduction and afterward by Holdstock and Priest discussing the British scene as regards SF, and why they selected these examples as typical. The cover features a robot with a steaming cup of tea, just so there will be no mistake where this book comes from. A rare and valuable paperback to add to anyone's collection of unusual and highly crafted science fiction.

AN OLD FRIEND OF THE FAMILY
By Fred Saberhagen
Ace Paperback, 256 pp., $1.95
Reviewed by Neil Wilgus

This book has been referred to as a sequel to Saberhagen's earlier THE HOLMES-DRACULA FILE and in a way it is -- but not really. That is to say in both books the central character (if not exactly protagonist) is Count Dracula. There the resemblance ends. HOLMES-DRACULA took place in 1897 and involved, in addition to Holmes and Watson, a fantastic plot to blackmail London and a fairly loose approach to plotting which resulted in an ending that somehow seemed contrived.

OLD FRIEND OF THE FAMILY, in contrast, is a story of modern Chicago and the fantastic elements are limited to straight-forward vampire paraphernalia. Saberhagen seems much more in control of FRIEND than he was HOLMES-DRACULA and everything is tighter this time around -- writing, plotting and ending. Though the Old Man is never specifically called Dracula in FRIEND as he was in HOLMES-DRACULA, he is surely the same character and in many ways he is a more attractive personage than the air-breathing non-vampires in both books.

No Sherlock Holmes this time around, but instead we have Joe Keogh of the Chicago Pawn Shop de-

I links. But the rest of his characters are believable enough and the fast pace and smooth style carry the reader along through an entertaining entry in the Dracula sweepstakes that suddenly seems to have swept the nation.

If you're only going to read one more vampire story in the next decade or so, Saberhagen's OLD FRIEND is probably the one you'll want to read.

THE PROPHET OF LAMATH
By Robert Don Hughes
Ballantine, $1.95, 1979
Reviewed by L. Craig Rickman

Ballantine continues to deluge the paperback market with fantastic fantasies under the Del Rey trademark. The quality of these releases usually do Mr. del Rey credit -- especially considering that, for the main part, they come from the pens of little-known writers.

Such is the case of THE PROPHET OF LAMATH by Robert Don Hughes, a fellow Kentuckian.

THE PROPHET concerns an actor by the name of Pelen the Player (that being but one of this more mundane professions) and his meeting with a rather typical two-headed dragon, Vicla-Heinox. This beastie is the force which keeps three nations -- Lamath, Chaomonous, and Ngandib-mar -- from each other's throats. It accomplishes this task with little politics -- by simply straddling the only access through a range of tremendous mountains. Only merchant caravans who are willing to pay a hefty toll in plump slaves are allowed to pass.

The action centers around Pelen's quick tongue causing an identity crisis in the dragon (which head is the real dragon!), and his foiling of a merchant scheme to destroy internally and externally, the governmental structures of the kingdoms. Naturally, the merchants wish to sit themselves on the three thrones -- for the betterment of their profits. Pelen wins -- so the merchants do not; and the dragon doesn't fare so well either.

In THE PROPHET, Mr. Hughes delivers a bit into mercantilism and religion, but very wisely does not allow it to "overcome" the novel. He also presents some solid characterization, and a plot of good substance.

Overall, not an award winner, but fun to read.
I'm very sorry I missed so many of the activities, and missed meet-
so many people. I hope the Portland S-F Society does it again some year.
I'll be there.
One suggestion to the next con committee: don't type or print the
name of the member on the membership bade in one corner---leave room on
the card for BIG PRINT! It's em-
barassing for all to have to lean
over and peer to read a name. The
member's name should be clear from
a distance of six feet, at least.
In fact, let's go to sandwich boards.

Alas, I spent that night and all
day Sunday shivering and moaning
piteously while cursing the Fates.
I missed the rest of the con.

The pressure is on to get the
new stuff out, in books or games.
S-F is hot now and it may be too
too late in a few years. Also, propor-
tionally more of the public is get-
ting interested in S-F. That means
a dilution of the interest level
and discrimination of the average
reader and game player. Science
Fiction should hope that we never get
to the point where S-F attracts con-
sumer female marketers. If that
happens, S-F as we know it will be
flooded out by Gothic, Gossip and
Romance S-F. In volume everything
else will be so less important it will
virtually cease to exist.

If you don't believe me just
look real hard next time you're in
one of those fancy enclosed shopping
malls. Count the proportion of the
space devoted to consumer females
as opposed to anything else. When
they get onto a topic they so out-
buy any other market segment it be-
comes peripheral.

Ah, well, I digress. I guess
my summed-up response is, 'things
are why they are because that's
what's made the money'. There's
gold in that thar drek. It almost
makes me want to get into something
natural, ecological and honest, like
septic tank cleaning.'
'Ronald Lambert's attempt in SFR #33 to demonstrate the existence and the operation of moral laws in history displays a misunderstanding of the facts and the nature of history. He offered the following chain of cause and effect as proof:

'1) To bring America into World War I Wilson and Churchill entered into an immoral conspiracy to effect the sinking of the Lusitania which brought America into the war.

'2) America's entry into the war was unnecessary because the British development of the tank made Germany's defeat inevitable. American aid only served to enable the Allies to impose a harsher peace on Germany.

'3) The humiliating and ruinous Treaty of Versailles created the climate in Germany that made possible Hitler's rise to power and thus WWII, death camps and genocide.

'4) Out of desperation after America's entry into the war the Germans aided Bolshevik revolutionaries which led to a communist Russia, the Iron Curtain and the Cold War.

'In summary, Lambert argues that the sinking of the Lusitania, arranged by Wilson and Churchill, led to WWII, death camps, genocide, the Iron Curtain and the Cold War. I will address these arguments in order.

'Although there is circumstantial evidence (see Colin Simpson's THE LUSITANIA, 1972) that Churchill knew of the danger to the ship, may have done less than he should have to prevent it, and perhaps hoped that it would be sunk bringing America into the war, there is no evidence to implicate Wilson or substantiate the charge of conspiracy between them. Also such an act would have been utterly inconsistent with Wilson's foreign policy objectives and his character. Furthermore, this incident, May 1915, did not bring America into the war. It was not until 23 months later, in April 1917, that America entered the war. America's declaration of war followed the exposure of the Zimmerman Telegram in which Germany offered Mexico the states of Texas, Arizona and New Mexico if she would join with Germany in making war on America when and if war broke out between the latter two (see Barbara Tuchman's THE ZIMMERMANN TELEGRAM, 1958).

'America's contribution was critical to Allied victory. 1917 to early 1918 was a period of ex-}

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(I suspect there are three versions of history—the popular, simplified version, the scholarly, researched version, and the real version which is different because of lack of records, destroyed records, and destroyed people whose memories were dangerous.)
'P.S. I deny that fiction is a literature of lies. In its finest tradition at least, it is a literature of truths. Especially science fiction, which is the only genre which deals with the whole of reality -- including the element of radical, transforming change, which mainstream (per se) ignores.'

((In colonial times in America there was great economic freedom, but social and cultural religious moral dictatorship. There was no true democracy. There was a republican form of government -- and the poor were not allowed to vote.

(As I try to follow and absorb your arguments, I suspect you want a return to the moral religious dictator ship of the past. You're not happy with personal sexual and religious freedoms...or the revamping and junking of a lot of past religious garbage.

(I've never heard 'righteousness' described as a superior on-and-only econo-politico-moral philosophy before. Your version of what is 'righteous', of course, is what you mean. Wow.))

# LETTER FROM WAYNE KEYSER
1111 Army-Navy Drive, A-710
Arlington, VA 22202
November 13, 1979

'Just a short and (I'm afraid) disappointing note.

'I was eager to see Peter Ellenshaw, longtime Disney matter artist and production designer of THE BLACK HOLE (a Disney film slated for December release in 70mm Dolby stereo). He appeared at the American Film Institute at the Kennedy Center last night, bringing with him a reel of BLACK HOLE for its first public screening.

'I'm sorry to have to say that this movie looks as easily avoidable as did THE CAT FROM OUTER SPACE. Ellenshaw's basic designs are interesting -- certainly not space-worthy, therefore not believable, but interesting. The film is obviously intended to be viewed as pure fantasy beyond the question of belief or unbelief, and as such it may work when viewed as a whole.

'Blue, glitter-filled interstellar space, a quarter-mile-long spaceship that seems more like one of those Victorian glass palaces than a workable vehicle, candy-colored kiddie-toy instrument panels everywhere, all work to defeat any identification from viewers who have lived through the era of genuine space voyages. The typical wooden Disney characters abound, and come off even worse than ever.

'1980 Since this is probably the last entry for this issue, let me say this about that: I didn't get as much reading done as I wished because I was neck deep in STAR WHORES and struggling to keep up with REG. Ahh, well...who needs excuses? I don't plan a self-published novel for 1980 until maybe the fall, so from now on I'll be digging into the piles of the unread with vim, vigor and vituperation.

I have some good letters here and as usual no room for them: letters from Richard Dodge, Wallace A. McClure, and Darrell Schweitzer will be in the May issue.

# GEORGE WARREN
wrote to announce he is starting a paperback book re-
view column in the LOS ANGELES TIMES in that paper's Times Book Review section. He wants paperback originals only—mass paperback only, no trade editions (which go to a different editor). He'll review all genres—romances, westers, sf, nonfiction...

His address: P.O. Box 3830
Pasadena, CA 91103.

# EARTHLIGHT PUBLISHERS sent out a postcard Dec. 21 saying: 'Due to numerous production problems (a full explanation of which would take more than the space of 20 postcards) the release of SAN DIEGO LIGHTFOOT SUE will be delayed until the first of January. Orders are being processed and will be shipped in the order of receipt. We ask for your patience and understanding in this matter. It will be a very beautiful book, one that you will be proud to own.'

(Thanks to Jim Sanderson.)

# JERRY POURNELLE wrote November 15 to advise: 'ENDLESS FRONTIER, Volume Two, is being assembled now. I could use at least two short contributions. The theme is life in space (as opposed to life on planets). I could also use humor; even short anecdotes. For vignettes I will pay a flat rate rather than pro rata royalties; short stories will receive shares.'

Interested parties would probably be advised to query Jerry on his needs now; but he is a market to keep in mind. His anthologies sell well.

His address: 12051 Laurel Terrace Drive, Studio City, CA 91604

# MARK J. MCGARRY reports that he has sold his third and fourth novels to Signet/NAL and will be devoting himself full-time to writing beginning in January, 1980.

Apparently EMPIRE, his semi-prozine, will continue under new editor and publisher.

# I REFUSE TO AGONIZE TOO MUCH; or bleed all over this issue, but an apology is due the man who wrote the review of THE AMERICAN MONOMYTH which I ran last issue. I noted that he had neglected to put his name on the review ms. and I had forgotten his name.

He wrote and gave me his name. And I have misplaced his letter and still cannot remember his name. The ghosts are against us, sir. But if you'd care to try again....

# IAN COVELL sent word that John Brunner now acknowledges that his first novel was GALACTIC STORM using the pseudonym Gill Hunt in 1951.

# AN HOUR WITH HARLAN ELLISON, VOLUME I is a 60 minute cassette tape selling for $4.98 plus 50¢ postage & handling, from Hourglass Productions, 10292 Westminster Av., Garden Grove, CA 92643.

James JJ Wilson, reviewer, loved it: 'It will be of interest to those who want to know what it was like to be a struggling writer in the mid-50's ... and only sf fans will understand the references to John W. Campbell, Horace Gold, Ed Vailgursky, Robert Silverberg, The Futurians, and others. This tape is very light and I guarantee you'll laugh out loud as you listen.'

# THE NOMINATIONS FOR THE 7TH ANNUAL S-F, FANTASY & HORROR FILMS AWARDS ARE:

SCIENCE FICTION

ALIEN
THE BLACK HOLE
MOONRACER
STAR TREK
TIME AFTER TIME

FANTASY

ARABIAN ADVENTURE
DINNER FOR ADELE
NUTCRACKER FANTASY
THE MUPPET MOVIE
THE LAST WAVE

HORROR

THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
DRACULA
LOVE AT FIRST BITE
THE MAFU CAGE
PHANTASM

BEST ACTOR

GEORGE HAMILTON--LOVE AT FIRST BITE
FRANK LANGELLA--DRACULA
CHRISTOPHER LEE--ARABIAN ADVENTURE
MALCOLM MCDOWELL--TIME AFTER TIME
WILLIAM SHATNER--STAR TREK

BEST ACTRESS

PERSEPHONE KHABATTA--STAR TREK
MARGOT KIDDER--THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
SUSAN SAINT JAMES--LOVE AT FIRST BITE
MARY STEENBURGEN--TIME AFTER TIME
SIGNOURNEY WEAVER--ALIEN

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR

ARTE JOHNSON--LOVE AT FIRST BITE
RICHARD KIEL--MOONRACER
LEONARD NIMOY--STAR TREK
DONALD PLEASANCE--DRACULA
DAVID WARNER--TIME AFTER TIME

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS

VERONICA CARTWRIGHT--ALIEN
PAMELA HENSLEY--BUCK ROGERS
JACQUELYN HYDE--THE DARK MARCY LAFERTY--THE DAY TIME ENDED
NICHOLLE NICHOLS--STAR TREK

DIRECTION

TIME AFTER TIME--NICHOLAS MEYER
THE MUPPET MOVIE--JERRY JUHL & JACK BURNS
THE LAST WAVE--PETER WEIR
STAR TREK--ROBERT Wise
DRACULA--JOHN BADHAM

WRITING

TIME AFTER TIME--NICHOLAS MEYER
THE MUPPET MOVIE--JERRY JUHL & JACK BURNS
ALIEN--DAN O'BANNON
LOVE AT FIRST BITE--ROBERT KAUFMAN
THE BLACK HOLE--JEB ROSEBROOK & GERRY DAY

SPECIAL EFFECTS

ALIEN--BRIAN JOHNSON & NICK ALLDER
THE MUPPET MOVIE--ROBBIE KNOTT
MOONRACER--JOHN EVANS & JOHN RICHARDSON
STAR TREK--DOUGLAS TRUMBULL, JOHN DYKSTRA, & RICHARD YURICICI

BLACK HOLE--PETER ELLISHAW

There are also nominations for MUSIC, MAKE-UP AND COSTUME. For a complete list and other info, write: The Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy & Horror Films, 334 W. 54th St., Los Angeles, CA 90037.

1-10-88

We've had a freezing rain and snow storm here in Portland the last few days. The streets are virtually impassable and more snow is forecast.

I doubt I can get the copy for this issue into the hands of the printer in Forest Grove, down in the valley. Normally they send couriers into the Portland area to pick up copy from customers. But I suspect it'll be Monday (today is Thursday) before they can make a pickup. Which means the delivery of the new SFR to me will be delayed three or more days, which means it may be the first week of February before I can get the sub copies into the mails.

So now you know why SFR was maybe a week or more late.

But since God, this delay is due to an act of His. But then, I always did believe He is a bad actor.

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**Non-Hugo Awards**

**JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD**

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**GANDALF AWARD**

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**THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION MUST BE INCLUDED:**

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☐ I enclose $_____ for a _________ Membership.

(Supporting Memberships are $8.00, entitling the member to all publications and the right to vote on the Hugos and 1682 site selection. Attending Memberships are $30.00 until July 15, 1980, and also entitle the member to attend the convention. Make checks payable to Noreascon II.)

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You Got No Friends In This World
A Review Of Short Fiction
By Orson Scott Card

Quite apart from the stories, there are things about the magazines and anthologies that need to be said, if only because sometimes I get so damn mad. Like, for instance the subscription department at the Asimov magazines. I subscribed when the magazines first came out -- and ended up with two concurrent subscriptions. Neither address label was correct, and despite several letters, I kept getting both subscriptions until both ran out. Then, after letting them lapse for several months, I subscribed again, specifically asking for the subscription to begin with the December issue. Well, they sent me an issue in December -- but it was the September issue, which I had reviewed months before.

Another pain -- the hideous typesetting at Zebra. The CHRYSALIS, SWORDS AGAINST DARKNESS and OTHER WORLDS anthologies are usually very good -- but it is infuriating to see moronic mistakes time after time, issue after issue. Every magazine has its share of errors -- but at Zebra, they manage to invert whole passages of type. Is there no one there who can do a simple continuity check?


AFTER a year at this business of reading and reviewing almost all the short SF around, the irritations only get more irritating. But I have also begun to regard these publications as friends, sort of. I know their foibles, but I also know their strengths, and there isn't one of these magazines and anthologies that I don't turn to with expectation of finding something I will like.

GALILEO has often had, in its fiction, a trait that I once described in print as "amateurishness" -- thereby incurring the righteous wrath of Charlie Ryan. I didn't change my opinion -- some of the stories still feel clumsy to me -- but I did learn that Charlie wasn't buying stories that he didn't like but had to settle for to fill an issue. He was buying what he liked. And gradually I have come to see, even in the stories that annoy me, the qualities that Charlie is looking for, the good points that are present in every story in GALILEO. I mean, Charlie and I may not agree, but he knows what he's looking for and he finds it, and I am coming to appreciate that more and more.

OMNI constantly delights me with its exciting but accessible science, its stunning visuals, its professional approach to publishing that is refreshing in a field with heavy apron-string ties with pulps and fanzines. Yet, despite its highest-in-the-field rates, I find that it has no better an average in fiction that pleases me than, say, ANALOG or the ASIMOV magazines. Always there is one story an issue that I like very much -- but some of the others are downright terrible, in my view -- and some of these are by people who can do better. It is a surprise to see that despite its high payment rates, OMNI is not necessarily getting the best out of its contributors -- though, of course, when OMNI is good it is very, very good.

For all their emphasis on hard science fiction, ANALOG and the ASIMOV magazines do have one or two stories an issue where the hardware takes a definite back seat to other values, like character and genuine epiphany. Invariably those are the best stories, the ones with the strongest reader response, and I wonder two things: Why they don't publish more of the emotional, powerful stories, and why SF readers don't realize that their favorite ANALOG stories aren't "ANALOG stories" at all.

And, to my surprise, ASIMOV'S SF ADVENTURE MAGAZINE published a higher proportion of good fiction than its parent magazine. Now that the large format quarterly is folding, I'm glad Scithers is putting fantasy into the monthly digest magazine, beginning with Vinge's "Snow Queen" -- in part because good fantasy needs a vehicle that reaches a broader audience, and in part because it will only improve the magazine.

The newest magazine, ETERNITY, shows great promise, though with the low payment rates the fiction is inevitably uneven. Darrel Anderson and Stephen Fabian set a high standard that most of the other illustrations don't come up to. But the features are excellent (after all, I review books for them ...) and the editorial slant is broader than any of the other magazines. I hope it doesn't narrow with age and the magazine's deserved success.

GALAXY still struggles along, a new issue limping out to the stands every six months or so to sit and rest until the next one finally arrives to take its place. But still -- good stories now and then, and at last, with its new affiliation with GALILEO, perhaps this grand old mag can get back to its old high standards.

And FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION goes on putting out the most consistently good fiction of any of the magazines, while Ed Ferman keeps a low profile and must take his rewards in the form of the respect of writers and readers while other editors keep walking off with the Hugos.

The anthologies? NEW DIMENSIONS 10 will be the last edited by Robert Silverberg alone; it will be interesting to see, in a couple of years,
what Marta Randall's influence does to the anthology. UNIVERSE goes on publishing good-to-excellent fiction.

But, for me, the most exciting anthology series around right now is Roy Torgeson's CHRYsalis, which will soon be jumping from Zebra to Doubleday -- a surprise, since Doubleday also publishes UNIVERSE. But there won't be much conflict. Roy Torgeson has found an area of fantasy/science fiction that no other publication is regularly covering. It happens to be an area that I find exciting to read; exciting enough that despite higher payment rates elsewhere I've been submitting some of my strongest but most favorite work to Roy. Is it because I believe there are higher things than money? Hell no. It's because I like the company I keep in those anthologies. (Is CHRYsalis an anthology or a magazine? After all, it comes out more often than GALAXY and it has more fiction each year than DESTINIES. Well, between hard covers it will doubtless settle down into comfortable middle age and get a bit stodgy.

I didn't really plan to start this column with a magazine overview, but as I write this, New Year's Day is staring me in the face, and since, being an irrelate person, I do not make resolutions, this is about as close as I'll let myself come to summing up anything about 1979. Except that, at the end of this column, I will be listing my choices for the year's best science fiction and fantasy. This is instead of doing a best-of-the-year anthology. I would do a b-o-t-y anthology, if anyone would pay me to do it, but so far (sob) no one has ever let me near one of them...

THE STORIES: (Yeah, I'm Getting Around to That)

There's something sweet about all those old stories about kids longing to get to the moon. Now that a couple of kids did grow up to get to the moon, though, it seems no one writes that kind of story anymore. Nobody except Donald Kingsbury, that is, whose novella, 'The Moon Goddess and the Son' (ANALOG Dec) is one of my favorite stories this year. Kingsbury actually does have a kid who takes the name Diana because she wants to grow up to live on the moon -- and she makes it. But the story is a lot more than that, of course, or it would be unbearably sentimental. Unlike most hard SF writers (and this story is, by most definitions, hard SF), Kingsbury is very good at creating characters; he also manages very well a difficult structure, with the plot skipping from one point of view to another almost painlessly.

Best of all, however, is his exploration of the influence of parents on children. Perhaps it's just my bias (which shows up in my own writing perhaps too much) but I firmly believe that the best fiction imitates biography more than history, keeping a tight focus on a character, not an event. I like it a lot when a character's whole life is taken into account, from childhood on, instead of picking up at the onset of a major event and ignoring the most important influences in his life. After all, our childhood is what made us who we are -- and yet too many writers create characters who seem to have been born at the age of thirty-eight, without parents.

MARITAGE AND FAMILY COUNSELING:

Kingsbury's story isn't the only one dealing with family ties and parent-child relationships this quarter. David Bunch has come up with a family that makes the folks in Kingsbury's story look like Ozzie and Harriet. In "A Little Girl's Spring Day in Moderan" (GALAXY 39:11), Little Sister cheerfully takes her father apart in the effort to discover the meaning of the word dirt.

Lisa Tuttle's story "Wives" (F&SF Dec) is a well-told, heart-breaking story of alien females who have survived a war with human beings, only to end up in the role of precious little sweethearts to satisfy the convivial longings of the soldiers. If they show any of their true, unwifely, inhuman character, they are doomed. The story would be even better if there weren't just the slightest hint of self-righteous generalization in this.

If Lisa Tuttle means only what she actually says in the story, then it has integrity; if, however, she is trying to use this as an allegory of the way men and women usually relate together in marriage, then I can only conclude that either Tuttle has had the misfortune of seeing only very strange marriages or she is stretching the truth a bit. In my experience and study, marriages are as likely to be wife-dominated as husband-dominated, and equally poisoned either way. And while "Wives" is powerful and well-written, it does not contain a true picture of ineluctable male-female relationships. (How's that for starting another argument?)

After all the unloving families in these stories, it might be cheering to see a father who really loves his son -- if it weren't in the brilliant and ugly story "My Father's Head" (CHRYsalis 5) by Timothy

Robert Sullivan. Jarrass is an adult male in a society where women, because they usually die at puberty, are supreme. In order to avoid having too many fertile men around, a son is required to behead his father immediately after he first has intercourse with a woman. Jarrass, however, loved his father, and so endured eighteen years of humiliation and ostracism because he let his father live. The story is about Jarrass's efforts to win the love of his own son -- and despite the hideous cruelty of the story, it is beautiful.

TAKING THINGS APART TO WATCH THEM BLEED:

Cruelty is one of the devices writers can use to good effect -- or for gross exploitation. Used properly, cruelty inflicted by or on a character the reader identifies with serves to engage the reader's emotions still further; it can often be a climax or prepare for a climax as no other technique can. However, in less talented hands cruelty serves only to immerse the reader in gore. A good example of the latter is ALIEN, a silly film where stupid and unsympathetic characters spend two hours getting taken apart by a meaningless monster; a good example of the former is Timothy Robert Sullivan's work -- the just-mentioned "My Father's Head" and Sullivan's first sale, "The Rauncher Goes to Tinker Town" in NEW DIMENSIONS 9. It is a strange story of a man kept alive only to inflict welcome death on the immortals who preserve him. Sullivan is a writer to watch -- he is doing exciting work.
No one does viciousness like Karl Hansen. However, I sat with him at a banquet at Penultim President and a sweater, funnier man it would be hard to imagine. Give him a type-writer, however, and he'll rip your balls off and eat them right before your eyes. "Portrait for a Blind Man" (CHRYSALIS 5) is about soldiers who must face an enemy weapon that makes them retreat into autism. To keep them from going crazy in battle they are trained to be monstrous human beings, so that they literally cannot bear to be alone with themselves. Makes them tough to live with -- but it also keeps them functional.

Cruelty is taken to absurdity by James E. Thompson (OTHER WORLDS 1) in "The Birdchaser", a painfully funny little tale about a reporter trying to understand the men whose mission is to capture and chop in half all the little birds flying around in the pipes.

HEAVEN SUCKS!

Utopias usually irritate me, primarily because what some writers think is desirable coincides pretty well with my idea of hell. Such is the case with Paul Novitski's "Nuclear Fission" (UNIVERSE 9). It is very well written, with plausible characters, but I found their way of life so repulsive that I had a hard time rooting for them when they had trouble accommodating to it. Susan Janice Anderson's "Returning to Center" (CHRYSALIS 5) works a little better for me, if only because her ecologically aware society isn't so intrusive; the more personal story isn't overwhelmed by the utopianism.

Population control is often part of utopia; Jeff Hecht, in "Cruising the Wastelands" (NEW DIMENSIONS 9), shows an underpopulated world that clings to the old overcrowded slum buildings, keeping them frozen though no one ever visits. It is a lonely world, a sad story of a man who comes out of cold sleep to find that they have preserved the things he hated worst about New Jersey -- and worse yet, the lower population has made people even less friendly and loving than they were in the old overcrowded cities.

John Varley's stories have often included routine sex-change as part of the society. In "Options" (UNIVERSE 9) he shows the problems people face as sex-change first becomes possible. Unfortunately, it is a one-sided presentation of the ideas; Varley makes the enormous assumption that sex-change will just naturally make people happier and better, and he focuses only on the problems caused by a man who refuses to change sexes when his wife does. Like the psychopathic defense strategy of de-nial, this voluntary blindness ultimately does not work. I found myself at the end feeling a bit cheated, as if a clever scam had been played on me. It is, of course, well-written; it's by John Varley, isn't it?

WHAT? NOT PERFECT EVERY TIME?

My negative response to "Options" may be just part of the great-author syndrome that plagues a lot of fine writers. What I say that Varley or LeQuin or Martin or McIntyre has to come up with a masterpiece every time? But having read great stories from all four of them, I find myself disappointed when they write stories that are merely above average.

I was disappointed in Vonda McIntyre's "Fireflood" (F&SF Nov) because the ending was more a surrender than a fulfillment -- the story ended up going nowhere. Yet if an unknown had written "Fireflood", I'd review it with glowing praise for the tremendously good writing in the beginning, for the fascinating superwoman the writer had devised. But who could get excited about good writing from Vonda McIntyre? I mean, what else can you expect?

Similarly, while George R.R. Martin's "A Beast for Norm" (GALAXY 39:11) is a rip-roaring outsman-the-assholes tale of a genetic manipulator who makes some competitive families pay for the privilege of destroying themselves, I was irritated by a self-righteous prig of a protagonist and more than a little annoyed at the underlying philosophy that seems to value animal life above human life. Martin can do better than this! I cried in indignation. Most writers, however, can't do as well.

And "The Pathways of Desire" (NEW DIMENSIONS 9) by Ursula K. LeQuin is beautifully written, a story of three scientists struggling to understand an alien people that seem to speak a corrupt form of English. However, she throws the whole thing away with a formulaic ending that reduces the story to the kind of plot that friends are always coming up and suggesting to me. 'Hey, Scott, why don't you write a neat story about how the whole world is being dreamed up by a thirteen-year-old boy?' Silly, silly, and beneath LeQuin's talents. Those characters deserved better treatment than that.

One-punch stories, where the climax is the sudden revelation of a fact at the end, usually fall miserably, and I think one could make a good case for the idea that the better the writing, the worse the damage such an ending will do. Jane Yolen's "Angelica" (F&SF Dec) would have been a perfectly successful story if she had revealed right at the beginning that the little boy was Adolf Hitler. But by withholding that fact until the end, she made everything that went before seem trivial. Michael Bishop's "Seasons of Belief" (SHADOWS 2) beautifully showed the touching credulity of children; but the ending was so absolutely pedestrian that I couldn't believe Bishop could have thrown such writing away to so little effect. Fortunately for T.E.D. Klein's story "Petey" (SHADOWS 2), the scenes in an upper-middle-class house party were so well done that the weak one-punch ending didn't overshadow the rest of the tale, which seems designed to prove that ordinary human beings are far more horrible than the monster lurking outside.

DISCOVERIES

Every editor gets a secret delight out of discovering an exciting new talent and watching his career blossom. George Scithers is rightfully proud of Barry Longyear; Ben Bova has been soundly cursed for unleashing upon us the world of science fiction; and GALILEO's Charlie Ryan has every reason to be busting buttons over Connie Willis. Willis's quiet but powerful stories have been a pleasure to read over the last year; "Daisy, in the Sun" (GALILEO Nov) is her best yet, the story of what happens to the people who are destroyed when the sun explodes.

Who discovered Somtow Sucharitkul? It doesn't matter -- he has work appearing everywhere, and I'm delighted. Two of his stories this quarter deal with time travel. In "Fire From the Wine-Dark Sea" (OTHER WORLDS 1) a father who inexplicably loves one of his twin sons and dislikes the other finds the problem painfully solved for him by a time-traveling Odysses, who gave up on Penelope and now roams the oceans of the world in search of something. And in "Comets and Kings" (CHRYSALIS 5), Sucharitkul brings a time traveler in contact with Alexander the Great -- an idea that, less skillfully handled, would have been terrible. Sucharitkul makes it great. A third Sucharitkul story, "A Day in Mallworld" (IA'SM Oct) is a fun, silly story about a scavenger hunt for the meaning of life.

Two other stories deal with time manipulation. John M. Ford, who is quite good at humor, is even better when he plays it straight. His story "Mandalay" (IA'SM Oct) is about time travelers struggling to get home again, after a massive
fracture broke up the system. They travel along a seemingly endless tunnel that never quite leads home; they follow a more than remarkable leader. And in "Rent Control" (OMNI Oct), Walter Tevis tells almost a fairy tale about a couple of lovers who literally make time stand still. But they pay a price for it in this excellent story.

BETRAYAL AND UNCERTAINTY

The most moving love affair I've read about in a long time is in Tanith Lee's "Deux Amours d'Une Sorciere" (SWORDS AGAINST DARKNESS IV). In this tale of misplaced love and misplaced magic, the language always verges on affectation -- but stops short. Are all women sorcerous? Perhaps yes. But the magic finds its own painful course.

The universe doesn't always make sense -- but it still works. So do a few strange and ambiguous stories. Barry Malzberg's "Demystification of Circumstance" (F&SF Nov) belies its title and gives us a protagonist who is at the mercy of a sentient rock who may or may not be an enemy -- and may or may not be real. Malzberg expertly turns his character -- and his readers -- inside out several times, with betrayal after lie after trick. Roger Zelazny's "Go Starless in the Night" (DESTINIES Oct-Dec) also refuses to let the reader know the truth. His protagonist, who has been entrusted with secrets, finds himself utterly at the mercy of strangers -- and just suspicious enough not to take them at face value.

There is nothing ambiguous about Philip Dick's delightful "The Exit Door Leads In" (ROLLING STONE COLLEGE PAPERS 1). Bob Bibleman is involuntarily recruited into a top-secret military academy and gets just as involuntarily booted out. But in the process, Dick turns the tables on readers who expect it to be an anti-establishment story. It isn't exactly pro-establishment, either -- it does, however, force you to think about the meaning of trust.

FRIENDLY ALIENS

Two old men find warmth and friendship on a concrete bench in Cleveland -- only the bench turns out to be a sentient creature involved in a vicious high-stakes contest with still another alien race in "Old Friends" (ANALOG Nov), by Kevin O'Donnell, Jr. It's a well-crafted, cheerful little story, unlike the brooding "The Faces of Man" (CHRYSALIS 5) by Glenn Chang, one of the best stories of the year. Versola is an anthropologist (or sorts) who deliberately "goes native" -- only to discover, to his great pain, that the natives completely misunderstand his role among them and eventually leave him in unwelcome solitude.

Sentient creatures also play a role in "Frost Animals" (UNIVERSE 9) by Bob Shaw. This story is a hard SF mystery the way they should always be written. The protagonist steps off his first starship flight to discover that he is suspected of committing a murder the murder of the fellow spacer who got him into an orgy just before he shipped out. Good characters, good mystery, and a perfectly satisfactory ending.

Alien machines are saving the world in "Last" (NEW DIMENSIONS 9) by Michael Conner. Or are they? It's the brittle story of the last man on earth -- a death-wishing madman who loves the role he has to play, and wants no supporting cast. Machine intelligence is not so alien, however, in Gene Wolfe's bitter little Christmas present to us in the December OMNI. The story, "War Beneath the Tree", is about what happens to last year's toys when the new batch is brought by Santa Claus. It is written by Gene Wolfe, which is recommendation enough. Wolfe, at least, has never disappointed me -- he gets better with everything he publishes.

HUMOR

Already into the quick takes under category headings? Oh, well. There's never enough space to say all that these stories deserve to have said.

Humor is hard to do, and most attempts at it succeed only in being light. Often that's enough, as it is with Brian Lumley's "Cryptically Yours" (SAD IV), the epistolary story of a battle between a power-mad sorcerer and his unsuspecting colleagues. Barry N. Malzberg and Bill Pronzino do an excellent send-up of Poe in "Clocks" (SHADOWS 2), which waves between being serious and funny. Funny is better, in this case. And in "Life Among the Brain Stealers" (ANALOG Dec), Frederick William Croft finds a diabolically clever advertising method -- that has side effects.

David Bunch's "Through a Wall and Back" (ETERNITY 1) is a brittle story in a strange voice. So you work hard and get luck and God on your side and finally are sent through to heaven, only to discover that heaven is a boring cocktail party. Bunch's poetic style makes for slow reading -- but it's worth it, especially since the density allows his stories to be very short.

Donald Barthelme spends a lot of time savaging the press in "The Emerald" (ESQUIRE Nov), and his style is affected -- but effective. Usually Barthelme, a mainstream writer of note, leaves me cold; this time, however, his pyrotechnics came off just right, and this story of a woman who mates with the moon god (Deus Lunus) and gives birth to an emerald is one of the best fantasies of the year.

MODERN FANTASY

Three modern fantasies this quarter dealt with children, with surprisingly good effect. Kids are hard to write -- they tend to turn out as small adults. Not so in Greg Bear's "White Horse Child" (UNIVERSE 9), a haunting, nostalgia-invoking story of how some children find their way into their imagination -- and how most are forced to choose another life. Ramsey Campbell turns the cruelty of children around quite effectively in "Macintosh Willy" (SHADOWS 2), the story of children who face their imaginary fears and find them not quite so imaginary. And Pat Murphy writes about two twins -- only one of whom has a soul -- in "Nightbird at the Window" (CHRYSALIS 5). It is a strangely compelling story in which one twin discovers his emptiness the hard way -- and loses his mother in the process.

Not since Peter Beagle's A FINE AND PRIVATE PLACE have I read as good a treatment of the life of the dead as Peter Pautz's "The Closing Off of Old Doors" (SHADOWS 2), in which Carver, dead for twenty-seven years, finds his way to the funeral home where his future awaits him. "Dead End", by Richard Christian Matheson, also in SHADOWS 2, is like one of the best of the old TWILIGHT ZONE stories: A couple, who are not doing so well in their marriage, find themselves endlessly wandering the hills near Los Angeles, always running into the same dead end.

Unlike the bulk of the stories in SHADOWS 2, Manly Wade Wellman's "The Spring" isn't really trying for terror or shock. His Appalachian folk are too lovable, even the villainous, for a reader to fear them much. It's a warm, if dangerous, world he has created, and I love
every visit there.

Steve Rasnic Tem is a poet; I'm glad to see he is also an excellent writer of fiction. He has two stories in OTHER WORLDS 1, and both are good. In "Hideout", McMahon goes back in time to try to get his young self to avoid the miseries he knows lie ahead -- but he finds that his old self is impenetrably bull-headed, and even nastier than he had remembered. And "The Painters Are Coming Today" is a strange but wonderful story about housepainters who come unbidden to beautify a neighborhood, residents and all.

Paul H. Cook is another poet, with a respectable reputation in little literary magazines. He has also sold an excellent novel, TINTAGEL, to Berkley; his story "Character Assassin" in OTHER WORLDS 1 is a foretaste of the originality and good writing that can be expected from Cook in the future. In the story a lover of literature finds that every world that a writer creates really comes into existence somewhere -- and a madman named Faraday is going around ruining the endings of the stories.

Alan Ryan explores the horrors of getting stuck, day after day, in the limes department of Macy's in "Sheets" (CHRYSALIS 5), while David Bisschop gives us a delightfully perverted performance of HAMLET in "All the Stage, a World" (CHRYSALIS 5). When the show is over, however, the improvisors don't necessarily get applauding.

Another fine story about a performer is Alan Ryan's "The Last Performance of Kobo Daishi" (OTHER WORLDS 1). First published by Roy Torgeson, Ryan has found many other editors who appreciate his gifts; this story, however, is his finest. It is a delicately wrought Japanese fantasy that creates a jester and the intriguing emperor he performs for.

HEROIC FANTASY

Joanna Russ doesn't like heroic fantasy, for perfectly valid reasons of taste. In fact, the reasons she has expressed in reviews in FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION are precisely the reasons why I hate so much heroic fantasy myself. Unfortunately, she has somehow got herself in the awkward position of expressing her tastes as if they were absolute standards -- as if, because she can't get over her problems with the genre, no intelligent person should. And nowhere is the result of this more unfortunately expressed than in her silly parody "Dragons and Dimwits or There and Back Again: A Publishers' Holiday or Why Did I Do It? or Much Ado About Magic or Lord of the Royalties or ... or ... or ... or ..." (F&SF Dec). The title is sufficient review of the story -- it never gets above that level. The main problem with Russ's view of heroic fantasy -- and the problem with many reviewers' tendency to ridicule what they do not understand -- is that all fiction requires a willing suspension of disbelief. Some people can suspend their disbelief for some things, others for others, but there is no fiction whatsoever that cannot be ridiculed with equal unintelligence by someone who is incapable of understanding it.

What Mark Twain did to Fenimore Cooper could with equal ease be done to Mark Twain. Ridicule is the most useless and self-debasing form of criticism. Joanna Russ has often proved herself capable of much better -- she should leave the childish antics to reviewers of less ability.

A story that would be quite dispicable to Russ is Charles Saunders's "Mai-Kulala" (SAD IV), and for pretty good reason. Saunders writes well, and the story is very entertaining; but I keep wishing his main character would turn into a human being who once had parents and who isn't always so damn strong and so remarkably purposeless -- a common failing in heroic fantasy.

Another frequent problem with fantasy is the attempt at high language. Ursula LeGuin may have called for formal English in her essay "From Elfland to Poughkeepsie", but I assure all would-be fantasists that high language is not achieved by tossing in a few forsooths and convoluting the grammar of your dialogue. Despite some unfortunate dialogue that falls into such absurdities, Jayge Carr's "The Pavilion Where All Times Meet" (OTHER WORLDS 1) is a well-written, compelling fantasy about the man without a past and the woman without a future. (Carr also wrote a Malthusian nightmare story entitled, appropriately, "Malthus's Day", which appeared in the November Omn. She is a very talented writer who does not always stick with the trendy viewpoint when she deals with "pertinent social issues".)

With space waning, I can only briefly mention four other fine heroic fantasies: Roger Zelazny's "A Knight for Merytha" (ETERNITY 1) in which the maiden in distress is not all she seems to be; Gordon Linzner's "The Ballad of Borrell", the story of a father with two sons, one of his body and one of his heart; Diana Paxson's "The Dark Mother", in which a woman sacrifices something far more valuable to her than life in order to save the life of the son of her friends; and Manly Wade Wellman's "The Edge of the World" is a rollicking good swashbuckler that would be the envy of Rafael Sabatini. (The last three appeared in SAD IV.)

As usual, I have a couple of stories left over after I've run out of categories. Jay A. Parry is a friend and sometime collaborator of mine; I admit the bias and still recommend to you "Gods in the Fire, Gods in the Rain" (CHRYSALIS 5) as a sensitive portrayal of what life might be like after a complete economic collapse in America. Marta Randall posits an equally oppressive, deprived society in "The Captain and the Kid" (UNIVERSE 9), a sentimental but not maudlin story about an aging ship captain who is sick to death of earthside life and wants her spaceship back again.

OK, Dick. Come out with the nails. I see the cross is ready.

Card went over the space limit again, worse than ever, and the column is a week late. This time, at least, can I have the middle cross?

((I was reserving that spot for Elton Elliott. But if you insist...))

STORIES REVIEWED THIS ISSUE

Listed by publication in which the story first appeared.

MAGAZINES (genre)

ANALOG
Nov. "Old Friends", Kevin O'Donnell, Jr.
Dec. "The Moon Goddess and the Son", Donald Kingsbury; "Life Among the Brain Stealers", Frederick William Croft
DESTINIES
ETERNITY
No. 1. "A Knight for Merytha", Roger Zelazny; "Through a Wall and Back", David R. Bunch
GALAXY
GALILEO
Nov. "Daisy, in the Sun", Connie Willis

57
Fantasy and Science Fiction
Nov. "Demystification of Circumstance", Barry N. Malzberg
Dec. "Wives", Lisa Tuttle;
"Angelica", Jane Yolen; "Dragons and Dimwits...", Joanna Russ

Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine
"A Day in Mallworld", Somtow Sucharitkul

OMNI
Oct. "Rent Control!", Walter Tevis
Nov. "Malthus's Day!", Jayge Carr
Dec. "War Beneath the Tree!", Gene Wolfe

MAGAZINES (Mainstream)
ESQUIRE
Nov. "The Emerald!", Donald Bartheleme
ROLLING STONE COLLEGE PAPERS
No. 1. "The Exit Door Leads In!", Philip K. Dick

Anthologies
CHRYSALIS 5. (Zebra, Ed. Roy Torgeson), "Returning to Center!", Susan Janice Anderson; "Sheets!", Alan Ryan;
"My Father's Head!", Timothy Robert Sullivan; "Portrait for a Blind Man!", Karl Hansson;
"Nightbird at the Window!", Pat Murphy; "Comets and Kings!", Somtow Sucharitkul;
"All the Stage, a World!", David F. Bischoff; "The Faces of Men!", Glenn Chang;
"Gods in the Fire, Gods in the Rain!", Jay A. Parry

"The Ranchers Go to Tinker Town!", Timothy Robert Sullivan; "Crossing the Wastelands!", Jeff Hecht;
"Last!", Michael Conner.

"The Pavilion Where All Times Meet!", Jayge Carr; "Hideout!", and "The Painters Are Coming Today!", Steve Rasnic Tem;

"Mackintosh Willy!", Ramsey Campbell;
"Clocks!", Barry N. Malzberg and Bill Pronzini;
"The Closing Off of Old Doors!", Peter D. Pautz;
"Dead End!", Richard Christian Matheson;
"Seasons of Belief!", Michael Bishop;
"Petey!", T.E.D. Klein.

"The Ballad of Borrel!", Gordon Linzner;
"Deux Amours d'Une Sorciere!", Tanith Lee;
"Cryptically Yours!", Brian Lumley;
"The Dark Mother!", Diana L. Paxson;

"The Edge of the World!", Manly Wade Wellman.

UNIVERSE 9 (Doubleday, Ed. Terry Carr): "Frost Animals!", Bob Shaw;
"Nuclear Fission!", Paul David Novitski;
"The Captain and the Kid!", Marta Randalli;
"The White Horse Child!", Greg Bear; "Options!", John Varley.

Card's Choice
or
The Ones I'd Put in a Best-of-the-Year Anthology If I Were Doing One!
By Orson Scott Card

With the hundreds of stories published every year, very few SF readers bother trying to read them all. Most stick with one or two magazines, or an occasional anthology, or an occasional issue that contains a story by a favorite writer. Unfortunately, this means that few readers have a feel for the genre's short fiction as a whole. I began writing this column a bit over a year ago in order to provide a handy-dandy guide to the short fiction. I have deliberately not limited myself to my own preferences; I have tried to point out the best stories each quarter in every camp and subgenre of science fiction and fantasy. Even when I hated a story, if I suspected that one group would like it, I said so. In short, I have tried to enable the reader who wants to keep up with the best in short fiction to do so without spending all his time reading everything.

Whether I have achieved that objective is one of the great unknowables. But now, at the end of my first full calendar year of doing this, I want to point out to you the ones that I think are the very finest. Award material. The most important stories you could read, if you were only reading a few dozen. And, just to get it off my chest, I have also included my personal choices in several other Hugo categories. All of it just this writer's opinion, of course, but these were the works that pleased me most this year.

Short Stories
Science Fiction:
"Can These Bones Live?" Ted Reynolds (ANALOG, Mar.)
The last woman on earth is given one wish.

"Go Starless in the Night", Roger Zelaanz (DESTINIES 1/5, Oct-Dec)
A frozen man is brought to life without any of his senses -- and asked to trust strangers.

"The Thirteenth Utopia", Somtow Sucharitkul (ANALOG, Apr.) He is called to destroy a perfect society -- and finds that this one is indestructible.

"Hero", Neal Barrett, Jr. (F&SF, Sep.) He comes back from the wars, but his life can never quite be normal again.

"The Emerald!", Donald Bartheleme (ESQUIRE, Nov.) A noble alien sires a sentient emerald on a simple American woman, who must struggle to preserve her child.

"When the Metal Eaters Come!", David Bunch (GALAXY, Oct.) To achieve immortality, they have made their bodies metal. They just didn't figure on death evolving, too.

Fantasy:
"Deux Amours d'Une Sorciere!", Tanith Lee (SWORDS AGAINST DARKNESS IV, Zebra): She uses sorcery to win the love of a man she doesn't know; and finds she has chosen the wrong subject.

"The Hero Who Returned!", Gerald Page (HEROIC FANTASY, DAW): He believes his wife despises him, and embarks on a quest from which none has ever returned.

"Jumping the Line!", Granvia Davis (F&SF, July): Life is a line waiting for God knows what or how long; but don't count on getting in when you get there.

"The White Horse Child!", Greg Bear (UNIVERSE 9, Doubleday): That old man and that old lady know stories -- if your aunt will let you hear them.

"Rent Control!", Walter Tevis (OMNI, Oct.): They find that when two lovers touch, time does indeed stand still.

Novelets
Science Fiction:
"The Faces of Men!", Glenn Chang (CHRYSALIS 5, Zebra): There's a danger in going native -- even the natives might not want you.

"The Way of Cross and Dragon!", George R.R. Martin (OMNI, June): He went to stamp out a heresy, and found it beautiful. (Martin's "Sandkings" in the August OMNI is more likely to win awards, but in my opinion, "Cross and Dragon" was the more difficult story to bring off well, and the more rewarding to read.)

"Palely Loitering!", Christopher Priest (F&SF, Jan.): A boy plays games with time, and somehow just misses finding his destiny.
"My Father's Head", Timothy Robert Sullivan (CHRYSALIS 5, Zebra): It doesn't pay to love your father when you have to kill him the day you lose your virginity.

"Camps", Jack Dann (PSF, May): There are many kinds of pain you can suffer in a hospital.

"Chrysalis Three", Karen G. Jollie (CHRYSALIS 3, Zebra): He loves his friend, not because he is a Superman, but in spite of that.

Fantasy:

"The Tale of Gorgik", Samuel R. Delany (ASIMOV'S SF ADVENTURES, Summer; also, TALES OF NEVERYON, Bantam): He rose from slavery to power -- losing freedom all along the way.

"The Man Who Walked Through Cracks", R.A. Lafferty (CHRYSALIS 3, Zebra): Reality just isn't what it used to be -- but it can be fun messing it up.

"The Last Performance of Kobo Daishi" Alan Ryan (OTHER WORLDS 1, Zebra): With grace and restraint, both Ryan and the court jester create their finest works to date.

"The Things That Are Gods", John Brunner (ASIMOV'S SF ADVENTURES, Fall): Beware of what you dump in lakes; and don't grant wishes that might conflict with each other.

NOVELS: (There are too few here to bother with categories)

"Enemy Mine", Barry Longyear (ISAAC ASIMOV'S SCIENCE FICTION FICTION MAGAZINE, Sep.): A man and an alien, enemies, are forced to depend on each other for survival.

"The Dancer in the Darkness", Thomas F. Monteleone (NEW VOICES 2, Jove): She longs to dance the one flamenco dance that will kill her.

"The Moon Goddess and the Son", Donald Kingsbury (ANALOG, Dec.): The moon is all she has dreamed of, in this story where fathers bend their children's lives.


BOOKS:

(I don't pretend to have read every novel published this year, but these are my favorites)

Science Fiction:

ENGINE SUMMER, John Crowley (Doubleday)
THE ROAD TO CORLAY, Richard Cowper (Pocket)
TRANSFIGURATIONS, Michael Bishop (Berkley)

Fantasy:

HARPIST IN THE WIND, Patricia McKillip (Atheneum)
THE DEAD ZONE, Stephen King (Viking)
TALES OF NEVERYON, Samuel R. Delany (Bantam)

Commentary:

THE LANGUAGE OF THE NIGHT, Ursula K. LeGuin (Putnam)

Art:

A TOLKIEN BESTIARY, David Day (Del Rey)
AGE OF DREAMS, Alicia Austin
MASTER SNICKUP'S CLOAK, Alexander Theroux/Brian Froud (Harper & Row)

EDITORS:

Roy Torgeson, CHRYSLIS, OTHER WORLDS
Ed Ferman, FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION
David Hartwell, Pocket Books.

ARTISTS:

Don Maizt, cover for THE ROAD TO CORLAY (Cowper, Pocket)
Richard Anderson, interior art for ANALOG throughout 1979
Ian Miller, in A TOLKIEN BESTIARY (Day, Del Rey)

NEW WRITERS:

Karen G. Jollie, "Chrysalis Three" (CHRYSALIS 3)
Timothy Robert Sullivan, "My Father's Head" (CHRYSALIS 5); "The Rauncher Goes to Tinker Town" (NEW DIMENSIONS 9)
Barry Longyear, "Enemy Mine" (IA's fm Sep.); and forgiving the entire Mommus series in IA's fm.
Connie Willis, "Homied Pigeon" (GALILEO July); "Daisy, in the Sun" (GALILEO Nov.)
Jay A. Parry, "Gods in the Fire, Gods in the Rain" (CHRYSALIS 5)
Paul H. Cook, "The Character Assassin" (OTHER WORLDS 1)

So if you're wondering what in the world to read; if you stare at your stack of magazines and anthologies wondering where to begin; then these are my suggestions as to good stories, good writers, good books and good editors to begin with.

It was a good year for science fiction and fantasy. But judging from galleys I've already read of books coming up, 1980 is going to be even better. In particular, I suggest that you watch for the release of Gene Wolfe's new novel, THE SHADOW OF THE TORTURER, when it comes out from Simon and Schuster next May, with a wraparound cover by Don Maizt. I have read it, and without doing a whole review right here, let me simply say that it is the best science fiction or fantasy novel I have ever read; and I don't say that lightly.

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SPECIAL MAGAZINE SECTION

# ANALOG (Monthly)

The January, 1980 issue, marked the 50th anniversary of ANALOG, first published by Clayton as ASTOUNDING STORIES OF SUPER SCIENCE, then as ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION and later as ANALOG. Under the editorship of John W. Campbell Jr. from 1937 to his death in 1971, the magazine became the leader of the SF field. Campbell found and shaped many of the most famous SF writers. Ben Bova took over until mid-1978, when Stanley Schmidt became the editor of the magazine's history; both continued Campbell's goal of developing new writers.

In the upcoming anniversary year, Editor Schmidt has decided on a year-long gala with appearances of many authors and artists associated with the magazine. On file are stories by Clifford D. Simak, Gordon R. Dickson, George O. Smith and Mack Reynolds and others. The anniversary issue itself contains fiction by Isaac Asimov and Ben Bova and has a cover by Paul Lehr. Other artists include Kelly Freas, Vincent DiPate, John Schoenherr and others.

According to Editor Schmidt, ANALOG Books will continue. The contract calls only for paperbacks, through Ace Books. Baronet will not be involved in the new line, edited by ANALOG's Editor Schmidt.

# AMAZING & FANTASTIC (Quarterly)

The latest AMAZING is totally original, and it is said they are phasing out all reprints, and are buying new material.

# ASIMOV'S (Monthly)

They are maintaining their sales lead over ANALOG. However, the companion magazine, ASIMOV'S ADVENTURES, has been postponed because of poor sales on the third issue. Davis Publications indicates that sales figures on the fourth issue will determine the magazine's future.

# DESTINES (Quarterly)

DESTINES #6 has been moved from January to February, the third postponement since the magazine's inception. Being through a paperback publisher, they can afford this luxury that a newsstand magazine, with distribution orders to fulfill, cannot.

# ETERNITY (Bimonthly)

The second issue includes novellas by Orson Scott Card, John Shirley and Benton McAdams, and short stories by Grant Carrington, Janet Fox and Robert Anthony Cross. Featured is an interview with Gregory Benford, a film column by Ed Bryant, Science column by Karl T. Pflock and Books by Orson Scott Card.

By subscription only: 4 issues/$6 to: ETERNITY SCIENCE FICTION, POB #510, Clemson, SC, 29631.

# FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION

A fire at the fulfillment house, which mails subscription copies for them and for ISAAC ASIMOV'S, caused problems with the October issue.

# OMNI

Ben Bova has been named Executive Editor replacing Frank Kendig, who resigned in favor of a writing career. Robert Sheckley has taken over as Fiction Editor.

SF CHRONICLE reported in its January issue: "Current readership studies indicate OMNI's readership stands at over 3,000,000 readers." Bova maintains it will increase. Note: The three-million figure relates only to estimated readers, and has nothing to do with an actual near-million sales figure, still a healthy number considering "experts" were predicting its demise within a year of its first issue.

# STARLOG/FUTURE LIFE

(STARLOG -- Monthly)

(FUTURE LIFE -- 8 yearly)

Rumors indicate that publishers and staff are spread too thin, with 5+ magazines and multiple projects. Several sources (not connected with the STARLOG staff) say they are considering going into full-feature films, requiring enormous capital and a larger staff.

THE STARLOG SF YEARBOOK is out.

# ARES

Simulations Publications, Inc. has announced a new bi-monthly magazine, ARES, subtitled THE MAGAZINE OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY SIMULATION, to start with the March/April issue. The 8 1/4 x 11" 40-page magazine will have a process cover, two-color interior with full-page illustrations and will contain:

1. A fantasy/science fiction simulation game with an 11" by 17" playing map and 100 counters.

2. A background story, possibly illustrated, to accompany the game.

3. Two or three 5,000 to 6,000-word short stories with payment of 64 per word paid on acceptance to "established writers" for First North American serial rights. Notice of acceptance within 45 days.

4. Articles on science fiction/fantasy simulation games -- criticism, hints on play, new scenarios, etc.

5. A number of regular columns -- book reviews, media reviews, philosophy, etc.


This info procured courtesy of Managing Editor, Michael Moore, who adds, "We're hoping that some of the
MOVIE NEWS

According to CBS news, David Begelman, of illegal check-writing fame, was appointed head of MGM. Begelman previously was an independent producer. One of his latest projects was AIR RAID from the Hugo and Nebula-nominated short story by John Varley. Varley was working as script consultant at the time of Begelman's appointment. Mr. Begelman saved Columbia Pictures, with the help of Steven Spielberg's CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND, but lost his job when it was found he had forged checks against Cliff Richardson and others.

No word on how Begelman's new job will affect AIR RAID, which Doug Trumbull is set to direct.

STAR TREK was packing them in to the tune of $12 million in the first three days, with BLACK HOLE drawing considerably less, although both received very poor movie reviews.

# ITEMS OF INTEREST

Furry Ackerman donated his multimillion-dollar collection of SF/fantasy, movie books, films and memorabilia to the city of Los Angeles. L.A. City Librarian Hyman Jones termed it "priceless" and "the world's best". L.A. Mayor Tom Bradley officially commended Furry and the December 8 Los Angeles Times carried the story.

As SF literature becomes more accepted, SF collections will gain in value.

# The Perry Rhodan series at issue #157 in America, is dead. According to Wendayne Ackerman the Germans simply wanted too much money.

# Correction: From Elaine Hampton of KCET: "In re: SFR #33 -- Cosmos is a KCET/BBC production -- the same (or at least some of the) people who worked on THE ASCENT OF MAN series."

# David Lubkin has just sold a story to F&SF. He edits a 'zine, CLARITY, and runs a workshop for "Midwest Would-be Skiffy Pulp Authors", open to anyone with a "demonstratable interest in selling SF professionally". If interested, contact: David Lubkin, 416 S. Francis, Lansing, MI, 48912.

# Brian W. Aldiss recently returned from China, where he interviewed Premier Deng Xiaoping.

# Pennames: "John Norman" is really John Lange, Professor of Philosophy at Queens College of the N.Y. City University. Other pseudonyms: "Alan Burt Akers" is Kenneth Bulmer, as reported in the January 1980 issue of FANTASY NEWSLETTER. The Buck Rodgers adaptations from the TV series, was written for Dell by Richard A. Lupoff, under the name of Addison E. Steele, according to a Dell ad. Is "Bill Starr" really Brian Daley? If anybody has info on unknown pseudonyms, please write me and I will try to authenticate.

# Speaking of "John Norman"; A 22-year-old male, Robert Terhune, has been accused of murdering a 16-year-old female, Paula Ashbaugh. During the trial Terhune testified that he was an avid Gor reader, and then "had fantasies of tying up and dominating neighborhood girls" (from an article in LOCUS #228). The name of the town was not given.

# Roger Lovin, 38, SF novelist, including the recent novel, APOSTLE, (Starblaze) was arrested in New Orleans on obscenity charges. A prior arrest was on pornography charges.

# PUBLISHER'S NOTES

Random House, owners of Ballantine Books and its SF imprint, Del Rey Books, is up for sale by its parent company RCA, reportedly as an RCA consolidation effort.

Ballantine Books, in the meantime, has signed a distribution agreement with Warner Books.

# Anne McCaffrey's books, DRAGONSONG and DRAGONSONG, (Bantam Books) have totaled 600,000 copies in print.

# Lou Stathis left the assistant editorship at Dell Books.

# Darrell Schweitzer has signed a six-book development contract with Starblaze Books, says Hank Stine, new Starblaze editor.

# St. Martin's has bought a new novel by Allen Wold, STAR-GOD.

# NAL/Signet has started their hardcover line again. No info on whether they will publish SF again. DAW Books, also part of NAL, now has a hardcover option, although DAW's publisher, Donald A. Wollheim has repeatedly denied these rumors.

# Rumors has it that Dell, Berkley and Ace are cutting back their SF programs.

# Britain: Penguin has bought the first three Weir World books by Jack Chalker: MIDNIGHT AT THE WELL OF SOULS, EXILES AT THE WELL OF SOULS, QUEST FOR THE WELL OF SOULS. A fourth, THE RETURN OF NATHAN BRAZIL, was published by Del Rey, January, 1980.

In February, New English Library will publish the first edition of Robert A. Heinlein's latest novel, THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST.

BOOK NEWS

# ACE

February:

Ursula K. LeGuin ✦ Virginia Kidd .... (Eds.) (Trade Paperback) ... INTERFACE (Lynd Abbey ... DAUGHTER OF THE BRIGHT ......)

William E. Cochrane ... CLASS SIX CLIMB .... (Axel Madsen .......UNISAVE Gordon R. Dickson ....... DORSAL! Colin Kapp .... THE WIZARD OF ANHARITE March:

Lynd Abbey .......... THE BLACK FLAME (Trade Paperback, unrelated to the Stanley G. Weinbaum novel of the same name.)

Jerry E. Pournelle .... JANISSARIES Reginald Bretnor (Ed.) .... THE SPEAR OF AMAR .. MAESTRO: THE FUTURE AT WAR VOL. 2 Robert W. Prebodeh ...... YOUR NEXT FIFTY (Non-fiction) .............. YEARS Gordon R. Dickson ... SOLDIER, ASK NOT James Patrick Baen (Ed.) .... THE BEST ............. FROM IF: VOL. 4

April:

Larry Niven .... THE PATCHWORK GIRL (Trade Paperback)

Charles Sheffield ... THE WEB BETWEEN ........ THE WORLDS

Spider Robinson .... THE BEST OF ALL .......... POSSIBLE WORLDS

Bill Adler & Co. .... FUTURESCOPE! Robert Silverberg ... INVADERS FROM .... EARTH/TO WORLDS BEYOND Marion Zimmer Bradley: .... STAR OF BANGER .......... THE PLANET SAVERS .......... THE SWORD OF ALDOR ...... THE WINDS OF DAKORO .... THE WORLD WRECKERS James Patrick Baen (Ed.) ... DESTINIES #7


# AVON

Page Cuddy is now Editor-in-Chief of the science fiction line, in addition to being Senior Editor. She is an experienced publishing editor, has attended many SF conventions and is building up the Avon line by several book purchases, including MACRÖLIFE by George Zebrowski.

# BANTAM

February:

Anne McCaffrey .... DRAGON DRUMS Jack C. Haldeman II .... PERRY'S PLANET David Brin .......... SUNDIVER Thomas M. Disch ... CAMP CONCENTRATION Ray Bradbury .... THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES

March:

John Crowley ... ENGINE SUMMER
April: WATCTOWER, paperback, by Elizabeth Lynn, the first book in a trilogy; the second, THE DANCERS OF ARUN, will be in paper in July. The concluding volume, THE NORTHERN GIRL, will be in hardcover in May.

Upcoming titles: WINDOWS (paper) and ASCENDANCIES (hardcover) by D.G. Compton. Book Four in the Riverworld series, THE MAGIC LABYRINTH by Philip Jose Farmer, will be a June hardcover. Damon Knight's first novel in a decade, THE WORLD AND THOR-RIN, will be a fall hardcover.

# DA W

Daw will be moving to the same address as Signet/NAL: 1635 Broadway, New York, NY, 10019.

SABELLA, by Tanith Lee is to be released in the spring, and a new novel by Stephen Tall, THE PEOPLE BEYOND THE WALL, plus Ron Goulart's new novel, LOST ILLUSIONS.

# DELL

Spider & Jeanne Robinson...STARDANCE (The first part of this novel won the Hugo and Nebula awards for best novella of 1977 -- it's the second Dell SF title marketed as a Dell Science Fiction Special.) James Frenkel (Ed.)...BINARY STAR #4 "Legacy"... Joan D. Vinge...THE JANUS EQUATION"...Steven G. Spruill Philip K. Dick...THE PENULTIMATE TRUTH Manly Wade WELLMAN...WHO FEARS THE DEVIL?

March: F.M. Busby .............ZELIDS N'TANA Bob Shaw .............MEDUSA'S CHILDREN (Re: The blurb on this book, the publicity release got one important plot detail wrong) Hugh B. Cave .... THE NEBULON HORROR

# DIAL BOOKS

April: Jeffrey Carver .............PANGLORE Phyllis Eisenstein...BORN TO EXILE Marvin Kaye ..........THE INCREDIBLE UMBRELLA Keith Laumer & Rosal George Brown... .......EARTHBLOOD

March: John Jakes & Gil KANE ... EXCALIBUR (By Dial Books, a hardcover house associated with Dell)

April: Joan D. Vinge ...... THE SNOW QUEEN

Other upcoming releases: KINSMAN by Ben Bova, FIND THE CHANGELING by Gregory Benford and Gordon Eklund, CITY COME A' WALKIN' by John Shirley, CIRCUMPOLAR! by Richard Lupoff, and A PLANET CALLED TREASON by Orson Scott Card.

# DOUBLEDAY

February: A.E. Van Vogt...THE COSMIC CONNECTION Jack Dann ............. TIME-TIPPING H. Warner Munn ...... THE LOST LEGION

# POCKET


# SIMON & SCHUSTER

March: Gene Roddenberry....STARR TREK: ......THE MOTION PICTURE April: Alfred Bestre .......... GOLEM 100


# APOLOGIES:

Apologies for my comments on GAL-AXY last issue. I did not mean that Hank Stine was at fault for GALAXY's lateness or lack of payment. An editor must have full cooperation from the publisher.

I apologize for my comments in SFR #3l about Andrew Porter and SF CHRONICLE. Hindsight has shown that Mr. Porter was right and SF CHRONIC-LE has evolved in four issues into an excellent news magazine.
Galaxy Magazine Under New Management

In an agreement dated December 13, 1979, Universal Publishing and Distributing Corporation has transferred its right to publish Galaxy Magazine to Galaxy Magazine, Inc., a company organized in Boston and chiefly owned by Galileo Magazine. Under the contract, Galaxy Magazine, Inc., receives the current and past subscriber lists, the right to use the name, and whatever reprint rights are owned by Universal in previously published material. The new company has had to commit a portion of the magazine's income to Universal, but there has been no cash payment.

The new company is owned 90% by Galileo, a temporary custodial arrangement according to Galileo's publisher, Vincent McGaffrey. "We hope to attract new investors to the venture," said McGaffrey, "in order to build capital and provide a broader income into the management." The other 10% of the company is owned by Universal.

Galileo will be providing the management for the new company and has announced that Floyd Kemske of the Galileo staff is being installed as Galaxy's Editor. In addition, Galileo plans some other changes. The new Galaxy is bi-monthly (published on the alternate months with Galileo, which is also bi-monthly). It is in a large (8½ x 11) format, rather than its traditional digest size. It is being designed for a college-age readership, addressing a group averaging five to ten years younger than the Galileo audience (which is approximately 29 years old on the average). The magazine will stress adventure in its fiction and the selling price, being somewhat lower than that of Galileo, reflects the lower average income of the younger readership.

Floyd Kemske, Galaxy's new Editor, has been with the Galileo organization for over three years. He has worked for Galileo as Review Editor and as Coordinating Editor and has been involved in virtually every aspect of Galileo's production at one time or another. Galaxy will boast an enlarged science fiction section in the magazine, to be edited by Ed Teja, the newly appointed Science Editor. Reviews will be edited by Noralie Barnett, who has been appointed Review Editor for both Galileo and Galaxy.

Hank Stine, Editor of Galaxy before the reorganization, has been asked to be a contributing editor with duties in the area of manuscript acquisition and evaluation. A unique Strataform Design has been developed for Galaxy's new large page. A horizontal grid comprising three information layers makes the magazine graphically exciting without necessitating a surrender toward the growing industry trend toward shallowness, rapid-fire copy. "This is not design for design's sake," says McGaffrey. "We have important reasons for the strataform approach. This type of layered page lends itself to modular construction." According to McGaffrey, modular construction is well suited to a small staff and enables the magazine to cover topics in depth without having to publish long and dense-looking articles.

Each of the three strata on Galaxy's page carries independent copy which is closely related to the copy in the other strata. A reader can follow a particular article along its band (which remains the same from page to page), but is encouraged by the layout to sample the material which arises in other strata.

Floyd Kemske, the new Editor of Galaxy, in implementing an editorial plan which complements the strataform design. He divides the magazine into virtually independent sections, one for fiction and one each for science and science fiction commentary. Each section is something of a magazine unto itself.

The fiction section will function as much as it has for thirty years, using the strataform page for visual effect only. The other two sections, however, will each be based on a feature article addressing a single topic in some depth. This lead article will generally occupy the uppermost stratum on the page. In the other two strata, there will be modules of copy which can be read either as independent "shorts" or as glosses on the feature.

Galaxy's science Editor, Ed Teja, builds the science section of the magazine around a single concept. For his main feature of each issue he is looking for non-technical but well-informed writing addressed to the adventure of the future. He then surrounds the feature with five modules. Three of the modules—Careers, Words, and Movers and Shakers—are planned as regular columns, while the other two are flexible. Teja tailors each of the five modules to the main feature.

Editor Kemske assembles the section on science fiction on a similar plan. The feature article is an interview with a science fiction personality, an entertaining review essay, or a non-technical account of a science fiction concept. The modules are then book or film reviews, photo essays, short biographies, SF history, or anything else which relates to the future.

The fiction section consists of five to six short stories. Kemske does not anticipate serializations (although he is interested in "series-type" stories). He seeks a balance in each issue among humorous and serious work, space adventure and robots, aliens and sports activities, strange planets and the far future. Galaxy is not in the market for fantasy. The editorial emphasis is on adventure, but not to the exclusion of thoughtful stories. "My own taste," says Kemske, "does not run to pure space opera, but I do like adventure fiction."

The editorial budget of Galaxy is higher than it was under the previous management. Kemske pays $100 to $250 for First World Serial Rights (including a non-exclusive option on anthology publication) on short fiction, dependant on the needs of the magazine. Stories average 5000 words and Kemske emphasizes a need for shorter stories. Galaxy does not pay by the word.

Reviews are acquired by the new Review Editor, Noralie Barnett, who is seeking freelanced reviews of 500 to 750 words for both Galileo and Galaxy. Those accepted for Galaxy will be paid $15 to $25, depending on the needs of the magazine.

Ed Teja will start payment on features for the science section at $100 for First World Serial Rights with a non-exclusive option on anthology publication. Also, all science fiction for the commentary section are purchased for $100 on the same basis. Galaxy will sometimes be able to pay more than $100 for outstanding articles, but it observes a $100 maximum on interviews. Galaxy makes payment on publication.

Sample copies can be obtained for $1.50 (which includes postage) from Galaxy, 339 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02115.
THE ALIEN CRITIC

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

NO OTHER BACK ISSUES ARE AVAILABLE

$1.35 per copy

EACH ISSUE CONTAINS MANY REVIEWS.

THE FOLLOWING LISTINGS ARE OF FEATURED CONTRIBUTIONS

THE ALIEN CRITIC #5 Interview with Fritz Leiber; "The Literary Dreamers" by James Blish; "Irvin Binkin Meets H.P. Lovecraft" by Jack Chalker.

THE ALIEN CRITIC #6 Interview with R.A. Lafferty; "The Trenchant Blade" by Ted White; "Translations from the Editorial" by Marion Z. Bradley.

THE ALIEN CRITIC #8 "Tomorrow's Libido: Sex and Science Fiction" by Richard Delap; "The Trenchant Blade" by Ted White; "Banquet Speech" by Robert Bloch; "Noise Level" by John Brunner.

THE ALIEN CRITIC #9 "Reading Heinlein Subjectively" by Alexei and Cory Fanshin; "Written to a Pulp" by Sam Merwin, Jr.; "Noise Level" by John Brunner; "The Shaver Papers" by Richard S. Shaver.

THE ALIEN CRITIC #10 An Interview with Stanislav Lem; "A Nest of Strange and Wonderful Birds" by Sam Merwin, Jr.; Robert Bloch's Guest Of Honor speech; The Heinlein Reaction.

THE ALIEN CRITIC #11 Interview with Avram Davidson; "Foundation on Scorquan" by J. Alderson; "A Fan History" by L.B. "Bob" Newmark.

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