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C O N T E N T S

RON'S ROOST.....	Ron L. Clarke	page 1
M. JOHN HARRISON & THE DIGNITY OF POINTLESSNESS.....	Andy Darlington....	" 3
SHOP SOILED GOODS.....	Helen Sargeant.....	" 7
CHALLENGER.....	Sue Isle.....	" 12
SOVIET SF CHRONICLE.....	Boris Zavgorodny...	" 13
AN OPEN ACCOUNT.....	Igor Toloconnicou..	" 17
YEVGENY ZAMYATIN.....	Dennis Stocks.....	" 21
MY DEN.....	Diane Fox.....	" 37
THE R&R DEPT.....		" 40
SPACED OUT.....	Mike McGann.....	" 55
REVIEWS.....		" 57

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RON'S ROOST

THE PAST IS BEHIND US
- TOMORROW BELONGS TO ME

Time for another issue. I've just come back from another convention . Galactic Tours convention was held over the weekend of the 8 - 9 th of March in Melbourne. Susan was flown down as one of the fan guests of honour, so I was delegated to drive down with the fanzines we had just published to get some money in to pay for the paper etc for the coming year. I was lucky that Gay Williams was going overseas in April and wanted to save money, so she came down with me from the Blue Mountains, and we picked up Nikki White in Canberra on the way through.

The weather was pretty hot and we had the van air conditioner on all the way down. We hit Melbourne weather about fifty kilometres out in the form of a southerly change which changed our speed for 100 kph to 85 kph as we met it head on. I didn't see much of Melbourne, as I stayed inside of the motel (the Townhouse) the whole three days we were there. It was the Moomba weekend and if it wasn't raining it was windy and overcast.

The convention was the first these particular organisers had done and probably would have gone smoother had it not been for the nature of the Townhouse. It is not a good site for a con. It is five stories and there is only one lift. The con facilities are on the ground and fifth floors. The concom had headset radios which linked them up with Security, who had the job of policing the running of the con. It may have looked good in theory, but the use of the radios meant that delegation was not put upon the people on the spot - the problem was always passed on to John Meekings, who was literally run off his feet.

I enjoyed myself, though tales of the coffee lounge not being opened for meals made many fans unhappy. The major events were an hour to an hour and a half late. The main problem which created this was there was not fixed stage and one had to be set up, along with the lighting and sound. The food was delicious.

One of the interesting things the con did was have a display of various aero- and astro-nautical models, including the space shuttle and flight guidance systems. The big draw card, of course, was the full scale model of the bridge of the starship Enterprise. With the public paying to look them over some of the cost of building the scale model was recouped. There is a rumour the concom is thinking of putting another Galactic Tours con on in a year or so...



Mike Harrison

M. JOHN HARRISON & THE DIGNITY OF POINTLESSNESS

BY ANDY DARLINGTON.

"The writer is a voice, nothing else" says M.J. Harrison. "As a writer, it's only incumbent on you to be your own voice. To be it as well, and as interestingly as you possibly can - so you suck the reader in, mangle him about, and spit him out at the other end feeling as if he's swum through a pool of vomit, or been shaken by a dog, or a mixture of the two!"

M.J. Harrison's prose is hermetically dense, construction is claustrophobically tight, words and phrases selected with the care and attention of an assassin choosing a blade or a poison. "The first thing that strikes you about anything by M.J. Harrison is sheer style" says SAVOY DREAMS. And - while grown from the forcing house of science fiction - he's always been one of its severest critics. As a reviewer for NEW WORLDS in the late 60s he admits "my head became stuffed with the rubbish - and even though I hated most of it I was able, luckily, to say so in print and try to change the quality of the stuff". Michael Moorcock published Harrison's BAA BAA BLOCKSHEEP in the November 1968 NEW WORLDS/NEW WRITERS SPECIAL, while in America Harlan Ellison was sufficiently impressed to include him in AGAIN DANGEROUS VISIONS. Then, evolving from the New Wave S.F. novels - THE COMMITTED MAN (1969), and THE CENTAURI DEVICE, through the elaborate baroque fantasies of Viriconium - THE PASTEL CITY and A STORM OF WINGS, his subsequent short story collections (THE ICE MONKEY and the August 1985 VIRICONIUM NIGHTS) have taken him beyond clearly defined genre categories.

Michael John Harrison now lives in the West Yorkshire village of Holmbridge with his books and his cats ("all my cats are MAD!"). To him, genre writing is no longer a concern, fiction is now "just the operation of your technique on your sensibility. A writer's only duty is to operate truly on his own sensibility, his own viewpoint, with his technique. It's incumbent on him only to be technically good, and honest in terms of his sensibility and his viewpoint.

The directions and attitudes readers can expect from his future works

becomes clearer in this taped conversation:-

ANDY DARLINGTON: You have a very dense prose style. Are you an obsessive corrector and re-writer?

M.J. HARRISON: Yes, I am an obsessive corrector. In the times between about mid-1975 and mid-77 I hardly published a single word because I corrected everything I wrote completely out of existence, and even now I find it very hard to produce completed work that satisfies me to the point that I allow it to be published. Recently I've been trying to get around this by taking a great deal more directly observed notes from reality, as I go around, and doing the work when I put those notes down. I leave them in the notebook or the journal for a long time, and when I go back to them, to use them for a piece of fiction, they seem to be perfectly decently written. This process defuses the urge to go on writing and re-writing them, and I can almost use them like packages and slip them into the text where I need them. In fact, the text tends to grow out of them - my notes over two or three months will suggest a shape, and I will suddenly realise that I've been collecting notes in a certain direction, and 'bang', I have a short story. It cuts the writing time down at the actual point of sitting down to write a story - although, in fact, it means that I'm writing ALL the time, because I'm consistently sort of sitting down in Cafes or on rock faces and scribbling in a note book - which can be embarrassing or difficult - especially on a rock!

AD: The narrators in THE ICE MONKEY stories tend to be static, almost voyeuristic, describing the actions of a more interesting central character - Lyall in RUNNING DOWN for example.

M.JH: The narrators of the stories, vet.

AD: There's also a static element in some of the stories themselves - THE ICE MONKEY and INCALLING seem to assume a confrontational attitude to writing; their lack of movement being almost the antithesis of conventional story construction, which largely depends on movement. Only the beauty of the prose saves it from dourness. PUNCH magazine called it an "uncanny capacity to describe life where it has almost ceased to exist".

M.JH: That's fascinating. I think you might be right. I was thinking about J.G. Ballard the other day, the French Nouvelle Vague, and the anti-novelist of the post-war and early 50s. And I was thinking - "why is it I don't like that stuff anymore?". And it's because it's so static. It's because they've tried to freeze each instant instead of allowing the movement of each instant into the next instant to come through. And surely - that's the only thing fiction can do. It's up to paintings to freeze time... but then, of course, they were highly influenced by painters rather than by writers. You may very well be right. I'd want to think about it and argue about it a bit. But taken in conjunction with what I've been thinking about Ballard and the Nouvelle Vague, that's very possible - because I was very influenced by the French New Wave, by the Absurdist, and by Ballard when I was 20-21. These things get into your head and stay there - perhaps in an area of your method that you cease to question or even consider, it's just something that you do. You may very well be right - I'm not saying you are, because I haven't thought about it; but if it is the case, I would see that collection (THE ICE MONKEY) as transitional in an attempt to move out of that, and into something more flexible. I've got 3 of 4 new pieces, which have not yet been published, in which I think the movement is back. The movement is there.

AD: If I can quote from the book's title story - "none of us, after all, understand our motives". To what extent does that apply to the construction of your stories - to what extent are the ideas they project premeditated? To a degree you've already suggested that they emerge intuitively, built up without conscious direction from fragmentary notes.

MJH: No. What I would like the stories to do (and I think there are one or two successful ones in there that do it) is to encapsulate a particularly human problem that interests me at the time. Mostly in those stories it's the inability of one person to communicate with another - which is why "none of us understand our own motives, because the implication is "...let alone other people's!". We don't understand why we do things let alone why people around us do things. And yet we still have to interact with them. We have to try and get some sort of result in the real world. Mostly those stories - THE ICE MONKEY particularly, for instance - are about people who are failing to communicate with one another, who are failing to understand their own motives let alone the other person's motives, and who are being observed (usually) by a very distant narrator. He claims to understand nobody's motives, but in fact - by telling the story - he's pointing the reader's attention at certain things. Things that say "well look, this is not the done thing. This wasn't a very nice thing to do". He steadily builds up evidence so that the reader is quite certain where the moral right lies. It's an old technique; the Edwardians did it - the use of an apparently distanced narrator who, in his very refusal to comment on other people's actions, is damning them just as surely, as it were. Colin Greenland said in a TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT review of THE ICE MONKEY that the narrator "limps around the crater after the disaster, showing you the ruins and saying "god knows why we do these things to ourselves"" - but he knows damn well. He's as complicit as the characters in the stories. And so is the reader, I might say. We all know - although at one level we none of us know why we do things, at another level we are all quite aware of why we do things. We know exactly what we want and most of it isn't very acceptable in moral terms, in personal relationships.

AD: All fiction is artifice, and within the writer there has to be an element of the entertainer too. This can run from the polar extremes of pure escapism produced by market caterers, to the honestly crafted work of the creative writer. How do you decide where exactly you draw the line, where you achieve the balance between the two?

MJH: Yeah. There are technical problems to resolve as well. At the 'honesty' and of the spectrum there are technical reasons why it's not possible. Many writers spend their entire lives trying to decide whether it's possible to be a camera, or be absolutely truthful. That, in itself, is a problem of self-honesty, and of technique, which you've gotta crack, before you can then go on to your problem - which is then how far do you let the reader in?

AD: You mean the degree of subjective interpretation?

MJH: Well, yes - we talk about honesty, but what do we mean? Is it possible to replicate the world? It isn't. We know now that even cameras aren't honest. The camera can lie. It selects. Now, because of that - if you add THAT into your equation - it's even more difficult to be honest. Because you've got technical difficulties in being honest. You've got your own personal and subjective difficulties in being honest. You tint everything you look at with your own personality. Then finally you've got this business of how much of an entertainer you're going to be. That's an astonishing amount of forces ranged against honesty, they're enormous! What do we do? To go right back to an earlier point of yours, you have to produce a kind of mobility to get the reader to read at all. If your vision is static then you're in trouble to start with! Mine isn't static particularly - but the difficulty of the real Nouvelle Vague performer is that he is boring as far as the ordinary reader is concerned. Now, I've been fascinated for 2 or 3 years by the relationship between what you would call reportage - camera-like photography of the environment, and fiction. I mean, to me, I haven't actually come to any conclusions. I'm still working on it. It's astonishing - it's something that a Science Fiction writer never has to bother about!

AD: One of the promises of New Wave S.F. was to escape escapism. That Science

Fiction should relate to the real world. Doesn't that, by implication, involve a political element?

MJH: No, only in modern terms. I don't know whether you know it, but you can still relate to the world as an individual. You don't have to relate to the world as part of a mass. Psychology still exists. We haven't been fobbed off with sociology for ever. There are still non-political solutions. To an extent I'm reacting against politicisation of any sort. When you are evaluating in a personal sense, your strongest motivation is to keep that personal motivation pure. There are still non-political problems. I've always spoken for the individual. I don't want to put the world to rights because I don't believe it can be put to rights. I would want to explain that statement at length, but it would seem to me that there is a human condition, and that the writer's job is to live with it, describe it - not to try and change it on the basis of some theory that he only partly understands, or indeed, any theory! So even Socialist S.F. has no real interest for me. In fact it has even less interest, because the more propaganda you have, the less art. There's no doubt about that, and I use art to mean artifice, that is, again - technique.

AD: You've been described as an Anarchist - which infers a belief that once the manipulative influences of State and Religion are removed, people are innately good. You've also been described as a pessimist. Don't these two terms conflict?

MJH: My argument would be that people are innately good - but that doesn't mean to say we can expect much from them. Because of their non-communication. Because of their inability to understand their own motives, let alone anybody else's. Eventually they cannot co-operate. Not successfully. Not to produce things that are worth having. It's quite easy to co-operate to produce atomic weapons, but nobody seems to be able to co-operate to solve the problems of the Third World (laughter). I don't know. I'm not a pessimist anyway, I'm an Absurdist. I don't believe there's any meaning to the universe. And my stories illustrate, or accept that, as a basis. I'm a materialist and no materialist can believe that there is any sense of purpose - but that doesn't make you a pessimist. That just makes you somebody who sees no meaning in it, and must therefore show his characters trying to find their own meaning, their own level of meaning. Trying to define themselves, compassionately, in relation with the other human beings they know. I think I've accepted too easily the definition of pessimist. It's a simplification. I don't think my work reflects pessimism so much as absurdism. There is a realisation of the philosophical and metaphysical meaninglessness of the universe; but what I like to try and say is that we must get on and do what we do, the best we can, without meaning. Usually we make a cock-up of it, and we have been doing for several thousand years, and we will probably continue to do so for several thousand more years. I don't think that's pessimism so much as simple observation of facts.

AD: There's one final quote I want to fling at you - "an ideology of despair is as emotional as any other" (from THE MACHINE IN SHAFT TEN). Does that mean that all viewpoints come down to subjectivity?

MJH: Yeah, I think we must accept that. We must accept - given that - that we must operate personally. I mean, that's why I'm still an Anarchist. If all value-judgements are subjective, which they are by definition, linguistically and in the real world, then any evaluation we make of the universe is personal. It therefore behoves us to act with dignity, and act personally. Not to club together in big groups and say "because we have agreed on this personal evaluation as universal, from now on it will be universal, and we will hit anybody who doesn't agree with us"!

AD: In THE MACHINE IN SHAFT TEN you write "We have meaning - and thus, thankfully, no more illusions left to love". This is presumably what you mean by 'a dignity of pointlessness'?

MJH: Exactly. Exactly.

SHOP SOILED GOODS

BY HELEN SARGEANT

"I'm bored!" said Helen.

"Yes dear, I know." He said it very calmly, as he gritted his teeth.

"Really bored!" Helen whined.

"Then do something," he replied.

"There's nothing to do."

He was silent.

"There's nothing to do." Helen was going for emphasis today.

John walked from the room. It was just too much. The same cry day after day. He'd tried everything. Jewellery, clothes, daily outings. He'd even tried to show her a few magic tricks. But she just sat through it all, sighing.

He walked into his study. "Let's face it," he muttered to the bookcase. "We're not working out."

"Then do something about it!" a voice suggested.

He turned. "Oh, you again," he said glumly.

"Yes John, me again." Mephistopheles was sitting in Faust's chair. His feet were propped up on the oakwood desk, and a broad grin was spread thickly on his face.

"Look", said Faust tiredly, "I'm really not interested today - "

"Ah, but you will be," Mephistopheles put in quickly. "I gather you're sick of Helen?"

"Who wouldn't be? All that whining and whinging. How Paris put up with it, I'll never know."

The door to the study swung open again and Helen sidled into the room.

"John, can we go out? I - " She stopped, staring at the visitor in the chair. "What, you again?" she said crossly.

"Why is no one ever pleased to see me?" Mephistopheles grumbled.

"Trouble-maker!" she hissed.

"Helen!" Faust warned. She fell silent, but wandered around the study, making sure the two men could see the pout on her lips.

Faust watched her for a few moments, and then did some sighing himself.

"As I said before, John," Mephistopheles wheedled. "Why don't you do something about it?" He lowered his voice. "There are plenty more where she came from."

Helen's head jerked up. "I heard that! John, you can't listen to him. You love me, don't you?"

"Shut up!" Faust glared at her. "I'm sick of your whinging."

"But John - "

Mephistopheles stood up. "Don't put up with that, John. You're not married to her."

Suddenly, Faust realised that fact. He was not bound to Helen. "Helen, leave the room."

"No!" Helen stuck her chin out defiantly. But the look on Faust's face changed her mind. "Well... all right then, but I'll be just outside." She stormed from the room, and slammed the door behind her.

"Thank Satan, she's gone!" Mephistopheles said.

"What can be done?" Faust demanded immediately.

"Well, how about trying someone else?"

"Like who?"

"Who do you want?"

Faust had no idea. He let his gaze wander over the many books lining the walls of his study. He hesitated over Plutarch's LIVES.

"They say Cleopatra was very beautiful," he murmured.

"Did you say Cleopatra? Right. Wait five minutes." Mephistopheles rushed from the room. Faust tried to follow.

"But I haven't made a decision!" he called. But it was too late. Mephistopheles was gone, and Helen with him.

Faust returned to the study, but despite sitting down, he found he could not keep still. Legs swung under the desk, fingers tapped on the chair arms. He was just controlling his lip biting when the door opened.

"Why do you not bow before me?"

Faust jumped. There, in the doorway, in full queenly regalia, was Cleopatra, glaring at him. Faust tried to stutter a welcome.

"Kneel, foul dog!" she shouted.

"Your Majesty, oh beautiful Cleopatra - "

"Kneel!"

Faust knelt.

"Now, dog, what is this place?"

"This is where I live, your Majesty."

"But where are your guards, your slaves?"

"Please, your Highness, this isn't a palace."

"You are not a king?"

"No."

"Nor an emperor?"

"I'm afraid not."

"Then what are you?"

"John Faust."

"Faust? I know no such person. Get from my sight. Where are my slaves? Bring me wine!"

Faust gladly fled the room. He found Mephistopheles in the kitchen, eating an apple, and grinning once again.

"Want some?" Mephistopheles offered the fruit. Faust made a face.

"She'll have to go," was all he said.

"I agree. Who do you want now?"

"I'm not sure - "

"Third time luck, they always say."

"But I can't think of anyone," Faust said plaintively.

Mephistopheles threw his apple core across the room where it landed neatly on the scrap heap. "Tell you what, you just leave it to me."

"But - "

"Don't worry. Trust me." And he was gone again. By the silence upstairs, so was Cleopatra. But it was a full hour before Faust dared venture back into the study.

When he did, he found Mephistopheles and a young girl waiting.

"Who's this?" he whispered.

"Queen Guenevere, wife of Arthur," Mephistopheles replied.

Guenevere had her eyes glued to the floor. She was too shy to lift them.

"Have a nice day," Mephistopheles syruped, and slid out of the room, pausing only to dig Faust slyly in the ribs as he passed.

Then Faust and his new lady were alone.

"Well, my dear, how are you?"

"I am well, sir." The voice came out as a squeak. She still had not looked at him.

"How old are you, child?"

"Fourteen, sir." Another squeak.

Faust could see that getting to know her would be a long process. But it was obvious she had none of the qualities of Helen or Cleopatra.

In fact, Guenevere didn't have much of anything. She had been trained to be concerned only with the affairs of Arthur and Britain. She knew little of history, literature, or anything Faust himself was interested in.

So, after a week of trying to find something to talk about, Faust conceded defeat.

"She's too young," he complained to Mephistopheles.

"Yes," Mephistopheles sympathised. "I should have realised." And he took Guenevere back to Camelot.

Faust was miserable. No-one had worked out. Queen Victoria was too old. Nell Gwyn too coarse. Elizabeth Barrett Browning too sick. Martina Navratilova too healthy. Virginia Woolf too emancipated.

Faust gave up.

"I'm sick of them!" he moaned, as he watched Virginia disappear.

"How about Boedicia? Anne Boelyn? Brooke Shields?"

"I don't even know the names, and frankly, I don't care. I'm fed up with the whole lot. I don't want any more."

"You have to," Mephistopheles said bluntly.

"No, I don't."

"Yes, you do. It says in your contract. You can exchange goods that don't meet your satisfaction, but you can't return them and expect the deal to be off. It's in your contract," he emphasized.

"So I can't not have someone?" Faust said slowly.

"That's right!" Mephistopheles laughed and danced a little jig. "So who's it to be this time? You've got the whole of history to choose from. Catherine the Great. Messalina?"

"Helen."

"Helen who? Oh, Helen! But you've had her. You sent her away."

"I know, and that's how this whole mess got started. So I want Helen back. At least I know what she's like."

"Why do you want to settle for her? I'm sure we could come up with someone who's just right for you."

"I want Helen!" Faust insisted.

Mephistopheles shrugged. "Okay, but just remember who you turned down." His figure started to fade into transparency, and his voice into silence. "Just think, all those women that you're missing out on. Millions of them. Just think..." And he was gone.

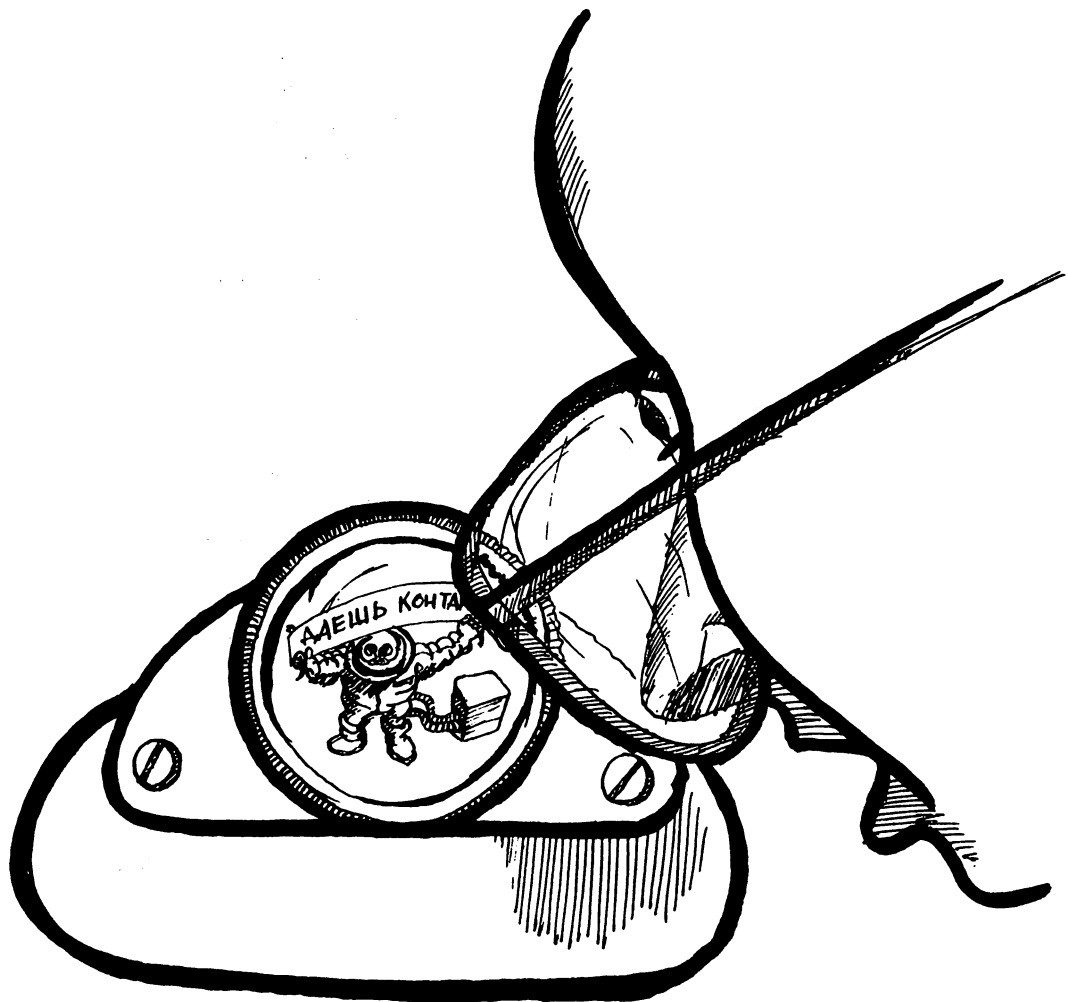
Faust heard fists hammering at the study door.

"John? I know you're in there. You let me in! You said we were going out."

Faust opened the door.

"Helen," he sighed. "How nice to have you home."

- Helen Sargeant.



CHALLENGER

29 JANUARY 1986 12.39 W.A. TIME

I must remember
We are too skilled at forgetting.

If you look straight into holocaust
the raw power of deity
your eyes weep and you must look aside.
So it is when the soul sees
a light go out.

Who does not remember a path once trod
is doomed to tread that way again.

They rode up on a dragon's back
power for growth become death
seeking ways we have not trod
We alone have the power
to remember what has never been.

We owe them the debt of remembrance
whose deaths woke us.

In grieving for the way not travelled
We may come to know more clearly what we seek.
To sing the songs of starflight
may bring that dream within our reach.
Now we must mind the earth lest we forget her.

To whoever first watched the stars
and called them names of god.

- Sue Isle.



SOVIET S.F. CHRONICLE

PREPARED BY BORIS ZAVGORODNY

In Novosibirsk the East Siberian publ. house issued the anthology THE SNOWY AUGUST by young sf writers. The editor and author of the afterword is K. Milov. The anthology contains 21 stories, by A. Bachilo, A. Kubatiev, V. Titov and B. Shtern. The edition run was 15000.

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Liuben Dilov's book, THE LAGRANGE POINT contains ten stories. It appeared in the series "Bolgaria Library" for reading in Russian which is issued by Sofia Press publ. house (Bulgaria).

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Moscow publishing house "Sovremennik" issued an omnibus with history novels by A. F. Veltman in the series "Is Nasledia" (Heritage). Two out of three of these novels: "Koshey Immortal (1833)", "Sviatoslavich, Enemy's Pupil (1835)" one could call fantasy because there are a lot of folk-lore heroes in them. This reprint is the first issue since the 19th century. The edition run - 100,000.

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The magazine "Smena" has been published, and if I am not mistaken has the first translated story by Norman Spinrad, "The Beautiful Creation". (Translator's Note: I don't know the exact title as I didn't read the original. The story is about the Brooklyn Bridge being sold to the Japanese).

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In the beginning of 1985, the book "The Lost Section" by Igor Rosohovatsky was issued in Kiev. The book has 17 stories and a novella, "The Cause for Optimism". The edition run is 65,000. Reviewers are Yi. Popsuenko and A. Teslenko.

* * *

The magazine, "Vokrug Sveta (Around the World)" announced a competition for the best short story, in the twelfth issue of 1985. This is being run in connection with the magazine's jubilee - 125 years since the time of its foundation.

* * *

The discussion about SF in "Literaturnaya Gazeta" is over - all in all, it took eight issues of the weekly. In my opinion, one of the most interesting articles was an sf interview with the head of a publishing house "Fantastika" from the year 2000. The author of this interview is V. Babenko.

* * *

The new collection of stories by D. Bilenkin, "The Face In The Crowd" has been issued by the publishing house "Molodaya Gvardia". The collection has 18 stories and is in the series "Soviet SF Library." The edition run is 100,000 copies.

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The publishing house, "Nauka" (The Academy of Science in the USSR) issued the book, "Adventures of Baron Munnikin" (edition run 100,000 copies) in the series, "Literary Memorials." This edition is prepared by A.N. Makarov. It contains both basic text and numerous comments, additions, and also the full biography of previous issues in Russian, beginning from 1791 until 1984.

* * *

The magazine, "Literaturnaya Ucheba" (Literary Education) - edited by the USSR Writers Union and the Central Committee of Komsomol - is not much known amongst readers. In comparison with other Soviet magazines, it has a small edition - circa 12,500 - 25,000 copies. But the last issue (#6) of 1985 presented to sf fans a beautiful New Year gift. Here is published a selection of young sf writers: novella "Igoriasha - The Golden Fish" by V. Babenko; stories: M. Plashkin, H. Rebane, O. Korneeva. Arcady Strugatsky introduces these young writers. In his article, he writes: "... the novella by V. Babenko is the big achievement in SF of the last decade... ("The fulfilment of wishes")." In my opinion - after reading "Igoriasha - Golden Fish", it is impossible not to agree with these words. It is notable that usually the magazine didn't print sf, since its foundation by M. Gorky in 1930. However, this is the second sf publication lately.

The first time was in 1981 (#5). The selection consisted of young writers: A. Bushkov, A. Siletzky, S. Smirnov, R. Sagabalian. Their works were commented on by S. Abramov - the sf writer and the chairman of the RSFSR Writers Union - in a section on SF and Adventure. It is notable that the novella by Alexadr Bushkov, "Variagi (Normanns) Without Invitation" got the fan award, "The Great Ring", in 1982.

* * *

A New serial was shown on Union television. It's title is "A Guest From The Future" and is based on Kir Bulichev's novella, "A Hundred Years After Before." The film was shown twice in March, 1985 and at the beginning of January 1986, in school vacation time.

* * *

Union television had shown two parts of the feature "The SF World", in November/December. The first was the premier of a TV play, "Gum-Gam", which was based on a novelette of the same name by E. Veltistov, SF Writer for youth. The second screened stories by R. Bradbury and R. Sheckley.

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On the 3rd November, Union television featured a two part film, "The House which was Built by Swift" - screenplay by G. Gorin, Director M. Zaharov. The film starred Oleg Yankovsky who is known from a two part film, "The Same Munhausen" (Munniken) where he acted as Munhausen; Aldexandr Abdullin is one of the main heroes in "Wizard" based on "Monday Begins In Saturday" by the brothers Strugatsky. They also wrote the screenplay; Evgeny Leonov starred in the SF film "Tears Were Dropping", screenplay by K. Bulichev and G. Danelia.

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In 1985, these new films were released: "A Chance" based on K. Bulichev's novelette, "A Martian Remedy", screenplay by K. Bulichev and A. Mayorov; "Unicum" based on Leningrad writers, A. Gitis's novella, "Snus" (it means they dream of me); "The Day of Wrath" based on the story by Sever Gansovsky, screenplay by A. Lapshin.

"The Invisible Man", based on the novel by H.G. Wells, screenplay by A. Zaharov with A. Dmitriev participating. The screening is interesting by that here the invisible man doesn't think about becoming a world dictator until his college friend instigates it. The end is all the same - death.

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At the end of 1985, there was a premier of the English (BBC) three part serial on Union television of "The Invisible Man" so we have had a chance to compare. And there will soon be shown a two part series of animated cartoons "Two Tickets to India" based on the novelette by K. Bulichev.

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The publishing house (Dushanbe) "Ifron" issued the SF collection "To Go Away That You Could Return" by young SF writer Boris Pshenchny. The collection had six stories and a novella and the edition run is 7,000 copies.

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The publishing house, "Moskovsky Rabotsky" (Moscow) issued an SF anthology called "Orion". The compiler is N. Berkova. The anthology includes new and old works including novelettes by K. Bulichev, Z. Yuriev, G. Gurevitch and stories by A. Abramov, D. Bilenkin, A. Kostin, I. Yefremov, etc. From abroad is a story by H. Kuttner. The anthology is concluded by V. Revich's article, "The Crossroads of Utopias" (Sources of Soviet SF). Edition run of 100,000 copies.

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The magazine, "Sibirsky Ogn" (twelve issues printed in 1985) published by the Novosibirsk branch of the RSFSR Writers Union, published SF by a string of young SF writers. These are stories by A. Kubatiev, A. Shalin, A. Bachilo, V. Karpov, A. Lenidov. Run of the magazine is 90,000 copies.

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The magazine "Enisey" (4,5 1985 - published bimonthly by Kradnoyarsk writers branch) has a SF novella "To East of Midnight" by Oleg Korabelnikov. This is

a sequel to a non SF novella, "Castles In The Air, You Are Beautiful", (published in his second book, "And Doors Few Open" (Krasnoyarsk - 1984)). Run of the magazine is 25,000 copies.

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The newspaper, "Pionerskaya Pravda" 2,3 1985 published a new story about the adventures of Alisa Selezneva "Vtorogodniki (those who were left second year to study in school in the same class) by Kir Bulichev.

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The quarterly magazine, "Almanac of Cinema Scenarios" 1 - 1985, has a screenplay "At the End of Night" by V. Rybakov, a young Leningrad SF writer, and K. Lopushansky, a cinemaproducer. The screenplay describes the outcome of nuclear war. According to the magazine, "Science and Religion" I, 1986, cinema shop Lenfilm producer K. Lopushansky is shooting a new film.

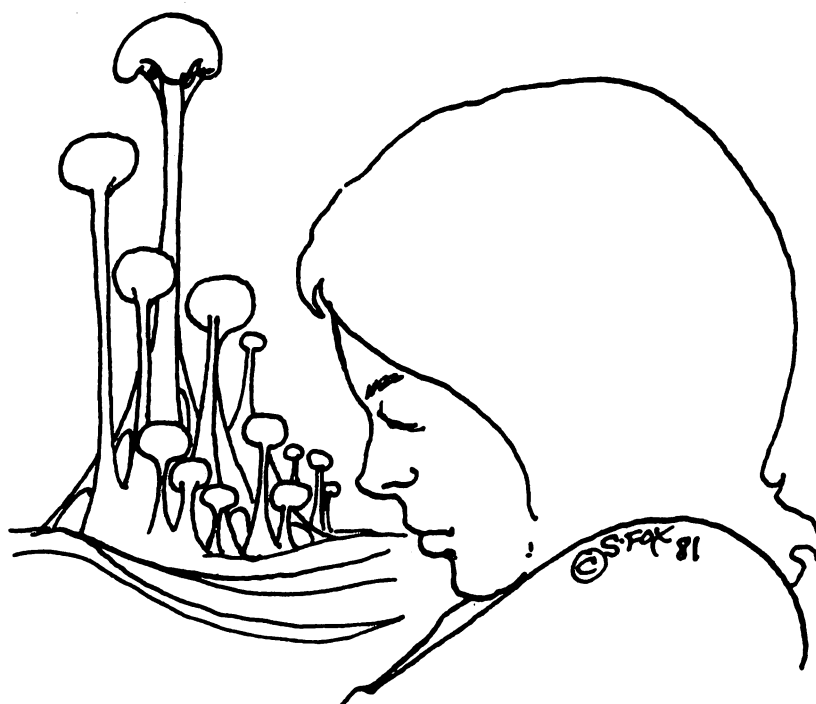
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The latest issue of the magazine, "Uralsky Sledopyt" 12, 1985, published the SF quiz results which has been held by the magazine annually for the last eleven years. This year, the quiz was decided by the editorial staff. As before, the magazine has published SF. Last year, there was the novellas, "The Boy and a Small Lizard" by V.Krapivin, "Bonfairs Of Worlds" by G. Prashkevitch, "The End of The Hunting Season" by T. Sviridov and stories by A. Chumanov, A. Timeragalin, O. Mironov, V. Hudiakov, etc. Also, in every issue there was the interesting column "SF Kaleidoscope." In 1985, A. N. Strugatsky was elected to the editorial staff.

- Boris Zavgorodny



AN OPEN ACCOUNT

BY IGOR TOLOCONNICOU

In response to Roger Waddington's letter, I looked into the magazine "Sibirskye Ogni" (Siberian Lights). It had been published far away and so ought to have a pure kind of pulp writing.

Issue #12, 1983 includes "The Third Arrow" by A. Slvedov. It has been written in conversational though lightweight prose along folklore tale lines. This stubborn Siberian man decided to marry his sons at once (the eldest was absorbed in eating beef-steak and reading thick medical magazines, the middle one read Chess Courier, and the junior one after quickly swallowing his dinner was reading "Airport" by A. Haily). There followed a dialogue ("Have you noticed at all, asked the old man, that there is a second half to mankind? Something was supposed to trigger a suspicion in you before that there ought to be a reason for the existence of girls, a?") and the old man gives each of them a bow to fire arrows. Where they fell, one was to find his bride, evidently. So it happened. The eldest, a physician, wounds his girl, treats her, takes her to a cafe... The middle one, an electronics man, broke the computer the girl was typing her programme at, took her out... The junior's arrow fell into forest. Here he met a former leprechaun, his work is now done by forest guards, then Baba-Yaga, a witch who lives in a modern cottage and then Kashey Immortal, who constructed an unbreakable electronic fort. Only the arrow breaks the controls. Here the junior finds his bride.

A. Shalin's "A Life of Paradise". It's meant to be a serious story but his literary skill is not up to it, and creates an illusion of humour. (Or maybe I lack humour in this particular example.) This issues in a logical fallacy. Roman's, the planetologist, intuition whispered that this planet which they had orbited two days already, ought to have a civilisation. It is his life's goal to find one. Roman (later): "I begin to regret that I did not listen to the captain. He gave the correct advice - to clear out quickly". The planet has warring cybernetic armies and is blown to dust. It seems that all people are now living only in the memory of computer cities. Well, Roman and his crew are battered around and he is glad, in the end, to make contact with the computer.

A. Kubatiev: "Only Where Heavenly Bodies Are Moving". The story is a kind of diary representing a dim picture of a world in the future where an immunity fails in some newborns. The principal, writing the diary, is a genetic freak. He lives in orbit and is doing meteorological work. After doing some useful work, he is shocked by personal grief, and goes into research of immunity freakishness. No doubt he'll solve it, seeing how he's set on it. Perhaps you'll get an inkling if I say that I wrote such a diary story in school and then it was rewritten by an adult. Thus it seems, but the teenage foundation is left, all the same.

V. Shkalicov, "The Empty Words." Set in a research lab, a lecturer arrived to give a report in social achievements, but all the cliché phrases fell off the paper. He delivers something from his personal history and departs. The boss then calls his employee ("Confess: no-one but you could have done this"). Well, this lad made, by chance, a discovery on how to get rid of excess, cliché words, to leave

only the essence. ie. those words which are necessary to express the truth. The boss then gives his scientific paper to try it - nothing was changed: it is sound. But a letter from his wife ended up with only: "My darling" and "PS Never before I was apart from you, and never will be again."

Issue #12, 1985 is a more lightweight one. A Kubatiev's "All In One Boat" shows he has and his literary manner shows a vividness of action. The plot is set in a small Western country. Some terrorism again. It comes out at last that people of a particular age are exploding. There were some genetic experiments on inhabitants in the past and they went astray. Again, the plot is fuzzy.

A. Shalin's "The Better Half" - a scientist tells his pupil about a visit from the future and a warning "Not to spend his life uselessly". So he chooses the short but useful life.

"We Got Lost" - time travelling, with the driver like a modern cab man: knowing, spiteful. This one (the time car continually breaking down) turns up with some local beauty every time.

"Evdokia" - "Don't Look for me. Farewell. Your former wife - Evdokia". He calls his robot: what had happened? She understood that your a robot? (Note: A the robot resembles his master) No, she's tired on account of the fact that you're busy all the time. All right, I'll name my new creation Evdokia, to keep the illusion of married life.

A. Bachilo's "Make Yourself At Home" - is about a bar frequenter who is invited to another planet to have his memory studied by them. Meanwhile, to ensure that he is happy, they created the illusion of city life for him and he finds his pleasure in standing in a queue.

"A Wizard" is good. A passerby is invited to a party and is mistaken for an illusionist. However he does fine - his assistants dance in the air, lakes appear, fireworks dazzle. Although soon the real illusionist appears - he has the papers on him to prove it - and he is dull. But by then, the unknown passerby is already gone...

V. Karpov's "The Mount 4100" - they meet yeti in the mountains. It seems that the yeti is immortal. He lived parallel with homo sapiens progressing.

A. Leonidov's "One Pill Is Enough..." - you take a pill and become a genius. The writer in the story took one, tears his novelette up and sets out to write a new one. It turns out to be a masterpiece, but has already been written by Leo Tolstoy: "Anna Kerenina". So he picks up and begins to glue together his torn novelette.

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THE DISCUSSION IN "LITERATURNAYA GAZETA" ON SF.

Consider: All works from antique times up to the Golden Age could be put into a few bookcases, but since then there has been written as much as to fill a library of ordinary size. We came out of the catacombs. What's this: maturity or old age? I should say the prime of youthfulness. We are forgetting conveniently that SF literature in its modern form, is a recent genre (upper XIXth century). It's unbreakably tied to names such as J. Verne, J. Ronie Sr. and H.G. Wells. Hence we can see why fandom has appeared when it had appeared. And more: we can conclude fairly well why it has appeared at all, because we all recognise specifics of the SF genre. Generally the mainstream reflects a real experience, when SF authors use both

experience and imagination. Well, writers don't exist in a vacuum, so they have their readers and vice versa. The principal thing is that fandom resides on the borderline between sure and maybe, between life and fiction; in a nutritious SF environment and consequently a nutrition to exploration of the world. A handy quotation is: "Philosophy (read: outlook) consists at all times mainly in an ability to explain the work but the thing is that one's position must be to see into the world and remake it." The continual balancing on the verge of reality and unreality makes fandom active, unlike the usual literary groups submerged in the depths of pure art.

The discussion - it was truly a discussion: with only one or two dissenting voices - raged from August to November. In my survey I present readers opinion first, then a conclusion drawn by S. Abramov (chairman of the SF section, Union of Writers of RSFSR) and V. Gubarev (newsman and writer) and some comments from various articles (I do not mention the critical reviews, which abounded.).

Responses were compatible with I. Yefremov's definition: "SF is the literature of dream and scientific progress." Readers differ from "Don't give me scientific stuff but create for me problems, conflicts instead; things that one could think on" on to "we need scientific facts, ideas that nourish thinking" and almost all were unanimous on that that development of human thought covers both culture and the technological progress of Mankind; that SF is an unalienable part of Soviet multinational literature and ought to unveil principal future/s of our society (a remark aside remark: too true, SF is heavily in debt to youth for many primitive glimpses ahead). The last point is illustrated once more by a quote from I. Yefremov: "... applying scientific achievements to Man and to Nature, the conversion of man and society is the essence of SF". A remark though - that melting in a J. Vernian form of scientific prediction doesn't mean a thing to the underlying principle of literature: to write about man's psychology - we see that modern SF and technological progress are drawing apart already. However, here's a reader arguing the point: SF is a XXth century scientific tale and as such had types, not characters; so do not ask writers to carry out deep psychological studies. So it goes.

A big part of the discussion was condemnation. Marked as "weak" were - V. Lapin's "The First Step", E. Nikolaiev's "The White Erdeny Stone", V. Sherbakov's "Seven Elements", V. Ribin's "Hello, Galaxy", collections by V. Mihanovsky, M. Puhov. Readers also found that all was not well with the magazines "Technika-Molodiogo" and "Dstatel". In general, shortcomings were: a deficiency of epertis, a loss of large scale vision, a pretension to be philosophical (or meditative), to appear more clever than the writer. High marks were received by V. Krapinin, Strugatskys, E. Parnov, A. Gitinsky, A. Kazantzev, V. Shefner, O. Larionova and the magazine "Uralsky Sledopit".

A mention of films: It was spoken outright that the last SF film efforts are pitiful - tortured poses, unnatural feelings, scenarios are full of stupidity and nonsense.

There was a rather clever film
My chance to see it again is jolly slim.
Everybody there speaks
And the head in there speaks
That clever novel but this silly film.

Such was a response to the screening of of the film of Belayev's novel "Professor Douel's Head". Readers regretted the death of Richard Viktorov (Per aspera ad astra; Alien Woman, etc).

S. Abramov and V. Gubarev were bringing the discussion to a close. About literature, Abramov began by quoting I. Bestugevlada's opinion (sociologist):

"Science fiction is about to die", evidence is seen in the genre's dissolving into psychological, social, etc studies. It's a mistake. The genre is looking for new means to correspond with life and the reader. So, not by chance, the masters of mainstream such as L. Leonov, V. Kaverin, Ch. Kitmatov use SF in their works. To judge the writer by the novelty of an introduced idea is a narrow-minded position. A writer creates a literary work, not patents some invention. His task is an assistance to moral progress. Gubarev opposed it: But to take science from SF is downright impossible. Soviet science fiction ought to be headed also for peaceful exploration of the future, contrary to the USA's Star Wars. This includes a theme about biological revolution, for example, the achievement of physical perfection and the ability to exist, to move about in outer space. All right, all right, but SF writers use machines damn carelessly. They can do everything and are turned consequently into abstraction, into 'deus ex machina' type saviours. There are few such novels which is why it is easy to award "Aelita's", though there are crowds of mediocre stories. Heroes do not know, as a rule, about past cultures and their achievements and talk a poor teenagers lingo. K. Bulichev has had his say about this in a roundabout way. It's simple. The island Sumatra had rhinoceros. Is it not so? They dwindled in numbers though. So there had occurred a situation that the last rhino-bride waits in vain because her proposed bridegroom doesn't know where to look for her. However scientists find it is more interesting to discuss rhino habits, body build and are there rhinoceros at all. It's more interesting to do an article on what form of ears they have than to go into the wilderness somewhere and help them to meet each other. So it is with SF and, in spite of some excellent works, the real work about further SF education is not done. And Sumatran rhinoceros wander in solitude... because requirements made up by many editors recall to life epigones but not creative writers. As a sample - in the course of three years, 70 young writers have passed through a seminar in Maleievka and only 5 published. SF became a label. Writers split two ways. One puts in some bits of science, hunts for newness and imperceptibly created dangerous illusions that sf is something unique, different from ordinary literature; others came so close to the mainstream flow that they become indivisible ("Altist (a big violin player) Danilov" by S. Orlov, "A Squirrel" by A. Kim). How the last is felt, S. Yagupova tells: "As a writer, you're writing about real people. However, the world all around is changing. And you just could not resist it, and now your hero attempts to exploit time, now he tries to seize a passing comment by the tail (which makes your reviewer happy). The reviewer gets a chance to show his knowledge and he explains very patiently to you that nobody can have a comet by the tail today." It is impossible even in fairy stories.

"But I'm no science fiction writer!" wail you and some critic brings out his kindly verdict: "You are a science fiction writer, however an unscientific one! You hang in airless space between "normal" mainstream and sf. Realistic writers look askance at you: a hopeless dreamer, and sf writers regard you as apostate who went over to mainstream. Solid magazines shy off as if you were old Nick himself. Friends meet you with the invariable question "Do they fly?" A few well-disposed to you editors try to wake in you the Cassandra gift (remember Cassandra sees a future, but nobody believed) because this gift had found its best use in sf. And readers recollect Wells and Yefremov more frequently, giving their reproach that you do not resemble them.

It could be said that we are merging back into Literature again. Let's wait and see.

- Igor Toloconnicou

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YEVGENY ZAMYATIN

BY DENNIS STOCKS

I have had occasion to read and hear many incredible things concerning those times when people were still living free - i.e. in an unorganised, savage state. But the one thing that has always struck me as the most improbable was precisely this: How could the governing power (let us say even a rudimentary one) allow the people to live without anything resembling our Tables of Hourly Commandments, without obligatory walks, without exact regulation of mealtime - how could it allow them to get up and go to bed whenever they got the notion to do so? Certain historians even assert that, apparently, in those times the streets were lit all through the night - that, all through the night, people walked and drove through the streets! Now that is something that my mind simply cannot grasp.

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As a follower of Marxism-Leninism, a current Soviet ideologist is likely to contrast the 'scientific inevitability' of Communist society as the natural outcome of socioeconomic forces with the sentimental, idle dreams of the utopian worlds created by authors of speculative fiction. While to the ideologue the term 'Utopian' is pejorative², there can be little doubt that the genre is popular in Russia³ though Mirra Ginsburg notes the return of an ominous trend:

There has been of late a great number of articles, both in periodicals and in science fiction collections, setting forth the desirable goals and stressing the need to show 'Communist Man', 'Communist Achievements', and the 'Communist Future' as contrasted with the wretched destinies of the non-Communist world.⁴

The subordination of authors to definite political aims had begun in the early 1920s when the All-Russian Union of Writers (VSP) was renamed the All-Russian Union of Soviet Writers (VSSP) and a purge ("re-registration") of members began in the Moscow sections.⁵ Russian speculative fiction traditions established in the Twenties had ranged sociologically from a facile subliterate to a genre embracing global and interplanetary tales, politics, technology, ethics and romance, adventure, utopianism and presented in varying degrees of length.⁶ The early 1920s speculative fiction in Russia reaffirmed the Revolutionary process with works such as V. Bryussov's DISTANCES (1922) where billions of worlds await Earth's

announcement of "planetary revolution" and the perfect, classless society of Vivian Itin's LAND OF GONGURI (1922). Soviet concentration on national industrial build-up at the expense of global, revolutionary romanticism began to favour linear technological and natural science extrapolation to the detriment of imaginative novelty. In a return to the nineteenth century traditions of Jules Verne and H.G. Wells, Soviet Literary horizons grew less cosmic and grandiose; the speculations shifted into the detailed but flat descriptions of a domain of amazing adventures and/or inventions.

Its acolytes... began trussing up the wings of imagination. They said that literary anticipation had to solve only technological problems of the nearest future, and that it should not attempt to go beyond such limits; only thus will it remain based on socialist realism.⁷

A casualty of the campaign against the speculative genre outside the constraints of the VSSP was Yevgeny Zamyatin. Zamyatin had been tolerated under N.E.P., with his advocacy of individualism, but now either had to be converted or discredited and eliminated.⁸ Zamyatin fell between the now-emigrated or integrated 'Fathers' and the rising 'Sons' but, until the publication of WE, Russian speculative fiction was tenuous at best.

Faddej Bulgarin⁹ had pioneered scientific extrapolation but failed to realise that radically new productivity demanded radically altered social relations. Bulgarin's work never reached beyond the pre-Romantic period and his stories are of the ultramodern, prefabricated cities of the French and German authors.¹⁰ The weight of industrial and scientific backwardness combined with the literary policies of Tsarist Russia and prevented a flowering of the genre. In the twenty years before the Revolution, only twenty-five original Russian books of speculative fiction were published. Yes these provided the groundwork for a proliferation in the nineteen-twenties.¹¹

Russian literature of the Twenties reacted in a number of ways to the prospect of having the country turn Socialist. A variety of utopian speculations and forecasts were expressed in a multitude of ways: pro-Marxist, right-wing peasant-socialist, revolutionary anarchist, archaic Pan-Slavic and cosmic-universalist.¹² Faced with the experience of a proto-totalitarian state, the authors gave considerable attention to creating a number of political leaders and social reformers to inhabit their imaginary worlds, looked into their motives in relation to their psychological make-up, into the mechanics of power, and into the notorious issue of means-and-ends.

Their conclusion that no psychologically well-balanced individual, aware of the price paid in human lives for his schemes and projects, could prevail as leader, unless he is a neurasthenic paranoid and misanthrope,¹³ seemed confirmed by later events in Stalin's reign. But the revival of literature in Russia during the period 1918 to 1922 saw an unprecedented number of utopian works, artistically superior to previous Russian offerings in the genre. That the majority of these works were dystopian, taking a clearly negative stance to the regime's internationalist policies, indicated not only the continuing tradition of the intelligentsia's persistent nationalist policies but a broad literary protest against the Soviet political reality.

The utopian world-view of European authors had swung away from the seventeenth and eighteenth century vision of small, self-sufficient, economically-primitive communities existing in freedom from the corrupting, institutionalised influences of the real world to urban, industrial, often world-wide concepts characterised by a powerful, centralised state.¹⁴ But World War I and machine guns, gas and barbed wire showed the world what the real-life scientist/engineer could really do when given carte blanche. The counter reaction devolved that heroic, centralised state to one where life is servile, rigorously

controlled, happiness defined by the State and independence is anathema.

By the end of the Twenties, many Soviet dystopian works were known outside Russia as the harbingers of political nightmares to come. Their kinship with Western anti-totalitarian satire and political novels was to be continued by Huxley, Orwell, Koestler and Silone. Nonna Shaw's examination of the Intelligentsia's reaction to the transformation of Russia into a Socialist state produces a skeletal classification of the various forms of Utopian speculation and forecasts.¹⁶ But this somewhat ephemeral nomenclature clearly shows their prevailing concern for the political and apparent clear-cut choice between Socialism and Totalitarianism. In attitude, authors either totally ignored the clash of nationality in an evolving Communist system or agreed with the 'historical necessity' of sacrificing national traditions for the same goal. Few tried to reconcile nationalism with Socialism and the majority rejected the supranational concept: Socialist or otherwise.

In the writings of both the Russian Utopians and Dystopians of the Twenties, the formula of socialism-plus-technology was accepted as synonymous with a concept of a universal socialist state. Suggestions of a resolution of the nationality-plus-socialism problems were explored in prognostications of a peasant utopia.¹⁷

The Dystopians presented their case with greater analytical and argumentative skills, bringing to their genre a far greater sense of reality than their pro-Socialist opponents. The sociopolitical system models thus used were presented as perfectly functioning human paradises created by benevolent reformers ensuring universal human bliss. But for the Dystopians, there was also a set of equalizing, levelling off parameters which ensured a monotonous, regulated routine with human ants engrossed in a strictly limited circle of occupational and social activities.

The dystopian trend was to peak with the publication of Zamyatin's WE.

Zamyatin offered science at its most profoundly rational manner: Man had a precise psychological as well as material answer to his needs. But the protagonist, D-503, once infected by heretical and irrational thoughts and emotions, cannot escape his milieu. D-503's conflict lines between the desire to conform to the principles and laws of the One State and the demands of his suppressed subjective and emotional life.

WE is by no means unique in its portrayal of the individual submerged in the gestalt of the Whole, conditioned to love the Machine because of its purity of function and love of routine, obedience and trust in the wisdom of a centralised authority and his enforcement arm.

... fortunately we have only the unimportant failures of small parts - it is easy to repair them without stopping the grand, eternal progress of the whole Machine. And in order to throw out the warped bolt we have the skilful heavy hand of the Benefactor, we have the experienced eyes of the Guardians...¹⁸

Zamyatin's Benefactor justifies his position as executioner in the One State: in order to assure man's permanent happiness, one must deprive him of freedom of imagination, to expunge through conditioning the individual 'I' and fill the vacuum thus created with the 'WE' of the Single State.

As with other Russian dystopian authors Zamyatin did not reject the utopian precepts out of ignorance or lack of idealism for he was not without liberal ideals or political experience. He had been exiled by Nicholas II and lived through the turbulence of 1917 in England. His first story had appeared in print in 1908 but he did not begin serious writing until 1911-1912¹⁹, and his most productive

period lay between 1917 and 1921 beginning with OSTROVITJANE (written in England) and ending with the completion of WE in 1921.²⁰ During the War Communism/N.E.P. periods his output diminished but he influenced a number of young authors.²¹

By nature, Zamyatin was a nonconformist and quite early he realised Communism would restrict the growth of literature for "real literature can exist only when it is produced by madmen, hermits, heretics, dreamers, rebels and sceptics and not by painstaking and well-intentioned official."²² But as Party control was extended into all realms, there was no room for 'hermits' or 'madmen', and the future of great Russian literature lay in its past.

The basic elements of Zamyatin's imagined society of WE can be traced to a variety of possible sources. The theme of radical ideas ending paradoxically in a slave society had been developed by Dostoevsky in THE POSSESSED and the implications of scientific utopianism can be found in the works of H.G. Wells. Alex Shane finds "the necessary stimulus for MY undoubtedly came from Zamyatin's editorial work in 1919 on translations of H.G. Wells' sociofantastic novels and perhaps from an acquaintance with some works of Anatole France as well".²³

Mark Hillegas²⁴ supports this view by arguing that, by their rejection of Wells' values, the dystopians show their basic indebtedness to Wells. WE does reveal a broad topography of a Wellsian future romance but exhibits little of the spirit in which the novel was written.²⁵ Christopher Collins, however, contends that no single work served as a model for WE,²⁶ though Zamyatin was well-acquainted with Wells' work.

Wells' fiction is inhabited by scientific gadgets whose description absorbs much of the author's enthusiasm and the reader's sense of wonder with little left for the protagonist. Zamyatin is not especially fascinated by gadgets (though the Integral is ever-present) and it is interesting to note that Russian literature's two twentieth century practicing men of science - the physician Chekov and the naval architect Zamyatin - were not the naive positivists that some of the non-scientific fellow intellectuals were. Wells is enthusiastic about the sterile alienism and perfect efficiency of his future society. Zamyatin uses similar innovations to create his theme of dehumanisation and his science of almost a throwaway sub-plot.

Despite his support of the Bolsheviks, his extensive correspondence with Gorky and his organisation of supplies of fats and sugars for Russian scientists starving in the winter of 1919-20, Wells was not a political force in Russia²⁷ nor the originator of scientific socialist utopias, but he was certainly Russia's most popular and widely read literary proponent. Though an engineer/architect, Zamyatin's works never regard scientific innovation to be of any truly significant value. And while Wells made remarkably accurate scientific predictions, Zamyatin was more interested in the threat of collectivisation and rationalism, using any science theme to establish a mood of alienation.

In ideological terms, WE expresses Zamyatin's qualms about the technocratic developments of western civilization, with a sardonic relevance to the Bolshevik ideal. This is most notable in the portrayal of the entropic stabilization of the One Revolutionary State.²⁸ WE begins with a directive inviting all numbers³⁰ to compose poems or treatises celebrating the One State, to be carried on the first flight of the glass spacecraft, Integral, as an aid to subjugating other races - a very un-Wellsian use of space travel! Yet, is the One State thus seeding its own destruction by encouraging literary expression at all? Such seeds are only obvious when D-503 becomes aware of the irrational; of -1 solids lurking in the dark corners of non-Euclidean space of subjective experience.

Zamyatin does not necessarily indict Utopian ends as such - just those carried too far.³¹ The contention that any bureaucracy, whether it rules or aides

others in ruling, must inevitably become tyrannical or anarchistic and mindless primitives seen as the only response to suffocating automation is refuted by the experience of too many countries to have prima facie support. Zamyatin attacked the fanatical, practical application of rational principles untempered by other considerations. In his historical perspectives this was the increasing dogmatism of the Bolsheviks. He dismisses the claim of reason to be the exclusive arbiter of human destiny since it leads to the destruction of freedom by ignoring other facets of human nature. WE identifies reason not only with the conscious mind but with stagnation and death; while unreason is associated with the subconscious, revolution, change and life.

While the philosophic nucleus of WE can be seen to stem from Dostoevsky,³² there is considerable contribution from Zamyatin's earlier works. In THE TESTAMENT OF COMPULSORY SALVATION he explored the concept of a rigid routine for living.³³ His environment was one in which the masses had triumphed - at least officially - and where collective interests transcended individualism. The great labouring gestalt of the masses was now the hero and therefore must also be the hero of literature. Total regimentation was celebrated in a quasi-religious manner.³⁴ But for Zamyatin there could be no unique, unchanging truth, and therefore no organisation could possess it.

Zamyatin is remarkably accurate in his anticipation of many future features of Stalin's Russia. WE has a State Science, the Institute of State Poets and Writers, norms of parenthood, a single newspaper (the Gazette of the One State), annual elections held on the Day of Unanimity with a 100% poll in favour of the one candidate and no pretense at a secret ballot. Like the All-Russian Association of Proletarian Writers (VAPP) which expelled Zamyatin from the VSP in 1926,³⁵ the One State demands creativity aligned to glorifying the State. Punishment of enemies of the State (who confess their crimes before execution) is accompanied by odes proclaiming the wisdom of this punishment. In the Bureau of Guardians one can see the Cheka³⁶ and the Benefactor is a caricature of Lenin and the precursor of Huxley's 'World Controller' and Orwell's Big Brother.

There is a natural tendency to compare WE with later dystopian works such as 1984 and BRAVE NEW WORLD. The search for parallels can be somewhat inexact. Huxley's world (albeit set in the same temporal framework) contains a rigid class hierarchy rather than a clear distribution between authority and the masses. Zamyatin, in spite of reference to religion, science and industry, concentrates on the political and psychological aspects of the world he created while Huxley's world could not exist without its science.

Orwell's 1984 had the benefit of an extra twenty years observation of European totalitarianism evolution. Irving Howe's contention³⁷ is that Orwell, Zamyatin and Huxley suggest history has proved to be a cheat, not because it turned away from the progress promised in the nineteenth century, but because it betrays our hopes precisely through an inverted fulfilment of these expectations. The influence of the 'Underground Man' was noted as early as 1923 by the Russian critic Ja Braun³⁸ and, in 1958, Robert Jackson³⁹ pointed out that the Underground Man is seen as a prototype for the modern existential hero and was a remarkable influence on subsequent Russian literature. Parallels with 1984 are closer than with Huxley's work. In both novels, when revolt does appear it involves love, Winston Smith's demise closely parallels that of D-503 even to the betrayal of their respective loves, Smith's conversation with O'Brien, the brain operations, etcetera. Yet 1984 is set in this century's poverty-stricken, war-torn world. If imagination is forbidden in WE, memory is the danger to Big Brother's milieu. Who controls the past, controls the future; who controls the present, controls the past. It is interesting to apply this formula to events in Russia such as the disappearance of Beria's entry in the Great Russian Encyclopedia.

MY is hopelessly bad, a completely sterile thing. Its anger is cold and dry; it is the anger of an old maid.⁴⁰

Despite Western and Soviet critical appraisal of WE as anti-socialist or specifically anti-Soviet, the tyrannical, ultrarational State outlined in the novel bears little resemblance to the pre-Stalinist Russia of the early 1920s save in the most superficial sense. The interim period lying between the Civil War and the excesses of the late Twenties is considered by many to be a semi-Golden Age for Soviet Russia. That Zamyatin's transparently anti-regime tales were ever published and that he remained out of prison during this period indicates a degree of tolerance in the authorities.

In WE Zamyatin was writing a novel about the central problems in modern Western Civilization, not a novel specifically about the Soviet Union.⁴¹

Yet Adam Ulam⁴² finds WE a distinct, early protest against Soviet society, while others such as Northrop Frye⁴³ see WE as another in a long line of Utopian satires which can be traced to a long line of literature running from PARLIAMENT OF WOMEN by Aristophanes and Plato's REPUBLIC.⁴⁴

It is also true that a number of strikingly similar dystopian novels were being produced contemporaneous with WE such as Karel Capek's R.U.R. and THE INSECT PLAY and Georg Kaiser's G.A.S. Certainly if N.E.P. had continued, and subsequent collectivisation had not occurred, it would be difficult to regard WE as anti-Soviet. Unfortunately for the Soviet system, by the late Twenties, Zamyatin's precognition was uncomfortably relevant.

WE was first published in English translation by Gregory Zilboorg in New York in 1924. Though the novel prefigures many of the ills of totalitarian life, criticism has mainly concerned itself about the novel's place in the history of dystopian ideas. But Zamyatin's main principles in the novel really restate concepts outlined earlier by Dostoevsky: the right of irrationality (such as Raskolnikov) and the planned restrictions of an ordered lifestyle (THE LEGEND OF THE GRAND INQUISITOR).⁴⁴

In WE, Zamyatin challenges the State of two levels. Firstly on behalf of the elite, he rejects the claim of reason to be the exclusive arbiter of man's destiny.⁴⁶ Secondly, that the State cannot indefinitely maintain a stable rule by reason alone.⁴⁷ Man's inherent salvation lies with the dialectical process.⁴⁸ Zamyatin rejects the concept outlined by Boris Pasternak in DOCTOR ZHIVAGO and Tolstoy in WAR AND PEACE that life is too vast and elemental to be tamed by Man and, like Dostoevsky, that refuge is found in Christianity. The rebels of WE reject Christianity as the forerunner of the Single State. Zamyatin considered all churches as strongholds of dogmatism - religious, social and scientific - and the greatest barrier to freedom.

As a Marxist, Zamyatin thought in terms of teleology and could project his vision of the Single State well into the future to give his critique of the potential weaknesses in the system in which he lived a strong historical framework. The Single State, explicitly founded on a mathematically precise logic,⁴⁹ treats people as inanimate objects, unworthy of pity:

...something like half a score of the numbers working on our site hadn't been fast enough in getting out from under the exhaust - and absolutely nothing was left of them except a few non-descript fragments and a little soot. With pride I record here that the rhythm of our work was not broken even for a second by this, not a man was startled, and we and our lathes went on with our rectilinear or circular motions with the same precision as if nothing had happened. Ten numbers represented hardly one ten

millionth of our One State; for the purpose of practical calculation this is an infinitesimal of the third order. Pity based on arithmetical illiteracy was something that was known only to the ancients. We find it mirth provoking.⁵⁰

The essential health of the inhabitants of the One State is the absence of self-awareness and, despite a degree of satiric exaggeration, much of WE does broadly coincide with Wells' utopian vision. Richard Collins, however, has found all manner of Jungian archetypes in the subjective symbolism of the novel. This over-rationalisation leads Collins to conclude that Zamyatin's own unconsciousness must be the ultimate source of the characters and structure of the novel.⁵¹ Richard Gregg sees WE closely paralleling the Biblical story of the fall from Eden, even finding significance in the letter prefixes of the characters.⁵² Alternatively, I.F. Clarke⁵³ points out the Biblical parallels are questionable at best; though he does find in the Benefactor a socratically bald-headed man in imitation of Lenin extolling a version of N.E.P.

In Zamyatin's article TOMORROW (1919) he admitted the need for a temporary restriction of individual freedom, but he also claimed the violence of the Revolution had so devalued Man that the ideals for which he struggled had become meaningless. I FEAR (1920) first expressed his deep concern that the Revolution may lead to the end of real literature in Russia.⁵⁴ The only writers likely to survive were those who could act as court poets, producing material agreeable to the government.

... until we cure ourselves of this new Catholicism which, no less than the old, fears every heretical word. If this disease proves incurable, then I fear that Russian literature has only one future - its past.⁵⁵

The Soviet campaign against the speculative genre and anticipatory alternatives resulted in a drastic decrease in the number of books published⁵⁶ and in the period between Zamyatin's forced emigration in 1931 and the publication of Yefremov's ANDROMEDA in 1957 no significant work of anticipatory fiction was published.⁵⁷

Following the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956 and almost three decades of creative anabiosis, Russian speculative fiction again became popular. During the early Nineteen Sixties, many of the works from the Twenties⁵⁸ became known outside Russia as the Foreign Language Publishing House busily began churning out English editions of such works as Alexei Tolstoy's AELITA (1922) and THE GARIN DEATH RAY (1927).⁵⁹

The dystopian speculative fiction of the Twenties in Russia had been presented with considerable erudition and a pragmatic view of reality. The common denominator among the works was that no 'final solutions' ever remain final, nor is it desirable that they should.

Like the majority of these works, WE displays a degree of inconsistency. The novel hovers somewhere between Dostoevsky and Chernyshevsky - undecided as to its final pronouncement on science and reason. The scientific method had provided the paradigm for Zamyatin's basis and he cannot seriously blame it for the deformations of life. How is it that a certain type of rationalism, claiming to be scientific, can be harmful in certain social usage? Zamyatin can only answer in mythical Dostoevskian terms - that the achievement of any lofty ideal causes it to flounder in philistinism.

The Revolution in WE is not in the streets but in the head.
What have men, from their swaddling-clothes days, been praying for,
dreaming about, tormenting themselves for? Why, to have someone tell
them once and for all just what happiness is - and then weld them to

this happiness with chains. Well, what else are we doing now if not that?⁶⁰

The splintered style of the novel evokes the shifting impressionistic mood but Zamyatin employs systematic image building at the expense of plot. The 'diary' format is consistent with the literary genres of the period when stylistic changes removed the elaborate, slow-moving, long novels and replaced them with a prose fiction that was closer to the quick, staccato tempo of contemporary life.

D-503 became the first psychologically split protagonist since Dostoevsky, but the novel appears as vague and confused as D-503's oscillations between love and the Integral. Despite the one-sided assumptions extrapolated from both the bourgeois and early Socialist state practice, the novel is the culmination of Russian literary preoccupations since the late nineteenth century with Promethianism and Sensualism,⁶¹ and the first of the post-Revolutionary novels to use an anti-rationalist, anti-Utopian theme.

Zamyatin's work stands as a kind of valedictory not only for the imaginative Silver Age, but for the century of cultural ferment that had led up to it.⁶²

Until 1919 it had been possible to imagine the disruptions, hardships and uncertainties of the new way of life in Russia following the Revolution was subject to some control and were essentially temporary phenomena. The cultural world appeared as lively as ever and the government appeared interested in fostering new and exciting experiments in that world. GOSIZDAT (State Publishing House) had been created to provide employment for those intellectuals who found themselves on hard times. Mass education programmes and a monolithic bureaucracy demanded educated assistance and censorship was sufficiently relaxed to allow some of the older journals to continue and offered a breeding ground for new publications.

But in 1919-1920, the Civil War made its impact on the cities. Cold, starvation, fuel shortages, misery and deprivation on a scale not yet experienced in the major population centres swept in and settled as if now permanent. The intellectuals began to leave Russia either by their own initiative or were deported as having "oppositional attitudes".⁶³

None of the older journals survived 1921. Journals had been the main method of literary expression, but paper production dropped to one-eighth of its preWar level and 75% of the printing houses were immobilized.⁶⁴ Books were replaced by manuscript and the printer, by scribe. A thriving black market in paper gleaned ten times the going rate of GLAVBUM (The Main Administration of Paper Industry Establishments).

In this milieu, the eighteenth and nineteenth century literary "Thick Journal" reappeared. The "Thick Journals" were the equivalent of many fan publications today, without the advantages of xerox or gestetner machines. Someone would act as editor and have it known that he was compiling a collection. Authors would contribute and a small number of copies would be produced. These would be handed around the various discussion groups and salons until they fell apart. Long and tedious discussions of the contents often lead to the dissolution of friendships and, in some cases, duels.

Robert Maguire argues that the Bolsheviks had a definite policy of persuading authors to lend enthusiastic support to the new regime, or at least of not opposing it, from the moment the Bolsheviks seized power. Authors were given free reign to write in any manner they pleased and to express almost any viewpoint they desired, providing they were not overtly counter-revolutionary. The concept of free competition guaranteed all literary groups had equal rights to existence. None, however, were permitted to speak for the Party. This both agreed with the Bolshevik precept of the power of the written word and at the same time provided the very

practical need of creating prestige for the Revolution. While the numbers of writers supporting the Revolution had drastically been reduced by 1921, these concepts were even more firmly entrenched. Nonetheless, it was obvious a new literature was being created given the existing conditions.

Under the New Economic Policy (NEP), the bourgeois-operated publishing houses produced short-lived journals in which many of the great names of Russian literature could be found. The most dangerous of these journals to the Bolsheviks was CONTEMPORARY NOTES which published many ambitious authors who could find no recognition in Russia. Despite the diplomatic situation, writers found no difficulty in contacting the West with a view to having their work published there. Writers who had descended from the proletariat or who belonged to the Communist Party carried their own in-built protection against inimical writings, but the apolitical "Fellow Travellers" could be led astray.

The Party's literary programme made a return of the Thick Journals inevitable. A publishing house would not provide the close contact the Party required to nudge the authors their way. In any case, literature was tending towards shorter expression: the sketch and anecdote - none of which were substantial enough to be published between hard covers. It was also realised the different response a piece of writing has when published in company rather than stand alone. This censorship by association would straighten shaky ideology, ambiguous economics, political heresies and the fixed regular publication dates would impress a greater number than the unscheduled hardback efforts. Genres stabilised about the notebook, diary, travel memoir and interpretative journalist factions.

Tales of revolutionary heroism appeared in the bookstores alongside works on religion, Kantian philosophical essays and translations of Edgar Wallace detective novels. Many works bore a double imprint indicating they had been published under contract to a western publisher, usually in Germany. It was only in 1921 that writers began to absorb and transmit in prose the drama of the upheaval around them. That year the renewal of old economic relations with NEP brought with it a spirit of vulgarity, self-seeking, riotous living. While some saw hope in the new liberties, cynicism and disillusionment was the reaction of many. In literature, satire flourished. Nostalgia for the old rural life often marked the problems of the clash of old and new in the villages. Prose began to describe and interpret the revolution and the Civil War. The "Underground Man" became the literary expression of protest.⁶⁵

The younger writers, anxious to record their sometimes harrowing experiences, dominated Soviet literature. The style changed from the elaborate, slow-moving (and above all) long novels towards a prose fiction that was closer to the quick staccato tempo of contemporary life. Incident-prone short stories, devoid of all psychological probes and often written with intense emotional overtones, became increasingly prevalent.

Pre-Revolutionary Russian literature can be broken into two principle movements: Realism - a survival from the age of the Russian novel which reached saturation with Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, thereafter devolving to a shorter form as in the work of Gorky, Chekhov and Bunin - and Symbolism, which began in the last decade of the nineteenth century and was part of the general European trend. Of these, Symbolism was most affected by changes in Russian cultural life and played the more important role prior to the First World War.

Symbolism, however, was more than a literary school since it was connected with the rise of individualism and part of the revaluation of the Russian intelligentsia's traditional values.⁶⁶ The most striking example of the persistent attachment of the intelligentsia to individualism was the "Serapion Brotherhood" who argued that members of the group held no common tenets and that each had the right to individual opinion on politics and literature. They maintained that literature

should be individualistic and free of all ideological control. The Brotherhood's membership was composed of some of the leading members of the Russian writing fraternity of the early Twenties. Perhaps the most prominent was Zamyatin.

The great majority of the established writers took a hostile attitude to the coup of October 1917. Many found themselves on the wrong side of the political fence and between 1918 and 1922 many left Russia to make considerable contributions to Western culture. Of those who remained, only a few openly sided with the new regime. The others submitted passively, continuing writing and publishing but were often latently hostile to the Soviets.

In opposition to Symbolism was Futurism. Though originating with Italian Futurism, in Russia this trend carried an essentially negative approach and opposed all conventions, bourgeois culture and past art forms. It slowly became independent from its European counterparts. The new Soviet regime supported the Futurists as the only literary force willing to offer unconditional support to the Bolshevik cause. But, parallel to this, attempts were made to foster specific proletarian literature via the medium of the Proletkult. Between 1917 and 1921, the Proletkult organisation's activity was increased; it published its own magazine, organised an all-Russian conference and created a number of literary and artistic studios across Russia as training centres for workers.

Of the teachers employed in the studios, some were leading pre-Revolutionary writers - including Zamyatin. The problem of the cultural heritage of the past - of the attitude to be taken toward it in the new proletarian state - led to a rift between the Party and its Futurist allies. As early as December 1918, suggestions of the coming split were obvious.

The NIP period was heralded as not the time for idle picture painting, with its bourgeois associations of square canvas, when the streets and bridges were the obvious arena of activity. The Department of Fine Arts was created in 1919 under the Commissariat for People's Education (NARKOMPOS). It was responsible for the organisation and running of the artistic life of the country under the new government.

In essence, a regeneration of all existing bodies and centralisation trends were made under the aegis of Party control but opposed by the PROLETKULT movement. PROLETKULT, founded in 1906 though not active until 1917, supported a doctrine of militant Communism and professed to create a proletarian culture. It argued that the proletariat must have its own art forms suitable to its class in order to organise its struggle for socialism. Claims for PROLETKULT autonomy in its struggle ran afoul of Lenin's centralist policies and, in December 1920, Lenin ordered PROLETKULT to submit to the authority of NARKOMPOS.

The official creative platform of the Association of Proletarian Writers urged members to "show forth the complex human psyche, with all its contradictions, elements of the past and seeds of the future, both conscious and subconscious". The "Fellow Travellers" were the direct heirs of nineteenth century tradition, and alongside these were those who considered themselves "proletarian" - that is, those orientated towards the masses and who eschewed individualism and effete modernism. Their work paid overt concern to psychological realism and to a remaking of the world.

The horrors of everyday life reached their apogee in the winters of 1919/20 and 1920/21. The spring of 1921 brought some relief: the Civil War was to all intents and purposes finished and the organised/decentralised resistance to the new order was ended. NEP meant a partial restoration of bourgeois economy, a loosening of the taxation screws and a resumption of private trade.

1921, however, also heralded a new period in Soviet literature. The main

factors determining this change were the reappearance of private publishing houses, the growth of book printing and bookselling facilities, resumption of cultural exchange with the outside world and an influx of many new writers, some recently demobilised from the Red Army. It is true that many of the publishing ventures were extremely ephemeral but many others flourished and extended their influence beyond the Soviet Union with branches in Berlin where postwar inflation was conducive to this activity and the home of a number of Soviet authors. Soviet emigre works appeared indiscriminately, new magazines proliferated and, while a degree of censorship existed, the literary policy of the new government was itself criticised. The overall impression was one of dignified independence, though the Futurists no longer dominated the literary scene.

With the death of Lenin in 1924, factional differences within the Party terminated the temporary tactical retreat to a relaxation of controls in national life. Writers such as Zamyatin who had been tolerated under NEP, with their advocacy of individualism, now either had to be converted or discredited and eliminated.

The original position of the militant Communists (who were now known as the ONGARDISTS) with respect to the "Fellow Travellers" was the declare open and irreconcilable hostility. This was later modified by an admission that the "Fellow Travellers" were not a homogeneous grouping and that it would be possible to work with a few of them. This was affirmed by a resolution of the First All-Union Conference of Proletarian Writers in January 1925.

On June 18, that year, a resolution of the Party Central Committee "On Party Policy in the Field of Imaginative Literature" attacked the Ongardists' excessive attitude, but approved their ultimate objective of creating a hegemony of proletarian literature. In July, 1925, the Ongardists created the Federation of Soviet Writers' Organisations (FOSP) hoping to induce peasant writers and "Fellow Travellers" to accept the proletarian ideology. The more radical Ongardists, however, continued to oppose any close association with the "Fellow Travellers".

These radicals were expelled from the All-Russian Association of Proletarian Writers (VAPP) the following year and plans were laid to expel Zamyatin and others from their position in the All-Russian Union of Writers (VSP) and take the majority of "Fellow Travellers" under the wings of the VAPP.⁶⁷ In September 1927, Zamyatin's work was labelled "inadequate" and limited by petty ideology. Yet, in 1928, he was still supporting the Communist regime when he and several other writers travelled to collective farms to inspire the country populace to greater efforts during the economic hardships of forced grain requisitioning. In 1928 his play ATTILA was banned.

At the end of that year, a political change swept across Russia. Having overcome Leftists opposition the previous year, Stalin began a test of strength with the Rightists by having the chief of the Moscow Party Organisation removed from office. Following this and by the end of 1929, Stalin had consolidated his position with a number of purges and abandoned the economics of NEP. This was the start of the First Five Year Plan. On December 28, 1929, the Party's Central Committee had resolved the question of agitation, propaganda/educational brochures. While imaginative fiction output was to be increased, such works must emphasise contemporary political themes and oppose bourgeois philistinistic decadence.

It was against this background that Zamyatin produced the work that has been discussed earlier - WE. His first story had appeared in print in 1908 but he did not begin serious writing until 1911-1912 and his most productive period lay between 1917 and 1921 beginning with OSTROVITJANE (written in England) and ending with the completion of WE in 1921. During the War Communism/NEP periods his output diminished but he had influenced a number of younger authors.

By nature, Zamyatin was a nonconformist and quite early he realised Communism would restrict the growth of literature for "real literature can exist only when it is produced by madmen, hermits, heretics, dreamers, rebels and sceptics and not by painstaking and well-intentioned officials."⁶⁸

In a sense, "social command" had always been taken for granted in Russia, but the "command" was implicitly from the Ruling Class. "Social command" began a lively controversy preceding the introduction of the First Five Year Plan when the definition was interpreted to be those specific assignment to be executed by writers.

At first Zamyatin welcomed the Revolution as did many of the Intelligentsia as the fulfilment of their dreams for a new, free Russia - a rebirth of a nation and the spiritual regeneration of a people. However, he soon saw the sufferings of the Civil War and the destruction of many old, but vital, cultural values and a betrayal of faith by the new regime with the introduction of an intolerant orthodoxy.

Both THE DRAGON (1918) and TOMORROW (1919)⁶⁹ were early indications of his disillusionment. Zamyatin used TOMORROW to expound his dialectical view of progress, maintaining his Marxist-inspired faith in the future emancipation of humankind and admitting the need for temporary restriction of individual freedoms. His doubts on the era's transition are evident when he questions whether the struggle for ideals has become meaningless. Violence is dismissed as a means of achieving political reform.

Like other non-political revolutionaries, Zamyatin had probably never fully realised the practical, let alone psychological, consequences of an armed revolution. The Civil War clarified his position and renounced violence in favour of peaceful propaganda - not only because of the suffering, but because he felt the ideals imposed by force are corrupted in that struggle. Others of his early works portray individuals out of place in their own time,⁷⁰ those who cannot cope with the problems of life.

The dogmatism of the Soviet authorities meant an abolition of the old ways of life that did not include a conscious, rational forging of new social patterns that could lead to a tyranny as bad as the old. Revolution for Zamyatin implied continual change and by this anarchistic definition, the new government was not revolutionary enough.

Zamyatin's first play, THE FIRES OF ST. DOMINIC (1927, but never preformed) was relevant to the contemporary scene where Red Terror had reached a climax. (The Red Terror phase was one where the secret police - the CHEKA - were rounding up all dissidents and indiscriminately shooting most. It had begun with Dora Kaplan's assassination attempt on Lenin as those of you who saw REILLY ACE OF SPIES may recall). The play presents the Church's claim to possess a unique truth and thus the right to maintain uniformity of opinion, devaluation of individualism and the introduction of dogmatic life patterns by the persecution of dissenters. The arm of the Church is the Inquisition which is prepared to torture and kill all those who disagree with the Church's claim.

Zamyatin's MOST IMPORTANT THING is a fascinating novel written on four levels with a corresponding viewpoint of the four protagonists, each with his/its "most important thing". Viz: a grub in metamorphosis, two Russian country villages which are slaughtering each other in the name of the Revolution, the inhabitants of a distant world whose atmosphere is exhausted and a star which is on a collision course with Earth⁷¹ ... four different views of "immutable truth."

The relations between literature and politics and of general lack of literary freedoms in post-Revolutionary Russia eventually led Zamyatin into

voluntary exile.

The links between literature and politics was by no means a new phenomena for Russia where literature had often been closely involved with current social and political situations. Critics from V. Belinsky, even if they did not explicitly propound that art had a social function, found nothing unusual in discussing burning social issues or adopting a political position in their works. Zamyatin, however, believed that the artists' role was as a disseminator of truth to the masses. Art was manipulative, not contemplative; social nor private. In this he agreed with the proletarians but he could not accept their readiness to subordinate art to politics.

In 1922, Zamyatin was arrested along with 160 other intellectuals whose activities were considered to be opportunist and undesirable.⁷² Most were exiled abroad, but Zamyatin's friends helped in remain in Russia - much against his wishes. In fact, he was refused permission to emigrate; his foreign correspondence was censored and his works deleted from the leading critical and biographical journals.⁷³

Zamyatin's provocative articles of the early 1920's are the key to the campaign against him. His works were not merely political fables and satires on Collectivism, etc., but his works highlighting questions of the role of the writer in a Soviet society. Since his views were incompatible with those of his critics, he had to be silences.

Strangely enough, Zamyatin enjoyed support from the Leningrad VSP⁷⁴ - a faction of the Leningrad FOSP that was more powerful than the RAPP⁷⁵.

In 1929, Zamyatin was accused of collaboration with anti-Soviet elements in the West. RAPP began to purge VSP influence from the FOSP and the attacks briefly moved away from Zamyatin and onto other authors. On 22nd September, 1929, he was called to explain the publication of WE.

The book was common knowledge amongst the Soviets. Zamyatin had read passages to the Author's League in Moscow and had given notice of its English translation.⁷⁶ The basis of the attack lay with Zamyatin's contracts. The book had been completed in 1921 and send to the Grzhebin Publishing House, Berlin, to which Zamyatin was bound by contract. At the end of 1923, an English translation was made (published 1925) and a Czech version later. Through bibliographies, autobiographies and Soviet newspapers, these publications were well known and caused little concern. In 1924, Zamyatin was aware of censorship problems and declined all offers from Grzhebin to publish WE in Russian.

Three years later, fragments of the novel appeared in a Prague journal Volya Rossii, prefaced by a notation that the translations of the full were available in English and Czech. Zamyatin demanded the publication of the fragments stop. He was exonerated of collaboration with anti-Soviet elements but was forced to resign from the Soviet Writer's Union. He was accused of virtual treason and such a charge of irrevocable. Zamyatin maintained his silence on the subject and, ominously, his obituary was prepared and published by a VSSP member.

He was accused of being a member of the "arch bourgeois opposition to the working class."⁷⁸ His participation in the literary world of Russia was progressively restricted. Access to the Moscow Publishing House was closed to him but the Independent Writers' Publishing House in Leningrad continued to publish his material until 1931 when the Leningrad Association of Proletarian Writers had him removed from the editorial board. He attempted to publish his translation of Richard Sheridan's "School for Scandal" but was blocked. Eventually he wrote to Stalin.

The letter pointed out that his plays (THE FLEA and THE SOCIETY OF HONORARY BELL RINGERS) would provide finances so he would not burden the People's Commissariat of Finances with requests for foreign exchange. With the publishing houses closed to him, Zamyatin begged Stalin for permission to emigrate. In November, 1931, Zamyatin left the Soviet Union, never to return.

- Dennis Stocks

FOOTNOTES

1. Yevgeny Zamyatin, We, trans. Bernard Guilbert Guerney (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1972), p. 29
2. Jerome M. Gilson, The Soviet Image of Utopia (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1975), p. 24
3. Ariadna Gromova, Vortex: New Soviet Science Fiction, ed. C.G. Bearne, (London: Pan Books, 1975), p. 10. Gromova notes that two to three hundred thousand copies of a new title are sold out almost at once.
4. Mirra Ginsburg, The Ultimate Threshold (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1970), p.x
5. Significantly, the inclusion of 'Soviet' in the title stressed the socio-political responsibility of the members. By October 25, 1929, the Moscow membership had dropped from 570 to 330; 240 apparently not meeting the criteria of literary ability, literary activity and/or public character. Leningrad began a similar purge and by November 1929, the apolitical VSP ceased to exist. See Robert MacGuire, Red Virgin Soil: Soviet Literature in the Twenties (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1968), pp 74-75
6. This included eight silent science fiction films shot before 1929 and beginning with Jack London's Iron Heel (1919). Darko Suvin, Metamorphosis of Science Fiction: On Politics and History of a Literary Genre (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1979), p. 26
7. Ryurikov, cited by D. Suvin, "The Utopian Tradition of Russian Science Fiction", Modern Language Review, XLVI (1971), p. 153
8. Zamyatin had been branded a bourgeois writer early in his career and his estrangement from the present became an often repeated condemnation from his Communist critics. It was the key note of an article in 1922 by Aleksandr Voronskij who, having castigated Zamyatin for his pessimistic views of future trends, disappeared himself during the 1937 purges. See Alex M. Shane, The Life and Works of Evenji Zamyatin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 56 and Christopher Collins, Evenij Zamyatin: An Interpretative Study (The Hague: Mouton, 1973), p. 41
9. Suvin, op. cit., p. 244
10. Nicholas Vaslef, "Bulgarin and the Development of the Russian Utopia Genre", Slavic and Eastern European Journal, XII (1968), p. 37
11. Suvin, op. cit. pp. 252-5
12. Nonna Shaw, "Nation and Superstate in Soviet Utopian Literature" in Proceedings of the Fourth Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association, 1964, ed. Francois Jost (The Hague: Mouton, 1966), I, pp. 203-4
13. ibid., p. 208
14. Edmund Wilson, To the Finland Station (London: Collins/Fontant, 1974), p. 2
15. There was a terribly naive optimism with which the popular authors conjured the future before their incredulous audience which fixed forever the 'Man-of-Science' in his dominant place in popular imagination. Notable among these were Captain Nemo from Jules Verne's 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea; Robur, from Verne's Robur the Conqueror and Cavor from H. G. Wells' First Men in the Moon.
16. F. Clarke, Patterns of Expectation 1644-2001 (London: Book Club Associates, 1979), pp. 183-187
17. Shaw, op. cit., p. 203
18. Nonna Shaw, "The Only Soviet Literary Peasant Utopia", Slavic and East European

- Journal, VII (1963), pp. 279-83
18. Zamyatin, op. cit., p. 31
 19. MacGuire, op. cit., p. 43
 20. During this period Zamyatin produced a novel, two tales, 14 stories, 4 prose miniatures, one play and 12 fables, a biography of Robert Mayer and more than a dozen essays, articles and reviews.
 - Shane, op. cit., p. 131
 21. MacGuire, op. cit., p. 43
 22. ibid., p. 45
 23. Shane, op. cit. p. 37
 24. Mark R. Hillegas, The Future as Nightmare (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967)
 25. The 1920's saw a rise of engineering-orientated speculative fiction based around the works of Konstantin Tsiolkovsky. These non-fiction works of Tsiolkovsky were to lead directly to the spectacular success of the modern Salyut and Soyuz series of Soviet spacecraft. That Zamyatin's spacecraft, Integral, is intended for the propaganda purposes of the Benefactor may have been influenced by the fact that the first rocket laboratory and development organisation in Russia had been formed in 1921 by the military, unlike the West where initial experiments had been privately funded.
 26. Christopher Collins, "Zamyatin, Wells and the Utopian Tradition", Slavonic and Eastern European Review, XLIV (1966), p. 351
 27. Norman and Jeanne MacKenzie, H.G. Wells (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973), p. 325
 28. As part of an enormous translating and publishing project by 'World Literature' led by Maxim Gorky and staffed by needy writers and translators, Zamyatin edited three volumes of H.G. Wells in 1919-1920 and twenty three volumes of the collected works of Wells published in 1924-26.
 29. D. Suvin and Robert M. Philmus, H.G. Wells and Modern Science Fiction (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1977), p. 130
 30. All the 'numbers' in We wear similar garments and a metal plate which carries not only an identification but a watch to symbolise the rigid time schedule to which daily life is subordinate. This can be seen as an extension of the reformed prison system introduced in Europe in the nineteenth century whereby inmates were classified by numbers and no individuals and a society of gestalt humanity is ruled by a class of ruthless, self-righteous guardians. See Giles Playfair, The Punative Obsession (London: Gollancz, 1971) and Karl A. Manninger, The Crime of Punishment (New York: Viking Press, 1969).
 31. George Kateb, Utopia and its Enemies (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), p. 20
 32. Shane, op. cit., pp. 142-3
 33. Edward J. Brown, Russian Literature Since The Revolution (New York: Colliers, 1979), p. 71
 34. ibid., p. 74
 35. Shane, op. cit., p. 61
 36. MacGuire, op. cit., p. 47
 37. Irving Howe, "The Fiction of Anti-Utopia" New Republic, CXLVI, No. 11 (April 23, 1962), p. 13
 38. Shane, op. cit., p. 141
 39. Robert Jackson, Dostoevsky's Underground Man in Russian Literature (Granevhage: Mouton, 1958)
 40. Maksim Gor'kij, Sobrania Socinenij, XXX (Moska, 1955), p. 126, cited by Shane, op. cit., p. 27
 41. Collins, Evgenij Zamyatin, p. 40
 42. Adam Ulam, "Socialism and Utopia" in Utopias and Modern Thought, ed. Frank E. Manuel (London: Souvenir Press, 1973), p118
 43. Northrop Frye, "Varieties of Literary Utopia" in Manuel, op. cit. , p. 28
 44. Frank E. Manuel, "Towards a Psychological History of Utopias", ibid., p. 71
 45. Compare Zamyatin (op. cit., p. 204) on the need of, and for, authority with Fyodor Dostoevsky (The Brothers Karamazov, ed. Ralph E. Matlaw, the Garnett Translation (New York: Norton, 1976), p. 240)

46. D. Richards, Zamyatin: Soviet Heretic (New York: Hillary House, 1962), pp. 58-9
47. D-503 has his basic beliefs in the logic of life put into question by the idea of an irrational root ($\sqrt{-1}$) which takes on the emotional quality of a personal nature and a doorway to irrational, or suprarational, behaviour. See Zamyatin, op. cit., p. 107
48. Richards, Zamyatin, pp. 59-60
49. Example: Taylor's Law of Planned Programme of Daily Tasks. Zamyatin, op. cit., p. 47
50. ibid., p. 112
51. Collins, Evgenij Zamyatin, pp 52-68
52. Richard Gregg, "Two Adams and Eve in the Crystal Palace: Dostoevsky, the Bible and We", Slavic Review, XXIV, (1965), p. 684
53. Clarke, op. cit., p. 232
54. Richards, Zamyatin, pp. 50-1
55. Zamyatin, cited ibid., p. 51
56. From an average of 25 new books per year in the mid-Twenties, publication plummeted to 4 in 1931 and 1 each in 1933 and 1934. It became tantamount to suicide to claim anticipation of possible developments when Stalin had reserved that role for himself.
57. Albeit speculation made oblique appearances in the work of the major writers such as Leonid Leonov and Yuriy Olesha. Suvin, "Utopian Traditions...", p. 152
58. P. Schuyler Miller, "The People's Science Fiction", Analog, LXXX (December, 1962), pp. 151-3
59. The original title was "The Hyperboloid of Engineer Garin" and went through four different versions between 1926 and 1937. The title is sometimes mistranslated as "Gagarin" - especially after 1961 and the first Soviet manned orbital flight.
60. Zamyatin, op. cit., p. 204
61. James H. Billington, The Icon and The Axe: And Interpretive History of Russian Culture (new York: Vintage Books/Random House, 1970), p. 510
62. ibid., p. 512
63. MacGuire, op. cit., p. 5
64. ibid
65. Jackson, op. cit.
66. Brown, op. cit. pp. 22-23
67. Shane, Life & Works, p. 61
68. MacGuire, op. cit., p. 45
69. D. Richards, Zamyatin: Soviet Heretic (new York: Hillary House, 1962) pp. 57-58
70. THE CAVE, for example, presents Petrograd as a prehistoric village peopled by cavemen and ruled by the basic need of survival. Their insatiable god is a rusty stove.
71. Richards, op. cit., pp44-47
72. Gleb Struv, Russkaja Literatura v Izgnanii: Opyt Istoticheskogo Obozora Zaruneznoj Literary, 1959, New York, cited by Shane, op. cit., p. 40
73. Shane, op. cit., p. 40
74. ibid, pp. 66-67
75. VAPP had been renamed RAPP in May 1928.
76. Max Eastman, Artists In Uniform (New York: Octagon Books, 1972), p. 84
77. MacGuire, op. cit., p. 75
78. Mixail Comandrin, Zametki O Diskusii Krasnaja Gazete (Ve-Cernij Vypusk), Sept. 1931, cited ibid, p. 76.



MY DEN

- *DIANE FOX*

URBAN FANTASIES, edited by David King and Russell Blackford. (C) 1985. Ebony paperback. A\$4.95. Cover art by John Hall-Freeman.

This book is subtitled "Fantasies of the City of the Mind", quite appropriately. Not all of its thirteen stories are obviously about city life, but most seem intended to be cerebral. Most are reasonably good, four are as good as any sf I've read in 1985. However the presentation may put off many who would otherwise enjoy it.

The introduction doesn't help. It is clear and succinct when discussing the stories themselves, though at times unduly solemn. However the editor's description of their aims made me feel that I didn't know a great many self/evident points that they thought too universally known to need mentioning, and that I was woefully dense not to understand what it was all about, without having to be told.

A second weakness is the order in which the stories are set out. An anthology should start off with something that grabs the reader and engages not only interest, but emotions. The editor's demand that Australian sf should be profound, abstruse, arcane, demanding, and above all, something for the Very Best People, is underlined by the choice of David Brook's DU as the first story. It is an elegant little prose-poem about a city of games-players, imitating Jorge Luis Borges but lacking his power and edgy weirdness. DU will be more harshly criticised than it deserves because of this bad placing.

Damien Broderick's A TOOTH FOR EVERY CHILD should have come first. The back-cover blurb describes it: "Young Keith gives birth to a lobster who is really his mother" - no, it isn't surrealism but straightforward sf with some mystical elements, such as reincarnation. TOOTH is also about guilt, bitterness, love twisting into hate - a readable, grab-the-audience tale.

The next two are more limited in appeal. Phillipa C. Maddern's CONFUSION DAY seems a rambling, whimsical idyll, which many readers won't follow through to its unexpectedly strong, sad ending.

Norman Talbort's funny THE OTHER SIDE OF THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STREET I enjoyed greatly, but don't think it would make sense to anyone unfamiliar with fantasy roleplaying games (e.g. Dungeons and Dragons). Some fantasy gamers too might lack the sophistication to enjoy its Monty Pythonish humour.

By this point the good impression of the Broderick story would have been diluted, many of the less literary readers would have put the book aside. They would miss the fine John Baxter story DOWN FROM DEMOLITION, a sequel to Alfred Bester's Hugo-winning novel THE DEMOLISHED MAN. I read the novel some years back and have forgotten many details, but the sardonic, blackly witty short story still worked for me: it would probably work for people who hadn't read the novel at all, but would

encourage them to read it, and thus indirectly gain a deeper understanding of the contrast between the 1950s and the 1980s.

A bleak stretch for the average reader follows. First, *OUTLINES FOR URBAN FANTASIES* by often brilliant mainstream writer Michael Wilding. It is quite plotless, more scenario than story, a prose poem or abstract painting in words, evoking archetypal sfnal imagery of urban decay, dystopia, alienation.

FLAGS by David King had charm and deadpan humour. Unfortunately the highfalutin' Introduction will make most readers suppose *FLAGS* to be a Deep and Meaningful work of social criticism quite over their empty heads, rather than a humorous piece. Sigh.

Greg Egan's *TANGLED UP* didn't work for me, though it may for others. The convolutions were wearisome to follow.

Paul Collins' savagely jolly *THE GOVERNMENT IN EXILE* does have crowd-pleaser elements (a neofascist overthrown government holed up in an urban fortress, besieged by starving vengeful unemployed who they shoot for fun and food. The nastiness and deliberate ignorance of the neofascists is evilly funny and believable, but the symbolic treatment of the masses outside finally irritated me, the allegorical approach didn't quite work.

The next four stories are each worth the price of the book. *MONTAGE* by Lucy Sussex has a quiet, sophisticated style and strong sfnal plot. The guilt-ridden, alienated physicist Gabriel tries to avert the brutalized post-holocaust future he has seen, but merely brings about his own arrest, and the arrest and probably death of a camera-mad youth who helped him. The bleak mood and restrained approach reminded me of the best recent English sf, but the settings were solidly Australian - lower middle class suburbia, and a desolate fenced-off beach, site of the disastrous classified experiment.

George Turner's *THE FITTEST* depicts a plausible, grim future, overpopulated, ecologically devastated, with shrinking resources and melting polar ice-caps. Immigrant-swamped Australia, badly off as the rest of the world, has socially stratified rigidly into an ignorantly selfish upper class, and a dehumanized, lawless, slum-dwelling "Swill". Most people are driven by vicious, terrified need for status, loss of caste is the ultimate fear and is quite common. The story is told by two brothers whose family sunk into the slums after their father lost his job - the two having since clawed their separate ways back upwards - a complex, bleak story of survival, love, betrayal and ultimately, tragic compassion. A solution for the world's problems is found, one so loathsome that the chilling point is made, what exactly does "survival of the fittest" involve, and is it worthwhile?

Terry Dowling's *THE BULLET THAT GROWS IN THE GUN* is an apparently traditional ghost story, its sfnal side an extrapolation from theories of the paranormal. There's the slow M.R. James-ish buildup, the learned conversation, a haunted house, and a supposedly unloaded gun - which may have been loaded by no human hand. Quietly effective.

The last story is David Grigg's *THE TWIST OF FATE*, which could easily have been printed in *ANALOG* - and might then have been a Hugo voting candidate. Grigg depicts a similar future to Turner's, with the added misery of nuclear terrorism. When an abstruse branch of physics provides a source of almost unlimited power (and living space) there is briefly hope - but the solution could ultimately be so much worse than the problem that the story's central character must make a harrowing choice. The title is an ironically relevant pun.

The book's cover is beautiful, original, and its clutter of images is

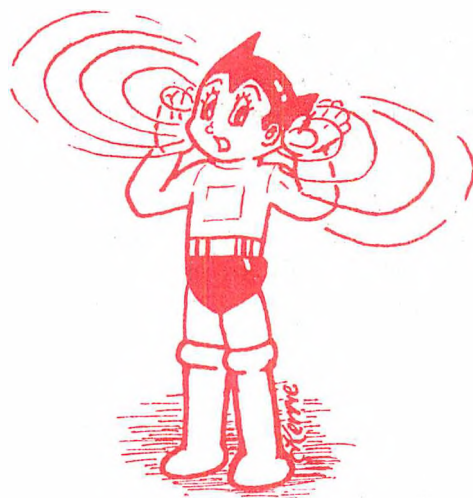
appropriate. There's an eye-catching image of the planet Saturn; this will ensure notice by browsing sf readers, and is a commercially shrewd touch, which URBAN FANTASIES badly needs. I got the strong impression that the editors felt they should make sure than everyone reading the book understood it to be Respectable Literature, and not one of those Buck Rogers things. Just who is supposed to be impressed? This is a paperback containing stories set in the future, and hence by definition beneath the notice of the highest-ranking Critical Names. We can blame this on the Cultural Cringe. The book is not only sf but Australian sf, and consequently must try, not twice, but eight times, as hard, and probably frighten off its potential audience in the process. This would be tragic, the book belongs on any thoughtful reader's shelf.

Two more points in its favour: it is a bargain at the low price, and, due to the small print, is much longer than it seems (if a thing is good, I am glad to have more of it.)

- Diane Fox.



The R. & R. Dept.



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Very much enjoyed Steve Fox's splendid cover illustration in THE MENTOR 55, and was delighted that Gail Neville's story THE WIZARD'S CHILD was worthy of it. The only fault with it was that the dialogue was Standard Non-Technological Alienspeak. I liked the way the young apprentice, Huldra, was revenged upon the smart-aleck Earthling entrepreneur. (I wonder what she did to the waiter that was so insulting?

Enjoyed Sue Bursztynski's account of Aussiecon II. I wish I'd kept a diary, my memories became rather a blur. I was very sick on Thursday night, so didn't get to the Richard III wake. John went, however, He went out looking for white roses at the local flower stalls, and found they were only available at one place. Worse, the people selling wouldn't split up a bunch. However, they gave John some good advice - buy a whole bunch, and sell the flowers separately to other people going to the banquet. This John did, and even managed to make a neat profit. He had a good time at the banquet too.

Yes the masquerade was very unsatisfactorily set up - the audience should get a chance to see the costumes. The poor visibility was most unfair to both the audience and the participants. Many people in the audience were in costume, and didn't get a good chance to show off their own costumes though they were not participating in the actual competition. (John and I were dressed as characters from 1984 which we thought should have been on the Hugo voting list.)

I missed a lot of the panels, those I did get to see and hear were most interesting as a rule. I remember the Arthurian panel, even managed to mention a little-known movie (SWORD OF LANCELOT with Cornel Wilde). Also remember Phyllis Anne Kerr describing a book which she'd never had published - a historical novel about the Templars, sounded a downer but fascinating. I wish I had heard more of the readings. I remember Gene Wolfe reading a little from FREE LIVE FREE. It was hilarious, and he read it in a quiet, rather dry voice, which was just right.

In comment to Roger Waddington, I suspect that any anti-Aussiecon II feeling here might be a result of fannish feuds. There was a lot of ill-feeling going around after the plan to hold a Worldcon in Sydney in 1983 fell through, with comments that various people had "sabotaged" it. There was also nervousness that Aussiecon II would be run by a small clique who would exclude groups and individuals with whom they had feuded. And so on.

In reply to Michael Hailstone's comments on MY FAIR LADY, I think a woman would have to be a bit of a fanatic to see it sexist or whatever. George Bernard Shaw was highly pro-feminist, and meant to depict Henry Higgins as a bit of a curmudgeon. (In the original play, Eliza does not marry H.H. and this is a rather more believable ending - Shaw even wrote an Afterword to PYGMALION to specifically comment why Eliza married Freddy instead, and why her marrying H.H. would have been a serious mistake.) The ending was changed in the movie - and the whole mood shifted slightly - in order to make it a typical Romantic Fairy Story rather than a piece of humorous social comment in the form of a Romance. (Feminists have some rather abrasive things to say about the industry of packaging the imagery of Romantic Love.)

I loved the Fox & Knox cover on THE MENTOR 56. When I saw it, hoped that there'd be a good story inside - THE MENTOR 55 spoilt me a bit I think. But no connection between THE MENTOR 56's cover and any of its stories.

Sergei Sinyakin's VICTOR-BO AND OTHERS was quite mad and fun. I'd have certainly enjoyed it more had I known more of the people it referred to. Some of the background details of Russian fannish life (in fact, of day-to-day ordinary Russian life) were the most interesting and entertaining to a Westerner like me. Blue Spirit sounds like rugged stuff.

Gail Neville's GOOD MORNING, ROGET was another computers-taking-over-the-world story, but genuinely funny and fresh. I enjoyed the nasty digs at cruddy swords-and-sorcery and cruddy media sci fi, but more genres could easily have been satirized (this would, however, have made the story too long and it was just the right length.)

Alan Stewart's GIFT-WRAPPED had another venerable plot, the nasty-parents-disposing-of-nasty-kid, but there were a few ingenious twists. One quibble: how come the spaceship didn't eat the brat kid the first time she went inside? This sort of story only works if written at the most superficial, black-humour level, and if very short - otherwise it becomes rapidly appalling. Carol certainly wasn't depicted as obnoxious enough to make her fate satisfactory.

John Alderson's article contains as usual a mixture of truth and nonsense. He is right, though, about attempts to alter the customs of other societies. Even apparently purely beneficial changes may have disastrous side-effects. I remember reading of a village in some Arab country, where the water supply was a large well at the centre of the place. The women used to go there every day to fill up water-pots and lug the heavy things home. A complete set of water pipes to every home was set up, much more convenient. However, visiting the town well had been a good excuse for the local women to get out of their homes and see their friends, talk and gossip, and even talk out their problems and get advice from each other. As there was no longer an excuse to go out and socialize, they were stuck at home and hardly got to see anyone all day - the result being that depression and emotional stress and even nervous breakdowns began to be a problem - just as they are in Western society. And of course I suspect that the next generation, both boys and girls, would have been badly affected too. The husbands would have been affected, to a somewhat lesser degree (living with a depressed person is in itself stressful).

In comment to Alan Stewart, in a longish article in F&SF Harlan Ellison claims that the movie DUNE was deliberately sabotaged so that it would be a flop (somewhat similar idea to that used in THE PRODUCERS, but less innocent). In comment to Richard Faulder, I think the American attitude he mentions is somewhat repugnant. A Con should not be put on as a splashy mass display, who the hell is it supposed to impress? I don't think I like big cons, there's too much to miss out on, and the whole thing is absolutely exhausting. My mind feels like my stomach feels after Christmas dinner. Of course, there's the rather adolescent attitude, "My

Con is bigger than your 'Con!' which may be involved.

In comment to Julie Vaux, I ran into the brick wall of fannish disdain for the amateur artist a lot quicker than she did. Right after joining fandom, I was inspired to write a story (it was very lousy, but it was a first story). The resounding news that I had written a story met with a curious reaction - a mixture of annoyance, embarrassment, boredom, and a strong feeling of, "That's just not done!" People reacted rather as they would to a retarded child (who could not be assumed to know any better) running into a room full of busy adults and insisting that they praise a lumpish ill-made plasticine model. I was a good deal more cautious thereafter, but still made mistakes. I remember trying to hawk my painted stones at conventions (Julie bought one herself). When people realized that they were actually expected to pay for the things, people cringed away. Fans, as a rule, have no money, and are reluctant to buy anything that isn't one of the things they usually spend lots of money on. They are also profoundly conservative. They will not buy anything unless the others are interested in buying it. Julie's misfortunes stem from continuing to try to sell things to fans - who doubtless already have half-a-dozen Julie Vaux drawings or paintings, why should they want more? She should try for a fresh audience reaction to her writing fiction, so should try selling her paintings through galleries etc. I also suspect she will experience the same disappointments with fannish reaction to her writing fiction, so should try from the beginning to get it published commercially!

Kerrie Hanlon's cover on THE MENTOR 57 looked good - but transparent skin-tight black bodystockings as uniforms? The helmets looked armoured, perhaps the bodystockings provide a good deal more protection than would be apparent. If so, why not flimsy-looking caps as head protection? Maybe the helmets contain enhanced sensory and communication gear and even small computers.

In reply to Igor Toloconnicou, William Morris was a late 19th Century English Socialist and fantasy writer and designer (he seems to have done a great variety of things). He believed in a return to the simplicity of the Middle Ages, encouragement of handicrafts, and the textiles, furniture, wallpaper etc. he designed have an appearance at once ornate and delicate, opposed to the rather heavy look of much Victorian design. He was a leader of the Pre-Raphaelites, an artistic movement. Some of his novels are NEWS FROM NOWHERE; A DREAM OF JOHN BALL; THE WELL AT WORLD'S END; THE GLITTERING PLAIN, THE WATER OF THE WONDROUS ISLES; THE SUNDERING FLOOD and THE WOOD BEYOND THE WORLD. His style is obviously strongly influenced by Arthurian romance, especially Malory, and is very slow paced and quiet for a modern taste, though well worth staying with.

I think it was Wat Tyler who led the Peasant's Revolt, the spelling Igor uses is probably the result of transliteration (Russian alphabet differing from our own.)

The myth of the Middle Ages can be, I think, used to support just about any political point, just as the Bible can be quoted to support just about anything. I think Hitler probably used whatever bits of Mediaeval pageantry - and even more, Nordic myth and folk-culture, to make Nazism appeal to people through the emotions. He also used very contemporary pseudoscience (such as theories on race etc., which would have seemed downright weird to Mediaeval, but which were accepted to a degree by nearly all his contemporaries - even those who were ultimately appalled when they at least had their noses rubbed in what those ideas ultimately justified.) Dictators don't believe in consistency, they will use anything that works, or that will give them even a temporary advantage. (In some way, people who insist on having a world-view in which everything must be internally coherent are fighting at a disadvantage.

In comment to Brian Earl Brown, I have always suspected that the illegalization of drugs was done partly as a means of handling the growth of social dissent in America during the Vietnam war. The drugs were made illegal and at the

same time, an enormous amount of literature was devoted to them; anti-drug propaganda of so blatantly untrue a character that it has become legendary, and pro-drug propaganda making irresponsible and exaggerated claims. This had an effect like the traditional red rag to a bull, the implied message being, "If you're not a weak conformist who believes anything the Government tells you, you'll try drugs and enjoy them!" This meant that most political dissidents would try drugs themselves, or associate with people who did, and provided a splendid excuse to arrest them. Hence the very savagely long jail sentences for pot smokers, etc. Also, unwise use of drugs will quickly reduce a person's intellectual powers, or at least, render what they say less believable to others. I think that, with the example of Prohibition behind them, the people responsible for the illegalization of drugs in the U.S.A. (and later, in other countries) had a fairly clear idea of what was going to happen, though they would not have thought of it in the exact cynical terms in which I have set it out. Probably Harry Warner's comments about Prohibition are true and it is too late to undo the hard done by the anti-drug laws. The networks of organized crime have already been strongly established; the psychological images of drug-taking as "defiance of Big Brother", even as fashionable, have been well and truly established. An industry has been created, an extremely powerful one. Legalizing drugs would probably be the equivalent of bolting the door after the horse had been stolen.

Fascinated by Larry Dunning's comments on my review. Yes, I did see the second "evil" computer as being ultimately a rather more sympathetic figure than the first "good" one, who was ultimately responsible for its degeneration (hardly a "good" action!) The computers, nasty though they were, were not ultimately evil, for they weren't responsible for their programming, and came across more as victims than anything else. I think the purpose of the whole plot strand was to give our complacent concepts of "good" and "evil" a jolt.

Is Steve Sneyd familiar with Josephine Tey's excellent historical detective novel, THE DAUGHTER OF TIME? He'd probably find it both interesting and enjoyable.

MARC ORTLIEB, PO Box 215, Forest Hill, Vic 3131.

I will admit that I find myself agreeing with you regarding the sf content of fanzines. TIGGER is going to look more at skiffy than did Q36, though the silly fannish element will also be present. I think that a genzine can balance the two. I'm not sure what you mean by fans broadening their distribution though. I'm currently sending out about 140 copies of TIGGER to Australian fans, and I'd love to find new fans who would contribute to the zine. The only thing is that, as you know, I'm not interested in articles on STAR TREK, DR WHO, or BLAKES 7, unless they are very well written, and they shed some new and interesting light on the shows. Are there young fans out there capable of that sort of dispassionate analysis of their skiffy shows? I do get some media orientated zines - John Tipper's METALUNA is probably the one that impresses me most. Are there any more out there like that?

The Soviet fan information is okay, but I have trouble relating to it, other than insofar as it shows that fans are pretty similar all over the place. I guess what I really need is a list of Soviet fanzines and their addresses, assuming that they will accept "the usual" and that there are some written in English. (I have received German and Italian fanzines, but have been unable to read them - the latter before I married Cath and got an Italian/English translator.)

Gail's story this time isn't up to her usual standard - an amusing trifle, but it doesn't really pay much attention to its ideas, other than doing a "the medium is the message" thing.

While what Dennis says might apply to Australia, it certainly doesn't to

other places. Harry Warner Jr no longer produces a genzine, but he appears regularly in FAPA. I'm sure that there are others in FAPA who used to produce genzines. When one thinks of it, ANZAPA contains a couple of retired genzine editors - John Bangsund and Gerald Smith have both produced genzines, but don't at the moment. Michael O'Brien is also an ex-fanzine producer who only appears in ANZAPA and very occasionally in letter columns. Roman Orszanski also used to produce fanzines.

In reply to Steve Sneyd, Cath Ortlieb, who was responsible for the Richard III Wake being held at AussieCon Two agrees than an Australian Richard III Society is weird. She joined it largely because of her interest in English History. That the first night of AussieCon Two fell on the calender anniversary of Richard's Death was just too good an opportunity to pass up - especially as it provided a good excuse for a first night party. (Cath is Australian of Italian descent. She finds this amusing, as no one can understand her interest in Richard III.)

HARRY WARNER Jr, 423 Summit Ave., Hagerstown, Maryland 21740, USA.

THE WIZARD'S CHILD is a neat story, quite well told, managing to make clear the nature of the characters and their environment in a minimum of words. There was only one thing about it that bothered me: its basic similarity to mundane fiction about mountebanks and shysters at carnivals and fairs and travelling medicine shows in the past in the United States. So I kept thinking about how few elements in the story couldn't have been used in a mundane story of this type, in a sort of reverse of the old AMAZING STORIES custom of changing western fiction into science fiction.

Not long ago, I did a fanzine article on fannish records and their possible holders. I think I identified correctly the fans who have been married the longest number of years, G.M. and Frank Carr, but it didn't occur to me to think about the fans who have had the most children. You must rank right up there in this respect, along with Susan, naturally. I believe Mae Strelkov had four or five children, I seem to remember four progeny of Art Widner, and there are probably some other fans with lots of children I've overlooked. But fans in general don't have many children, fewer on the average than mundane young people, I suspect.

Sue Bursztynski's con report gave me quite a few bits of information I hadn't seen in other descriptions of the con. This is the first I'd heard about the Wake for Richard III, for instance (I deep wondering if they called it That Was the Wake That Was). Curiously, the War of the Roses used to come to public attention regularly in Hagerstown, back in the 1940s and 1950s. The Inter-State Baseball League in that era had teams in two Pennsylvania cities named for English towns, York and Lancaster, as well as a team in Hagerstown. So every so often we'd have the White Roses or the Red Roses playing the Hagerstown team, because that was how the two Pennsylvania teams were nicknamed.

I think I understood Steve Sneyd's poem this time, something I don't always succeed in accomplishing. Moreover, I liked it better than the ones that I couldn't figure out. Maybe I'm more compatible with the longer creations of this poet, for some reason.

I have never watched MY FAIR LADY all the way through because of my admiration for Julie Andrews and my anger with those brothers who disgraced the name of Warner by giving the movie lead to Audrey Hepburn. She isn't a good enough actress to make her status as an ignorant and dirty flower girl believable. However, there are plenty of stage successes with more male chauvinistic themes than MY FAIR LADY. How about Gilbert & Sullivan's PRINCESS IDA, which pokes fun savagely at the most sacred aspects of women's lib a century ago? Or Shakespeare's THE TAMING OF THE SHREW? Then there's Mozart's COSI FAN TUTTE and various anti-feminist passages in the dialog of his THE MAGIC FLUTE.

Your review of another book which enables the reader to choose how the story goes has caused me to wonder how long it will be until the same idea is expanded to the media. One manufacturer is offering a compact disc player which can be loaded with as many as six discs and can provide access to any track on any of the six within a few seconds by proper manipulation of a keyboard. It's meant for discos and such purposes today, I suppose, but imagine the same setup for a player of laserdiscs, and a deck of six laserdiscs containing many alternate courses of events for the movie they contain. Such a set of laserdiscs would be very expensive but it would permit an almost infinite variation of how the movie proceeds and it would probably be financially practical for arcades.

BUCK COULSON, 2677W-500N, Hartford City, IN 47348, USA.

Well, since Andruschak asked... offhand, I can't really see myself going to any councillor, since I'm convinced that I know more about how to handle life than anyone else, but if for any reason I did go, I'd as soon go to a woman as to a man. Some of our best friends are women, our lawyer is a woman; why not a councillor? (I see I fell into copying Andy's use of the wrong term up there; a councillor is a member of a council; a counselor is someone who gives advice. Difference between a politician and a therapist.)

Which reminds me of a phrase in a press release which mentioned "foot-in-mouth disease which plagues cattle"; the individual who caught the error pointed out that foot in mouth disease plagues politicians; the bovine problem is hoof and mouth disease..

I suppose I wouldn't object to a woman minister, either, though I've never attended a service conducted by one. Of course, being a Universal Life minister myself, I tend to take care of my own theological problems. Out here in the hinterlands, the major problem would be to find a woman minister, or a counselor either.

Well, technically the U.S. was invaded in World War II, but then Alaska is pretty remote to most Americans, so it's not really a bar to Diane's theory. (But Japanese infantry did land infantrymen on U.S. territory; Alaska wasn't a state yet, either, so they didn't defile actual state soil.)

I like the way Alderson assumes that "social position" is equivalent to being of value; his arguments on women's social position could be used to prove that his prize bull (or ram, as the case may be) has a higher social position than he does. This casual assumption of the equality of value with power would be amusing if I didn't think he believed it.

TERRY BROOME, 23 Claremont St., Lincoln, LN2 58N, Linc's., England.

Lovely cover. Steve Fox's illustrations get better and better, and this one is a lovely depiction of a scene from Gail Neville's story. THE WIZARD'S CHILD is very competent, if highly unoriginal. Still, it's a gentle read, unlike a lot of fantasy these days.

Loved the illo on page 8, very very clever and funny. The AussieCon II report was interesting. I saw Bob Shaw at Novacon 15, but was too terrified to meet him. I did meet Sue Thomason, an up-and-coming 'new' British writer and managed to put my foot firmly into it. One of Life's disasters.

I enjoyed the review of ROOMS OF PARADISE, though the end reviews sometimes fell down. FOOTFALL was the original idea for LUCIFER'S HAMMER, but the book grew too big to introduce aliens. In THE SENTINEL, all the stories, except

possibly GUARDIAN ANGEL, have appeared in other collections (and written like this, you take up a lot less space). As to where Moorcock went after THE GOLDEN BARGE - well, should I say he's been and gone? (I believe he ceased writing sf several years ago). A seven year old's opinion is meaningless for a book designed for eleven's and over. The photo on the cover of the last STARSTORMERS book, by the way, may be of the child stars of the mini-series on ITV - having a 5 minute slot a week on THE BOOK TOWER a children's programme on (guess what?) children's books.

The review of the TRANSFORMERS: icky, icky! I know it's nice for little Tim Clarke, but it's a bit self-indulgent of the reviewer. Finally, in the review of THE HORSECLANS, the sentence should read "there dwells in that devastated land a group - (usually) of scientists - now grown warped and twisted..." 'Of (usually) scientists' makes me think that either a new science called Usually has just been invented, or that the scientists referred to aren't scientists all the time.

Steve Sneyd get everywhere. A MAGNIFICENT PERFORMANCE, with its simple but effective technique, must be marked as one of Steve's better ones. I can make out that an exploration of some kind is happening, and that's all - but it's poetic nevertheless.

I may have got hold of the wrong end of the stick, but: John Alderson's thesis bored me silly. Perhaps if I'd been with it from the start, I would have been able to see the point of the thing. It wouldn't have gone amiss if you'd included a summary of the parts before Alderson's own summing up. I noticed many of the examples he gives are illustrative of eastern countries and not western. Neither is it the case that, just because a thing is custom, it isn't exploitive. His fevered, froth-mouthed attack on feminists also struck me as peculiar - I mean, he spends 24+ pages (on the assumption of six pages in four parts) calmly laying down his argument, and then blows it all in the last paragraph by the sudden introduction of the Angry Flushes. His conclusions are faulty and tinged with a terrific emotional bias. His sources are sometimes very dated, whereas Time and Society simply are not static - they wait for on-one, and Alderson should have realised this. That's why we have a thing called History. The Past isn't changeable, the Present ought to be considered on its own merits, seriously, with improvement in quality of life in mind. Perhaps then the Future will be a better place to live, without all the wars, misunderstandings and petty bitching that goes on now. Alderson closes his eyes - the textbooks, after all, have all the answers, and textbooks can't be wrong can they? And of course his reasoning is faultless (all the wrong connections in all the right places). This I can't understand - to deny feminists have a point merely on the basis of personal interpretation from textbooks, for Chrissakes (and one of these, Genesis, is a work of fiction if you don't believe in God), to ignore all the evidence of the world around him now, is so preposterous, so ludicrous - I have to have the stick by the wrong end, if that's not the case, I can sum up with three words: What a shame.

JOY HIBBERT, 11 Rutland St., Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST1 5JG, UK.

Sue should give a more complete trip report - name the fan(s) who were messing up the zine publishing panels, especially if it wasn't Ted White's group mind. Ah, you poor deprived Australians, having th queue for Bob Shaw's autograph - it's something that never occurs to most of us - he lives about $\frac{3}{4}$ hour up the road from me now. My experience of children's sf is that children's sf has more casual violence and adult's sf has more sex. Which probably says something pretty unpleasant about our society.

If Abraham had an acceptable heir, Eliezer, why was it necessary for him to rape his wife's slave? An adopted heir was perfectly acceptable in that society, and surely for him to have gotten another heir, a son, would have lead to disruption, between those who had got used to the idea of an adopted son, and those

who hadn't. Particularly since Abraham could not have reasonably expected to live till Isaac was an adult, even though he did manage it.

This idea that an Arab will marry any women he wishes to use sounds very honourable in theory, but practice is a different matter. As you know, various countries are going through an 'Islamisation' process at the moment. Many people are protesting against this, and being executed. Islamic law forbids the killing of a virgin of any age, so the men guarding women and girls who are to be executed just 'marry' them and make sure they're not virgins at the time they die. Perhaps this will cast a more accurate light on the tradition.

I wonder what Alderson's idea of 'bad treatment' of women is if "decently treated" means forcible marriage. And it's all very well listing the 'rights' that a slave has, but did anyone tell the slaves about this?

Note the way he ignores the controversial question of whether a castrated man can have sex, assuming that he can since it serves his purpose. What of the theory that female genital mutilation developed as a way of stopping harem women from wanting sex (and if they did want sex, if they weren't mutilated, why couldn't they have it with each other). A good anthropologist keeps an open mind and presents theories as theories, not as facts. Who has the festering imagination, open minded anthropologists, or Alderson, determined to prove that male dominated societies are best for everyone because of his gynophobia?

Michael Hailstone: yes, and 'tyrant' meant 'leader'. Which, I think, shows something about leaders and householders down the ages - power, whether it be over a country or merely over a 'household' (presumably family, children-in-law and servants/slaves?). Housewives these days have chemical help, which isn't a good thing, but prevents them from the obvious stress-release method - killing the kids. Society, ie conditioning, prevents workers and houseworkers from releasing stress. Every household should have a punchbag.

It's common for male sexists to define women as irrational and therefore not deserving of respect. Bright male sexists, like Michael, merely invent new ways of saying it. How about the classic male argument for women being kept in their place - that men have delicate egos and that women shouldn't upset them. I suppose Michael would define that as rational argument?

I suspect that if MY FAIR LADY was being made now, it would have stuck to the original ending, in which Liza gets fed up with Higgins overbearing pomposity and goes and opens a flower shop with Freddie. The charm of MY FAIR LADY is the contrast between Higgins and the other character, Colonel something, can't remember his name. Higgins is more classist than sexist anyway - I bet he wouldn't have treated a woman of his own class as he treated Liza.

Typical of Michael to actually take notice of what Alderson says - all the other statistics I've seen suggest married men and single women live longer than the rest. Surely the reason isn't so hard to find? Married men have someone to load their troubles onto and single women aren't having troubles dumped on them, and so have less excess stress than the rest. If men could release stress through crying etc., things might be a bit more even.

Ah, Harry, like a breath of reason. Don't fall into the enemies terminology, my boy - UU doesn't 'call women ministers', which suggests they aren't really. Before anyone says "Ah, UU aren't Christians though are they", my ancestral church, Methodism, has been ordaining women since about 1974 and having female lay preachers for some time before that (my mum used to be one). Personally I think Christian churches shouldn't have female ministers - it's just tokenism after was. As for counselling, in theory I couldn't care less what sex a counsellor was, in practice it depends on various 'most women/men' generalisations. Most women are

trained to appear sympathetic no matter what they really think. Most people who are brought up by two parents will expect a man to play the 'heavy' (eg 'wait till your father gets home'nd the mother to be less effectual. Most men are trained to expect to have a woman to confide in, but not to confide in other men, and thus show weakness in front of potential rivals, whereas women tend to have close female friends and be less afraid of showing weakness and imperfections. I suppose this is where the Alderson's of this world part company with more sensible men: in our society men are forbidden from showing weakness and therefore become alcoholics etc. What Alderson's type don't realise is that male sexist society is at least as damaging to men as it is to women - the difference is that men are economically in charge and thus don't realise what they're missing out on.

Why do women go to church? Perhaps because we're brought up to depend on a man, and since men are only human they can't be relied on? So what is there to do but turn to the man who can be relied on. That's one theory anyway.

I suppose if I needed counselling I'd just prefer someone sympathetic. I suspect this may be because of personal peculiarities which might have to come out in the discussions, which aren't the sort of thing I'd expect men to sympathise with more than women, or vice versa. If I was a normal sort of woman, I'd probably prefer a woman, simply because she'd know what I was talking about.

Sorry, Ron, but I found it most amusing that the unreadable bit of your fanzine was the bit just before you were telling Rob what you think of the cram-it-in school of fanzine production.

I've recently got a job for the first time in 4 years, and am interested in the way women seem to respond to their husbands or whatever. They would not expect them to be considerate or change any more than you'd expect a mountain to get out of your way, but they'd no more think of respecting or loving (as opposed to lusting after) them than you would after that mountain. Not hate, just contempt. I suppose if they'd had worse lives they'd be more inclined to hate, but they seem to believe men are just one of the burdens of life.

HARRY WARNER, Jr. Address as above.

Now issues of your allegedly bimonthly fanzine continue to arrive at intervals of approximately one week or ten days. This eccentric behavior pattern of THE MENTOR is further complicated by the fact that the most recent one to reach my mailbox is dated November, 1985. If a postal strike in New South Wales causes fanzines to reach me only two months after their apparent publication, the times really are a changing.

VICTOR-BO AND OTHERS was amusing. If I'm right in assuming that it's partly based on the real characteristics of some Russian fans and pros, it's probably even funnier to those in the know. Maybe it qualifies as the first piece of faan fiction (fiction, that is, about fans, rather than fiction written by fans) to appear in an English language fanzine. The writer shows amazing familiarity with such foreign phenomena as Alcoholics Anonymous.

I suppose most readers will find GOOD MORNING, ROGET just as amusing. but my computer phobia made it more frightening then funny to me. I also question whether some pro authors would need a computer to help them turn out fiction. They've been demonstrating the vast capacity of their own intellects to provide them with never-ending supplies of cliches of plots, character and language.

GIFT-WRAPPED is skillful in most ways, suffering from very few of the faults normally found in the short-short-short story. But the ending after the initial surprise and semi-chuckle it provoked became mystifying to me. Was this

little girl so unbearable that the parents decided on this particular was of ridding themselves of her, as a sort of retroactive abortion? Or was it a toy that somehow found its way onto the market without passing the safety tests that are normally imposed on playthings? Or did the author just decide to give his readers a surprise at the end without making it a logical surprise?

I was asked the other day to volunteer some time in tutoring men and women in reading skills and simple writing arts at a local firm that draws most of its employees from handicapped people. I didn't accept the challenge for reasons somewhat similar to Colin Grubb's reference to "find it difficult to visualize getting through a single day without the ability to read". It seems to me that I would be unsuitable for the volunteer work because reading has always been as natural and easy to me as breathing (well, I learned to read somewhat later than I learned to breathe, but now the two are similarly unconscious talents). How could I have the patience to try to help individuals who like so many today struggle with every word like first graders? Besides, this county's school system has an elaborate structure of special courses for slow learners, taught by men and women who took college training in this specialized field. If they didn't help some persons, what chance would an untrained person like me have of supplying a magic key to reading ease?

Julie Vaux's loc makes me feel guilty because I'm prominent among those who don't respond to drawn things in fanzines as I do to written things. I've tried several times to explain the causes of this boorishness: I'm word-orientated rather than picture-orientated, I don't know enough about art to use the highfalutin' language to be found in art museum publications, and there is the special fanzine problem of so many drawings similar in style and theme from any given artist: how could anyone possibly say new things about the hundredth Rotsler or ATom cartoon in their typical manner, except the plain fact that we think they're all marvellous and hope to see many more like them? On the other hand, Julie is already one up on Vincent van Gogh if she sold two paintings at the worldcon; he made only one sale in his entire life, and I wonder if it's totally in the spirit of fandom to expect recognition for art in the form of purchases?

Come to think of it - I react to book reviews as I do to art. However, my inability to write specific remarks about individual reviews is due mainly to the rarity with which I find a review of a book I've already read. I did read everything in your review section this time but only two or three of the books you reviewed are among my reading experiences, and I read those few so long ago I can't remember how I felt about them. Alas, I can no longer point out that I'll resume reading all the new science fiction and fantasy books as soon as I retire and acquire lots of additional spare time.

JULIE VAUX, 17 Zara Rd., Willoughby, NSW 2068.

Gail Neville's GOOD MORNING ROGET was pleasantly amusing as a depiction of one of the possible disadvantages of AI (Artificial Intelligence) as secretaries.

Alderson, you're doing it again. Alright, the Philistines were descendants of Minoan and Mycenaean colonists and probably retained some matriarchal customs, but the Egyptians were polytheists and hence "theocentric". Most of the other Semitic cultures, such as the Babylonians and Assyrians were patriarchal or changing over to patriarchy by as early as Abraham's migration to the future Israel. The Persians and Medes were Indo European warriors with dominant male gods.

As for the the later Hellenistic empires and the Romans - well, you can't get much more macho than wanting to dominate the known world. (It's wonderful how "classical" history tends to reflect the modern era! The ancient world had its

share of great powers, etc.)

Someone throw one of Nawal el Sawaai's books at John, please. The veil is a symbol of women as property, or women caged. In some Islamic countries women are still stoned or jeered or insulted simply for being outside the house with a Veil! The Turks abolished veils more readily because that custom was a recent imposition on their culture. Their still nomadic central asian cousins wear scarves or fezs or a combination of both. Veils were a custom of Urban society copied from the Arabs and Byzantines...

Caste systems are not peculiar to India! Feudal Japan and Tibet had cast systems. There is a high order of probability that many of the ancient Celtic tribes did. Stress of strict hereditary inheritance with its links of the importance of clan and class and caste and descent are features of many feudal societies. Everybody who did fifth form ancient history switch your memories on and remember the battles between factions in ancient Athens linked to hill and shore clans! Remember those aristocratic clans exiled at the beginning of Athens' democracy? The setting up of the demes and phratries - new urban and district associations created to break down the barriers of clan and class and foster loyalties to the greater unity of the polis as a whole.

By-the-way John, have you read Marilyn French's BEYOND POWER yet? She wisely points out that we are all caught up into a patriarchal perverse "power" mindset. We use words describing power and rule to describe governments; - kratia - strength, - arche rule, - dominated - master of. (I have coined a new word, DOMINALLY - based on the latin neuter adjective dominalis - to replace the male connotations of dominated). Anyway, Marilyn notes that the ancient tribal cultures were matricentric; matrilineality



and archy came later. They were about harmony, not power.

We use the word "palace" to describe Knossos - with its implications to us of a central place of rule and power, but to the ancient Cretans, it was probably the House of the Double Axe and it is noted that many believe the Double Axe was a symbol of men and women living in joint harmony - a witty urban rebuke to the extremes of the matriarchies and patriarchies surrounding them.

Oh, by the way, Michelle understands Hebrew... and thank you for the compliment... and the discussion about bronze archaeology. I didn't realise until afterwards it was that John from Victoria. Do read BEYOND POWER... don't follow Graves too strictly. Remember he was offering interpretations from a poetic insight. He wasn't a Hebrew scholar either.. to my knowledge.

BRIAN EARL BROWN, 11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit, MI. 48224, USA.

Sue Bursztynski's Aussiecon II report demonstrates once again that everyone's convention is different. Other reports of Aussiecon II have been rather negative, chronicling the various weaknesses of an understaffed and inexperienced concon. It's good to see that someone had a good time there. Sue also proves the contention that people determine whether they have a good time or not more than does the organisation, efficiency or good sense of the concon. People will have a good time (if they want to) no matter how hard a hotel or concon work to stop it. Which is why I think Worldcon should consciously decide to divest itself of a good portion of its programming. A simplified worldcon would need less people to run, thus making staffing a lot easier to do. And I don't think people would miss the missing programme.

John Alderson's article in THE MENTOR 55 at last gets him on familiar ground. If there's one thing John knows first hand its the solitary life of the herdsman! As ever its hard to dispute Alderson's arguments without having spent years of study in anthropology, a situation familiar to students of Velikousky. One nitpicks over what one knows, but few are expert enough to argue main contentions. Like: Alderson says that both the Muslim and the Jew have done away with a priesthood. In which case, what are the Muslim mullah and Ayatollah's and Jewish Rabbis? They are people supported by the community for their religious leadership. Doesn't that make them priests? Maybe there is an ideal among Jews and Muslim that all men are priests but the practical reality seems to be that these peoples have priests nonetheless.

Alderson's conclusion that male-dominated societies are less misogynistic than imagined by feminists is pretty dubious. The legal status of women in the USA only a century ago was no better than the status of slaves over which we'd just fought a civil war. And a culture like the arab that forces women to go about dressed like a tent sale (the chudan) to prevent men from having lustful thoughts is a culture that blames women for men's weaknesses. If it is men who develop lustful thoughts while looking at a woman, it is the man's responsibility to control this thought and not the woman's, who after all, was just standing there.

Steve Sneyd's letter was fascinating. I wish he'd write about these "reassurances" meets in greater detail. It would make a good article for THE MENTOR. Toxic chemicals: we're more likely to die from them than for anything else. There are so many really toxic long lasting chemicals around, often being dumped into inadequate dumpsites, that too soon there won't be any naturally occurring drinkable fresh water. It will all be laced with dioxins, chloroforms and prenots. All at parts per billion levels but unfortunately, that all it takes.

What's partly frightening and partly disappointing is the degree of collusion between government and industry to get something like Steve Sneyd's

pesticide plant built. It means "jobs, jobs, jobs" (a favorite phrase of the government of Michigan) and damn the health risks. Government is supposed to "promote the general wealth and domestic tranquility", according to our constitution and I can't see how turning a blind eye to the shortcomings of a chemical plants emissions promotes either.

I think there's an answer to Steve Sneyd's question why the Hindu nations never tried to conquer their neighboring states of Iran, Afghanistan and Arabia. The land was hard to get to (cross mountain and deserts, on overseas) and not worth much compared to the lush Indian river valleys.

I doubt Diane Fox's argument that RAMBO II is popular in the US because the US has never been invaded and that Ramboesque films have not appeared in the USSR because it has been invaded. It is a simplistic argument that ignores the two very different literary traditions of these two countries, which, since films are visualised stories, affects the sorts of films made. Further, RAMBO has proved quite popular in a number of countries which have been invaded. Obviously the ability to romanticize about war is not dependent on how thoroughly one has experienced war.

I've seen the Russian film ROADSIDE PICNIC. It's titled STALKER, runs about 3¹/₂ hours long and contains all the horrors of the Russian novel. It's long and slow and obtuse. I remember ROADSIDE PICNIC as a rather Analogish adventure story. All that was jettisoned for a metaphorical descent to the heart of happiness and a turning away at the last moment. Editing with a chain saw might produce a 2 hour movie worth watching, but I don't know. Russian books were long aimed for the intelligensia, the educated classes. American literature has always been popular literature appealing to the mood. It has always been more actioned and aimed at our lower (or more primal instincts) - love, hate, greed, jealousy, revenge. Russian literature aimed to entertain sophisticated people and hung a gauze of respectability over these emotions. The common Russian, though, would probably find "pop" SF and even pop films like RAMBO more entertaining if given the chance to see them.

ANDREW DARLINGTON, 44 Spa Croft Road, Teall Street, Ossett, West Yorks WF5 OHE, UK.

I'm not too sure what I've done lately to deserve each new MENTOR. Just stove my car in during a snow-blitz, and gotta find hard cash currency for that, so it can't be my cash you're after? As I write Clive James is on the idiot box and he sayeth the Australian male passes thru the menopause in his early 20s, so it can't be by body you're after either? I just got some stuff published in A BOOK TO PERFORM POEMS BY... put out by Rory Harris/Peter McFarlane of the "Australian Association for the Teaching of English" - although I hardly consider inflicting heavy verse on undefended and undeserving school-kids any particular reason for gratitude or chanx either.

Enjoyed the Roget fiction though, by Gail Neville; its possible to divide my own writing into three distinct categories - the stuff I wrote pre-Roget which is enlivened by a spontaneous ineptness equalled only by the narrow width of its vocabulary, phase two is characterised by the discovery of Roget in which adjectives multiply charmingly and usually occur in alphabetical order using many words which are only found in Thesaurus - like "chiaroscuro" and "obfuscation". Phase three is post-Roget, hopefully older and wiser after going cold turkey and drying out at a discrete Roget-withdrawal clinic. Hope Gail Neville succeeds with her Thesauran problems - the next obstacle is the Word Processor - and that's a killer!

ROB GREGG, 103 Highfield Rd., Romford, Essex RM5 3AE, UK.

Regarding your editorial in TM 57, I have to disagree that Australia is

the last bastion of the sf genzine. Now, if you'd said sf newzine I might have agreed as I believe you now have THE NOTIONAL, THYME and SF NEWS, whereas in Britain we only have ANSIBLE, and that is more fannish than sercon. But, as for sf genzines - well, I've only seen your own, although we heard that Bruce Gillespie produces something serconish - none of the other Aussie zines I've seen or heard of could be regarded as sf genzines. WWW, GEGENSHEIN, WAHF FULL, SIKANDER and TIGGER are all more fannish than sf-ish.

I particularly enjoyed Boris Zavgorodny's SOVIET SF CHRONICLE of the Soviet related articles in this issue. Although I have to advise that the names and books are still largely unknown to me, as very few Soviet authors are pubbed in Britain. Possibly the Moscow publishing agencies would be the place to look - but I don't know if they're out in English, and I can't read Russian.

Since I last wrote, I have picked up one second-hand anthology of Soviet sf. It is VORTEX: NEW SOVIET SCIENCE FICTION, edited by C.G. Bearne (Pan Books 1970). The stories contained therein are: THE SECOND MARTIAN INVASION by the Strugutsky's; HE WILL WAKE IN 200 YEARS by Andrei Gorbovskii; THE SILENT PROCESSION by Boris Smagin; THE TIME SCALE by Aleksandr and Sergei Abramov; THE TEST and THE OLD ROAD by Artur Mirer and FUTILITY, also by A Gorbovskii. It is rounded off by a long introduction to Soviet sf by Amadne Gromova. All in all, a nice little volume, and a bargain at only 25p! Appalling cover though - reminds me of something out of King Arthur's Britain rather than being futuristic.

I liked Kerrie Hanlon's cover - reminded me of the John Varley novel MILLENIUM. That is how I imagined the time travellers looked when they arrived to rescue people from the doomed planes. The bacover reminded me too much of drum majorettes.

I enjoyed Gail Neville's THE LAWLESS EFFECT, but it was a little too condensed, and rather unrealistic when one considered it in hindsight. I can't see there ever being a female Prime Minister in Australia (not that I'm opposed to the idea) but now the Americans have elected an actor, I suppose it's unlikely they'll ever elect another "proper" President. I don't know about Racquel Welch though... personally I thought John Glenn would've got the Democrat nomination last time, especially with THE RIGHT STUFF being released.

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

John Alderson praises the stabilising effect of the dowry system in THE MENTOR 56. The dowry element in feudalism, whereby an heiress brought her lands to her husband, could often act as a violent destabiliser - Eleanor of Aquitaine is the classic example. But an example of dowry as a destabiliser of much more current validity is surely what is happening now in India, the increasingly widespread occurrence of bride-murder (often thinly disguised as paraffin stove incidents) because the husband's family, dissatisfied with the amount of dowry received, decides to eliminate the first bride and try for a better payoff from a second. The desperation to provide a good dowry is also apparently a major cause of lifelong debt bondage for the bride's father. Regardless of whether it once stabilised Indian society, under the impact of pressures to "consume" in neo-Western terms it has surely become a dangerous destructive force.

Just to briefly amplify this point: for the inhabitants of the land concerned, this could mean, not just a change of dynasty, but a change of nationality of the ruler, a "Trojan horse" of foreign domination arriving to take over not just the marriage bed but the whole structure of society. And wars to control who the heiress' married, or to control her lands once you had married her, were a perennial feature of medieval society. I think the relative stability for long periods of much of Germany in the medieval period (not so much an absence of

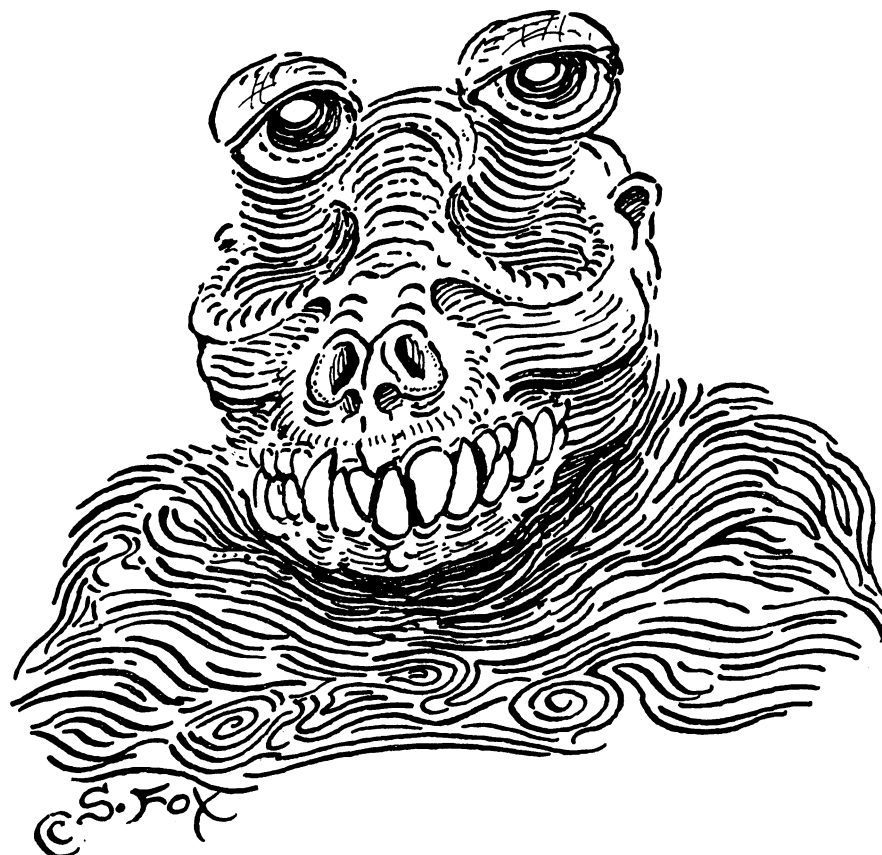
war, admittedly, but an absence of enforced mergers of statelets or changes of nationality of controller) arose from their Salic Law, which prevented a land dowry system.

Re the queries in locs re BURNING WITH A VISION poetry anthology - among pros represented in it are Brian Aldiss, Tom Disch, Suzette Elgin, Joe Haldeman, Ursula Leguin and Roger Zelazny.

GIFT-WRAPPED is a delicious tale (excuse pun). I like the "laid back" strangeness, and the almost Alice in Wonderland-style size shifting. A little gem. Wrapping paper that walks to the bin, tha't what we need. There was a radio prog. tonight, THE ARCHERS IN 2050 (takeoff/projection of the daily farming "soap" radio serial THE ARCHERS) which had a similiarly appealing necessary improvement: the robot drinking companion, which cd also safely drive you home.

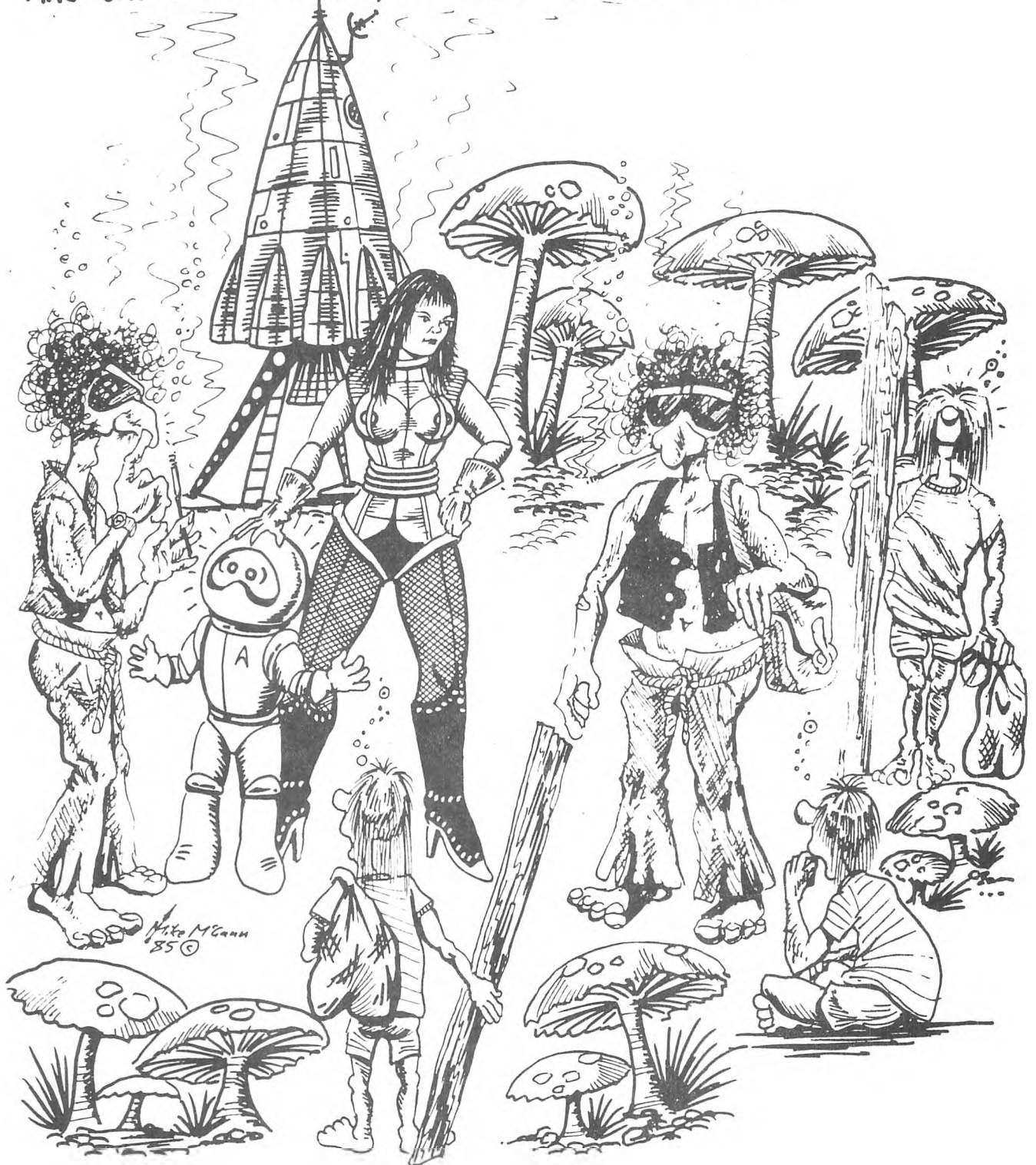
Reminds me - an amusing anecdote re new tech which sounds apocryphal, but I'm assured isn't: friend of a colleague at work has just got an Amstrad word processor (incredibly cheap) - 399 pounds plus VAT for full fig incl. printer), says it'll be much cheaper than a secretary for his one-man business (so much for new small businesses creating employment!); anyhow in this letter he decided to change "man" to "person" throughout. Lo and behold the Amstrad programme did it perfectly... but it also changed Manchester to Personchester in the address. Good job there wasn't a reference to Manfred Mann. Cometh the person-dominated society.

WE ALSO HEARD FROM: Andy Andruschak, Raymond L. Clancy, Ron Gemmel and Sue Isle. Because of various causes, the publishing schedule of THE MENTOR is changing from this issue on. THE MENTOR will be still coming out every two months (because of the postal commitments) but there will be changes, some of which look interesting from heree. See what you think of the next few issues.



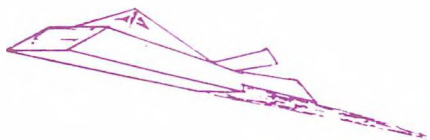
SPACED OUT...ON A NEW PLANET

WITH A STRANGE ALIEN PEOPLE WHO SMOKE FUNNY THINGS,
AND SAY IT'S COOL MAN, AND ONLY THE NOSE KNOWS..!?



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REVIEWS



DRAGON'S EGG by Robert L. Forward. NEL pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1980. 308pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

In the Beginning was hardcore sf, then after it came Inner Space.

DRAGON'S EGG refers to a neutron star that will pass close to Sol some time in the future. When it is discovered early in the 21st century a spacecraft is sent to research it. Since the surface gravity is some 67 billion gees it takes some special preparations to get the spacecraft down to some 400 kilometres of the surface. This is done by setting up six super-dense asteroids to form a circular pattern and the spacecraft fits itself inside, thus neutralising the enormous gravity.

The surface of the neutron star turns out to be inhabited by creatures somewhat like Hal Clement's Mesklinites who have evolved specialised structures to survive the unique world of Dragon's Egg. Because the reactions on the star are based on nuclear, rather than molecular reactions, the native's time-frame is about 100,000 times as fast as an ordinary humans, so much of their history passes in front of the visiting human's eyes. *Recommended*.

THE FLIGHT OF THE DRAGONFLY by Robert L. Forward. NEL pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1984. 318pp incl. indices. A\$6.95. On sale now.

I don't know if this novel is set in the same universe as **DRAGON'S EGG** - though there is no indication it is. I think Forward just likes the word 'dragon' or the publisher is trying to cash in on the sales of the earlier novel.

THE FLIGHT OF THE DRAGONFLY is written in a more free flowing style than the earlier novel. That novel was almost pure scientific speculation and the action, what there was of it, stopped for the scientific background. In this novel the background is more skilfully woven into the plot. Which follows the adventures of a crew sent to explore Barnard's Star by light-sail ship. They go the slow trip - sixty years one way only - with a drug that slows down the aging process, and also lowers IQ by a considerable amount. When they get there they discover alien life in the seas of one of the double planets circling a giant planet, larger than Jupiter.

Excellent speculative SF.

SPACE FAMILY STONE by Robert A. Heinlein. NEL pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1952. A\$6.95. On sale now.

I am reviewing the best of the reprints as they are reissued - this includes the juvenile

Heinleins, which are being reprinted alone with his other works.

SPACE FAMILY STONE starts off with the two Stone twins, Castor and Pollux, looking over some second-hand space ships in a dealer's yard on Luna. They had invented several devices and come into money; they decided to enlarge their deposit and purchase a ship and ship cargo. When they told their father of their plans he, after some verbiage, told them that he had decided to go on a holiday trip into space, and had thought of purchasing himself a ship. They went back to the yards, along with their grandmother, who was as bossy as Heinlein's principal older male characters in his later novels... and ended up buying a cargo ship.

The author slips in scientific facts with some ease, though they are not integrated totally with the story, they are fairly easy to digest. As with most of his juveniles, it is enjoyable for adults also.

DAYWORLD by Philip Jose Farmer. Granada h/c, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1985. 322pp. A\$19.95. On sale now.

The (very well done) dust jacket on this book is slightly misleading in that it shows a monad towering over countryside with other monads in the distance, when apparently, from the text, the city are still sprawling things, with some extra-large buildings.

Be that as it may, Farmer has done what Wells recommended and though up one process that was unique and built the novel on that. The 'process' that farmer used is that of 'stoning'. In the future world that Farmer envisages, the majority of the people of the earth are alive on only on day a week - on the other days they are 'stoned', or their molecular structure is frozen. A person may be a 'Monday' person, and come alive each Monday morning, go to work through the day, and be stoned again that night, to wake up the following Monday, unaware of the passing of time. Of course there are those who escape to live every day; they are called 'Daybreakers' and **DAYWORLD** details the search for a maniac who is one.

A well thought out future society. *Recommended*.

SKYFALL by Harry Harrison. Granada pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1976. 270pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

This is possibly the first of those novels detailing what would happen when a spacecraft fell from orbit and obliterated a piece of earth. The spacecraft in this instance was Prometheus, which weighed 20,000 tons on the

launching pad.

The project to put a reflecting mirror into orbit to enable power to be collected and sent to earth, was a joint project of the US and USSR. The boosters and rocket were Soviet and the spacecraft itself and the generator from the US. The crew was also mixed, both for race, sex and nationality. The launch was successful but the trouble came in the second burn into a higher orbit. From the time the separating bolts failed to properly let go, to the firing of the fission rocket, everything went wrong. And there was a 10,000 ton spacecraft in a decaying orbit.

Then the sun-spot activity started. One of Harrison's best.

SILVERTHORN by Raymond E. Feist. Granada h/c, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1985. 302pp. A\$19.95. On sale now.

SILVERTHORN is the sequel to **MAGICIAN**, and is the second in the Riftwar trilogy, the last book, **DARKNESS AT SETHANON**, will be published later.

The book takes up where **MAGICIAN** left off, and takes up a year later in time when everything had settled down. Though Macros, the adversary they had fought, had died as detailed in **MAGICIAN**, the being only known as the Enemy was still at large. The first they knew anything was amiss was when, on her wedding day, the princess was poisoned and fell into a sickness that would end in death. That makes up the quest part of the plot. In addition, undead soldiers are brought into action against the new king, Lyam.

Fantasy had a quite large readership now, and many of those readers are apparently not quite so discerning, if what is being sold as fantasy is any guide; however this series is one that can be bought to read without undue worry at finding the prose turgid.

RHIATO THE MARVELLOUS by Jack Vance. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1984. 240pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

In this novel Vance ventures forward to the Dying Earth, aeons in the future (the 21st Aeon, to be accurate). In those far off days, the powers reside in magicians, who group themselves together in self-help and protection groups. In one such group is Rhiato, who calls himself The Marvellous.

The book consists of several novellas which follow on somewhat in the same timeframe. In the first, the story details how a witch who was exiled some aeons before escapes her place of confinement and journeys to Earth to do mischief. In the second, one of the band of magicians becomes annoyed at Rhiato and proceeds to play increasingly unfunny jokes on him, ending up breaking the self-imposed magicians laws.

As I have mentioned previously, Vance has his unique style and his writing lends a flavour that is his along. A pleasant read.

FRONTIERA by Lewis Shiner. Sphere pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1984. 181pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

FRONTIERA is billed on the cover as a first novel, and on the back-cover a blurb by George R.R. Martin says "Shiner's gritty realism makes you believe every minute". I would not go so far as to say "every minute", but the novel is certainly gripping and Shiner has researched present ideas about the physical identity of Mars quite well.

Some time before the story opens support has been withdrawn from the Martian colonies by

both the Soviet Union and the USA leaving the colonists who refused to leave no support. The governments of most of the developed countries then proceeded to collapse and the multinationals then took over (even in the Soviet Union). The combine who took over the space facilities of NASA had been listening in to the broadcasts from a mole left on Mars and found out about experiments there with antimatter space drives and a matter transmitter. Putting together a mission from components left over from before the collapse, the ship from the USA arrived only a few days ahead of that from the USSR. Tension mounted when the "governor" of the (only) combined colony found out how far along the experiments were and tried to take over. Quite realistic sf.

DESTINATION: VOID by Frank Herbert. Penguin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1966. 219pp. A\$4.95. On sale now.

THE JESUS INCIDENT is the sequel to this earlier novel of Herbert's. **VOID** is one of his earlier works and shows it somewhat. The cover illustration does not illustrate any scene at all from the novel.

The scene is set some time in the not-so-far-future when starships are being sent out to colonise nearby planets of other systems. Unfortunately the ships on their hundred year or so voyages need some sort of guidance and human brains especially mated to the ships, have been developed. Not too successfully, it seems as the first six ships sent out have not been heard from again. The ship is not even out of the solar system when the three 'brains' are destroyed and the four awake crew members must decide what to do and do it fairly quickly.

Herbert has laced computer, psychology and a mish-mash of esoteric scientific terms throughout the 'explanation' of the behaviour of the ship's computer. At times it is heavy going.

THE FACE OF CHAOS edited by Robert Asprin and Lynn Abbey. Penguin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1983. 204pp. A\$4.95. On sale now.

The Saga of Thieves World must have caught on with fantasy readers for Penguin to be printing these from US originals. Each book consists of an Introduction by Robert Asprin where he sets the scene for the individual stories that follow. Each author has written separately his or her own story and editor Asprin has placed them in some semblance of order.

Following on from the previous volumes, the authors Asprin has used are usually the same, but these sometimes take up new characters; many change but in order to give a thread to them theme, storytellers are often used. The stories included in **THE FACE OF CHAOS** are:- **HIGH MOON** by Janet Morris; **NECROMANT** by C.J. Cherryh; **THE ART OF ALLIANCE** by Robert Asprin; **THE CORNERS OF MEMORY** by Lynn Abbey; **VOTARY** by David Drake and **MIRROR IMAGE** by Diana Paxson.

The world of the Thieves is becoming more and more fixed, so the writers using its background are becoming increasingly limited in some ways. An interesting experiment.

HERSEKER by Fred Saberhagen. Penguin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1963/66. 224pp. A\$4.95. On sale now.

I first read these stories when they were first published in **GALAXY** magazine back in the sixties. I have always wondered how they would stand up for a re-reading as I thought when I first read them that they were quite exciting.

The stories are printed here somewhat in

the form of a novel; this they stand up to well. The basic background has become well known over the years since they were first printed - the fighting machines left over from an ancient interplanetary war had followed their prime instruction to destroy all life and were now attacking the human held worlds. The machines were not only old, but immense - in the first story one is described as being liked in size to the state of New Jersey. Even fusion weapons have little effect on their immenseness and it is only by ganging up on them with three ships do the human have any chance of destroying them. They have ranged through the galaxy and even though most have been destroyed in the epic battle of Stone Place, they have built automated shipyards and new Berserker machines were being built. The past twenty years hasn't aged these stories any. *Recommended* - one of the modern classics.

ROBOTS AND EMPIRE by Isaac Asimov. Granada h/c, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1985. 423pp. A\$21.95. On sale now.

Sequels are coming thick and fast... **ROBOTS AND EMPIRE** is the sequel to **THE ROBOTS OF DAWN**. It is set some one hundred and sixty-four years after Elijah Baley has died of old age on the Settler planet named after him - Baleyworld. His descendents live on, some of them named after his two robot helpers.

Asimov is attempting to tie some of his various series up into a coherent whole. In **FOUNDATION'S EDGE** he introduced robots into the Foundation Series. In this volume he introduces the first steps that lead the robots (or at least two of them) to gain an inkling of Psychohistory...). Baley's old enemy, Amadiro, is still living, being a Spacer, and is still more-than-smarting under the grudge. He is determined to avenge himself and there comes into his employ a man who has determined how to destroy Earth and its future power. The novel tells of a race against time as the robots attempt to try to stop Amadiro, with the words of the First Law protecting him, rather than the people of Earth.

Asimov shows his polish in the simple style of the story. There is more sf than detective this time around.

DEMON IN THE SKULL by Frederik Pohl. Penguin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1965. Revised edition 1985. 172pp. A\$4.95. On sale now.

When published in 1965 this novel was titled **A PLAGUE OF PYTHONS**. Apparently Pohl has updated this edition and the updated version is now titled **DEMON IN THE SKULL**.

The covers of the latest Penguins are getting more towards cover artwork and less towards impressions, if that is the right word. It seems that a research team in Russia had perfected a means a mind control using a transmitter and a device that fitted over the brow like a coronet. It was possible to 'float' over the world and take over anyone who was not wearing the device. In the end only about a thousand people ended up wearing them. In the process of taking over the world the original wearers had destroyed it, firstly by exploding bombs over Moscow, New York etc, and then by creating a reign of terror by killing, raping and generally cowering the populace. The career of one man, named throughout the novel as 'Chandler' is followed as first he is held for trial for the rape and dismemberment of a sixteen-year old girl which he escapes by a technicality, through to his trials when he meets the overlords.

Smoothly written sf adventure.

CODE OF THE LIFEMAKER by James P. Hogan. Penguin

pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1983. 405pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

Robots are thing going thing lately - first there were the two new Asimov robot books then **CODE OF THE LIFEMAKER**. **CODE** is an adventure novel, but also has some philosophising.

A probe which was sent to investigate Titan found what appeared to be a complex of some sort on various parts of the planet. It seemed that factories on Titan were churning out machines at a prodigious rate. The introduction to the novel shows how, some one and a half millions years ago an alien ship was sent to set up an automated factory on a rich metal-bearing planet. This being done, the ship departed and the factory flourished until the star went nova, setting off a chain reaction which destroyed the factory planet as well as the home planet of the aliens who set it up. The returning ship, damaged, landed on Titan and set up more factories. Unfortunately radiation damage from the nova had scrambled some of its circuits and the end result was a robot economy which ultimately produced intelligent, replicating robots.

Then the terrans arrived to try to obtain some of the output from the automated factories... I suppose you could call this an example of class consciousness in robots. Amusing reading.

MOLLY ZERO by Keith Roberts. Penguin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust Ltd. (C) 1980. 251pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

As far as I know this is one of Roberts' newer novels. It is set 200 years from now in a Britain in a Britain that is under martial law, and has been for most of those 200 years. It is not until the last few pages of the novel that the reader obtains the background that enables him or her to fill in the gaps that the author (deliberately) leaves in the plot.

The heroine of the novel is Molly Zero. All the people she meets have a given name followed by a numeral. Molly was born in, and brought up in the Blocks, large buildings built like fortresses. When she and her classmates go out they go in shuttered and guarded trains and busses, with slit windows. everywhere they go are the militia, guarding them. Every so often one of Molly's classmates disappear and she fears that they have failed some test and have been killed. She leads a normal Block life till her Block becomes integrated and boys are introduced in their lives. She meets Paul, who is planning to escape and persuades Molly to go with him. They travel through the remaining countryside that remains, the towns isolated and surrounded by fences and militia with automatic firearms.

The two managed to escape and eventually meet the young people who are trying to free the people. However all is not as it seems... *Recommended*.

THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW by Robert A. Heinlein. NEL pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1949. 141 pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

Heinlein's publishers keep his books in print so that new readers have no trouble obtaining his older works. **THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW** is nearly forty years old and is still fresh reading.

Set in a USA where it has been recently defeated by Asian Hordes, the hope of the people trodden under the oppressor is in a secret defense establishment called by the inhabitants the Citadel. Unfortunately at the time the country had been taken over all but six of the men manning the Citadel had been killed by a lethal radiation that

an experimenter into alternate energy had been experimenting with. After an expedition into the hinterland where they found just how bad things were for the general populace, the remaining free men attempted to do something to free the country. How they did it is the gist of the novel.

The cover illustrates a scene from the novel accurately - at least one cover artist reads the work before illustrating.

FOHLSTARS by Frederik Pohl. Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1984. 203pp. A\$30.95. On sale now.

The stories in this anthology were published in two groupings - 1974-77 and 1983. They come from such diverse sources as OMNI, FINAL STAGE, THE MAGAZINE OF F&SD, VIVA and FELLOWSHIP OF THE STARS.

There are eleven stories altogether, along with an Introduction, in which Pohl tells of meeting Chinese sf writers. The fiction is: THE SWEET, SAD QUEEN OF THE GRAZING ISLES; THE HIGH TEST; SPENDING A DAY AT THE LOTTERY FAIR; SECOND COMING; ENJOY, ENJOY; GROWING UP IN EDGE CITY; WE PURCHASED PEOPLE; REM THE REMEMBERER; THE MOTHER TRIP; A DAY IN THE LIFE OF ABLE CHARLIE and THE WAY IT WAS.

Pohl's fiction is often savage and straight to the point. In these stories he sometimes comes back to a subject again (as in overpopulation) but any messages he has are integrated in the stories. Which are often gritty but world wise. It is not often that he romanticises. *Recommended*.

GALAPAGOS by Kurt Vonnegut. Jonathan Cape h/c, dist in Aust by Australasian Publishing Co. (C) 1985. 269pp. A\$24.95. On sale now.

It has been some time since I last read a Vonnegut novel. Galapagos has been reviewed in the US edition by several Aussie fanzines when it was apparently titled THE GALAPAGOS ARCHIPELAGO. There is no hint in this edition of a title change.

The year the novel is set in is late 1986, which kind of cramps the future of the same for readers first coming upon it in several years time. Events have unloaded the worlds misfortunes and a enormous market crash is in the process of wiping out most countries economies. The plot centres around a cruise (which was planned before the economies fell apart) to sail around the Galapagos islands and visit the areas Darwin saw in the nineteenth century and in the doing so gain some education. The people who ended up actually sailing were the Captain, a young Japanese woman, an elderly school teacher, a con man and six young cannibal girls. How they survived and gave the then human race the opportunity to loose the capacity of their 'big brains' and evolve into something that was in tune with their environment in a million years is the theme of GALAPAGOS.

THE REAVERS OF SKAITH by Leigh Brackett. NEL pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1976. 208pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

This is the third in the Planet Skaith trilogy. The series is science fantasy more than sword and sorcery; that is, the powers used by the characters who use them are psi powers and are not used haphazardly.

Eric John Stark, the man brought from the slums of Mercury as a child, and who had been betrayed when he thought he was going to attain his goal at last, manages to escape from the spacers who have captured him and, with his foster father, sets out to cross the planet to enlist aid to throw

the spacers off and also throw off the yoke of the Wandsmen. Brackett has wrought a believable society with the Skaith trilogy and the adventure proceeds at a fast clip. Some of the latest sf adventures are not as interesting as those of Leigh Brackett, who has written them from the 1940s and with equal verve.

A good novel to take on the train or plane.

I HOPE I SHALL ARRIVE SOON by Philip K. Dick. Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1985. 179pp. A\$30.95. On sale May.

The stories in this collection are from two periods in Dick's writing career: the early years and the last five years of his life; thus they range from the early fifties to around 1980.

The volume commences with a reprint of his speech HOW TO BUILD A UNIVERSE THAT DOESN'T FALL APART TWO DAYS LATER, in which he gives details of how the present reality has a foundation of around Rome AD 50, and this basic reality has the ability to show through every so often. The stories included are: THE SHORT HAPPY LIFE OF THE BROWN OXFORD; EXPLORERS WE; HOLY QUARREL; WHAT'LL WE DO WITH RAGLAND PARK?; STRANGE MEMORIES OF DEATH; THE ALIEN MIND; THE EXIT DOOR LEADS IN; CHAINS OF AIR, WEB OF AETHER; RAUTANARRA'S CASE and I HOPE I SHALL ARRIVE SOON. If you haven't read much of Dick, this collection is a good introduction to his style of writing and if you like these you will also like his novels. It is best to start with his earlier ones and read forward - his later works such as UBIK need to be snuck up on.

WELCOME, CHAOS by Kate Wilhelm. Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1983. 297pp. A\$32.95. On sale June.

Many of the novels nowadays are written in a fragmented style and are thus hard to follow. WELCOME, CHAOS is not one of these. The theme of the novel is spread over the yellow jacket, so it is not a secret to say that it is immortality.

The protagonist is a college lecturer who had written a bestseller about hawks. The book had unexpectedly taken off in the lists and she is approached to write a book about eagles. The book agency is genuine; the man behind the idea is not what he seems. He is Lasater, a one-time government agent who is intrigued by Saul Werther, a man he suspects has an immense secret. Lasater believes Werther is murdering scientists who are getting too close to certain conclusions in biological sciences. Lasater tells Lyle Taney, the author, that he believes Werther is a drug dealer and asks her to spy for him. Taney is naturally not too enthused with the idea but Lasater blackmails her.

The plot thickens when Taney meets Werther and his houseboy, Carmen. She cannot believe that Werther is a drug smuggler. Lasater tells her he believes Werther will kill Carmen when he moves out. An excellent novel.

1986 YEARBOOK OF ASTRONOMY edited by Patrick Moore. Sidgwick & Jackson pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1985. 240pp. A\$18.95. On sale now.

This is the first I have seen Moore's Yearbook. Physically it is standard paperback size with glossy stiff cover and is well bound with high quality paper. The contents read as follows = Part One Monthly charts and Astronomical Phenomena: notes on the star charts; northern star charts; southern star charts; the planets and the ecliptic; phases of the moon; longitudes of the sun, moon and planets; events in 1986; monthly notes; eclipses in 1986; occultations in 1986; comets in 1986; minor

planets in 1986; meteors in 1986; some events in 1987; Part Two - Article Section: Australian pepper; Vermis of the sky; 1983 TB and the geminids; Observing the sun in hydrogen alpha; photoelectric photometry: a quiet revolution in amateur astronomy; radio stars; spiral galaxies, side by side; uranus: voyager is coming; Part Three - Miscellaneous: Some interesting telescopic variable stars; some interesting double stars; some interesting nebulae and clusters

The star charts give stars down to the fourth magnitude. An excellent book for the amateur astronomer.

THE PENGUIN REFERENCE DICTIONARY, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1985. 1107pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

The last paperback dictionary I purchased was **THE PENGUIN ENGLISH DICTIONARY**. Back in 1965 it was 19/6. I am still using it. **THE PENGUIN REFERENCE DICTIONARY** has over 35,000 headwords and over 100,000 entries. It is based on the **LONGMAN NEW UNIVERSAL DICTIONARY (LONGMAN CONCISE ENGLISH DICTIONARY)**. There is included a "How to use this dictionary"; abbreviations used; the dictionary itself; common abbreviations; periodic table and physical units table.

When I am running the spelling program through **THE MENTOR** and it picks up a word it says is misspelled, this is the first reference dictionary I pick up to check the spelling. Usually I find the word in it. The dictionary is a nice size for a desk top - 15cm x 21 cm and is 5cm thick. If you don't have a good reference dictionary, or want to update yours, this is the obvious choice.

UNIVERSE - A THREE-DIMENSIONAL STUDY by Heather Couper & David Pelham. Century h/c, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. 6 three-dimensional pages. A\$29.95. On sale now.

You don't see many three-dimensional educational books these days. This volume is large (25cm x 25 cm) and each page opens up into some aspect of the universe from its birth to death. Each page had individual pull-outs which explain further the goings on of that section.

Page One illustrates the Big Bang, and has pull-out of wavefronts and the Universal Clock. Page Two illustrates in 3-D two galaxies and shows the different types of galaxies. Page Three pops up into the birth of a star from cloud to fusion generator. Page Four shows the planets, with a pop up of the asteroids and Saturn. Page Five illustrates Star Death with the star going nova. Page six shows the end of the universe, with an enormous black hole. Each page also has two expander sections with text explaining the models and illustrations further.

A beautiful book for expanding the sense of wonder in children (and adults).

CHAMPION OF THE LAST BATTLE and **A WOMAN OF THE HORSECLANS (VOLUMES 11 & 12 of The Horseclans Saga)** by Robert Adams. Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1983 201 & 197pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

Two more novels from the prolific pen of Robert Adams. Interestingly they both show warrior women in fighting pose - one apparently battling a bearlike creature, the other, showing a slightly knock-kneed maid, swinging a sword around her head for no apparent reason.

These books are printed in micro-elite type and are full of swash-buckling adventure - #11 tells of when Bili and prince Byruhn are forced to call their people for a protracted defense of New

Kuhmbuhlun. The attacking Skohshuns have developed new weapons and the stone walls of the city are soon under sustained attack. In addition to the enemy outside a strange killer stalks the inhabitants. #2 follows the adventures of Bettylou as she is first kidnapped by the Horseclans from the people who thought her the epitome of evil and whose elder had impregnated her to prove it.

THE CITY by Jane Gaskell. Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1966. 190pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

The continuing story set in earth's past before she captured the moon, when an ancient civilization headed by Atlan. Cija is still fleeing for her life - she passes through the open doors of a brothel and ends up in the temple of her father. Managing to escape from him she falls into the arena of apes, where she manages to survive and makes off with a bull ape, whom she befriends and all is well until the temple city guards find her again.

The Atlan Saga was written back in the early sixties and remains one of the better fantasy series from that period. Having a female protagonist it heralded the upcoming feminist revolution in prose. The writing style is vigorous and the story is well told. Since it is a series the books are written with that end in mind - they use this to make the background as natural as the present day. This is the type of series that it is best to read in one sitting - they are too good to buy one and read it, then buy the next some months later and read it them.

MASTER OF THE FIVE MAGICS by Lyndon Hardy. Corgi pb, dist in Aust by Corgi & Bantam Books. (C) 1980. 408pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

I first read this novel in the Ballantine edition back in 1980. It is one of those fantasy novels that attempts to cover those arts of magic from the point of view of an apprentice. The apprentice in this case is one Alodar who was an apprentice thaumaturge. The adventures he was precipitated into found him on a quest to win Queen Vandora's hand. The quest was his own idea but to continue the adventure he had to learn the handle the five branches of the arts: Thaumaturgy, Alchemy, Magic, Sorcery, and Wizardry.

How he manages to continue his search and study, though a series of adventures and misadventures makes up one of the more studied novels about the laws of magic that has appeared in the last ten years. If you are a fantasy fan and haven't read this book - it is one for your library.

DAY OF THE DOVE adapted by James Blish. Bantam pb, dist in Aust by Corgi & Bantam Books. (C) 1975. 188pp. A\$3.95. On sale now.

Previously titled **STAR TREK II**, the publishing history tells just how the fans like to read Star Trek. First published in 1975, it was reprinted in April, July and November 1975, then in August 1977, January 1978, October 1979 and then in October 1985.

The stories included in this volume are (with their original screen writer): **WHAT ARE LITTLE GIRLS MADE OF** - Robert Bloch; **THE SQUIRE OF GOTHOS** - Paul Schneider; **WINK OF AN EYE** - Arthur Keinemann & Lee Cronin; **BREAD AND CIRCUSES** - Gene Roddenberry & Gene L. Coon; **DAY OF THE DOVE** - Jerome Bixby; and **PLATO'S STEPCHILDREN** by Meyer Dolinsky. They follow pretty well the scripts of the series, and in the Introduction James Blish makes some interesting comments about some of the fan letters he received from the readers of his

Star Trek novels and adaptation. *

AUTOBOTS FIGHT BACK - The Transformers. Ladybird h/c, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1985. 43pp in colour. A\$1.95. On sale now.

The further adventures of the autobots war against the evil decepticons. In this adventure the decepticons have rebuilt their starship to the point that they have to test their ion drive system. They do not have a place big enough to test it in their complex so they try to find somewhere outside. They find an abandoned tunnel of the required dimensions, with a track running into it and commence to set the test up. In the meantime the autobots have discovered their plans and try to foil the attempted test.

The TV cartoons have proved quite popular with children and so also do these booklets appear to have. If you know any children interested in sf they will probably enjoy this series as presents.

EXILES OF COLSEC by Douglas Hill. Puffin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1984. 127pp. A\$3.50. On sale now.

Douglas Hill writes sf mainly published for the children's market, as this Puffin book is. The story is set in the future some hundred years or so, when the world is ruled by a bureaucracy and is administered by 'sections'. The section referred to in the title is Colonisation Section. Twelve teenagers are being transported to Antarctica when one of them wakes up only to find they are actually on their way to attempt to implant a colony on a newly discovered planet. Unfortunately the ship is damaged and they can either attempt to land a ship which is not designed for it, or hope to contact another ship in deep space before their food gives out. The decision made is to attempt to land.

I found this novel to be engrossing and equal to any sf adventure from the Golden Age of the 1940s. The approach is fresh and the problems faced by the survivors - the aliens and the insane passenger - are well integrated. I am sure that any sf fan will find this novel an entertaining read. *Recommended*.

LIES, INC by Philip K. Dick. Granada pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1964. 223pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

This is the first time this novel has been published in paperback for the British market. The novel was first published in **AMAZING** as **THE UNTELEPORTED MAN**. An extra 30,000 words is in this edition which were not in the 1983 US edition.

The Lies, Inc of the title is a giant organisation which specialises in transmitting information that was not the truth. The novel commences with a technician taking a computer out of circuit that had transmitted information that was not a lie. It had transmitted this information to one Ben Applebaum Rachmael, who had had dreams that he was a rat. His father, now dead, had headed a spaceship company who were exploring the cosmos. When Trails of Hoffman, another conglomerate, came up with an instantaneous method of interstellar transportation his father went out of business, and Applebaum ended up needing police protection.

If you like Dick, this is another novel you will want, especially with the extra wordage.

REVOLT OF THE GALAXY by E.E. 'Doc' Smith with Stephen Goldin. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1985. 186pp. A\$5.95. On sale

now.

The blurb says that this is the tenth and last in the Family d'Alembert series started by Doc Smith and carried on by Stephen Goldin.

Doc Smith is well known for his galaxy spanning interstellar adventures. When he died he had several series going that his publishers apparently thought could be carried on by another author. The d'Alembert series was one of them. The series tells how the d'Alembert's strive to save the Empire and Emperor from dissidents. They follow a thread through their adventures and eventually manage to destroy Lady A when she and her fleet attach. In this novel they find the identity of C who was the unseen power behind Lady A. It is a shock to the d'Alemberts, and they attempt to get through to the Head of their organisation to pass on the information.

Another 'space opera' - not an involved as some, but enough to while away a few hours. *

STARFLIGHT ZERO by David Fickling & Perry Hinton. Illust by Peter Andrew Jones. Puffin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1985. 36 pp. 21.5cm x 28cm. A\$6.95. On sale now.

This is a fantasy questbook and is in full colour. What it is is a gamesbook, which game can be done using a pencil as the only additional tool. The story is that a community of 23 worlds had been attacked by ships wielding 'black light' which was sourced at their home base at the other side of the galaxy. All but one planet had fallen to them and as a last resort eight ships, including that of the reader, attempts to destroy the source of the 'black light'. Each double page of the book illustrates a scene from an action that the ships meet on their way to the source, and a control screen integrated with the picture gives information re damage, ships remaining, fuel, navigation etc. In fact what you have here is a computer game without the computer.

I read quickly through it, and it looks a little complicated, though I imagine for dedicated games buffs it would not be.

LASERS AND HOLOGRAMS by Judy Allen. Puffin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1983. 108pp. A\$3.50. On sale now.

This is a companion volume to Allen's **CHIPS, COMPUTERS AND ROBOTS**, which was reviewed several issues ago. I found that earlier book was a little more complex, dealing as it did with a more complex structure. **LASERS AND HOLOGRAMS** is a much easier book to read and does not require rereading some sections. The bulk of the book is taken up with lasers, commencing with the nature of light and going on to describing the different types of lasers (ruby, gas semi-conductor, dye) and going on to fission and fusion and fluorescence and fibre-optic communications.

The section on holography is, as I mentioned, short but it does go into how it is done and the various uses. The book ends on the future applications of holography. A beginners book for a home library.

POWER PAINTING - COMPUTER GRAPHICS ON THE MACINTOSH by Verne Bauman & Ronald Kidd. Illust by Gaspar Vaccaro. Bantam pb, dist in Aust by Corgi & Bantam Books. (C) 1985. 208pp. A\$24.95. On sale now.

If you own a Macintosh, or were thinking of buying one, then this book gives the practical application of that advertised graphics capability. The book is in two parts: Part One - Tools and Techniques, which acquaints you with the computer and its graphics programmes, principle

MacPaint. In part two the book guides you through the uses to which the computer can be put to use.

About a third of the book is illustrations of the text and the screen, so as to make the text easier to follow. The idea is that you sit down in front of a Macintosh and use the book in a hands-on technique. Part One chapters are headed THE MACINTOSH; MACPAINT; BASICS OF DRAWING AND DESIGN; MANAGING GRAPHICS and OTHER GRAPHICS PROGRAMMES. Part Two headings are: THE HOME COMPUTER ARTIST; THE HOME GRAPHIC DESIGNER; THE HOME ARCHITECT AND DECORATOR; THE HOME EDUCATOR; KIDS AND THE MAC. There is also an Appendix, GUIDE TO MACPAINT. From what I can make out, not having a Macintosh, this would be a very useful book. *

THE WINDSINGERS by Megan Lindholm. Corgi pb, dist in Aust by Corgi & Bantam Books. (C) 1983/4. 637pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

This is quite a hefty volume. It consists of three books which were first published separately: HARPY'S FLIGHT, THE WINDSINGERS and THE LIMBRETH GATE. I can't say that the cover painting is one to entice the reader, though many of the objects illustrated are from the plot.

It is worth it to come across a story that stands out for itself amongst the formula stuff which is churned out. Especially if the reader has not heard of the author previously. Lindholm is new to me - though I can say that I would read any future novels of hers that come my way.

The world of THE WINDSINGERS is a strange one. Apparently in the far past creatures known as the Gatherers had plucked from various planets some of their higher life forms and placed them on worlds that had been set aside for the purpose. The worlds could be linked by 'Gates', but only with difficulty by the creatures marooned on the planets, which after hundreds of years, came to look upon them as home. Some of the Powers were not human, especially the Windsingers, who though born female children, were spirited away to acquire the alien powers of a dead race. Why there were no male Windsingers is not mentioned.

JOB: A COMEDY OF JUSTICE by Robert A. Heinlein. NEL pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1984. 368pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

This is Heinlein's best book for several years; many would call it his best book ever. It isn't technically sf, but a satirical fantasy in the style of James Branch Cabell (the title points out this), dealing with God, the Devil, Heaven and Hell (all most sardonically) and human love.

The main character is Alex Hergensheimer, right-wing Christian cleric and fund-raiser who recklessly takes part in a South Pacific fire-walking ritual. He survives, but comes out into what seems an alternate universe - his name is now Graham, a beautiful Danish stewardess, Margarethe, is in love with him, and his alternate persona seem to have been mixed up in crime. Alex is an ultraconservative bigot but shrewd and a survivor - characteristics he greatly needs. He and Margarethe are switched again and again into different alternate universes, each fairly similar but with different history, technological level, customs, even coinage. She copes better than Alex, who finds his only job qualifications are a respectable appearance and the patience to cope with very dull work, such as washing crockery. All this is endurable, because they have each other. The explanation for all this is finally shown to be not sfnal but theological. Instead of his usual well-researched details from

the sciences, Heinlein has used quotations from the Bible and Biblical scholarship; fascinating stuff and often quite startling. *Recommended*. Reviewed by Diane Fox.

PLANET OF THE APES by Pierre Boulle. Penguin pb. (C) 1963. 174 pp. \$4.95. On sale now.

This is the book the movies were inspired by rather than the book of the movie. This author brought us BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI amongst many others, and this book, although a breakaway from his normal form, was written in such a style as marked by the post-war fiction. Importance is placed on the reaction of the hero who often apologises for normal feelings, as if he might be offending people by revealing them. I found the style almost as interesting as the story - and the comparisons of the story and what the movie-makers did to it were especially fascinating. Boulle's explanations of science are easily read (like Heinlein's early novels where you read the explanation and sit back and think "of course, that's self-evident") and the story is unfolded as it is discovered by the hero and the author does not succumb to weighty passages of description or explanation. It has a quickly moving feel to it and a conservation of words that makes it a pleasant change from a lot of the novels coming out today. It's a pity some scenes weren't left in it. Ulysse, the hero, is naked through most of the book. The experiments of the apes are definitely believable. Ulysse's guilt at his involvement with the human-animal, Nova, and his attraction to Zira which is felt but hardly mentioned. All in all, I enjoyed it as a book, and as a taste of what might have been if it could have been filmed as is.... Reviewed by Susan Clarke.

THE SOURCE by Jack Shackleford, N.E.L. pb. dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1985. 346 pp. \$8.95. Out now.

This is the story of Pan's second coming - or at least his attempted second coming - and the pawns that he uses. At first it seems another of those stories about the stone rings of England, but some mystery is revealed a little at a time. However, mystery buffs will have realised what it was all about by the end of the third chapter. There are some inconsistencies (like the presence of the dead...), but certainly it is entertainingly written. Quite erotic in places to cater for the modern horror market who like their chills with some erotic type thrills. Especially the lesbian scenes. The ending is quite logical in its way (some fool had built a church over the second coming site, hence some interesting problems...) - last of the surprises comes in human (almost) form, and the last chapter is the epilogue, which is a true let-down. I had enjoyed it until that point despite all. It shows what an entertaining writer can do even if the plot is holey. Reviewed by Susan Clarke.

FUTURE BANTAM RELEASES WHICH MAY BE DISTRIBUTED IN AUSTRALIA BY CORGI & BANTAM BOOKS:

MAGICIAN: APPRENTICE by Raymond E. Feist. (C) 1982. 323pp. The sage of the Rift War. MAGICIAN: APPRENTICE is the first volume in a projected four volume series about the land of Midkemia and the boy Pug. It was originally published under the title PUG AND THOMAS. It was also released by Granada as Book One of the 831 page MAGICIAN.

THE MAN WHO MELTED by Jack Dann. (C) 1985. 258pp. The stories this novel consists of were AMNESTIA;

GOING UNDER; SCREAMERS and BLIND SHEMMY which were published between 1981 and 1983. It tells of a man searching for a woman in a world fearful of telepathy and is set in the 21st century.

THE PLANETS edited by Byron Preiss. h/c. (C) 1985. 336pp. This is an extraordinary book. There is an essay on each planet by a scientist then an extrapolation by an sf writer. The volume is illustrated by the latest colour photographs and also illustrations by sf artists. If you see it, buy it.

OTHER CURRENT RELEASES:

PENGUIN:

THE IRON MAN by Ted Hughes
SOFTWARE by Rudy Rucker

SPHERE:

UNICORN VARIATIONS by Roger Zelazny
CONAN THE TRIUMPHANT by R. Jordan
NIGHT'S DAUGHTER by M.Z. Bradley

HODDER & STOUGHTON:

ELEPHANT SONG by Barry Longyear
RIVER OF THE DANCING GODS by Chalker
ATLAN 4 - SOME SUMMER LANDS by Gaskell
THE WEREWOLF PRINCIPLE by Clifford Simak
WHY CALL THEM BACK FROM HEAVEN by Simak
ALL FLESH IS GRASS by Clifford Simak
TIME AND AGAIN by Clifford Simak
FORTY THOUSAND IN GEHENNA by Cherryh
COMPUTER WORLD by A.E. Van Vogt
THE TAR-AIYM KRANG by Alan Dean Foster
GALACTIC RAIDERS by Christopher Black
THE WEIRD ZONE by Christopher Black
THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST by R Heinlein
STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND by Heinlein
D.A.R.Y.L adapted by N. Kleinbaum

CORGI & BANTAM:

THE ENCHANTRESS by Han Suyin
JOURNEY TO THE FLAME by Richard Monaco
RAPHAEL/DAMIANO/DAMIANO'S LUTE - Macavoy
THE POSTMAN by David Brin
SIX OF SWORDS by Carole Douglas
BRAINCHILD by John Saul
DINOBOT WAR (Transformers)
PERIL FROM THE STARS (Transformers)
THE WINDSINGERS by Megan Lindholm

APRIL RELEASES:

CORGI & BANTAM:

ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK by Mike McQuay
SPACEMAN, SPACEMAN by Ireson & Axworthy

PENGUIN:

STARSILK by Sydney van Scyoc
THE MIND by Anthony Smith
THE QUANTUM WORLD by J. Polkinghorne
SETTING GENES TO WORK by S. Yanchinski
THE SAGA OF ERIC THE VIKING by T. Jones
REBEL PLANET by Jackson & Livingstone