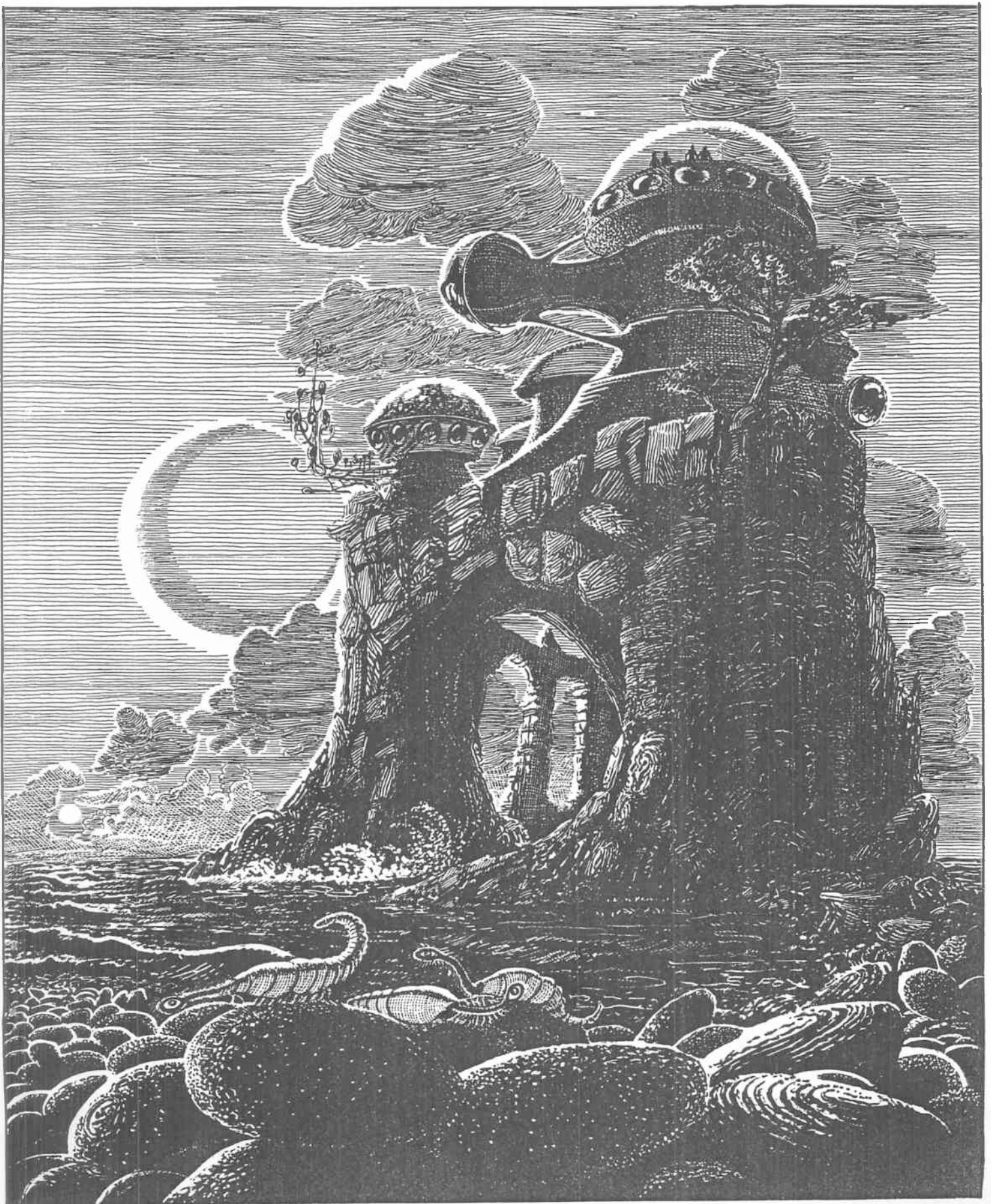


THE MENTOR 54

July 1985

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THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

1776	July 4th	Declaration of Independence
1787	September 17th	Constitution signed
1791	September 16th	Bill of Rights adopted
1800	January 1st	George Washington becomes President
1803	April 30th	Louisiana Purchase
1812	June 18th	War of 1812 begins
1820	March 3rd	Morrill Act passed
1823	December 22nd	Monroe Doctrine
1848	February 2nd	Texas Annexation
1850	September 9th	Compromise of 1850
1861	April 12th	Civil War begins
1863	September 17th	Gettysburg
1865	April 9th	Confederate surrender
1868	March 30th	Reconstruction Act
1870	January 1st	Reconstruction ends
1876	November 3rd	Electoral College
1880	September 1st	Hayden-Carter Act
1882	August 14th	Chinese Exclusion Act
1888	November 3rd	Electoral College
1890	September 9th	Wheeler-Howard Act
1896	November 3rd	Electoral College
1900	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1903	July 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1906	October 3rd	Wheeler-Howard Act
1908	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1910	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1912	November 3rd	Electoral College
1914	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1916	November 3rd	Electoral College
1918	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1920	November 3rd	Electoral College
1922	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1924	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1926	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1928	November 3rd	Electoral College
1930	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1932	November 3rd	Electoral College
1934	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1936	November 3rd	Electoral College
1938	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1940	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1942	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1944	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1946	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1948	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1950	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1952	November 3rd	Electoral College
1954	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1956	November 3rd	Electoral College
1958	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1960	November 3rd	Electoral College
1962	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1964	November 3rd	Electoral College
1966	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1968	November 3rd	Electoral College
1970	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1972	November 3rd	Electoral College
1974	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1976	November 3rd	Electoral College
1978	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1980	November 3rd	Electoral College
1982	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1984	November 3rd	Electoral College
1986	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1988	November 3rd	Electoral College
1990	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1992	November 3rd	Electoral College
1994	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
1996	November 3rd	Electoral College
1998	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
2000	November 3rd	Electoral College
2002	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
2004	November 3rd	Electoral College
2006	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
2008	November 3rd	Electoral College
2010	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
2012	November 3rd	Electoral College
2014	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
2016	November 3rd	Electoral College
2018	September 1st	Wheeler-Howard Act
2020	November 3rd	Electoral College

THE MENTOR

SCIENCE FICTION

JULY 1985

NUMBER 54

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RON'S ROOST

It is only a month to go till the Worldcon in Melbourne, and doubtless numerous fans both in Melbourne and the rest of Australia are glad that it is almost upon them - they might have a chance to have some rest in September after nearly three years work. In Faulconbridge we have already had some fans telephone from the USA asking to stay for a few days so that, although Susan and I aren't going to the Worldcon (Susan is due to have a baby on the 17th of July) we will meet some of the fans from overseas. I am hoping that several of the fans writing for this fanzine will be sending in articles about the goings on at the con.

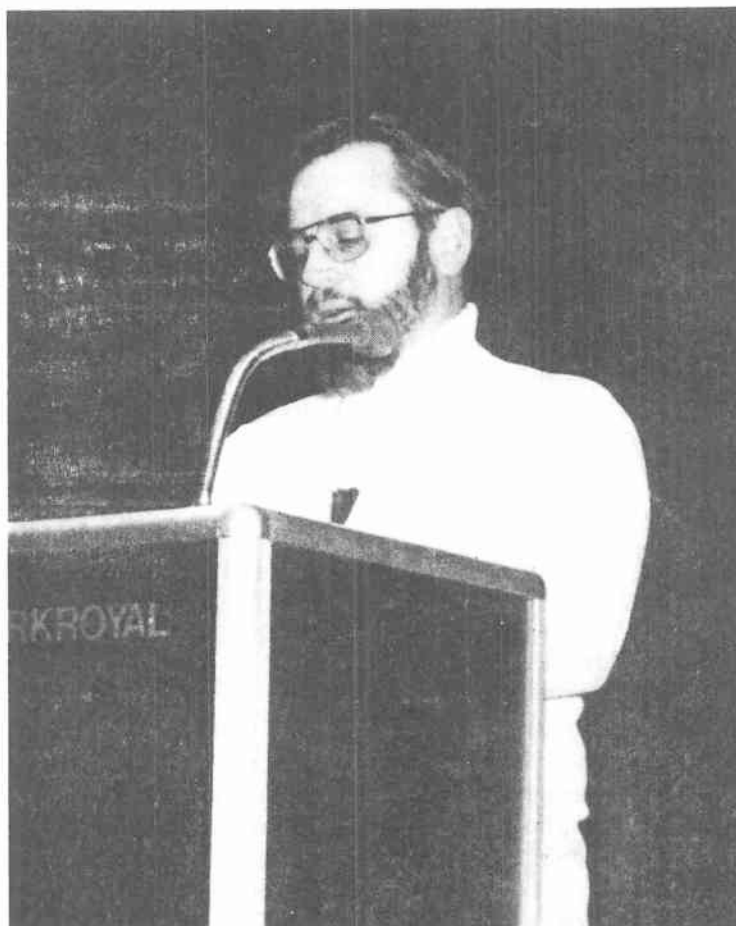
Several of the newszines in Australia in their latest issues have had news of a games F&SF magazine which is coming out in Australia. What they seem to have overlooked is that there is an honest-to-god F&SF prozine, whose first issue came out sometime around June, 1985. The magazine's name is FAR OUT!, and its first issue has 15 short stories. It is folded quarto and is 73 pages. The cover is what I suppose you would call mauve and has the Southern Cross and Federation star in white, along with the name. Price is \$3.50. Subscription rates are \$13 for 4 issues. For anyone wanting to contribute, fiction up to 3,000 words is acceptable (the editor says: The aim... is to give you "a good read" when you have little time to spare: travelling - in hospital - eating a snack - preparing for sleep, etc.") Rates are \$20 per thousand words, on publication. Copyright remains with the contributor.

I have never heard of any of the writers in this first issue; presumably the editor used his contacts to compile it. The stories aren't hard core sf - they are mostly of the type that could be published in the odd woman's and men's magazines (which isn't to say they are bad - MAN published some good sf in its day). This magazine seems a good opportunity for writers trying to break into print and who have not had the opportunity because of a lack of an sf magazine in Australia. The distributor is Gordon & Gotch, so it looks like the publishers have at least that going for them - they will get into the newsagents. We picked this copy up when we were coming back from the convention in Brisbane. I haven't seen any other copy in Sydney, so they may have sold out. It will be interesting to see where this magazine goes when it gets up steam, and it is up to Australian SF readers to make sure it has the opportunity.

The editorial address? - Far Out Enterprises, PO Box 338, Port Hedland, W.A. 6721. (091) 73 1225.

Good luck to them!

"IN PRAISE OF THE GHETTO"



BY DENNIS STOCKS

I feel not unlike the ghost of Christmas Past rattling the chains of events and people who may mean very little to my audience. When I accepted the invitation from Lorrie Boen to be Literary Fan Guest of Honour, this convention was still thirteen or fourteen months away. Casting around for something to talk about, I am glad to say that I found this year to be significant. Fandom in Australia can be said to have begun fifty years ago this year.

In 1935, Wallace Osland, William Hewitt and Thomas Mallett were all members of Hugo Gernsback's SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE. On August 15, 1935 they founded Chapter 27 of the LEAGUE and began meeting in people's homes. Perhaps I should say "members'" homes? By February 1936 their membership reached six and further Chapters are thought to have been at least considered for Brisbane and Toowoomba. Nothing is really known about what happened to these latter Chapters, or if they were ever formed in the first place. Certainly, the Osland/Hewitt/Mallett Chapter had fallen apart by 1936 to be resurrected the following year by four Randwick Intermediate High School students who formed the Junior Australian Science Fiction Correspondence Club.

In 1938 the first fanzines appeared. These were SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW and AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION NEWS. Neither lasted more than one issue. In October, 1939 ULTRA (produced by Eric Russell) was published as Australia's first successful fanzine. It ran through 14 issues (roughly bi-monthly) until December, 1941.

At this point we can identify one of the strands that run through fandom. In this case the urge to publish fanzines.

Sue (Clarke) spoke yesterday of the trials and tribulations of fanzine production. If any of you have leanings that way, and the question time seemed to indicate that may be so, I can suggest no better introduction to fanzines than to join an APA - "Amateur Publishing Association" - specifically ANZAPA. ANZAPA is an acronym for Australian and New Zealand Amateur Publishing (or Press) Association. In the time I was associated with ANZAPA I'm not sure we ever had a New Zealander as a member but there were quite a number of Americans and even two South Africans.

APAs work on a system whereby you produce, say, 30 copies of your fanzine and send them off to a central editor. The title was "Official Bloody Editor" (O.B.E.) and I enjoyed that position for ANZAPA in 1971-1972. The editor collates all the submissions he has received by the deadline and mails back the bundle to members. So you get back a pile of fanzines, one of which is yours and, in the ultimate case, 29 others if the APA membership was 30 and everyone contributed that month.

The APAs raise the second strand we can unravel in continuity, that of tensions. Let me say this presentation is a very personal view of Australian fandom as I saw it, or as I perceived it from impressions deriving from fanzines, rumour, and second-or third-hand gossip. If I present people or events unfavourably I apologise in advance.

I use the word "tensions" rather than any other to represent disagreements, controversy, outright hatreds et cetera because the tensions I perceived seemed to run the full gamut of emotions and I'd like to examine a number of them throughout this presentation without prefacing my comment by saying "Well, this event really was steaming up the protagonists, and they hated each other since that time." I've never fully understood, for example, the tensions between Media and Literary Science Fiction fans. At the time I'm talking about, Media fandom was very thin on the ground and perhaps best represented by Shayne McCormack. Shayne came in for a lot of flack over her Star Trek interests, which is a shame and something I never fully understood.

This perhaps also says something about my fandom, or fan activities. I've found a lot of fans frighteningly committed and dedicated. Perhaps because I have had a somewhat superficial commitment to fandom. I should say, however, that I was involved in an incident which, in retrospect, is petty and trivial (even embarrassing) over postal dues with a Melbourne fan, John Foyster. In reality, the tension has never affected our relationship and I like to think of John as one of my friends still.

Where was I? APAs and Tensions.. In ANZAPA I experienced the tensions that can arise when criticising someone else's work of creativity. But there were other incidents. For example, a sixteen-year-old was banned from membership which caused a few waves. I should point out that fans tend to bleed in public - especially in Apazines. You read the most intimate details of the lives (sex-lives especially) and they reveal things they probably wouldn't tell their best friends in the more mainstream world.

Enough on fanzines. In November 1939 the Futurian Society of Sydney formed as a forum for discussion of magazines, quizzes, competitions and round robin stories. They also conducted ESP experiments. Damien Broderick seemed to pick up some 35 years later and I've been to at least two conventions where he's used the audience to conduct a number of ESP trials. What became of his results I don't know.

In the clubs now forming in Australia, another aspect of fan tension arose. There had always been and perhaps always will be tensions of personalities. But in July 1940 there appeared an animated discussion whether the Futurians should send a congratulatory telegram to the Convention being run in Chicago at that time.

There was the argument that the money should best be spent on the Club Library. Also there was the cry "Are we scientists or Science Fictionists?" when the club discussions moved towards more technical aspects of science fiction.

I find this amazing. The Futurians could trace their lineage back to Hugo Gernsback who was, after all, the creator of RALPH 124841+. RALPH began as a "filler" when Gernsback had space in his radio magazine. It was written from month to month with apparently no idea how it would end or what next month's installment would reveal. Ralph (our hero) is confronted with a number of problems and he uses an amazing range of equipment to bring his beloved back to life, to destroy an avalanche and so on.

In Brisbane, the British Interplanetary Society had a great effect on science fiction readers. Perhaps the best (the only?) example of this is Frank Bryning.

When I first met Frank, he was one of the technical editors for Strand Press, where he edited a number of the electrical trades' magazines. He had also been a freelance writer since 1931 and sold his first science fiction story BLOODTHINKER to World News in Sydney in 1945. I understand they changed the title to TO SAVE HIS LIFE. Frank devised a series of stories acted out in a Commonwealth Satellite Space Station orbiting the Earth 22,300 miles over the equator at the longitude of Woomera.

The stories centred about the character of Dr Vivian Gale and were FOR MEN MUST WORK, JETTISON OR DIE, JOURNEY INTO ORBIT, OPERATION IN FREE FALL, SPACE DOCTOR'S ORDERS and ACTION-REACTION.

An example of the "hard" science trend is apparent in a letter Frank received from Flight Lieutenant Sanderman, based at the RAAF base at Amberley outside Ipswich. While Frank had done his homework for OPERATION IN FREE ORBIT (in which the character has to remove his own appendix) and consulted the medical texts so he could slip in technical terms such as a Bard Parker knife, Poupart's Ligament and so on, even considering how you remove the bubble from the hypodermic in zero gravity, Sanderman pointed out the spinal anaesthetic used depended on the different specific gravity between itself and the spinal fluid to keep the patient alive. In zero g, the anaesthetic would reach the pons medulla which are the motor centres which keep our lungs working. In zero g, the patient/surgeon would have killed himself.

In the second edition published in Fantastic, Frank carefully inserted a sentence saying that Sanderman's Glutin Plug was inserted. The Plug stopped the spread of the anaesthetic. Frank then dropped it back to Sanderman to develop the "Plug" Frank had just named after him!.

Frank, George Tafe (who managed a sweets manufacturing business), Ken Cheong (an architect) and others who enjoyed science fiction used to meet in members' homes. Their library was carried from place to place in an old gladstone bag. Considering the weight, the librarian's arm must have been extended some inches.

By the way, Australia had gone through an availability crisis during the war when only British reprints filled the gap, but began to omit the serials.

Frank began another "series" - this time on Robots. ROBOT CARPENTER, YOU TURN ME ON, THE MECHMAN OF DREAMING, LOST EXPLORER, etc. With MECHMAN, there is another trend in Frank's work - that of his aboriginal stories. THE PLACE OF THE THROWING STICK (and in case you don't get the reference that's Woomera) is perhaps his most reprinted work.

Now, having used Frank as a local example of a "hard" author, I should say he's written ACCIDENTS OF BLOOD which is a fantasy for a Harlan Ellison collection which may or may not appear. I think Ellison's had this story for 15 years now. It involves a priest celebrating mass who finds it is real blood and real flesh he's handing out (or about to).

By the time I came on the scene, Frank's group had quietly folded, though individuals were still in the background and gave me unstinting help when I formed the Brisbane Fantasy and Science Fiction Association in November 1969.

In 1967-1968 I'd written to John Bangsund as a result of an article that had appeared in Worlds Of If magazine. In typical Bangsund fashion, despite numerous reminders, it took him about 12 months to reply. He had, however, passed my name on to Gary Mason who began sending me New Millennial Harbinger. NMH was a newszine for fans, carrying snippets of info Gary thought would interest fans. He had, in my opinion, an unfortunate predilection for SHOCK! HORROR! headlines on the covers of NMH and seemed to be unconcerned with his stretching the truth to achieve sensationalism. I've always thought Gary should have been editor of the Melbourne Truth.

Well, all this suddenly made me aware of fandom in Australia. An advertisement appeared in a local newspaper from a fellow who's name I've forgotten who deplored that there was no fan group in Brisbane. He visited me in response to my letter and left it to me to form a group. I don't recall why he couldn't do it, but I never saw him again.

In response to be ad. I received an amazing supply of letters. I don't recall if STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND had been published, or if it had achieved the notoriety it later enjoyed, but one woman said she was interested, but not if my potential group had anything to do with drugs. There was one objecting to my witchcraft.??

One of our members ran an employment agency and we met in his rooms on weekday evenings. Later two of us rented rooms in a business building in Edward Street and we could meet on weekends.

In 1970 two fans had gone to a convention in Melbourne and with Bangsund's push, came back to suggest we could run our own convention in Brisbane. I should say that then conventions were never in premises with accomodation. It wasn't until 1972-1973 that Australian sf cons began to be held in motels or universities that the attendees could "live in". Until then they were held in halls, etc.

Q-CON I was run over the Easter weekend, 1971 and was a mess. I'm embarrassed by the whole thing. We had a panel discussion on time travel anomalies and as soon as a member of the audience would scratch his head, he'd be leapt on by the panel to make a comment. We had two days of discussions, speeches etc in Brisbane, then treked off to the Gold Coast to visit a fan there who had the biggest collection of magazines in Queensland.

I do remember we ran an auction to raise funs for the Worldcon bid, and Robin Johnson successfully bid for a lump of wood painted black (the monolith from 2001). Frank Bryning was our Guest of Honour and I received invaluable assistance from John Ryan.

John had been transferred to Brisbane from Sydney. He worked as the manager of the General Products section of Firestone. Firestone is just a mile away from where I work and John would often drop up in our lunch hours for long talks.

If any of you have a mentor or patron who has influenced your life for the better, who had pushed you along with helpful suggestions and who you have

admired and respected, John Ryan was that person for me. He had come to Brisbane without his family and was forced to learn to drive a car as part of his new position. When his family eventually arrived, I helped them move into their Mt Gravatt home and began a friendship which I cherish. Ten years later John died of a heart attack whilst on a business trip to Darwin.

John wasn't so much a science fiction fan so much as a Comics fan. He'd won the prestigious Alley award (based on Alley Oop, an American caveman comic character). He was a member of ANZAPA and got me to join and pushed me into the OBE spot. He improved my fanzines out of sight with his help. We used to use the Firestone gestetner machine after work. He also pushed me into Comic's fandom. It's not related, but it was John's influence that won me the Ditmar Award for the best Australian fanzine in 1971. (By the way, the Ditmar Award has always been a source of tension in Australian fandom.)

When I pushed him into writing the book he'd always wanted to do (PANEL BY PANEL) I like to think I repaid just a fraction of the help he'd been to me. It is a source of great honour to me that my name appears in the acknowledgements in that book.

Things just drooped along in Brisbane. I contacted Keith Wilby (who is showing the films for this convention). Keith ran the Sailsbury theatre and would let us use it for meetings and film showings. One night we were showing Fahrengait 451 when the locals turned up - kids in pyjamas etc - all wanting to see the movies. This was strange since 451 had been shown on TV the week before. Should I charge them? I did!

Oh, I should say Q-CON I made a profit from \$1.50 membership. I understand it was the first Australian Convention to actually make a profit.

For Q-CON II I decided to do everything myself. John couldn't help since he was on a business trip. The second con was pushed as "The First Convention on the Other Side of the Time Barrier". Queensland had separated itself from the other eastern states following daylight saving, so there was an hour difference in our times. The con was run over the new year weekend 1972-1973 with Christine McGowan (now Ashby) speaking on Intergalactic Law and using sf characters to illustrate her points, Roy Russell on UFOs (another subject being considered this afternoon), Bruce Gillespie and "I Must Be Talking to My Friends" which was the title of a column Bruce wrote for his fanzine SF Commentary (which was being nominated for a Hugo Award), Ron Boscott talking on "The Animal Umbrella" and Jack Wodhams.

The last two guests should be expanded upon.

Dr Boscott ran the Medical School library which, at first glance, may appear to decry his very real achievements. He had worked in England with Salk on the polio vaccine and had 13 or 14 drug patents in his own name. His contention was that drugs are not tested enough in combination before being released on the public. His examples showed how simple errors combine to fatal results. For example: a male sterility pill was tested on the inmates of an American prison for remission of sentence. It worked perfectly and the test subjects were fertile again once they stopped taking the pill. At a major publicity launch run by the drug company, the managing director had to be carried out. He announced he'd taken the pill (invite to the typing pool?) but what everyone had forgotten was that inmates don't get alcohol. Alcohol plus the pill was dangerous. Further examples of a coincidence chain in Canada resulted in a number of deaths. This was a combination of vitamin A deficiency in alcoholics, depressed vitamin A in bottled beer (more stringently sterilized than draught and alcoholics drank bottled in preference) and heavy metals added to combat detergent residue in the beer glasses which was causing the foam to collapse.

Lee Harding was to have been my Guest of Honour but couldn't make it at literally the last minute. In a panic I contacted Jack Wodhams and Jack was kind enough to fill in. Jack is an amazing character with an infectious laugh. At that stage he'd had 34 stories published, 24 in Analog. But when John W. Campbell died, Jack's popularity with the new editor(s) dropped off. One incident was about a story of his called FOUNDING FATHER. Kelly Freas had done the B&W illustration which showed a naked male and female human facing a rather stern Mormon-like character. The male human is making an obscene gesture at the Mormon. Now, while Freas did the artwork, Jack seemed to cop the flack in the subsequent letters to the editor of Analog.

At the con, Jack was great. He gave his GOH speech and, suitably primed with XXXX, presented his dissertation on the existence of Bunyips. This hilarious speil was later published by Ron Clarke in The Mentor.

The con was also significant in that it resulted in cessation of diplomatic relations between myself and Rumania. I'd contacted the Rumanian embassy to obtain copies of DER GOLEM. GOLEM is about a rabbi who creates a clay creature to protect his people during a pogrom. The creature is activated by placing a scroll of life in a Star of David medallion it wears around its neck. Having run amok in the end, it picks up a child who removes the scroll and the creature turns back into a lifeless statue. Well, I showed reel one and found there was no second reel in the other canister. The embassy claimed they had sent it, but I showed by the weight on the delivery dockets this was untrue.

Q-CON III and Lee Harding did turn up thanks to David Grigg and his fan fund. Fan funds have been run to help defray the costs of sending a fan representative to a convention. DUFF (Down Under Fan Fund) which raised money by auctions etc has sent fans to and from America to attend Worldcons.

David, who had just two books published, organised to send Lee up here. At the con, run over the new year weekend 1976-1977, we also had Bob Matthew, Leigh Edmonds, Paul Stevens, David Lake and Bertram Chandler (as GOH).

Bob Matthew had been translating Japanese sf and presented two talks - one on Japanese sf in general and one on Hoshi Shin'ichi specifically. Bob has now translated over 400 Japanese sf works. There was a suggestion DAW might be interested in publishing them. Bob was the "sleeper" at the con. Both his sessions ran overtime and the audience loved him. An entertaining speaker at the best of times, his sessions were the highlights of the con.

Leigh Edmonds had brought his synthesiser with him and, using David Grigg and Valma Brown, played out "3M10" - about the crew of a ship falling into a black hole. Valma was the voice of the computer and the synthesiser provided a music background. At the end, the room is plunged into darkness, giving an eerie and effective finish.

David Lake had had a number of sf stories published by DAW. In order to get his stories as correct as possible, he'd created a 3-D map of the nearby stars through which you could walk. The "stars" were all of the correct spectrum and suspended on black wires from the ceiling. If his characters were on a planet of another star, David could walk into this model and look "up" from the perspective of his characters to "see" the sky from their point of view. He could thus devise new star signs of the "zodiac" etc.

Paul Stevens presented his sex and filth show in his character of Hiram Q Aardvark. Paul worked for Merv Binns (more about Merv shortly), and had a range of other characters - including Anti-Fan (BOO! HISS!). The Sex and Filth show was a slide showing in which inuendo (no pun intended) was rampant and enjoyed by everyone.

I should have mentioned Merv earlier. Merv Binns worked for McGill's bookshop in Melbourne and ran that shop's sf mail order business. He later moved on and became the owner/operator of Space Age Books. The Melbourne group used to meet in rooms over McGill's and films seemed to be an important part of their programme. Someone complained about showing films in rooms that didn't have adequate fire escapes and that film group fizzled out, I believe, though they may have moved on.

Films have always been an important part of sf fandom. I can't explain, let alone understand the tensions that I have perceived over the years. For example, I was contacted by an old acquaintance about this convention. When he found out it was a media con, even in part, he fled as though I had contacted the plague.

The next major event for the Brisbane group was that Eric Fried opened the Brave New World bookshop and immediately attracted the attention of the Special Branch, who thought there was something sinister in the name. Eric carried about 50% sf but was forced to move when the lease costs went through the roof. He moved down one block and opened the Phantom Bookshop - in case you don't get the reference, this was "The Bookshop that Walked".

Eric and I rented rooms above the old Brave New World and we moved the local fan group there. When Thompson's bookshop was being demolished, Eric arranged to purchase or acquire their bookshelves. One evening he asked me to give him a hand to get the shelves. When we arrived I found they were still attached to the walls of Thompson's. Eric gave me a hammer and disappeared. Some hours later, filthy from the dust and working in my singlet I discovered I was being watched by 4 or 5 men in business suits. They appeared to be discussing the ultimate future of the site, but I was too good a show. To this day I don't know if Eric actually had permission to take the shelves!

We moved the shelves around the block in Eric's van and up to the club rooms. The shelves were 20' or so long so we knocked out the escape panel in the lift and stuck them up through the lift's roof.

In assembling the shelves on the very thin walls of the rooms, I'm sure we punched holes through into the room next door.

Well, the club moved in and the library grew. In 1977 I went to work for the Australian Atomic Energy Commission and my time became precious. The club seemed to be taking odd trends and at one meeting, during a discussion on Atomic power given by a very intense young man, I questioned some of the statements he'd made on the toxicity of plutonium and the keloid scar damage from Hiroshima. While I was pointing out that keloid scars are not confined to atomic blasts but are a reflection of skin types (I have one myself, hardly caused by nuclear accidents), he threw a book at me across the room. About that stage I decided I'd had enough.

I'd been to the Worldcon in 1975, met a number of Big Name Authors and enjoyed myself. But the tensions were getting worse. Blake's Seven, Dr Who, Star Trek reruns were all responsible for a number of fans joining our group. Wargames and comics seemed to be on the rise with a host of highly dedicated followers. Sf was suddenly legitimate but there was none of the humour I had seen. At one convention in Melbourne the audience ran out of a very intense discussion when a gelati salesman appeared in the street outside. In Adelaide, Robin Johnson became increasingly irritated at the audience laughing at him, or so he thought. During the lunch break a young boy had crept into a full scale model Dalek on the stage and waited until Robin was in the middle of a very deep and serious discussion on actions to secure the Worldcon for Australia. Unseen by Robin, the Dalek slowly moved up and stuck its blaster in his ear with that dreadful EXTERMINATE! The stalking Dalek was seen by everyone save poor Robin.

In 1973 I was fan GOH at a Melbourne convention. As part of the programme Lee Harding, Val Brown and I played out the first Buck Rogers radio broadcast (Nov. 7, 1932). Naturally Lee was Buck, Val was Wilma and I was Byron, whose description was given by the script as "A veteran space navigator, middle-aged hearty and hale". So here was I trying to be a middle-aged, hearty space vet. and speaking through a cardboard tube (I was supposed to be in the engine room). If ever you manage to read a copy of this script (a copy is in the back of the Chelsea House edition of THE COLLECTED WORKS OF BUCK ROGERS IN THE 25TH CENTURY) you'll find the age of innocence has passed. Played by Lee and Val it was the most obscene thing I'd heard for some time. I couldn't finish my lines with Lee's ad libs and "Buck's" and "Wilma's" antics. Since this is a mixed audience I won't go any further, but just to say it was one of the highlights of the con for me.

I fully accept many of the tensions I have perceived are directly related to the personalities concerned. I am made nervous by intense people who don't seem to have the capacity to lighten up. I've noted one or two at this con. They simply seem too intense for their own good and it affects those around them.

The local group left the city rooms when member's donations couldn't meet the rent. Eric and I had carried the rental costs for a few years. When we left, the club moved out to Seventeen Mile Rocks and a member's home. After a time this member claimed the club owed him for rent on the library (now under his house) and the electricity used during meetings.

I am still a "fan" - I still read sf. Perhaps a little more discriminatingly than I did and, like a number of southern fans, have made the transition to a fan who does not publish a fanzine, belong to a club or attend conventions. This is my first con in eight years.

Will there ever be a Q-CON IV? Not run by me. It is now the era when you need to combine Media and Literary fandom. I admire the organisers of this con for the venue and the immense effort in getting overseas personalities over. It is something I would not care to do anymore.

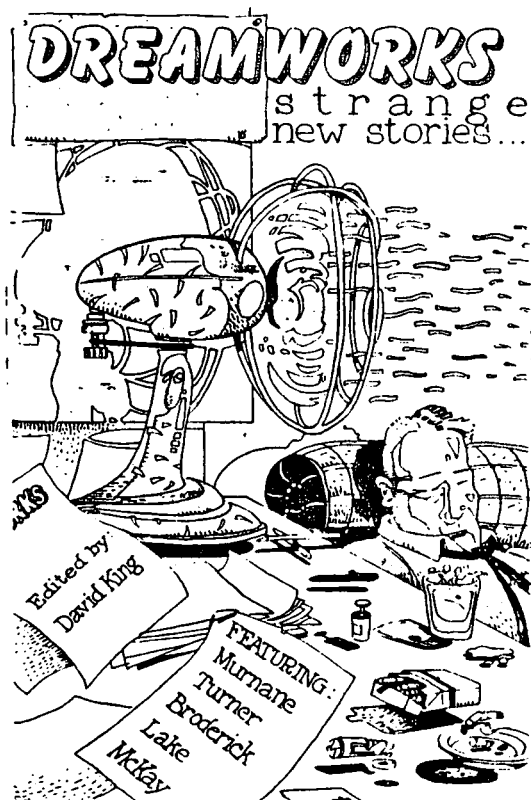
Media fandom works with concrete visual images while the literary fan's images are self-created. Perhaps when faced with solid manifestation of his mental conceptions which are not as he saw them, the literary fan reacts in an unfortunate way. I find it a pity that tensions should exist. But as I said earlier, perhaps my fan activity is somewhat superficial. I have made a number of lasting friendships which I value and for those I would do it all again.

- Dennis Stocks.
CON-AMORE.
June, 1985.

-----ooo00ooo-----

MY DEN

- *DIANE FOX*



DREAMWORKS: STRANGE NEW STORIES, edited by David King, (C) 1983, Nostrilia Press, cover by Stephen Campbell. H/C. A\$12.95.

The art deco-style cover, in simplified geometrical outlines and flat areas of colour, showing a recognisable and non-sfnal room with a man at a desk, expresses the way the editor hopes that readers will approach this book. The stories are not chosen as sf or fantasy (though all but two are) but as explorations of perceptions of reality.

It was most fitting that originally Philip K. Dick had intended to write the introduction. Nearly all of his stories are journeys into inner space, and questions our concepts of sanity, reality, normality and humanity - nothing is what it seems, nothing can be taken for granted. At the same time these stories are rich in the traditional sfnal details - mutants, telepathy, androids, robots, aliens, space travel, totalitarian future societies, Lovecraftian alien gods, the post-holocaust world. His future societies are full of lively invention and satirical detail. There is a strong religious streak which is

most noticeable in his last novels.

The stories in **DREAMWORKS** very much follow this pattern. However, they are by strongly individual writers, who are in no way clones of Dick or of each other, and a unity of theme is enhanced by a variety of expression.

Kevin McKay's **LIFE IN SOLITUDE**, my favourite, is rich in incongruous humour blended with the mildly unnerving. It is a witty, inventive pastiche of the surrealistic, powerful Colombian author Gabriel Garcia Marquez, whose best known novel is **ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE**. The short story echoes the South American writer's favourite setting - a small, decaying town set in bleak desert, with languid eccentric inhabitants who do not so much live in dreams as find their dreams spilling into their outer world. Though surreal in mood, **LIFE IN SOLITUDE** is straightforward alternate-history, set in an Australia colonized by the Spanish rather than the British. One of the characters is that stock SFnal figure the eccentric obscure inventor whose discovery changes the world around him, eventually disasterously. Even the first sentence of the story, which seems pure surrealist fancy, is finally explained realistically, and yet does not lose its strangeness. (The title, incidently, is a quotation from 18th Century poet Edward Young.)

Gerald Murnane's best-known novel describes another alternate-history Australia. There are no Aborigines in THE PLAINS, but his story LAND DEAL in DREAMWORKS makes up for it. Not really Sf or fantasy at all, it is told from the viewpoint of tribal Aborigines, who see European explorers and settlers and their strange artifacts as a kind of dream which has gotten out of hand. The Aborigines live in a universe of multiple-layered reality, the Europeans perceive only one of those realities.

ARTHUR'S AUNT by Henry Gasko is less subtle and is straightforward Sf - however, it handles with mildly macabre humour the question "How would you know that one of your friends hadn't been replaced by a robot who sounded/looked identical?" It also reminded me a little of a non-tragic version of the Robert Browning poem, THE STATUE AND THE DUST.

The ordinary suburban setting of ARTHUR'S AUNT is also used in Bruce Gillespie's WHAT GOD SAID TO ME WHEN HE LIVED NEXT DOOR. This is another of my favourites, full of mildly Shavian ironic humour, and reminded me a little of some of the ideas in HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY. There was an underlying seriousness which turned an agreeable piece of wit into a memorable and upbeat story - the idea of responsibility.

Responsibility and religion are the themes of another memorable story, Andrew Whitmore's grotesque ABOVE ATLAS HIS SHOULDERS. It is another pastiche, mostly of Mervyn Peake; another alternate-history tale, in which Europe is a patchwork of petty states, technology has not progressed beyond the 17th Century, and a twisted and rigid cult of religious fanatics, ruling a dark and labyrinthine city, force their slaves into gladiatorial combat. One of the characters is a heroic giant, the narrator; his rival is a cunning opportunist who despises everything except survival. This tale is rich in symbolism from William Blake's more obscure and forbidding works. The title, incidentally, is another quote - from Sir Thomas Browne.

David Lake's THE PURE LIGHT OF THE VOID has a memorable opening paragraph, mentioning angels, and covers fairly similar ground to the Bruce Gillespie story. Basically it is a tale about the Creationists being proved right, though probably few Creationists would be much pleased with the ironic and irreverent tone of this story of the discovery of a very strange planet.

CRYSTAL SOLDIER also confronts religion. Russell Blackford expounds here on his views more fully and seriously than he did in his novel THE TEMPTING OF THE WITCH KING. The short story is hence a better and more satisfying work. It describes the confrontation of a soldier/assassin of a totalitarian organisation with an elderly eccentric and individualistic poet/magician, who he must either convert or kill. There's an Orwellian concept of totalitarianism as the logical ultimate form of organised religion. However, the magician proves a tougher opponent than poor Winston Smith, and the story's title becomes relevant in a sardonically apt metaphor.

George Turner's FEEDBACK has another exponent of a strange philosophy - but this time a religion of soliphism, presented at its least attractive. The story has a solid and realistic setting of scientific research to balance the cosmic terror and uncertainty which is the main theme of the story. The sub-plot of the birth of an Aboriginal baby provides not only an affirmative note, but at the end a touch of sardonic irony - the Faustian delvings of white science lead to an unforeseen result (Turner is obviously familiar with the satiric anecdote of the astronaut describing an encounter with God).

Not only soliphism but downright raving insanity is described in Damien Broderick's DROWNING IN FIRE, the monologue of a bitter madman who is enjoying his prolonged decision whether to commit suicide or to use his invention to destroy the

world (the cliched Mad Scientist, but at least his insanity is made true-to-life). Of course, the Quark Catalyst may exist only in his magalomaniac daydreams. I found this story somewhat boring, not because it is badly written, but because I found the narrator not only mad but detestable.

A gentler kind of madness is shown in Lucy Sussex's THE PARISH AND MRS BROWN. Insanity in this story is not an avoidance of reality, but an overwhelming insight by the narrator into her own compulsions, a sweeping away of the illusion that we call normal reality which protects us from the horror of understanding what we are and perhaps, how little we can do about it. This story is not Sf or fantasy, but the sad tale of a woman who keeps getting into the same relationship with different people - maybe if she manages to find her own way out the other side of insanity, she will be able to avoid this particular trap in future. Maybe.

Finally, there are two Inexplicable Artifact stories - a theme that was treated most thoroughly in Stanislaw Lem's novel SOLARIS and in Arthur C. Clarke's novel RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA..

Greg Egan's story is actually called ARTIFACT. The narrator is one of a group of scientists studying an alien construct - the project is very difficult to leave, and an air of unsolved unease lies over the story. It has another memorable opening paragraph. David King's own story, MIRROR CITY, is more a prose poem than a tale - slight, yet haunting, it describes a scholar seeking a long-lost epic poem in an abandoned alien city. His final and alogical decision reminded me a little of some of J.G. Ballard's stories.

Alternate history, other planets, space travel, traces of lost alien civilizations, computers, robots, scientists (sane or mad) and their experiments, technological advances - definitely solidly sfnal. It could be argued, however, that this is as much a collection of religious fiction. Nearly every story touches on a religious or philosophical concept, and would not be a story without it. The quest for or discovery of a creator God; the pit falls of organized religion; the longing for a Messiah; redemption and enlightenment. Without being subjected to undue solemnity we have had our minds stretched a little towards the infinite, in these speculative stories.

It is sad that P.K. Dick never got around to writing that introduction, he would have liked to do so. He would also have enjoyed reading the book. DREAMWORKS will not appeal to everyone, but any thoughtful reader will relish it, for although some of the stories are slighter than others, all provide something to stimulate the mind and the sense of wonder.

- Diane Fox

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THE GOLDEN AGE

BY IGOR TOLOCONNOU

Soviet SF had erupted into activity by the sixties. Twelve hundred and sixty six works had been published from 1959 to 1965, and had sold a total of 140 million copies, which was much more than in any previous period. New ideas flooded the field, and little by little it stabilised. The "World's Best" SF was published in twenty five volumes, as well as Soviet and foreign SF series.

Today we know that change is an inherent property of things - the 20th Century has accustomed us to it. SF also keeps changing - it focuses exclusively on the relationships of things now, instead of portraying them in isolation. This new approach lifts our understanding onto a new level: from the sole SKYLARK of E.E. Smith to the fleet-civilization of Robert Heinlein, and yet further on to the symbiotic colony of Gail Neville. This is one method, but it has a real cause: SF evolves, and not only in an evident way. The time came when SF began to speak not about small, fragmentary bits of data and wonderous innovations (such as the scientific revolution), but about the Universe itself, both outside and inside the man - Dune and Babel-17 are examples. Wells was the first; today it is a major trend. The central issue is the society - at this point SF and fantasy converge. Both are creating societies and studying man within their separate frameworks (TRITON by Delaney and LORD OF THE RINGS by Tolkien are examples). They differ in the way they use the background. SF bases itself on extrapolation of reality, fantasy bases itself on extrapolation of human beliefs. (Generally speaking we ought to distinguish alien subcultures as a special class of speculation related both to SF and fantasy - something like a crossbreed between abstract SF and the rational part of fantasy; examples being THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS by Le Guin, TRANSFIGURATIONS by Bishop, MINDSWAY by Sheckley and THE MANY WORLDS OF MAGNUS RIDOLPH by Jack Vance.) I must also draw the readers attention to an existing bond between folklore and fantasy's ideas. However, are we really looking for the truth? Maybe we just want to see our reflections in nature, as in times past. Well, notions of fantasy are common to our outlook, and so we are stuck with it ad infinitum.

Western SF shows the growing influence of fantasy. It appears it will be more so influenced in the future. Soviet SF is more "hard science" and continues to be so. At the same time it is closer to the mainstream than Western SF due to a strong realistic dominance in the past. One may predict that in the future it could split two ways: into romantic fantasy or join the mainstream.

Today the brothers Strugatskys dominate the field. Arkady is an astronomer and Boris a linguist. They live in different cities and write separately, then meet and edit. Their prose is lucid, energetic and reads well, though through a critical eye there are some weak spots. Their works portray a general picture that they have in mind. Some works are serialised - THE LAND OF THE PURPLE CLOUDS (exploration and exploitation of Venus's radioactivv deserts), READ TO AMALTEA (a short piece about Jupiter and scientists), STAGERS (an inspector travels through the solar system and the dark abysses of the soul and shows the task of education with the motto "To struggle, to seek, to find, but not to yield"), THE PREDATORS OF THE CENTURY (from a rat to a man is such a little step, and because it is, mankind must not allow itself self-satisfaction, which is a limited outlook). The series evolved from their earliest work and shows the gradual growth and maturing of the writers.

Other works that followed are THE FAR RAINBOW (an experiment grew out of control and a distortion of space travels slowly around a planet, bringing death to every living thing thereon; it shows the behaviour of people faced by danger), AFTERNOON: XX A.D. (the sands of Mars and common human problems, the terraforming of Venus, ocean patrols, flights into deep space and finding traces of ancient civilizations, etc.), KID (a human baby is educated by a strange and very ancient civilization), A ROADSIDE PICNIC (...about ultimate happiness - it was filmed as STALKER), YOUTH FROM AN INFERNO (Nazi Youth of the future), A BEETLE IN THE ANTHILL (a work that ties their previous novels into one series and leads to new questions), HARD TO BE A GOD (an observer on a feudal alien planet and A BILLION YEARS TILL THE END OF THE UNIVERSE (the Universe is an entity and resists some of Man's inventions which threaten to destroy it). These works show various facets of both space and societical exploration, and familiarize the reader with both new and everpresent problems in the future.

One series is dedicated to disclosing the disease of bureaucracy and class contagion: MONDAY BEGINS ON SATURDAY (a tale about scientific institutions), A TRIPARTITE TALE (bureaucracy is the establishment), A SNAIL ON A SLOPE (in two parts: bureaucracy in its outlook - how the Forest is explored from the outside, and how this exploration looks from the inside), THE SECOND MARTIAN INVASION (Martians become cleverer after Wells' time - they now offer to pay for their food!). A. and B. Strugatsky, along with I. Yefremov, laid the foundations for Soviet SF. The works of Martinov: CALLISTO (the future as a Golden Age), Gemaitis : THE BIG LAGOON; THE ETERNAL WIND (a stress made on the significance of oceans) also delve into the background features of the future.

Another giant figure is Polish Sf writer Stanislaw Lem. It may seem strange but it is virtually impossible to imagine Soviet Sf without him - he made such a big impression. He was active in WW2 and finished medical training. All his major works are translated and are constantly being republished. His brilliant philosophical prose still influences s.f. Nobody can leave out issues raised by him anymore. SOLARIS, for example, is about an exploratory outpost which is set on an intelligent planet. But how intelligent? This question already has a second generation trying to resolve it. The planet has nothing in common with the vague human consciousness of ROGUE STAR by Pohl & Williamson or WHIPPING STAR/DOSADI EXPERIMENT from Frank Herbert. Lem finds it to be an altogether different phenomenon. The plot however, is concerned with man's behaviour before the truth of an exceptional existence. Man has gone to the stars but everywhere he goes he brings his own fears and doubts. The central idea of the novel is that men create the "real" world by his beliefs and closed mind. Solaris materialised some long-repressed memories by the station's crew and the men reverted to petty squabbles, to internal concerns. And just behind the station walls are the rolling ocean swells of Solaris.

The main attraction of Lem is that he gives a broad overview of matters or gives a list of simple facts and never reveals everything. He always leaves something unsaid, which the reader can think upon. EDEM is another example of this. An accident, a starship crash, painstaking repairs, cautious probing in to the surrounding neighbourhood: an incomprehensible installation showing a closed circuit from creation to destruction, the strange behaviour of the inhabitants (indifference to the spaceship, mass burials, construction of a fence around the ship), one native comes to tell them something about his world, doesn't want to fly with them but remained in the ship at blast-off - all this constitutes EDEM. The Fire Creators in Strugatsky's novel PRISONERS OF POWER show a direct control of people by psychological means. Here it is done anonymously (so as not to give one person the blame) by the manipulation of the mass media.

"Before an organisation emerges there must be a bond of mutual understanding. Please note that some events here, generally speaking, are not related by name or relation to other things but those names and relations do not

reflect true meaning - they are lies." Thus EDEM seems a paradise from outside and a cruel hell from inside.

Along with serious material such as SUMMA TECHNOLOGAE (a philosophical meditation on Nature, a whole treatise about the future of our civilisation and its place in the universe), Lem also wrote humorous pieces such as CYBERIADA (the adventures of two constructor robots who are friends and rivals), THE STAR DIARIES of JION TIHI ("I had no help preparing the diaries for publication. As a matter of fact, I won't name those who interfered with it. It would take up too much space"). They are very likable parodies on some modern sf themes - on some pig-headed scientists, concepts, etc.

Stanislaw Lem has greatly influenced Soviet readers. Other foreign authors have had less influence. Asimov, Clarke, Vonnegut, Simak, Bova, Le Guin, Wyndham, Priest, Norton, etc. have been translated but only a few titles from each author. There are published in the Union (I don't remember exact figures) twice as many translations from english as are the opposite. I presume it is true in relation to sf as well. Western sf contributes adventure stories. The works are entertaining and stimulating, though the futures proposed are not convincing to us, in most cases.

A few words about space opera. This subgenre is small. MY BROTHER'S KEEPER, THEN COME AND WE WILL CONSIDER by V. Michailov have already been mentioned. An important work was written by S. Snegov. His trilogy: MEN LIKE GODS, PERSEUS INVASION, THE OPPOSITE TIME RING confirmed his reputation as the most prolific of our sf writers (he also wrote sf detective stories). The story line of the expanding galactic federation of which mankind is a member encounters another galactic culture. However, this culture is led by an inherently cruel and evil elite. The federation tries to win a victory for the oppressed civilisations. Thus begins a long space war. And so on. Personally, I don't favour this trilogy because of its proclaimed violent intervention, turning repeatedly to questions of war. In addition the heros are simple and single-minded, which doesn't jibe with its being in the future. By the way, every writer in similiar circumstances arms his heros heavily from head to foot. Not that such heros are outright belligerent, but it seems that writers can't see any other approach than exhibiting armed might. However if we look closely, we can see that true power is the other way around - not in displaying might but in concealing it, in an ability to absorb any shocks - physical or psychological - instead of pounding each other over the head. An interesting byline has a place though. In Pohl's MAN PLUS, computers dominate the world after all. Here a planet-wide computer, when asked, rules out constructing a warfleet because of the tremendous psychological and material impact on mankind it would have, and when defeated by global vote on this action, its programme has to be changed.

A digression on the essence of human nature. Has anybody thought why sf clubs display such furious activity? One thinks that literary groups ought to be quiet, but fandom is a far cry from this supposition. SF fandom debates, infiltrates, demonstrates; holds conventions, festivities, polls; tries everything. Why does a fan flee from a soft armchair, a cosy reading room, a quiet life? Is it because sf gives bare facts (try to get a thrill from reading a set of equations...) but corresponds with the spirit of science - its drive for exploring the unknown. And we are invited along because there dwells in our souls the expectation, the longing for participation. The possibility of putting the coherent question and joining the search for a logical explanation is exhilarating. SF's rationality provides a framework which, in its own right, is consistent. And we are awakened to this realisation and want to contribute. However, there is more to fannish activities. Let us face the fact that most fans are amateurs and its impossible to be a universal genius nowadays. We are heirs to the cultural transitions of the past, and children of the epoch of narrow specialisations.

A Soviet philosopher, M. Dimshitz, says that an analysis of mythology

shows how the spontaneous process of human cognition evolved from an embodiment of abstract conceptions into gods and heroes' images and then isolated them from these connotations. Ancient man animated his environment to try to express implicit knowledge which was accessible at that level of development. The vision comes before: Science steps in after. In fact we observe this taking place in SF which is elevated by the achievements of the STR epoch. All our hopes and fears are realised within its form. SF has its peculiarities though. SF shapes potential events on demand and fandom enacts them in costume parades or even in life. However, the days of glory have passed and science alone suddenly does not seem able to answer all our questions.

The keys have been left to us. Soviet SF continues to cherish hard science. I can mention here G. Gurevitch and also K. Bulishev, A. Shalimov, A. Dneprov, A. Kasantzev, Parnov & Yemtzev and others. Gurevitch has a book entitled *TIME DEPOSIT* consisting of traditional stories, of the 'what if' variety: an inventor leaves his daughter a gadget for hearing thoughts/a man has the ability to change his shape/a chance for a second lifetime is given/you have to swallow your surgeon to treat you for an illness. Gurevitch also raises some universal questions. The obvious route of progress for mankind is to go to the stars, to turn galaxies into bright new homes (all contemporary projects are orientated to this direction and astronomers listen to a noisy galaxy). Gurevitch has gone this way before (as in *AN INVITATION TO ZENITH*) but not long ago he saw a different solution in *TEMPO TOWN* - why aren't there super-civilisations out there who have left the earth far behind in development and taken the galaxy into their possession? "Because super-cultures have spread themselves not in common space, but inside matter down to the level of atomic dimensions, so that they could preserve their culture and not be divided by distance." Figuratively speaking, our assumed neighbours have gone underground and I see here an implied possibility that, after living in the speeded up time tract of a micro world, they will eventually swarm into the big universe again, happily passing the painful stage necessitating living on remote planets. A cursory look at SF history shows us that the problem of separation is the main hinderance envisaged. Thus is it not suprising that attempts to hear messages from the stars have failed - we are looking in the wrong direction!

Fantasy is split into a great many subdivisions, most of which disappeared after the October Revolution in Russia. Moreover, the sword and sorcery theme is alien to our thinking (but not to such an extent that it is not sometimes considered). We don't see the necessity of reverting to medieval times because we don't think they had a bright side. I speak of the underlying principle itself - "right of might". Not accidentally, Nazi Germany acquired for us an additional meaning for medieval obscurism. What we have left, after all this, is the romantic novelettes by A. Grin and V. Krapivin and modern stories by Caverin and Schwartz and so-called experimental works (semi-mainstream/semi-F&SF) by G. Gor. For example, *THE STATUE*:

"But if you are a book that means you are not a real girl."

"To answer this question I can only go by feelings, not logic. What are you feeling when you look at me?"

"I think you are beautiful. You are both real and a dream together. But why do you call yourself a book? A book is a thing, an object."

"You can't call thoughts and emotions objects."

"I did not exist one moment", said she, "and in another moment I was. In a few seconds I shall disappear and you will find yourself in 1919 again, in a town by the name of Tomsk."

Juvenile fiction is akin to modern tales. Good examples are by V. Melentiev (*THE BLUE PEOPLE FROM THE ORANGE PLANET*, *33RD MARCH*, *THE BLACK LIGHT* - a trilogy) and K. Bulichev (*THE GIRL NOTHING HAPPENED TO*, *A BILLION ADVENTURES*). After these writers there emerged a new generation - P. Amnuel, B. Gitinsky and A. Dmitruk, who gave more interesting introductions with their approaches.

These are a key with which you can introduce yourself to Soviet SF.

THE GRACE OF GOD

BY ALAN STEWART

In, out, in, out - running pattern a vidphone message coming in. As it squirmed away the words began.

'Good morning, as a person of good standing you have been chosen as a lucky recipient of our strictly limited purchase option.' As usual the lower half of the screen carried pictures, views and angles of a chromy device changing as the message spelt out.

'This marvellous fully factory crafted technological marvel can be yours now. Here's the answer to sleeping troubles. Automatic wake up and dream signals, just plug in and away you go. Personalised 'Night Caps' an optional extra. Just like eating and drinking Automatia now supplies another automatic service, we're just making life easier. Order now.'

A series of digits bright orange on green held for a few seconds, then vanished in the termination pip.

Aleph snapped from his waking trance at the pip, consciously ignorant that he had been held blinkless since the initial pattern run. Build in hypnocatchers had been mandatory for about a decade, since Advertising Access managed to get their candidate in as Prime Minister.

The digital timer now on the screen clicked to ten hundred as he began work. Moving figures around, turning grids and models as he sculpted decisive swathes and slow deliberations. Finger talking on the terminal's buttons.

It was no longer necessary to lay hammer to chisel for the bite into wood or marble chipping. His tools were light itself, spread on a screen, cut by the mathematics he wielded at fingertip into beauty.

Stored away to be digitally ordered by someone, somewhere who had glanced at a catalogue listing. Glanced and liked or was amused or cared enough to place an order to the machines. To the factories who took Aleph's beauty and spun it gold or silver, sprayed it with jewels, dappled over grass green - shipped down a delivery tube to wherever.

Once a customer sent a piece to him for a few days. An early ring he had drawn - smoothed wood it was elegant curves on the screen, data bits in silicon and silkywarm in the hand with rubbing. Real wood, but it went; sent back before he was fined.

Today he ran a waterfall. Sent it lashing down into frothy spume. Froze the action, took a vertical slice, looped around and stuck the top through. Coded for clear crystal with random sapphire bubbles. Puched 'store' and watched it fade away to the clock, ten hundred fifty.

The regular buzzer went and his lunch moved at him. Silver plastic server as punctual as ever, shoving the embossed A and too close to his face before he settled back to eat.

Hung fork poised by in, out running pattern.

'Hullo, this is Susie, calling your number at random. Please don't turn off. I am speaking and I hope I didn't frighten you. Please wait. I have an idea and I must find out if it's really true. Number forty-five, that's what I'll call you for reference when I play the tape, number forty-five. I just want you to talk to me, don't terminal type, try vocalising. Perhaps just say your name, or sing a verse. I hope we can still talk, please answer me number forty-five, it took simply hours to retrieve these words from storage and arrange the audio tapes. Please number forty-five...'

Aleph's lunch was reheated automatically six thousand two hundred and five times.

- Alan Stewart.

-----ooOoo-----

BEAUTIFUL BITCH

Tales we dreamed in yesterday
of your joyful ocean swells.
A world of sea, the ever rain
with rich warm salty smells.

Perhaps an island's rocky peak,
tight rafts of floating weed.
Whatever view - was part marine,
your clouds, your clouds the seed.

But now today we have sent
our glass-eyed ships of steel.
To pierce your veil, and downward find
acid wind, furnace heat is real.

Surface bowl of refracted light
harbours would be future domes.
High algal seeding romantic plans,
you may be our second home.

- Alan Stewart.

after the thaw
sex returned

it had been in the cold time
so easy to neglect as when

we took sleeping pills twice
three times the same night for getting

so easily the motions we have
before now undertaken

unscrewing entering
leading to excess

eternal sleep
inertia that had not

bothered us the absence of
spring of buds leaping

out underground nothing like
that coming along no birds

lambs doubtless to
pacifiers in the foodpacks the

stale survival
rations neutralising doubtless too

bulky thickness the thermal
uniforms hiding any hint of hip bell of

nipple mountain ah but now under
the comeagain sun again it hindered

so many things interrupted
the necessary planting

the coping with floods the exposing
caves buried in silt the thrust

from the south like warm wind of
land-hungry expanders bursting

to ensure the interesting parts
of discovering surface life

were not lost in the rush
those wise or said so

with pretensions to leadership
genitals smaller than knives

so free of choosing of all
the terrors of being

vilely bound to each other
the duty to defend

so welcome safe
boundaries all around

ice-wall each complete to guard
self against slopping away into

slush being invaded by others
spilt and lost only they they said

could bring back again days
without itching sweaty hungry

scrabbling spoiling
content can we still

do so we asked pleading can we
hoping against hope can we

still go back again to what we
were now the land stinks now everywhere

is slimy with dead things revealed
rotting in the nasty bright

sun that hurts the eye now where the so
easy to understand lovely one colour

pure ice has been has gone
is everything horrible confusing

other shapes shades colours we have
no name for yet but nasty impure dirty so

simple they say to answer even that
dissolving melting diffusing less of

perfection into muddy wriggling
tangling thrusting up disorder

they now explain can be must be
blamed on the women tempting

beyond their strength even the dying
beyond its strength even the lord over

the cold general the Fimbulwinter they
have been always right so far surely

and carefully maintained
sole weapons access through

the lean the cold
years were worth their mouth-shrinking

salt then melting the right
path for us devising

the new faith how we saw
at their proposing life in Ice Days

had been pure heaven
only their god the god they understood

they said had kept it
so

they are right again surely we can
all feel it in us like pains

in weakened bladder surely we
are not what we were so strong

no more our hardness lost our bladestrong
simplicity of nature i am all in favour

let us do what they propose let us
as they suggest kill

the breasts kill the spring let us
thus lure back even purchase back our god

no price is too high no one must spoil
it ever again present us freezing

losing nothing giving nothing
saving the best for later.

—0000o000—



MUMMY, I WANT A BUNNY!

BY EVGENY TITAEV

"Eat, my bunny, eat, my dear," the Mother said lovingly squeezing into the Kid's plate some gooey substance out of a plastic tube.

"Mummy, what is a bunny?"

"I don't know, my love, it's something my mother and my grandmother used to call me by when I was just a tiny chit of a girl."

"You said 'bunny'?" the Father rubbed his temples absent mindedly. "Well, look here, Kid! Don't you think that Chikess can be a new artificial satellite of Viola? or that Zau-Nick is the capital of Uran? Oh, I understand you mean Sichaka. Yes, there is such a bird on Gerd."

The Kid sighed heavily, got down from the chair and went out into the corridor. This one was of a light blue colour. There were corridors painted in red and yellow, but they were less suitable for daydreaming. That was probably because of the colour. Red and yellow irritated the Kid. But what is a bunny, after all?

Stopping undecidedly by a door, the Kid pushed the button. The Uncle Psychologist was limbering up solving cross-words of the first category of complexity. The question about the bunny did not seem to draw him out of his profound absorption.

"A bunny, a bunny... five letters. Down or across? Now, what d'you mean? What bunny? Now go and play, don't stand there bothering me." The Psychologist shaded his eyes with his hand and moved his lips noiselessly.

The light-blue corridor. Plastic floor. Another door. Another button. The Uncle Doctor was pouring something from one beaker into another.

"A bunny? I dunno, honest to God, I don't. Shall I present you with a white rat?"

Again the light-blue corridor. A row of doors. Nobody knows the first thing about a bunny. Even the Uncle Captain made a helpless gesture, I wish there were other children in this station.

"Mummy, will you give me a bunny on my birthday, please?"

The next day the scientists, who were off duty, were making a bunny. We could not very well let our blue-eyed boy pine away on account of a bunny. For half an hour everyone was telling everyone else what the thing looked like. At last all agreed that a bunny was a self-contained computer fitted with a saltatory device. This conclusion was reached because the Biologist remembered an old nursery rhyme that went something like this:

A bunny showing the white feather
Was a-jumping hither and thither.

To tell the truth, it was not at all clear about the rhyme. What the hell did the computer show the white feather for? And why did it have to jump, anyway? But they all called me a cynic and a stick-in-the-mud and so I went to work.



We did our best to make our bunny as funny as they make 'em. In two hours time it was standing there on the floor, a brightly shining parallelepiped with a feather sticking up where, to my mind, it should belong and two aerials on top of its upper cover. The Engineer looked at it tenderly and flicked a tiny toggle-switch on the control panel.

The bunny hissed, jumped a metre and a half up into the air and began whizzing around in the cabin. When the Engineer fingered some knob on his panel, the thing started rotating around its axis shrieking wildly, "I am a funny bunny, tra-la-la." Then, waving its artificial feather excitedly it emitted a characteristic wailing sound probably originating in its belly.

You bet we were having the time of our lives.

The next day the Kid was the happiest man on the station. The Baker made a cake, the apples suddenly matured to a luscious ripeness in the greenhouse, and what't more, daddy and mummy did not bring up an educational question that

morning. The presents were a treat to see: a complete set of Einstein's works (from myself), a model of a Martian scorpion (from the Biologist), a space-suit (from his parents), and so on and so forth. The Kid was glad all right, but he seemed to be waiting for something else. Then the Captain was on his feet with a box tucked under his arm.

"Kid", he began, "we wish you a happy birthday. We want you to become a real spaceman in the future. We know what you've been longing for and we have prepared a present for you. Now, you'll see your bunny!"

The Kid jumped from his seat, ran up to the Captain and seized the box. "Oh, thank you very much indeed!"

We, the old space-dogs, had been through a lot in our time, but a scene like that hits you like a scorcher.

The Captain produced our bunny. The Engineer flicked the toggle-switch. Everybody roared with laughter. But the Kid! Oh, the Kid! At first he did not seem to understand, then he turned to us. I'll never forget the expression in his eyes. They seemed to ask: Why are you kidding me?

Everyone went quiet. The main motors were heard droning nearby. At last the Kid spoke:

"Uncle Captain! Dad! Mummy! This is not a bunny! I know a bunny must be furry and kind. And this thing is some bugaboo."

And he went away.

Now we realised what a monstrosity we had made! Something had to be done. The Kid could come down with fantoditis. No remedies would be of any use. Adults succumbed to it in two or three weeks. And in this case we had a kid to deal with.

In the morning the Kid did not rise from his bed. Mother had a lot of trouble trying to make him eat.

An emergency meeting of all the station specialists was held just after dinner. The Captain read aloud a radiogramme from the earth:

'In reply to your enquiry we wish to inform you that a rabbit (bunny) is a small burrowing mammal of the hare family having soft fur and long ears, black or white in the domestic variety. Exterminated on the earth in the first quarter of XXI Century before Precontact Era. Coloured hologram... genetic code as follows....'

Now it was all up to the Biologist and the Doctor. The former shut himself in the Lab, having curtailed some crash project, the latter, assuming his best bedside manner, went in to look after the Kid, together with the Kid's mother.

After five days had elapsed the door to the Lab opened and the haggard-looking Biologist, his face bristling with several day's growth of beard, staggered out. He was holding something white and soft in his hands.

"Here it is," he managed to whisper, "the only bunny in the whole universe." He tottered. We rushed to him, but he waved us aside.



"I want to do it myself. You understand? Myself!"

In a minute or two the Kid was cuddling a small soft white warm animal. The bunny moved his ears about and his paws up and down in the funniest way.

It was clear to everyone that this bunny was a Bunny with a capital B.

A body thumped as it fell to the floor. The Biologist was hoisted on to a chair. Excited and happy he gasped out in a hoarse voice, "Now I remember. Now I do remember the rhyme!"

A bunny who was all of a dither
Was a-jumping round a heather.

"Uncle Biologist, what is a heather? Mummy, let's give a bunny a heather!"

- Evgeny Titaev,
'Progressor Fan Club
in Semipalatinsk.

-----xccc-----



The R. E. R. Dept.



ROBERT MAPSON, PO Box 7087, Cloisters, WA 6000:

The best fiction is The Mentor 53 is C. John Fidge's THE NIGHT SKY. A nice little Jungian moral tale. But if the planet only consists of "inch-high grass" what do the loonies eat? Each other?

Peter Brodie displays a deft handling of the sf idiom, but a story whose main interest is a womb symbol doesn't really grip me. The conversations of the two characters are awkwardly written. Maybe it's just my distaste for Freud backlashing.

Regarding sf lists: I find these boring at the best of times, but when they're of authors and books I've never heard of, as in the USSR sf club voting, I wonder if my time might not be better spent (gerbil watching, for instance?).

TRIAL BY TELEVISION? Yes, well... it's a cliché handled in a standard manner, and all perfectly true. There's not a lot more I can say about it.

STEVE SNEYD, 4 Nowell Place, Almondbury, Huddersfield, W. Yorkshire HD5 8PB, UK:

I can't help reacting to Andruschak's attitude (in TM 52). Anyone who, after the history of the last thirty or forty years of dangerous experiments on unknowing populations by our leaders, can regard as nutty doubts about the motives and knowhow of the people trying to sell us on fluoridation, seems to me almost criminally naive. We were told by those who should know that Beta Red dyes were ok, that asbestos was peachy keen, that nuclear radiation sunshine units were good for us. We had, without them telling anyone, our govt testing radiation effects on unprotected servicemen (and your aborigines) at Marilinga, as well as releasing much more radioactive material than was technically necessary from Windscale reprocessing plant to see where it went and what it did. This week we had a govt spokesman saying (source Daily Telegraph for the quote) that the only way to really find out the effects of plutonium would be to deliberately feed a control group of children on plutonium-contaminated seafood. We had them contaminating Gruinard Island with anthrax to see what the chances would be of using it on Germany, we have an antifouling paint for yachts which even the government now admits is contaminating the seafood chain to such an extent that oysters are being grotesquely distorted... and then the Andruschaks of this world say it's nut cultery to be a little wary when Joe Whitehall or in your case Fred Canberra says "Close your eyes and open your mouth. It's good for you."

Fluoridation is of value to the teeth of children at a limited stage of tooth growth, so if tooth strengthening is all it's about, then give kids that age free sodium fluoride tablets. If you're really into making money for the aluminium industry by paying for its waste products, or interested in seeing how much the public can be got to accept in the way of compulsory mass medication, which is what water fluoridation is (next stage contraceptives, tranquillisers, who knows what in the water?) then this is a very good one to push. I started out with no feelings one way or the other about the issue, but the kind of evasive answers and steamrolling tactics our politicians came up with to get the legal power pushed through parliament here has convinced me that the whole thing stinks - and if that's nutcultery, let's remember that 20 years ago anyone who said Churchill seriously considered warfare against Germany would've been tagged a paranoid nut - now the memos he wrote demanding quick action on plans which could work, and replies showing how difficult his enthusiasm was to stop, are on the public domain.

YET is a lovely tale, sad, atmospheric and extremely plausible. I also like the animal-house type picture of the alien stopping to relieve himself on earth in VISITOR, though if his databank told him the planet was "hostile to the unknown" I would have thought Ftxl would've preferred an uninhabited location for such a "window of vulnerability" moment!

Having slagged a couple of articles in Alderson's series, may I congratulate him this time (his piece on the Arabs) - calm, readable, clearly carefully researched, and a genuine help to understanding. One small point - I thought the Beni Hillel, instead of becoming extinct, were exiled to the Maghrehand, and in fact disrupted the Berber States there in the socially Hillelian Jihad. Could be my memory playing tricks, but isn't the current Moroccan (sultan) thing of Hillelian descent?

The Soviet articles are fascinating, though they raise a lot of questions. Some, perhaps, stem from trying to translate unequivocal equivalents, but some I would be fascinated to have further explored. For example, while Bagalyakz says that fanzines don't exist and club anthologies appear only in mini-editions because of the state publishing monopoly, Zavgorodny speaks of a fanzine, though saying it only lasted one edition. Again, Bagalyakz speaks of the clubs' identification with Marxist-Leninist thought, yet the Strugatskys are held obviously in very high esteem, even though I would have thought ROADSIDE PICNIC and THE GREY ONES, for example, are imbued with pessimism and individualism, as well as a sense of human powerlessness, totally alien to the normal idea of Marxism-Leninism soviet-style. And, equally, reading writers like Priest, unless they are read in order to expose and explore contradictions in the writer's attitude, would seem odd choices for "fan-fodder" there.

The most remarkable feature, taken by the authors obviously as a matter of course, is that Soviet newspapers and periodicals in the "mundane" world clearly take SF quite seriously, not as a source of incomprehending levity as most of our media do. There's a link back to the "nutcultery" attack of Andruschak - in the USSR clearly ideas like "the hollow world" thesis can be discussed without being regarded as a badge of insanity per se. Anyway, I hope now that you've made contact, the "News from USSR SF" section will continue and develop - we hear so from from US SF fandom, and almost nothing from anywhere else.

ERIC LINDSAY, PO Box 42, Lyneham, ACT 2602:

I don't know that fanzine editors have disappeared into apas, altho certainly John Bangsund and Bruce Gillespie (have). I believe we are simply seeing less and less new fazines, while older editors grow more old and tired, and reduce their effort (or gafiante entirely). Once there seemed to be new zines appearing every few weeks - what was the last new genzine you recall?

The Soviet voting sounds almost like an early version of the Ditmars in numbers except that (like most European Sf movements) there seems a decided serious trend).

It seems Bert Chandler's taste for the low life didn't change much. Reading his article, I can almost see him sitting, lightning his pipe, and telling just such a story. I guess you don't really miss people like that until they are gone.

Gail Neville's story seemed one of the better of this issue, although if you assume 10 channels of TV, one trial per half-hour, you only get rid of 1100 cases per week, or 52,000 per year, which hardly seems sufficient for the society Gail postulates. (Well, if the 10 channels are per city then with the country cities thrown in, that would probably up the figure. - Ron.)

Lan Laskowski might be interested to know that the possibility of losing files irretrievably increases with the sophistication of the filing system used. Simple systems tend to make it harder to file, and easier to recover when misfiled.

Re your computer prices - you can drop them by 30% (which nicely counters the lower value of the A\$. US prices are even cheaper, if you know the "right" place to buy.)

I thought your reviews were well done and informative, but, alas, the books are so ancient that I've nearly forgotten when I first read them. (Actually, they are all current (within 3 months) releases from the distributors in Australia. Any reprints that I haven't read for years I also review. Currently the books I am reviewing are May Australian releases (this is being typed in June). - Ron).

MICHELLE HALLETT, 8/3 Oak Lane, Potts Point, NSW 2011:

Thanks for the copies of The Mentor you've been sending me. I'm beginning to understand now why you don't accept subscriptions but insist on contributions and am now ready to add my bit with this letter.

To get it out of the way first, I want to state my own impressions of John Alderson's articles; they could be very useful, the one about the Arabs for instance was interesting, but the one about the Jews, about which I know something, appeared so rife with mistakes and prejudices, that sadly I felt it necessary to discount the lot, at least until I can independently verify any of the facts stated.

For example, the assertion that "Israel" (pronounced in Hebrew "Yisrael" or "Yisroel") means "Rachel's man" or "Ish Rachel". In my own study of Hebrew I have never come across a case of the hard "chet" in "Rachel" becoming the silent "aleph" in "Yisrael" and in fact have also been taught the translation given by Sue Bursztynski and Michael Hailstone that "Yisra" is from the verb "sarah" to conquer ("yisra" is third person singular - perfect tense in Biblical use, future tense in Modern use) and "el" means God as in Michael (who is like God) and Uriel (light of God) and the translation of Israel is in fact, "he conquered God". John says that the interpretation of Israel as "Rachel's man" comes from Graves THE WHITE GODDESS. I would suggest that either Graves' research or that of John himself is not extensive enough.

Another fact which leads me to suggest the research was not extensive enough is that throughout his essay on the Jews John appears to be suggesting that Biblical Jewish society was in a transitional period between female and male dominated society, yet he fails to use one fact that might positively verify this assertion, i.e. that to this day the children of Jewish mothers and non-Jewish

fathers are considered full-blooded Jews, while those of Jewish fathers and non-Jewish mothers, if they wish to be considered Jewish must go through the full conversion process that any other non-Jew must. I kept waiting for you to bring that out, John.

Another error was in the use of the word "dowry". In the articles on the Jews and Arabs John speaks of "the dowry provided by the husband for the wife" (p.26, TM 50) and "make the dowry heavy to them" (p.21 TM 52). THE CONCISE OXFORD DICTIONARY defines the word "dowry" as "portion woman brings to her husband" and I have also read reports of women who had little or no dowry fearing they would never find a husband. The misuse of the word suggests again to me that the articles are not properly researched and facts not cross-referenced.

As to prejudices, on what basis does John conclude that Hayat Al-Nufus was "a real man-hater" because she refused many offers of marriage. If, in a male-dominated society, a woman enters a man's family (Alderson, p.23, TM 50) wouldn't it be sensible that she choose her husband and his family carefully in order to make her own life easier and happier? By the way, John, patronising someone the way you patronised Julie Vaux as in "sorry, dear, we'll have to scrub that one" (p.31, TM 52) does not raise your credibility greatly.

On to other things. Gail Neville's story TRIAL BY TELEVISION (TM 53) was wonderful and I liked Peter Brodie's stories too, especially BUCK, though I wish you'd developed the story YET a bit further, it was just getting interesting. Have another try, please. For example, how exactly did the humans get to be put in the stasis tubes in the first place? Who is "Lecturer"? A member of some Galaxy-preserving race or a servant of God?

Diane Fox's reviews are also excellent and very interesting though I really can't afford all those books!! I don't find she reveals too much, though that may be because it doesn't worry me. I will read a book even if I know the ending just for the pleasure of finding out how they got to that ending. In fact, in most books I usually read the ending first, because I can't take the tension of waiting to find out what happened.

The articles on Russian SF and fandom were also interesting. Igor's article on SF was a little unclear though that may be due to my unfamiliarity with Russian Sf. Truth be told I would like to know more about life in Russia. What's a "common worker" for example? Is that someone who can take any job for which one doesn't need training? I don't think we have that concept here and now-a-days, due to unemployment its very difficult to even get a job in a dress shop unless you've had previous experience in at least two other dress shops; talk about specialisation! Would Boris write to me, I'd like to write to him but I'm afraid that if I use the address at the back of The Mentor 52 the letter will end up in Leningrad instead of Volgograd. My mother once showed me a letter which she had sent me when I was in Israel. She tried to address it in Hebrew which she doesn't read and received it back a few weeks later marked "Return to Sender". By the way, could someone explain to me the photo on p.10 of TM 52, is that levitation? How is it done?

{Boris can be reached by addressing the letter "Boris Alexandrovich Zavgorodny, C/- Poste Restante, Volgograd-66 Central P.O., USSR 400066". Actually, just out (July) is a new book by Fontana - A HISTORY OF THE SOVIET UNION, 527pp, A\$14.95. It is written by Geoffrey Hosking, who is Professor of Slavic Studies at the University of London. The detail for the book was taken from official Soviet sources and monograms. It is a fascinating book - for instance, official Soviet government figures (1979) show the class breakup of the population to be: Workers, Individual Peasants (now extinct), Collective Peasants, White Collar, and Landowners (extinct). Very interesting statistical tables... It would be a good book for any fans wishing to know more of the USSR.)

{As to the photo, I think it is illustrating hypnotism - turning the body rigid. - Ron.}

Also, Roger Waddington, when you say you doubt the statement that SF in the USSR is "a means in itself for creative work", while I agree with the rest of what you say about people mostly reading SF for pleasure and entertainment, I think that everywhere SF has become a focus for creative work, look at all the fanzines and the people who write stories and articles for them, some of which are of very high quality. Perhaps in the USSR this is not true as they appear to be unable to publish fanzines, though they seem to encourage amateurs to publish professionally and also meet often for lectures and discussion.

One more comment. Michael Hailstone, you say that till now women tend to live longer than men because they have suffered less stress than men as they have not "had to go out to work in demanding jobs where the natural fight-or-flight reaction to stress is dented". While I agree with you that it will be interesting to see what happens with life expectancy in the future, I have to point out that it can be pretty stressful to stay at home day after day, cleaning, cooking and bringing up babies without hope of promotion (except through one's husband) and without hope of changing jobs (except through divorce, which till recently, was frowned upon). Some women probably took refuge in reading but not everyone enjoys this. Other women, I understand, took refuge in Bex and Vincent powders. I think that men's and women's roles were probably both stressful though in different ways; certainly it must be difficult for men to have to appear strong and capable all the time, just as difficult, in fact, as it was for women who were strong and capable to have to appear weak and helpless.

As to the question of whether an all female society would be less violent than current society, I read somewhere that research on hormonal influence on the brain had shown that men are slightly more likely to react aggressively than women whereas women are slightly more likely to react with nurturing behaviour (to small children, for example). Note the use of the word "slightly"; therefore I suppose an all-female society would be slightly less violent than our own, unless, of course, violence was made an all important tenet of society and its members were encouraged to commit acts of violence to prove themselves. I suppose too, it depends on how the society is structured, our own society is so violent, due largely to the fact of our own general powerlessness over our own lives; we are powerless, for example, to stop the build-up of nuclear weapons.

LARRY DUNNING, PO Box 111, Midland, WA 6056:

One thing you may have overlooked in your #53 editorial was Postal Games fandom. Originally this was centred around Diplomacy, although later other games were adapted for postal play. Dennis Brackman ran the first zine for postal dippy back in 1972-1974. I followed with my zine from 1974-1979. There were also zines for postal En Garde! and other role playing games. Lately there are two new zines that are running postal diplomacy, one in Tasmania and one in Victoria.

Now you might not consider this to be a fandom, but I do. The reason being that it involves people and readers in a social activity similar to that in an average fanzine. Players have to write to the GM to submit orders and can write "press" in the game - which can be anything. In America and Britain there are between 20-40 dippyzines and they organise conventions and activities et cetera.

Allied with this is wargaming and other gaming, which has always been there but never received much attention from outside the fandom. There is a certain amount of crossover however. In the days of WASFA for instance, a high percentage of its members were drawn from a local wargames group called WAHWA which met on the same premises. WAHWA died off before WASFA but the sentiment lingered on.

With SAFFA, the local successor to WASFA (although not directly, of course) many of its members are also in UNIGAMES, the Universtiy wargames group. Early in WA fandom I would have said that there were three main interests (apart from SF/Fantasy) that were common to most fans: Monty Python, Wargames/Roleplaying and getting pissed! Nowadays, it's anyone's guess!

MICHAEL HAILSTONE, PO Box 193, Woden, ACT 2606:

Joy Hibbert's point about pornography made in her letter in The Mentor 53 in no way invalidates my remark about the fear created by feminism in TM 50. Typical of the extreme feminists, she has taken me too literary. It is absurd to liken porn with an intelligent book of social comment like Goodman's GROWING UP ABSURD. What I meant, a point I would have thought too obvious to need spelling out, was that such a writer as Goodman would nowadays probably shrink from writing such a book for fear of being shot down in flames by his colleagues and the media at large, rather as Geoffrey Baliney has been persecuted for daring to express certain views on immigration that ran up against the present trendy ideology.

My "stupid" remark about a world without men had absolutely nothing to do with men being sexist bastards. It had everything to do with men being redundant in the modern world, as expressed in John Gribbin's book THE REDUNDANT MALE, which came out shortly after I saw GROWING UP ABSURD and wrote the letter that so offends Joy. Okay, men have "oppressed" women by keeping them as second-class citizens and so on, but in the same way men have also protected and cared for women. Sure, this industrial technological society is a male creation, but it exists mainly for the benefit of women and children, who need to be sheltered. In other words, this industrial organised society has been created by men for women. After all, what women would want to live and bring up children in a cave? All feminists are doing nowadays is taking advantage of this, taking their part in a system that has been built for them by men. This in itself is fair enough. But one of my main objections to feminism, one of its destructive excesses, is this trendy tendency to produce a neuter society, to do away with such things as distinctly manly and womanly traits. Thus it has become unfashionable, "ideologically unsound" to write such a book as Goodman's, which dares to bemoan such a thing as a lack of manly challenges. (For that matter, it has also become unfashionable in any way to bemoan the lot of men, as if women were the only people having a bad time.)

Even then she's wrong. So it's stupid to suggest that certain books daren't be published for fear of feminists? Well, I have news for her. Recently Alistair Cooke in his Letter From America told of the reaction to a recent novel by Kingsley Amis, who had one of his characters make an uncomplimentary remark about women. I don't remember the exact quote, but it compared women with the Russians and commented on their onesided bloodymindedness, something to that effect, anyway. The result was a national outcry by the wimmin of America, demanding that the book not be allowed into the United States. Although Amis has long been published in America, he couldn't find an American publisher for this book. The only saving grace I can find there is that at least British feminists seem a good deal more sensible and tolerant than their American counterparts. As Cooke pointed out, what if some equally fictitious character made the same remark about men? Would there then be cries of outrage and demands to ban?

But what really stinks about Joy's letter is the way that she, again typical of radical feminists, stoops to personal insults. I refer to her words "...when he grows up". That is the way feminists get their way, not by reasoned argument, but by preying on men's guilt-feelings through the use of such personal insults and innuendo. It is quite one thing to attack some statements or ideas as stupid, but it is nothing but petty and childish to stoop to personal abuse and name-calling. I'll even go so far as to say there that, if anyone needs to grow up, it's Joy and her ilk.

Bigod, see how low the level of this discussion has been dragged? Personal attacks, for chrissakes. I think feminism has a lot to answer for, the way it has set folk against each other with its hatreds and endless diatribes and polemics. I mean, it could well be that there are plenty of intelligent reasonable folk, including, I dare to say, both Joy and me, who probably agree on basic issues for the most part. I am sick to death of trying to be fair and not to seem anti-feminist. Joy's remark about men seems to show that she too is bending over backwards so as to seem fair and not manhating. But then I get the impression that she is really just projecting onto me the way she feels deep down about men. Why the hell doesn't she bother to read things properly? I would have thought that my letter made it plain that I, far from believing that men are sexist bastards that the world would be better off rid of, was attacking that very notion. If she's going to pour out her vitriol, then she might at least have the good sense and decency to direct her venom at the right target: in this case, John Gribbin, who published a book on this very subject (a world without men) last year.

While we're in the middle of slinging shit at each other, let me draw attention to Joy's last sentence, which seems to imply that Richard Faulder should winge about people who are trying to do anything about feminism instead of believing what the media say about it. Who in Earth is trying to do anything about feminism? I'm sure it's about time something were done, so that we could stop needlessly fighting and misunderstanding each other and find a little sanity, if such a thing is possible in the nineteen-eighties. But, since I can see what she's trying to say, I'll be charitable and call her a careless writer and reader. Bloody careless, that is.

I'd better correct one rosy naive statement I made about the new afterburners in cars (officially called some mouthful like "catalytic converters", but I think I'll stick to "afterburner"): with them cars will not spew only harmless carbon dioxide and water vapour into the air; the afterburners will merely reduce such noxious emissions as carbon monoxide by 30%. There are sure no wonders in these times.

{From 1st June 1985 in NSW Standard (92 octane) petrol was taken out of circulation - it being replaced by ULP (unleaded petrol) which most cars running around now can take. - Ron.}

The first reaction of my confused mind on seeing the column GRIMESISH GRUMBLINGS was that the good Captain was back with us after all. But after a few seconds I realised this could not be so. I have wondered whether you are reprinting earlier Grumblings or printing hitherto unpublished ones.

{That column of Bert's is the last one, unfortunately. - Ron.}

Yes, I also saw the spoof issue of Analog and especially liked the Iverson story, which, I think, could have been published only in a spoof issue of an American magazine. I get the impression that sf in the United States has become so jaded, so loath of "old" ideas like time travel, that it has lost its sense of fun - almost. I'd say the one feature of that story that made it publishable was its heavy criticism of the present day, such as the turning away from space exploration. We really need more markets in Australia, not only from Australian sf, but for such fun stories as Iverson's with that good old fashioned sense of wonder.

DIANE FOX, PO Box 1194, North Sydney, NSW 2060:

Randy Ash's cover (on TM 53) was most attractive. I like the look of the whole zine, in fact. It is a beauty. Who did the big-eared striped marsupial (looks a bit like a cross between a numbat, a wallaby and a helicopter) on the back cover? I loved it.

{That artwork was done by Lana Brown, and was lifted from a children's story about bunyips written by Sue and illustrated by Lana. - Ron.}

Peter Brodie's very short story TRAVELMOTHER is a subtle Luddite story about machines taking over people's lives indirectly. Not a profound story but made its point nicely.

John Alderson's article about the Aryans of India and the Law of Manu was interesting. There's a suggestion that the religion of the ancient Hindus encouraged them to practice birth control - otherwise the ideals of having few children after the birth of the heir, and the ideal of the husband keeping his wife sexually happy, would seem to be contradictory. Or maybe its just one of those "heads I win, tails you lose" set-ups that religions tend to practise so that people will feel a bit guilty no matter what they do and pay more time/money/etc to the church/temple/etc.

C. John Fidge's THE NIGHT SKY - most strange. Therapy by sensory deprivation sounds rather like the 18th Century practice of whipping mental patients, though certainly not as severe as lobotomy and other 20th Century experiments. Once I reached the paragraph that described the "sensory deprivation therapy" theory I realised that the man and the girl were the same person - I actually think he was the one running around screaming etc but part of his personality was detached and seeing the rest of him as a completely separate person (not even the same sex). I don't feel that he recovered - perhaps he simply became catatonic and hallucinated that he'd recovered.

Another strange poem from Steve Sneyd - a little vague at times, but the story and situation comes across vividly. Enjoyed this one too.

Great Circle and Fantastica Awards '83 - interesting but I can't really comment here. I'd like to read more Russian and Eastern European SF. Ditto for Boris Zavgorodny's article. THE DAY THAT LASTED MORE THAN A CENTURY is available here as THE DAY LASTS MORE THAN A HUNDRED YEARS (I think its original title, WINDSWEPT JERK-WATER STATION sounds more interesting but definitely less SFnal and thus less likely to sell the book.)

Larissa Plakhtina's lotus-woman in meditation seemed to fit in with the mood and theme of the John Alderson article on early Hinduism.

Gail Neville's story TRIAL BY TELEVISION - I knew this was going to be a nasty the moment I read the first paragraph. And nasty it certainly was, rubbing in the escalating violence of TV news sensationalism. (After all, Lindy Chamberlain was tried by TV and media sensationalism. I have a horrible suspicion that she was innocent, and her case will be the 20th Century equivalent of the infamous 19th Century Dreyfus case.) The final and most appropriate detail of Gail's story - the harassed jury didn't know or care whether they'd voted guilty or not guilty. A well written story.

Portfolio - some of these I liked, some I wasn't so sure about. Enjoyed Peter Lempert's intricate dungeons and dragons drawing, and Lana Brown's cat-and-mouse with haloes (does this mean the cat is a vegetarian?), and Sakura Allison's dragon and eggs (the dragon seems to have a pegasus ancestor). Kerrie Hanlon's girl-in-kinky gear I felt wasn't as good as her reclining beauty on page 5, which was excellent. I admired the technical competence of the one on page 29 but thought the freckled face kid and cute bunny just too much.

{Yes, well, the bunny and kid were sent before the story printed this issue, and would have better been kept for it. - Ron.}

Lan Laskowski's comments on "Dune" are most apt. At the silly ending, when Paul makes it rain and is acclaimed as the Messiah, the famous quotation ("He's not the Messiah, he's a very naughty boy") from Monty Python's "Life Of Brian" sprang to my lips, and was with difficulty repressed. However, I loved the Harkonnen grossities. So did the rest of the audience; "Beast" seemed a special favourite. Squishing a mouse into his drink was rather stylish in an entirely yuckful way.

I wouldn't call a computer a necessity of life. However, I suspect that Richard Faulder didn't take into account the fear most parents have that their children might not get work/succeed later in life if they aren't educated as much as possible. Computer literacy is regarded as very helpful in getting high-status-work-suitable-for-the-intelligent-middleclass-person (this is the ideal future for one's children). Computer illiteracy is seen as disastrous, encouraging the kids to hang about the streets etc.

Probably the popularity of Jules Verne's books is due to their "datedness" - their evocation of a world which was more innocent than our own, and the non-stop daredevil adventures. This sort of thing appeals to people. Also, Verne's books have very little sex in them (though they do have some female characters, these don't tempt/seduce/whatever the heroes, but simply get rescued/married/whatever in between all the inventions and adventures, which is what the books are all about. This is refreshing nowadays as probably people are a bit sick and tired of obligatory badly written sex scenes in books they are reading for adventure/inventions/sense of wonder etc.

Steve Sneyd's explanation of the real reason behind the fluoride conspiracy (ie make it impossible to sue in advance for lead, radiation or asbestos poisoning or worse) is the most valid I have yet seen.

Incidentally, I agree with Julie Vaux in feeling John Alderson's comparison of a TV to a "vulva with legs" to be unsuitable. A vulva may occasionally give birth to something useful. It is obvious to the thoughtful person that instead a TV resembles an extremely large anus, bespattering advertisements under our very noses.

I'd agree with Richard Faulder - some parents wouldn't have the bloody sense to get their kids to take fluoride tablets, or would overdose them. Human beings can be stupid bastards. Liked his comment on cannibal caterpillars (also mentioned in Peter Dicknson's FLIGHT OF DRAGONS). Caterpillars, despite their soft cuddly bodies and rather loveable bumbling movements have always been slightly unnerving to me because they eat like little chain saws. I like to watch them but feel glad they are so little.

{In that case you would love David Gerrold's new series THE WAR AGAINST THE CHTORR. - Ron.}

Interesting flatworm stuff. I've also heard that the experiments weren't entirely accurate as the flatworms may have been following the scent of the trail of slime etc left by their predecessors (the maze wasn't cleaned enough). They apparently have a keen sense of smell/taste/whatever).

True about women tending to marry older men. There's a quite noticeable discrimination against the reverse situation - I can think of at least one relationship that may have been wrecked by outside pressure.

Reviews: I haven't read TIME OUT OF JOINT, which apparently is considered one of P.K. Dick's better books. TWILIGHT WORLD was written in the 1950s. I remember reading it in my early teens. The mutant genius has a super-intelligent dog if I remember rightly. I enjoyed reading the book at the time because I identified strongly with the mutant, who was mistakenly thought as a child to be stupid/retarded/plain crazy. It is rather dishonest to publish an old book under a recent copyright - unless of course Poul Anderson has re-written the book recently to improve and update it.

I liked the idea behind the "Sanctuary" series. There are six of these books now. Unlike normal fantasy series, these tend to become more interesting and complex with each book, and the world described has taken on an incredible density and richness found in few fantasy novels, but often in myth and folktale collections (Tolkien would be an exception here).

The bit about the hero's nasty brother in Harry Harrison's STAR WORLD confused me a bit. Do you mean that the government in this book employs only evil people? "I have a dark, well-hidden secret - I have hidden tendencies towards good! It's awful!" (Villain-with-heart-of-gold syndrome.)

I liked the GNOMES book - a nice piece of SF/fantasy/science parody. I like these Gnomes much better than the concept used in most Dungeon and Dragons-type games. FAERIES I liked too. Lovely illustrations, and your comment was exactly on target.

You're also correct on "reading Vance is an acquired taste" - I didn't use to like them much, but now I relish them. I'm reading CUGEL'S SAGA now, actually. What especially appeals is the quiet sardonic humour, which is made even funnier by Vance's highly individual, slightly stilted, archaic vocabulary. His books contain adventure, strangeness and sometimes tragedy, but I think he will be remembered as one of the great humourists of science fiction.

RICHARD FAULDER, PO Box 136, Yanco, NSW 2703.

Peter Brodie's was a good effort, with just the right pacing. The one thing that jarred slightly from time to time was some of the dialogue, which seemed a bit colloquial. Somehow, it seemed to me that in such a situation colloquialisms would tend to drop out of the language.

Oh, and before I go any further I would like to say that the nicest piece of art this was the numbat on the backcover. Mike McGann's B.E.M. had a touch of whimsy I don't really associate with him, and something like that does him no harm at all. By contrast, Kerrie Hanlon's femme in the see-through blouse wasn't up to her usual standards, the face in particular being poorly rendered. It has long been my contention that erotic art (and let's not beat around the bush about what it is) is alright - as long as it is well-executed. Otherwise it has all the artistic merit of toilet-door graffiti.

{That piece of Kerrie's art was one of the first pieces she sent us. It had been used in one of Sue's zines, and when I ran short of art for last issue I reprinted it.- Ron.}

C. John Fidge's story had been going along quite nicely, skirting just on the right side of being over-wordy, building up atmosphere - only to have the whole thing spoilt by the last line. By the end of the penultimate sentence we had guessed that the male character, at least, was mentally deranged, but recovering. If the girl was a figment of his imagination, then the best way to handle this would have been to follow that penultimate sentence with: 'All was silent. He looked around for the girl, but she was gone.' If the author wanted to drive the point home, he could then have a scene where the recovered patient asks a medical staffer where the girl went to, only to be asked "What girl?"

The reports from Russia were a bit dry this time.

Gail Neville's story was quite effective and unpleasantly believable, in its own way a reasonably extrapolation of the trends evident in our own society. Somehow the prose style seemed just a little stilted and artificial, but this wasn't a major distraction.

Joy Hibbert's original statement, for readers who can't go back to issue 48, was "Women, and male feminists, wish to live, and wish their descendents to live in a reasonable society which doesn't deny spirituality." Now, if that first comma isn't a typo I will happily admit that the statement isn't sexist. However, if the sentence is set down as the writer intended, then the sentence means "All women, and male feminists, wish to live....". This is sexual stereotyping, and in my book

sentence is set down as the writer intended, then the sentence means "All women, and male feminists, wish to live....". This is sexual stereotyping, and in my book sexual stereotyping is sexist, regardless of who does it. Now, if Joy meant something different, fair enough, but that's what the sentence meant. In my original comment (issue 50, p.37, paragraph 3, line 7) the sentence was supposed to end with a question mark, thus: "Margaret Thatcher is supposed to be encouraging spirituality and discouraging materialism?", which rather alters the sense of that sentence. From typos do great arguments grow.

{Joy's above quote from her letter printed in TM 48 is as she wrote; so is yours printed in TM 50 (I just checked). What people mean is not necessarily what they write, sometimes. - Ron.}

The only time that I believe what the media says about feminism is when the article is written by someone who says "I am a feminist". If she is misrepresenting the movement, then that's the movement's problem. Mostly I find out about feminism by reading and listening to people like Joy Hibbert. Are they misrepresenting feminism? Equally to the point, what are they "trying to do... about" "upbringing that makes men, generally, nasty, and women, generally, wet"? So far as I can see, they need do nothing, as social and economic pressures gradually push both genders in the same direction. Now, it might be useful to try and influence the direction, which seems to be towards "nasty", but I rather suspect that the alternative is "wet", and I suspect Joy doesn't approve of that, either. In those terms I'd consider myself "wet", and much good it does me.

It is quite possible that any breakdown in health Michael Hailstone might have had might be due to ingesting fluoride, (which, of course, doesn't exclude the possibility of hypochondria - sorry, mate.)

I wasn't going to mention it, but I think Buck Coulson really said it all for me: "We're all people, after all." The point I've been trying to make all along.

JOHN ALDERSON, Havelock, Vic 3465:

Oh, "could we do with knowing" about Raechel's household gods and the head of Adam, etc.... well, if Hibbert referred to the bibliography I provided she could bloodywell find out. Joy Hibbert is only too anxious to continue her campaign to condemn me as a condoner of rape and a hater of women. As for the younger son being the heir amongst the Israelites, I made the suggestion on what I considered reasonable evidence and I felt a little disappointed to discover a reference to the same idea in Burton's 6th Suppl. Vol. of the Arabian Nights (p.214) citing Joseph Jacob's article, "Junior-right in Genesis" (Archeological Review, July 1888, pp 331-342). I have not read this. I thought I had thought it up myself. There is a difficulty in proving rape when there are no witnesses, hence the provision for paying the dowry and marrying the girl without the right of divorce, yet preserving for the girl the right of not marrying. If this isn't fair then how biased can Hibbert get? Her own position is seen in "it's upbringing that makes men generally, nasty" but its nice of her to believe "men can be improved."

Well, Mike O'Brien, I quoted Velikovsky's **WORLDS IN COLLISION**. So what! No-one had ever suggested the man's facts were bad. Thousands of people quote the man but few have the honesty to admit it. Then again, I quote Frazer, Muller, and so forth whilst not accepting their theories. Actually Velikovsky seems very well read in Arab folklore and history.

Julie, love, I must confess that a TV does remind me more of "a vulva on insignificant legs" than a "glass teat"... sorry about that but I assure you that that image has nothing to do with me dispising what comes out thereof, whilst my dislike of TV probably stems from the fact that it hurts my eyes. Nor is it a joke -

male dominated societies are scarce. Mind you, if one were to consider each Indian caste as a separate society (which would be the correct thing to do as they are not intermarrying) then the number of male-dominated societies would go up by perhaps a 1000, even though a sizable proportion are woman-dominated. Proprietary rights in cattle rather than land seems a deciding factor.

You may add Scotland to your list of peoples where the woman did not take her husband's name, or the male partner's family name. Much of this depends upon definition of name. Prior to the introduction of surnames, one's designation was to his or her land so a married woman was naturally referred to as Jill of the Well and her husband as Jack of the Well. Now, this was their address (no pun intended, the words mean the same) such designation are titles, and a title is legally a name (Americans please note). With the rise of crafts, Peter the Piper became Peter Piper but as I read the records, his wife remained whatever she was called before the marriage. Have to disagree with you about most European societies becoming "patrilineal or patriarchal since about 1500 BC..." Slightly after this time, Europe was virtually overwhelmed by the Celtic peoples, leaving only a non-Celtic fringe. The Celts were matrilineal and most remain so to this day. However, you could well be right about many people where the woman takes the male family name though I, by no means, concede the point. It appears to be an eccentricity of women dominated societies.

Just a triffling point re the violence of all male or female communities. Lacking much information on humanity, I hold my peace, but in all male or all female animal communities (as happens on farms), the amount of fighting in either is not notably more or less, and in springtime even wethers flex their muscles and bloody heads are common.

I don't think Richard Faulder's views on the extra longitivity of women as compared with men is very soundly based, and certainly the slightly older age a man marries appears to be irrelevant. Marriage does cut down the male's longevity, even in the bird world, the humble budgie lasting 14 years if kept a bachelor but turning up his toes at ten if allowed to raise families (this is in captivity). In my own family, bachelors have a slight edge on married men but my only aunt after raising a family (3 out of 4) lived to 96, beating the bachelors by several years. They were all farmers so stressful occupation was equal (except my dad went through the Great War which cut about ten years off his life, not only as expected by statistics but according to the family average).

Legalising pot indeed! The Victorian Government has just banned comfrey, aconite and licorice!

And a short note from

JOHN FOYSTER, 21 Shakespeare Grove, St. Kilda, Vic 3182:

I haven't written locs on TM lately partly because I've been busy but also because although some of the contents I find fascinating, I also find other parts almost worse than anything you've published in your entire career. And you with the longest-running, continuous title in Oz fan history!

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SPACED OUT...
IS NOT ADJUSTING YOUR JET PACK RIGHT
ON A HEAVY GRAVITY WORLD!



THE COLOUR OF MAGIC by Terry Pratchett. Corgi pb, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers. 237pp. A\$4.95. On sale now.

The planet on which these adventures take place is set upon the shoulders of four elephants, which in turn stand on the shell of a gigantic turtle swimming through space. The planet is in the form of a disc, and the inhabitants have been known to send expeditions over the edge, clad in suitable apparatus, to try to ascertain the sex of the turtle. The idea being if a mating of their turtle and another occurs, the sex of the one they are on would largely determine their chance of surviving the mating...

The book is a fantasy (naturally) and is of an irreverent humorous bent. The author succeeds in his writing, and the story flows smoothly as it follows the activities of the first tourist the world has seen - one Twoflower, who is 'accompanied' by a piece of perambulating luggage in the form of a chest with legs. His luggage is single minded and will not let anything come between it and its master. Rincewind, a failed wizard, because of the Spell that has lodged itself in his brain, finds himself delegated to show Twoflower around his country. An easy and satisfying read.

TWILIGHT AT THE WELL OF SOULS by Jack L. Chalker. Penguin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust Ltd. 304pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

This novel marks what appears to be the end of the Well World Saga, and is subtitled The Legacy of Nathan Brazil. It leads on from where **THE RETURN OF NATHAN BRAZIL** finished. The organized races of the Well World have heard that Brazil intends to turn the machines governing the Universe off, thus wiping out all the Universe except for the Well World and its machines, then start afresh with another Big Bang.

Brazil manages to smuggle in his compatriots - Mavra Chang, Marquoz, the loner Gypsy and the inhabitants of the Amazon planet. His main opponents are Ortega, in charge of the operation against Brazil because of his age and position, and Gunit Sangh, an insect-like creature from a warrior hex. There is plenty of action throughout, and the ending ties up most of the loose ends.

A well-written book.

THE TRIPODS TRILOGY by John Christopher. Puffin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. 446pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

The copyright date on this is 1967 and 1968, but the book has not aged. Actually it is a collection of three books - **THE WHITE MOUNTAINS**, **THE CITY OF GOLD AND LEAD** and **THE POOL OF FIRE**, so you are getting value for money.

The earth has been taken over by Tripods, machines of metal which stride along on their three legs, enforcing their rule on the humans by means of a skull-cap like device. Human civilization had been destroyed hundreds of years previously and the survivors eked out a spartan existence farming. The story follows Will Parker as he approaches his 'capping', when he will be carried into a Tripod and the mesh cap melded to his head. His friend has this happen to him and the difference between before the fitting of the cap and the resulting control by the Tripods is the last straw and Will determines to escape, with the help of a stranger.

A solid and well written novel - *Recommended.*

LADYHAWKE by Joan D. Vinge. Pan pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. 169pp. A\$4.95. On sale now.

The film that this book is based on was released in May. It is a fantasy, set in thirteenth Century Italy, and the action takes place around the city of Aquila which, in the middle ages was under the powerful grip of the Church and was personally run by the Bishop of Aquila.

The book starts off with the escape from the dungeons of Aquila of a young thief, Phillipe Gaston. This feat brings him to the attention of the Bishop of the city, who rules the town with an iron fist. Some time before the Bishop attempted to win a young woman, who was deeply in love with the Captain of the Bishop's guard. The Bishop had laid a spell on the young couple to keep them apart, and was determined that no-one would have her. With the help of the Evil One a spell was created that turned the man into a wolf at sunset, at the same time the woman who had the form (and instincts) of a hawke in the daylight hours, became her human self from sunset to sunrise.

Gaston's escape proves to be the catalyst to bring the Bishop and the couple to a final confrontation, helped by the priest who originally betrayed them. The plot is simple, but well told.

ADVENTURES WITH YOUR COMPUTER by L. Rade and R.D. Nelson. Penguin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. 199pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

The blurb on the front cover of this book says: "Learn the art of programming and enjoy your computer to the full." and the back cover has more along that line.

Unfortunately the book is not a basic step-by-step instruction in how to programme your computer using BASIC, it is more a mathematics-style text book with the solutions in the back. Something like: "Write a programme to make x to the power of a plus b" and then the solution says "this is x^{a+b} ". This is not what I expected the book to be; however if you already have the ability to do programming in BASIC and like doing puzzles you will probably find this of interest. The book is aimed, I presume, at the highschool pupil who is right into the computer scene - and this type of reader would, I think, find this to be just the sort of thing to keep this ability polished.

THE ENCHANTRESS by Han Suyin. Bantam h/c, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers. 345pp. A On sale now.

I am not sure why I received this book for review. If one goes by the title it could be presumed that it is a fantasy. The cover artwork is of an oriental city, with golden spires, with two people who appear to be Thais in the foreground.

I found the book engrossing. It is not a fantasy; rather it is a novel set in the historical past - when, in the sixteenth century, the great ocean explorers were beginning to make themselves heard in European courts and the forces of Empire were overflowing into the Orient. The plot concerns two youngsters, a brother and sister. The sister had inherited from her mother the Celtic gift of telepathy to a slight degree. The brother only had glimpses of it on rare occasions when he dreamed. Through various adventures the couple found themselves in Manchu China, where the girl attempted to put her gift to good use. The brother had learnt his craft from his father - that of building automations, or as the author calls them, 'androids'. At the time the building of such machines was the rage of Europe.

A very well written and interesting novel.

THE WEB OF TIME by Lee Harding. Puffin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust Ltd. 164pp. A\$3.95. On sale now.

This work is copyright 1980, so it is a recent novel as sf goes in this country. This is a time travel story: two of the main characters are a boy and his grandfather who has put together a trans-temporal precessor, called The Chronos. It really was an accident that precipitated them on their journey without any preparation - while his grandfather was doing the final checking of the machine, Tony accidentally pulled the lever that activated the drive and they found themselves journeying up the time stream. Along the way they pick up Miranda, a girl of much the same age as Tony, but more world wary.

Puffin books are aimed at those still with the Sense of Wonder, that is, who still have not reached 20. However, there are some good titles among them that anyone can read, and I think this is one of them. Lee has created quite a nice work with WEB, and anyone overseas who has access to sources will find this worth purchasing.

NEW FOUND LAND by John Christopher. Puffin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust Ltd. 126pp. A\$3.95. On sale now.

This one is copyright 1983 - I thought John Christopher had stopped writing sf years ago. NEW FOUND LAND is actually a sequel to FIREBALL, which tells of the world two youths found themselves in when a 'fireball' mysteriously transported them to an alternate earth where the Roman Empire had lasted into the 20th Century.

NEW FOUND LAND takes up the story with the two youths, along with their two Roman friends, in North America which they had reached by sea. The season was deepening into winter and food was becoming scarce. In the beginning the local indians seemed friendly, however when the weather turned bad their honest bargaining turned rigid and the four decided to leave on a raft. It was at this juncture that their troubles really began. The story follows their journey from what would have been Canada, down through the United States, on through Mexico and further south.

A well thought-out story and a good eye opener for anyone in their early teens.

BROKEN SYMMETRIES by Paul Preuss. Penguin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust Ltd. 333pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

This makes a good companion volume to **QUARKS - THE STUFF OF MATTER**, reviewed last issue. That volume went into the theoretical side of particle physics. This novel uses the background of current sub-atomic physics for its plot.

Set at a new particle accelerator in Hawai, called TERAC, it follows the events when a new sub-atomic particle is theorised and the accelerator sets out to find it and separate it out, as it is stable. One of the men who theorised that it existed was Peter Slater. The trouble was that his theory said that the particle was not stable, but actual practice showed it was. Or at least up to that point in time.

I found the book interesting and gave a convincing look at the way some scientific establishment work - it also gives the public some insight into the complexities of international establishments, in this case the project was one run by the North Americans and Japanese.

MILLENNIUM by John Varley. Sphere pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. 216pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

Sphere have put out a nice looking package with this book - the cover is silver reflecting-foil with an upside-down triangle cut in the centre, through which can be seen a colour-reverse image of a man's head. The title and author's name is done in red. Very striking.

MILLENNIUM is a time travel story. Each chapter is titled with some of the famous sf time travel stories (**ALL YOU ZOMBIES**, **THE END OF ETERNITY**, etc). The plot shows the invention built up over the past ninety years of time travel stories and how the modern tales rest on what has gone before. There is an organisation in the far future, when the human race is dying out, that has set itself to rescuing people history says died and of who no trace was found, or the people are unable to be identified - the Titanic, the Canary Jet liner disaster, etc - and who are brought to safety in the future. Varley has his own style, though and this reader found it hard to lay the book down.

Recommended.

A DAY FOR DAMNATION by David Gerrold. Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. 382pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

The series The War Against The Chtorr is going well for Gerrold. This is the second book published in England; at the convention CON AMORE in Brisbane in June he said he is now writing book five.

In the first book, **A MATTER FOR MEN**, humankind is fighting a rearguard action against the invasion of an alien life form which appears to be evolved 500,000,000 years further than the ecology earth has at present. A series of plagues had wiped out most of the humans, and then the Chtorr species began to appear in earnest. In this volume Jim McCarthy, a member of the US Special Forces finds himself volunteering for more hazardous duty in order to find out more about the invading ferocious life forms. In Book One Gerrold compared the US of that era with Germany in the 1930s, with its military preparedness cloaked in various ways, in this case the fighting machines were submerged in plastic in the sea, then later retrieved.

Looks like an interesting series.

CONAN THE DEFENDER by Robert Jordan. Sphere pb, dist in Aust by Willian Collins. 184pp. A\$4.95. On sale now.

Jordan is the author who has taken over L. Sprague de Camp's mantle for continuing the Conan books. And he does it well. Rather than portraying the Cimmerian as a dumbo as portrayed in the recent movie, he is shown as a barbarian, yes, but one with the potential for more.

Conan finds himself, as usual, up to his sword-arm in intrigue and bloody death. It all started of when an old man told Conan some prophecies: that a woman of sapphires and gold would seal his doom. Also he was to beware the woman of emeralds and ruby, who would watch him die. There were several others, all of which came true in several ways. As can be seen from the above, this mixes Conan up with the usual beautiful women, jewels and kings. For the fantasy buff.

THE DAUGHTER OF REGALS by Stephen Donaldson. Fontana pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. 349pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

This collection of short stories were either written in the spring/summer of 1977, or the summer/autumn of 1982; that is, between the times Donaldson was writing The Chronicles of Thomas Covenant. He says in the Introduction that he has a one track mind and that this is shown by the ten years he spent with Covenant. Whether he has broken away from that track can be seen by the following tales.

The stories are: DAUGHTER OF REGALS, MYTHOLOGICAL BEAST, THE LADY IN WHITE, ANIMAL LOVER, UNWORTHY OF THE ANGEL, THE CONQUEROR WORM and SER VISAL'S TALE. Most of the above are fantasy, with the odd sfnal element. If you liked Donaldson with Covenant, you might find other facets of his writing character in this anthology. Whatever, Donaldson may have a one track mind, but he certainly works over the terrain.

MAGICIAN by Raymond E. Feist. Granada pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. 831pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

This is one enormous novel; and is also the first novel by the author, who is a fantasy role-playing game designer. Feist has put the experience gained by that work into weaving the threads holding the novel together. If the size puts you off, don't worry too much - the print is slightly larger than usual. I would think that with the usual print size this would be a 600 odd page book.

It is set in Keleway and Midkemia, and follows the adventures of an orphan boy, Pug, who is apprenticed to a magician. Pug has a warrior friend, Tomas, who tags along with him. There are the usual fantasy keys - Princesses, Dukes, etc. Being in one volume like this is published, the story line is better able to be followed than if it had been split up into a trilogy, say. The threads are tied up, but there is a hint in the blurb that there may be a sequel... +

THE PEACE MACHINE by Bob Shaw. Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by the Hutchinson Group. 160pp. A\$20.95. On sale now.

The original title of this work was GROUND ZERO MAN, but it has been revised and updated for this hardcover publication. It is set in the near future (1988) and is about the attempt by an inventor, Lucas Hutchman, which he hopes will bring about a less tense world. He has invented a device which, by resonance, can explode all the nuclear warheads in all the weapons all over the world.

Hutchman sends plans to scientists and world leaders, telling them that he will detonate the weapons on a certain date. The idea is that they must dismantle

their weapons before that date. Unfortunately Hutchman did not really think out all the implications, and finds himself sought by assassins and finds other ways that governments do their dirty work.

Not bad - Shaw is a steady writer and turns out a good product. +

THE I INSIDE by Alan Dean Foster. Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. 311 pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

It seems that nowadays there really are only a few basic plots, and that authors are, not so much rehashing, as re-writing them more competently, with different twists and counterplots and subplots. In this novel, the world is being 'ruled' by a computer and has been since before anyone can remember. Peace and prosperity had brought a world without excesses.

There comes a time, however, when any society or world is disrupted by events - sometimes it is planned, as in Diaspar when the genetic tanks throw up someone to deliberately upset the society, sometimes it is because of the unplanned machinations of one man. This novel is slightly different in that it brings aliens into the mix, which makes it all the more eventful.

Reminds me somewhat of the maze Gosseyn wove through. +

THE RAINBOW CADENZA by J. Neil Schulman. New English Library pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. 299 pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

The blurb of this book reads: "In the world of tomorrow men will outnumber women by seven to one. But most men will still want women...". From such a basic background the reader would assume that the book will either be some sort of sexual adventure or a feminist/antifeminist tirade.

Actually the novel is quite well done. It concerns the future expansion of the art of lasergraphy for entertainment and a heroine who is an artist using this form. Also woven through the background are some of the tenets of Wicca, though these mostly tend to be unobtrusive unless the reader is searching for them. The chapters are set out in Logosata form and you could say they are titled in Angstroms. An interesting read for someone looking for something out of the ordinary. +

HORSECLANS ODYSSEY by Robert Adams. Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. 241pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

The Horseclans series rolls on - this is volume 7, but instead of following on in the lineal timescale that the first six have done, this volume is set before the time of volume 1. In his introduction Adams states that several volumes following this one will explore the origins of several of the background details already taken for granted - the origin of the prairie-cats, the discovery of the breed of mind-speaking horses, etc. So his faithful readers have much to look forward to.

In this novel, the action follows the attempts to rescue some of the clan's kidnapped children by men from a caravan of eastern traders. As also is usual there is a lot of fighting and adventure. This series is now firmly set in its world, which is why, I suppose, the creator is both fleshing it out and expanding it. +

PURE BLOOD by Mike McQuay. Bantam pb, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers. 280pp. A\$4.95. On sale now.

PURE BLOOD is the first in a series by the author of **JITTERBUG**. The next in the series, **EARTH MOTHER**, will be published later this year. Books release lists from the US show McQuay is writing quite a lot these days.

The scene is the earth some thousand years or so after the technological marvels of the present and near future have gotten out of kilter, including genetic engineering. The struggle the novel concerns itself with is that between two brothers, Ramon and Morgan. They had the same father, but one was the son of a concubine, the other of a Lady. Throughout their childhood they held themselves with barely concealed amicability, but when they matured they become deadly enemies. Unfortunately they involved others in their struggle, and commenced to spread bloodshed. One brother, Ramon, stayed with the humans, the other fled to the remnants of the created races.

There have been a lot of these after-the-bomb type stories in the last twelve months; hopefully the jewels will be fairly easy to pick out of the dross. +

CHOCKY by John Wyndham. Puffin Plus pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. 153 pp. A\$3.95. On sale now.

John Wyndham's novels are among the first that readers starting out with sf, or even any reading, come across in libraries and schools. **THE KRAKEN WAKES** and **THE TRIFFIDS** are all well known. The third novel that could be added to these two to make it a trilogy representing him is **CHOCKY**, which has recently been made into a TV play.

Chocky is the name given to an seemingly made-up childhood friend of Matthew Gore. His sister also had a made-up friend, but then she was only five years old. Matthew was twelve. Not only did he talk about his friend Chocky, he had arguments with her. This was not too bad; it was when he started using binary code at school that his parents realised there was something more than just the imagination of a twelve-year old involved. The writing is very good, as Wyndham is well known for his prose. Just the thing for a young beginner in sf.

Recommended. +

ENCHANTERS' END GAME by David Eddings. Century h/c dist in Aust by Doubleday Aust. 372pp. A\$19.95. Corgi pb dist in Aust by Transworld Publishing. 372pp. A\$5.95. Both editions on sale now.

This is the long-awaited conclusion to The Belgariad, which volumes followed Garion from his childhood, through his quest with his sorceror Grandfather Belgarath and his Aunt Polgara to find the Orb that would enable the two Prophecies to become one and seal the fate of the world that had been ordained at the beginning of time, to his final and fateful confrontation with the God Torak.

ENCHANTERS' END GAME is a book unto itself but to fully understand the scope and the complexities the full set requires reading. Everything is wound up in the end and there are some surprises. The Belgariad is definitely one of the best fantasy series to be published in the last twenty years.

I have given the other books in the series a *Highly Recommended*, and this one gets that too. If you have the opportunity get the entire set.

TIME MACHINE 6 - THE RINGS OF SATURN by Arthur Byron Cover. Illustrated by Brian Humphrey and Marc Hempel. Bantam pb, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishing. 126pp. A\$2.50. On sale now.

The Choose Your Own Adventure series run by Bantam is a very popular series. This particular line uses time travel to give the young adventurer a broader outlook on his adventures. The traveller goes both forward and back in time - in a previous volume back to the Age of Reptiles. There are always some basic scientific facts given, so they are a learning experience as well as entertainment.

The adventure commences in the year 2085 and the action follows a plan of the person travelling through the adventure to investigate radio signals originating from Saturn. On the way the player meets a cyborg and the first choice comes up - to hitch a ride with the cyborg or take a safe route. Our two children, ten and seven, love this type of book. The seven-year old especially is turning into a voracious reader and keeps re-reading them. A good present for sub-teens.

ON THE FLIP SIDE by Nicholas Fisk. Puffin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. 121pp. A\$3.50. On sale now.

Nicholas Fisk is a writer of children's sf and fantasy books that are apparently good sellers. The man himself is able to write stories that are full of adventure and succeeds in not writing them down to his intended audience.

ON THE FLIP SIDE is a strange tale of a brother and sister. The brother is fourteen and his sister is twelve. The boy seems normal enough; it is his sister who seems unusual - her nickname is "lettice" and she spends much of her free time at home talking to her pets. This is not so bad, but when she claims her pets tell her of "blobs" and creatures that humans can't see or hear, she finds herself in deeper water.

It is not until animals everywhere start acting up that people are forced to take notice of her. +

THE EARTHSEA TRILOGY by Ursula K. Le Guin. Puffin trade pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. 478pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

I don't think that there can be many people in science fiction fandom who haven't at least heard of the Earthsea novels - **A WIZARD OF EARTHSEA**, **THE TOMBS OF ATUAN** and **THE FARTHEST SHORE**. In this edition, first published in 1979, Penguin Books have brought all three together in a nicely produced book. The type is clean and of a nice size for easy reading.

The three novels are basically the continuing story of the Archmage, Sparrowhawk who had, in his youth, misused one of the Summoning spells and released an evil creature into the world of Earthsea. **A WIZARD OF EARTHSEA** details his attempts to stop it. The second novel tells of his attempt to retrieve the lost ring of Erreth-Akbe and his meeting with the Dark Lady of Gont. The third in the Trilogy tells of his journey into the land of the dead, and his adventures there. If you haven't had the opportunity to obtain this trilogy or you have only one or two of the novels, then definitely buy it now. *Recommended*. +

RETURN TO EDDARTA by Randall Garrett & Vicki Ann Heydron. Bantam pb, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers. 149pp. A\$3.95. On sale now.

Another series winds towards its conclusion - in the publisher's advertisements at the back of this book is the mention that The Gandalara Cycle will end with **THE RIVER WALL**, to be published in the USA later this year. This is an easy

novel to read, the writing style is clear and there are no deep philosophical ideas/dogmas cluttering it up.

This time the book traces Rikardon and Tarani's journey across Gandalara with the ultimate destination the centre of government. The authors have kept hold of all the threads throughout the books and hopefully by the time the last novel is published they will be able to answer the two prime questions raised in the series: Where is Gandalara and why is Rikardon there?

Reading for a lazy day. +

ORBITSVILLE by Bob Shaw. Granada pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. 187pp. A\$5.95. On sale now. **ORBITSVILLE DEPARTURE** by Bob Shaw. Granada pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. 192pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

Now is a good time to get these two novels of Shaw's while they are out in a matched set. **ORBITSVILLE** is copyright 1975, which is around the time that ringworlds (to coin a name) were the big thing. The sequel, **ORBITSVILLE DEPARTURE**, was reviewed in **THE MENTOR** 50.

The discovery of Orbitsville, the enormous artifact which was built unknown ages before, was the result of a lapse of concentration by an exploration ship captain. Left to watch over the spaceline President's son, the man is musing when he should have been watching the boy; the heir falls, and is killed. The spaceman flees and, when thinking of a place to go, decides to check some alien starcharts. A star that was there on earlier charts, was blank on later ones, and is not there again in the latest charts - this leads him and his crew to the discovery of the century.

THE LONG NIGHT by Poul Anderson. Sphere pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. 274pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

The stories in this anthology are set in the period after the fall of the Polesotechnic League when barbarism flourished through space and the Long Night was casting its shadow across the centuries. In this volume are included: **THE STAR PLUNDERER** (1952); **OUTPOST OF EMPIRE** (1967); **A TRAGEDY OF ERRORS** (1967); **THE SHARING OF FLESH** (1968) and **STARFOG** (1967). Also included in the back is **A CHRONOLOGY OF TECHNIC CIVILIZATION** which covers the history in the series from the 21st Century through to the year 7100, when **STARFOG** is set.

If the reader is a follower of Anderson's stories of the League, or is one who liked good Sf adventure from one of the Golden Ages of Sf, then this book is a good buy.

KITE-WORLD by Keith Roberts. Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by the Hutchinson Group. 288pp. A\$21.95. On sale now.

The reader has probably read three of the stories included in this volume when they were first published in **INTERZONE**, or when they were anthologised later. What Roberts has done is written five other 'chapters' to make up a fascinating picture of the world of the Realm, with its string of Kites streaming into the blue sky, watching for Demons.

The chapters are headed: Kitemaster; Kitecadet; Kitemistress; Kitecaptain; Kiteservant; Kitewaif; Kitemariner; and Kitekillers. Each can be read as complete in themselves, but when read in sequence the picture of the world of the Kites that builds up shows that the author of **PAVANE** still knows his art. The stories told show that people, though they are living in a changed world, are still the same underneath. *Recommended*.

THE MAN IN THE TREE by Damon Knight. Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by the Hutchinson Group. 246pp. A\$21.95. On sale now.

This is the first new novel from Damon Knight for many years, and it is well worth the wait. The blurb on the dust-jacket is quite true to the plot - "Born in a small Oregon town in 1944, Gene Anderson quickly learns that he does not fit into the world - physically or otherwise. By the time he is nine years old, he is as big as boys five years his senior; and he also discovered that he possesses a unique talent."

After reading the novel, the reader can see links with books by Sturgeon, Stapledon and others. The question is soon raised by the reader: Is Anderson a Superman? The answers to this question (there are more than one answer) surfaces as the novel progresses, and the ending suits the character of Anderson that Knight builds up. A very entertaining read.

THE FATE OF THE PHOENIX by Sondra Marshak and Myrna Culbreath. Bantam pb, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers. 262pp. A\$3.95. On sale now.

For those readers wondering why Star Trek books are being reviewed in The Mentor - this review listing is of those sf books being released in Australia, and the Star Trek books reviewed here are being released as part of Transworld's front-line sf collection.

THE FATE OF TH PHOENIX is the sequel to THE PRICE OF THE PHOENIX. It continues the saga of the fight over the Phoenix process which was illustrated in the recent movies. Susan could not get past the first twelve pages of this novel, which only goes to show that although some fans become competent writers, some do not.

MUDD'S ANGELS adapted by J.A. Lawrence. Bantam pb, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers. 177pp. A\$3.95. On sale now.

The dedication prefacing the stories in MUDD'S ANGELS is to James Blish, who died in 1975 after partially completing the conversion of two of the stories in this volume from the screen: MUDD'S WOMEN and I MUDD. J.A. Lawrence (Blish's wife) completed them and added a the third story, THE BUSINESS, AS USUAL, DURING ALTERCATIONS.

Though it is most probably that Blish wrote these screen adaptations solely for the money they still show his style in the polish of prose. Unfortunately the scope for innovation almost nill; however the episodes concerning the trader Mudd were some of the episodes of STAR TREK that were meant to be humorous, rather than being so bad as to be laughable, for example, SPOCK'S BRAIN.

STARTREK 12 adapted by James Blish and J.A. Lawrence. Corgi pb, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers. 177pp. A\$3.95. On sale now.

This is the other book that James Blish did not get to finish, and Lawrence took over. The stories included are PATTERNS OF FORCE, THE GAMESTERS OF TRKSKELION, AND THE CHILDREN SHALL LEAD, THE CORBOMITE MANEUVER and SHORE LEAVE. Also included are two appendices: a list of the Star Trek titles (ie the first 12 collections with the script writers names appended, and a list of titles with the collection number and the Season of the tv series.

There are two Introductions - one by James Blish, and one by his wife after his death. I am sure that Trekkers everywhere will miss his style.

THE SABLE MOON by Nancy Springer. Corgi pb, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers. 256pp. A\$4.95. On sale now.

Another fantasy trilogy ends. This time the trilogy is The Book of Isle trilogy. The other books in the trilogy are **THE WHITE HART** and **THE SILVER SUN**, which have been reviewed in previous issues of this magazine.

One of the quotes on the cover is by Andre Norton: "In a class with Donaldson's **CHRONICLES OF THOMAS COVENANT**", which the reader can make of what he or she wishes. The writing is clear and, even though the plot is not outstanding, the books still make an interesting read for fantasy fans. The covers look like Medieval paintings, though they are done in more modern pastels.

BOOKS PUBLISHED BY BANTAM AND WHICH ARE OBTAINABLE FROM SPECIALIST SF BOOKSHOPS:

TO OPEN THE SKY by Robert Silverberg. 222pp. US\$2.95. On sale now.

The story of Lazarus, the prophet of the Vorsters and the story of his rise from the dead and the problems it caused his faithful followers. The Copyright is 1967 and the book is required reading for all Silverberg completists. +

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THE MASTERS OF SOLITUDE by Marvin Kaye and Parke Godwin. 401pp. US\$3.50. On sale now.

Another novel of after the devastation and the creation of strange powers in the populace. Again science rears its head in an City outpost that survived the years and was making itself felt again. +

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REBEL'S QUEST by F.M. Busby. 243pp. US\$2.75. On sale now.

The sequel to **STAR REBEL**. Tells of Bran Tregare's fight against United Energy and Transport and his vengeance against them through a rebel starfleet. His path is changed when he meets Rissa Kerguelen who forces him to consider his nearly lost past. +

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UTOPIA HUNTERS by Somtow Sucharitkul. 255pp. US\$2.95. On sale now.

Another novel in the Inquestor series. Jenjen was from the world of Essondras who had been called to see Ton Elloran, an Inquestor, to shape a lightsculpture for a monument. She finds herself suddenly in the midst of events that are shaping the future of history for her kind. +

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LIFE KEEPER by Mike McQuay. 260pp. US\$2.95. On sale now.

It was after the devastation.... Mankind lived in ruined cities and fought between themselves under the "guidance" of a computer from the time before. It was time to change; humanity was becoming tired of war - and Dulan, of the elite, saw the end looming. +

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THE ALIEN UPSTAIRS by Pamela Sargent. 165pp. US\$2.75. On sale now.

When I first saw the cover of this work, with its old-style two storied house and woman with a harassed look in the foreground, I thought, "now why have I received this gothic horror story?" Only after a closer look disclosed what appears to be a spaceship passing transparently across the background cloudscape did it occur to me that it was sf. About a mysterious stranger in a small town. +

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THE ADVENTURES OF TERRA TARKINGTON by Sharon Webb. 203pp. US\$2.95. On sale now.

I suppose it had to happen - a science fiction Nurse Novel. The travails of RN Terra Tarkington, as she takes on all comers, be they the odd human, crustacean or muck-sucker. For the light moment. +

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MOCKINGBIRD by Walter Tevis. 276pp. US\$2.95. On sale now.

This won the Ditmar some years ago. A full review appeared in THE MENTOR 50 .

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FLIGHT FROM NEVERYON by Samuel R. Delany. 385pp. US\$4.50. On sale now.

This is the sequel to NEVERYON and TALES OF NEVERYON. In this work, the world of Neveryon begins to encroach on the 'real' world; characters from that land of fantasy appear on New York's streets and cause some consternation. +

OTHER CURRENT RELEASES:

SPHERE:	ET : THE BOOK OF THE GREEN PLANET - W.Kotzwinkle.
TRANSWORLD:	STARMAN - Alan Dean Foster.

JULY RELEASES:

TRANSWORLD:	THE DRAGON WAITING - John M. Ford. THE SABLE MOON - Nancy Springer.
DOUBLEDAY:	THE DEMON LORD - Peter Morwood.
GRANADA:	ROBOTS OF DAWN - Asimov.

AUGUST RELEASES: (COINCIDING WITH THE AUSTRALIAN WORLDCON)

TRANSWORLD:	MEDEA: HARLAN'S WORLD - Ed. by Harlan Ellison. FRAZETTA No 5 - Illus. Frank Frazetta. EARTH ABIDES - George R. Stewart. A CANTICLE FOR LEIBOWITZ - Walter M. Miller Jr.
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GRANADA: HELICONA SUMMER - Aldiss.
 ELRIC AT THE END OF TIME - M. Moorcock.
 UNFORSAKEN HERO - Lanier.
 HIGH-RISE - J.G. Ballard

PENGUIN: THE SCIENCE FICTION SOURCE BOOK - David Wingrove.
 SPACE.

SEPTEMBER RELEASES:

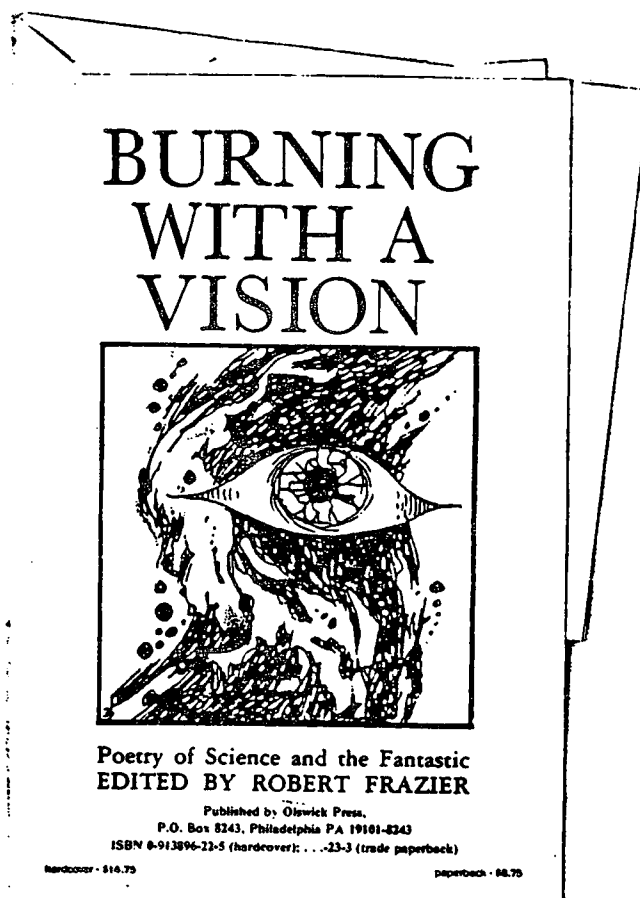
GRANADA: 1984 : SPRING - A.C. Clarke.
 THE SENTINAL - A.C. Clarke.
 BIOG. OF A SPACE TYRANT - Anthony.
 THE DRAGONMASTERS - Vance.

PENGUIN: ASIMOV'S NEW GUIDE TO SCIENCE - Isaac Asimov.

AND H/Cs COMING UP FROM:-

HUTCHINSON: I HOPE I SHALL ARRIVE SOON - Philip K. Dick.
 GILGAMESH THE KING - Robert Silverberg.
 FOOTFALL - Niven & Pournell (1986 Hugo winner)

HODDER: THE CAT THAT WALKS THROUGH WALLS - R.A.Heinlein
 JOB - R.A. Heinlein.



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