



MARTIANS, GO HOME by Fredric Brown. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1955. 202pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

You may recognise the cover on this paperback - it is the same Freas artwork used on the cover of the September 1954 *ASTOUNDING* that ran a shorter version (a baldheaded little green guy with pointed ears with his head resting on the palm of his hand, with a squint in his left eye looking through a giant keyhole).

The story itself concerns the invasion of the earth by 'Martians' back in 1964. They appeared all over the earth and were hellbent on being nuisances - one of their well known proclivities being to watch the mating habits of humans. Since they could see in the dark and look through clothes, sheets and walls, there was not much anyone could do to stop them.

The well known humorous sf classic.

THE SONGS OF DISTANT EARTH by Arthur C. Clarke. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1986. 228pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

The latest of Clarke's 'soft' sf novels. Another novel of the far future set on a planet nearly all ocean. Though this one has some problems that the inhabitants of the planet in *DROWNTIDE* do not have - one is an earthship which shows up to disrupt the calm, the other is a mysterious change in the doings of the creatures inhabiting the oceans of Thalassa.

The natives of Thalassa were settled down to a life of calm and seemingly ease. The only disturbing thing was a matter of some nets breaking. Then the Magellan arrived. It had set out from earth after that planet destruction and had only then arrived at Thalassa in order to obtain a supply of ice for its shield. There was quite a shakeup of Thalassa's social life when all the new humans arrived and their plant that froze sea water into ice before hoisting it into orbit attracted some strange visitors...

First class sf.

NERILKA'S STORY & THE COELURA by Anne McCaffrey. Corgi pb, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers. (C) 1983 and 1986. 192pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

As can be seen from the copyright date, this volume consists of two stories - both of which are listed in the title. *NERILKA'S STORY* is 123 pages long, *THE COELURA* is 52 pages. The former is set on Pern, the latter in a human dominated Galaxy.

Nerlika's story is told concurrent to that of Moreta, who was flying and trying to get the serum to help against the Plague that had spread over the inhabited region of Pern. Nerlika was the daughter of the leader of Fort Hold, who had left to join the revellers at Ruatha along with his wife and

daughters, leaving his son with his other daughter, Nerilka. Of course, as any reader of Nerilka knows, the plague struck Ruatha and decimated the inhabitants.

THE COELURA is a complete story in its own universe. It details how a daughter, Caissa, the 'body-heir' to one of the leading men of the planet, managed to rescue a man who was of an outcast group of which nothing had been heard for years.

I found NERILKA'S STORY to be fairly light, but I was pleasantly surprised to find, on reading, that THE COELURA was very tight knit and enjoyable. I haven't read many of Ann McCaffrey's short stories or novelettes before, and found that I liked them rather than some of the longer novels that she is well known for.

THE PRESERVING MACHINE by Philip K. Dick. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1969. 413pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

A collection of 15 short stories by Dick that are culled from numerous sources. They are all unique and many explore Dick's study of insanity. The contents are as follows:

THE PRESERVING MACHINE; WAR GAME; UPON THE DULL EARTH; ROOG; WAR VETERAN; TOP STAND-BY JOB; BEYOND LIES THE WUB; WE CAN REMEMBER IT FOR YOU WHOLESALE; CAPTIVE MARKET; IF THERE WERE NO BENNY CERMOLI; RETREAT SYNDROME; THE CRAWLERS; OH, TO BE A BLOBEL; WHAT THE DEAD MEN SAY and PAY FOR THE PRINTER.

If you are a P.K. Dick reader you will know his writing style. It has several imitators. If you haven't I suggest you buy this book and keep it in your library after reading it. Some of the stories are classics: WE CAN REMEMBER IT FOR YOU WHOLESALE and BEYOND LIES THE WUB. Several are encapsulated examples of his central theme: RETREAT SYNDROME and WHAT THE DEAD MEN SAY. Some could be almost mistaken for vintage Sturgeon: THE CRAWLERS and CAPTIVE MARKET.

All-in-all a collection not to be missed - buy it.!

DROWNTIDE by Sydney J. Van Scyoc. Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1987. 220pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

This is a newly released novel. Sydney Van Scyoc novels are always good reading and this one is not the exception.

The novel is set in the future some half a millennium after space travel first started. Some of the colonies were cut off from the rest of humanity and some even managed to survive. One being a planet that did not have much land area. That area was not very good for farming and much of the food came from the sea. Earth had seeded the oceans with mammals, but the local lifeforms competed quite well with them. The story starts out with the quest of a young native for his father, who, at his birth, had taken his twin sister and disappeared. There were tales that humans had once come from the sea and that what had driven them hence was such that return was impossible.

An excellent read for those who like a science fiction novel that is a 'hard science' background but had also adventure elements and which hangs together well.

LESS THAN HUMAN by Charles Platt. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1986. 238pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

Charles Platt seems determined to write the humorous science fiction novel. LESS THAN HUMAN is one of many that Platt has written lately in that vein.

There have been many robots and androids created in sf - most were created perfect, though some had design faults. The android in this novel was created perfect, though when he was being programmed a ten minute break in transmission of data to him created a less-than-perfect copy. This imperfection actually made him into what could be taken as a human being for most of the novel. His adventures as he sorts his way through the future that New York had fallen into and his ultimate meeting with the Chief Programmer is a quiet well told tale. The humour is there but it is not too obtrusive.

FOOL'S RUN by Patricia McKillip. Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1987. 252pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

I found this novel very hard to get into. The writing is very dense in the first few chapters and takes some working at.

The world that Terra Viridian is a prisoner in is a bleak edifice that is both a satellite and an outcrop of the official human universe of that time - cold and rigorous. The characters are certainly well cut out and the backgrounds are filled in, but I still found myself floundering. Probably one of the things that got to me was the naming of major characters a capital letter - the Magician, the Scholar...

McKilip has written a trilogy previously - the Riddlemaster Trilogy - so she does have some experience at writing. Some readers will find this book entertaining.

THE NICK OF TIME by George Alec Effinger. New English Library, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1985. 244pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

One thing you will know after reading this book - the main displays of the New York Fair of 1939.

George Effinger has written a time travel novel that is different from those written before. There is humour in it - humour that is subtle and part of the written fabric of the plot.

Said plot concerns the events which follow the first time traveller as he is flung into the past - 1939 specifically. The plan is for him to spend some time at the Fair and then have the engineers bring him back. Unfortunately something goes wrong, and he finds himself reliving the same day in 1939 over and over again. Eventually his girlfriend is sent back and they attempt to break through to the future. They do. But the future is not quite what they remembered...

I found this an easy and entertaining read for a Sunday afternoon.

WHAT MAD UNIVERSE? by Fredric Brown. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1949. 238pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

I had heard of this novel many times, but until I had seen this edition had not seen it on sale. It is one of the classic humorous sf novels and most sf fans know of it. This must be the time for releases of humorous sf novels.

Keith Winton was a pulp sf editor and it was when he was visiting his editor that a piece of 'hard' science hit him, in the form of a falling spaceship that had failed to reach the moon. It had a warhead of a special explosive which was designed to hit the moon. It was designed to give a brilliant flash on impact. It impacted all right, and blew Keith into another universe. A universe where his coinage, for example, could land him in jail or dead. Unless he could find out the lurks fast, it could well be that his life there would be short indeed.

He managed to pull through, at least enough to meet his girlfriend from his alternate existence - a girl who was in love with the man who was in the process of saving humankind from the invading aliens. Good, clean fun.

STARMAN'S SON by Andre Norton. Victor Gollancz SF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1952. 220pp. A46.95. On sale now.

A reissue in the Gollancz sf classics. This is indeed the time to either start a good sf library if you haven't already, or to make sure that you get all that you have missed.

The tale is set after a atomic war. Fors was one of a group of survivors that had, after hundreds of years, managed to hold on to some of the education from the past. His father had recently not returned from a trip to try to gain valuable artifacts from the ruined cities and to extent the maps of the group. Unfortunately Fors had several visible mutant characteristics and the leaders of his group decided that he was not to follow in his father's occupation.

Before they could act he gathered together his father's chattels and some food and departed, determined to show that he had the ability to also extend the group's knowledge.

LOVECRAFT'S BOOK by Richard Lupoff. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1985. 282pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

Grafton are also bring out some very good books recently. This title has material in it that a reader of Sprague DeCamp's autobiography on Lovecraft would find already mentioned.

The blurb gives the basic plot premise: 'The astounding story of H.P. Lovecraft and the Nazi connection.' The novel has Lovecraft as the central character and follows his adventures (if you could call them that) as he meets up with Nazi sympathisers in the US of the late 1920's. It is obvious that Lupoff has researched the material used deeply and has woven it into the story with care. It gives an excellent account of Lovecraft's character and follows the course of events with an eye to detail I found fascinating.

I like Lovecraft's stories for their sense of outre, and found this book both eminently readable and excellent for its insights into the times and Lovecraft himself.

Buy it.

MEDUSA'S CHILDREN by Bob Shaw. Gollancz SF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1977. 184pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

MEDUSA'S CHILDREN is set in an environment that is one of the hallmarks of some of the best sf - it is described in detail from the viewpoint and knowledge of the inhabitants and the author does not use the point-of-view of the author as God to give the reader insight into the plot. This kind of novel stimulates the imagination and the intellect.

The environment in this case is a watery one. There is an 'up' and 'down'. 'Up' is quite a distance and consists of a quick death when someone leaves the surface of the water and disappear into a misty cloud where they quickly turn black and die with convulsions. 'Down' is just as worse - there dwells a demon god who, in the belief of a religious group, draws worshippers/victims down to devour.

On earth strange things are happening - it is discovered that the earth's oceans are shrinking and various governments are trying to see what they could do about finding out where it is going to. Of course the people who know what is going on are in a spaceship which is about to find out just what a certain asteroid is. Shaw has written a good adventure novel with this and it is well worth the read.

UP THE LINE by Robert Silverberg. Gollancz SF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1969. 250pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

When sf authors began to loosen the strict strings of the publishers back in the 1960 Robert Silverberg was one of those authors whose work expanded into new areas. **UP THE LINE** was one of those novels.

Silverberg has done work as an anthropologist and he was brought some of the knowledge gained to bear on the background of this book. It is a story of time travel and is one of the best of its kind. The story follows Jud Elliott as he joins the Time-Couriers - men and women who take tourists through time and show them the sights. There is another facet of time travel - the Time-Patrol who police the time lanes and make sure that nothing happens to change the past. The personnel of the Time-Couriers are not as high standing as the latter and most endeavour to use their position to enhance their private lives, either by smuggling or making assignations with the men and women of the past.

Elliott's downfall was his love affair with one of his female ancestors - an event that led to his undoing in more ways than one.

THE DREAMSTONE by C.J. Cherryh. Gollancz SF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1983. 187pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

I don't think the female pictured on the cover would have been dressed quite like that pictured - she hated iron.

The days of magic were passing on and there was only several places in the land that it lingered. One was the Ealdwood wherein dwelt Arafel, the last queen of the Daoine Sidhe left on this side, the others of who had passed over the sea, leaving, however some physical manifestation of their presence - their armour. When the adventurer Nial, fleeing his pursuers, passed into the wood, it was only luck and loneliness that stayed her hand. After spending the night he followed her directions and found another magic hideaway, run by Beorc and his wife. He spent nearly a year there, resting and hoping that the young king would dodge his enemies long enough to grow into his majority.

It was all too soon that one of his followers found him and persuaded him to go back into the world. Quite a story and very good fantasy. Another one to buy for your library.

EARTHWIND by Robert Holdstock. Gollancz SF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1977. 245pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

A strange one, this. When Peter Ashka arrived on the planet Aeran it was partly in response to the strange legends of the degenerated colonists, and partly because of the order of their government back on Earth. Elspeth Mueller had gone before them on her own inspiration, and had found that the mystery that the stranded colonists evoked had its origins on Stone age earth. An object in a barrow in Ireland that she had seen in her student days proved a key. Peter and Elspeth join their forces for a short time before they are violently forced apart and one of them is taken out of the picture.

Throughout history cults and objects become focuses for mass adoration and use. In this future the Ching has come back into vogue and is used by specialists in forecasting the best path to take at decision time. Peter is one of these experts. However when they land on Aeran the Ching retreats from him and it is not long before he and Elspeth realise the truth about Aeran.

A mixture of intellect and action.

THE ALTERNATE ASIMOVs by Isaac Asimov. A Panther pb, published by Grafton, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1953, 1980 and 1986. 349pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

This volume is a treat - the original unpublished versions of **PEBBLE IN THE SKY**; **THE END OF ETERNITY** and **BELIEF**. The latter has the published version to allow the reader to see how it ended up.

One could believe that Asimov has allowed these to be published so that he can get some easy money - after all, he has not touched them since, and he now has two versions of the same plot earning royalties. After reading the stories, however, I can see that the stories are different and do warrant being published separately. The difference between the writings of the mature Asimov and that of thirty years ago is evident. And I think I prefer the writings of the earlier one - the sense of wonder is more concentrated.

The book is worth buying for the first two novelettes on their own - if you have the **ASTOUNDING** versions you will certainly notice the difference.

THE PEACE WAR and **MAROONED IN REAL TIME** by Vernor Vinge. Pan SF, dist in Aust by Pan Books. (C) 1984 and 1986. 317 and 269pp. On sale now.

These two books arrived from the publishers together but they got separated in the review pile. I read the sequel before the original novel before I had **THE PEACE WAR**. No problem - both stand along and knowing the finale of **THE PEACE WAR** did not spoil my enjoyment of it.

The device that backs both these novels is the 'bobble' - a sphere of force that, when it englobes anything, protects it from harm. These bobbles, once cast, exist on their own until they disintegrate in their own time, which depends on their size and the energy poured into them. The company which developed these devices was quite devious and ultimately engineered the Third World War - and, since their equipment and troops were safely ensconced within the force spheres, were able to take over the world.

MAROONED IN REAL TIME takes place after the fall of the 'Peace

the period that the men behind the company ruled. One of the events that the creation of the bobbles precipitated enabled venturesome people to journey one way into the future. One of the things they found was that the human race disappeared after a certain time and **MAROONED IN REAL TIME** is about the search for the reason behind this.

Two fascinating books and a must to read for the serious sf fan.

COUNT ZERO by William Gibson. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1986. 333pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

When I read **NEUROMANCER** I knew that William Gibson was an author to watch. This is his second novel that is in the same type of landscape - the computer generated landscape of Cyberspace. Gibson created something with cyberspace that enables him to loose many characters and plots in it depth. Not only that, he has a style of writing that goes along with and reinforces the 1980 technology. It will be interesting to read this in twenty years and see if it still stands along or if it has been left by changes. Some novels, though the science has been dated, still managed to stand along.

Turner was Count Zero, one of the best men able to get into others computer matrixes and extract the data that existed therein. After the last close call he was lucky to be alive. So he decided to lay low for a while. Much good that did him.

The first paragraph of the novel gives the reader a good clue to Gibson's style: 'They set a slamhound on Turner's tail in New Delhi, slotted it to his pheromones and the colour of his hair. It caught up with him on a street called Chandni Chauk and came scrambling for his rented BMW through a forest of bare brown legs and pedicab tyres. Its core was a kilogramme of recrystallized hexogene and flaked TNT.'

I loved it.

BABEL 17 by Samuel R. Delany. Gollancz Sf pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1966. 193pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

Back when Delaney's writing talents were being sung by those who thought his literary aspirations were going to make sf into something better (in their opinion) **BABEL 17** was put forward as being one of the best novels of that year.

Reading it over twenty years later, what does the reader find? That Delany's prose has not aged and that the story itself still hangs together. Babel-17 is actually a language - one used by invaders of the human worlds. The Alliance had various war yards and it was at these that the aliens struck - using Babel-17 in order to convey their orders quickly. The government asked Rydra Wong, one of the most famous poets of her time, to try and decode it. She spent much time at it, and followed the attacks around the worlds trying to get enough information to enable her to get a grip on the elusive language. Of course, when she did she found that it was not as simple as she and the government agents had thought. Thought provoking.

SLOWBIRDS by Ian Watson. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1981-1985. 224pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

Ian Watson is an British author whose writings are known for their unique ideas and straightforward style.

This is a volume of his novelettes, and includes the much anthologised **SLOWBIRDS** - which is set in a future where floating bombs pass through the countryside and explode without warning, creating a circle of glass on the ground. The bombs travel at a walking pace, where comes the term 'slow birds'. A later novel expanded the idea. Other stories are: **THE WIDTH OF THE WORLD**; **WHITE SOCKS**; **GHOST LECTURER**; **MISTRESS OF COLD**; **IN THE MIRROR OF THE EARTH**; **CRUISING**; **UNIVERSE ON THE TURN**; **THE FLESH OF HER HAIR**; **THE MYSTIC MARRIAGE OF SALOME** and **THE BLOOMSDAY REVOLUTION**. All the stories are well written and, unlike Ballard, are understandable in their own right. They include some very good speculative fiction stories - more fantasy than sf.

GLADIATOR-AT-LAW by Frederik Pohl & C.M. Kornbluth. Gollancz SF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1955. 192pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

This is a reprint of a novel by the justly-famous team of Pohl and Kornbluth. The novel was written well over thirty three years ago but still has retained its bite.

As are others of their novels, this is a satire. The targets this time are the housing construction companies - who constructed cheap housing for the masses, only to keep them in servitude. Huge slums developed when the people who couldn't get into the company owned houses crowded together in cheap imitations. One such area was Belly Rave. A young lawyer, Charles Mundin is unfortunate to have accepted as a client one of the part-owners of the company which developed the bubble home - the ultimate in home comfort. Her father had actually invented the home, but the companies other directors had manipulated stocks and forced her father and her out. After taking her on, things become very hectic and until Mundin gets into the swing of things he almost ends up on the receiving end of a blunt instrument. Classic sf.

JOURNEY BEYOND TOMORROW by Robert Sheckley. Gollancz SF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1962. 198pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

These 1987 VGSF pbs are very well presented volumes - trade sized with acid free paper and stiff shiny covers. The later ones are like ordinary paperbacks and are A\$1 cheaper.

JOURNEY.. was first serialised in F&SF, where I read it, back in 1962. This version has been polished and the joins smoothed. Basically it is a journey by an expatriate US citizen as he journeys from Tahiti to the US and across it. The tale is told over a thousand years later after that civilisation had fallen. The Journey is told as a series of episodes as fables. The F&SF title was THE JOURNEY OF JOENES, which is the better title, I think. His journey is not without excitement as he enters a lunatic asylum, is sentenced by a justice machine and has the US secret service after him (not necessarily in that order). His easy island life has not prepared him for his journey and it is mainly by luck that he manages to survive, and ultimately, conquer.

FADE-OUT by Patrick Tilley, Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1975. 541pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

I can't see why this book has not been published in paperback in the UK before this.

When an alien spacecraft lands in the USA and blankets an area with a forcefield stopping the generation and transmission of electricity, the authorities are quick to act. One of their first acts was to drop a news blanket over the area. A Presidential election was in the offing and they were making sure that no-one upset the apple cart. Exploration of the craft was slow and painstaking. It took weeks to work out a way to get into it, especially when it began to move under ground. Then it grew. Things became more hectic when it became known there was another one in the USSR...

One of the things that I liked about this novel and one which struck a cord of truth was the antagonism between the high echelons of the military and the politicians. The undercover work and the not-telling the other what was really going on sets the stage for the end of the novel.

Straight forward near-future sf.

ANGEL WITH THE SWORD by C.J. Cherryh. Gollancz SF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1985. 293pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

One of the new sf novels with a detailed sf background and good characterisation.

Altair Jones was a water urchin - she had inherited the boat she poled along the waterways from her mother, who had, by hard work and a sharp mind, managed to build a business that enabled her and her daughter to earn enough to live. The city they crisscrossed was honeycombed by canals and the people whose boats swept through them were not nice people to cross.

Altair's world became suddenly more deadly when she dragged a sodden man from the water after he had been assaulted. Mondragon was more than he seemed and Altair told herself she should have left well along. The trouble was her sense of business and her inquisitiveness. They soon landed her in more trouble than she had bargained for - and she was soon bargaining for both their lives.

Another complication was that she and Mondragon became emotionally entangled, which made matters much worse..

An excellent work.

DINNER AT DEVIANT'S PALACE by Tim Powers. Panther pb, published by Grafton Books, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1985. 300pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

If you want to know what the drugs might be in the future and how they are both affected by and affect life there, **DINNER** is a chilling introduction

Gregorio Rivas was a mercenary - he hired himself out to bring back converts from one of the cults that had descended on California after the war. He is introduced in a bar and it is here that he gets the assignment that leads him to one of his hardest kidnapping jobs. He knows the woman he is to kidnap. The kidnap itself is to take place in the fortress-like compound that is the headquarters of Norton Jaybush, whose visage stares from sundry tv sets. It is only when he is on the point of taking the girl that he finds that Jaybush is not the top of the heap.

I have said Tim Powers is one of the writers that I will read anything of and this novel does not get me to change my mind. Good sf adventure with a certain flavour.

YEAR OF THE UNICORN by Andre Norton. Gollancz SF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1965. 221pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

Abbey Norstead was the temporary home to a group of girls who had been picked as a bride gifts to the Riders to help pay them for offering their services in the recent war against invaders. Gillan, an orphan at the Abbey seized the opportunity to take the place of one of the girls who was terrified to go with the Riders to their far home. The Riders had strange powers of enchantment - one of which was to force the beholder to see a reality that the enchanter wove that was like a curtain over the plain and often harsh real landscape.

YEAR OF THE UNICORN is the third in the Witch World series and is set early in the piece. The tale is well told and keeps the reader's attention rapt. Both Gillan and the strange Rider who she chose at the short ceremony (and whose fellows were more than quite annoyed that she had done so) share many adventures eventually come to an end.

Both Witch World fans and regular sf readers will find this entertaining reading. It is a series that was written more than twenty years ago, but keeps on being reprinted and remaining in print for all her old and new readers to find.

TRULLION: ALASTOR 2262 by Jack Vance. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1973. 229pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

Alastor is a planet which has quite a lot of water. The natives are cast in the Vance mold and are unique and sometimes cantankerous. They are the Trill, and the one thing that they agree on is that the game of hussade is first class. The game consists of two teams who vie with one another in order to reach the other teams mascot, a pretty girl called a sheirlmaiden, to grip the zip at her neck and to strip the single covering garment off her, exposing her naked body to the hundreds of jeering fans.

Glinnes Hulden had returned to his fathers estate on hearing of his death - as the eldest son he interited the house and estate. He had, however, trouble evicting his younger brother and by the time he had done this, said brother had signed an agreement that gave title of the estate to a local businessman. During his attempts to get it back Glinnes joined local hussade team to raise the money to buy back the estate, annoyed a gypsy's daughter, and managed to run afoul of a bunch of space pirates who landed at a hussade match to rob the wealthy people attending.

Adds well to Vance's past successes, and shows that over the time he has been writing that his output, both in quantity and quality has been constant and readable.

THE BRAVE FREE MEN by Jack Vance. Gollancz SF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1972. 224pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

This reprint continues as book two of the Durdane trilogy. Durdane is feeling the attacks of the brutish Roguskhoi more and more as their bands venture further and further into the built-up areas. As the Faceless Man Gastel Etzwane finds that the organisation of a country by one man is not all that easy and he has to enlist the aid of another native of Durdane. The man, however, finds the power too much and Gastel has to dispose of him.

The background is developed, as one would expect that of a trilogy to be, and the fight against the Roguskhoi and the machinations of the few men whom Gastel has to deal with in his attempt to mobilise the country is filled with the usual Vance colourful description and intricate language. The meeting of Gastel with his long lost father, Drystar, showed him that memories are often faulty - and that he was at last as good a musician as his famous travelling father.

Another addition for your library.

INVERTED WORLD by Christopher Priest. Gollancz SF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1974, 1979. 250pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

It has been some time since I read this novel as a serial in NEW WORLDS. The impression I retained of it was a murky landscape with a travelling machine something like the one in Star Wars with the horizon running off into the sky and the further one went the more distorted things became.

The reality is much different. The world of the travelling city is one of the most invoking Sense of Wonder in modern science fiction. The strangely distorted landscape that exists outside the immediate boundary of the city that meets the traveller and the bizarre distortions the further away one travels is in a class of its own. The plot, when one is reading through, is full of strange events that only become clear as one reads on. The ending of the book, where everything is explained, and the past history of the city and the inhabitants is shown for what it actually is, is a triumph of imagination. Everything is explained from the viewpoint of the city dwellers and their view of the world is what colours the readers viewpoint. Excellent science fiction.

Recommended.

THE GLASS HAMMER by K.W. Jeter. Panther pb, published by Grafton, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1985. 238pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

K.W. Jeter shows with this novel what a good writer can do with just one basic premise. In HAMMER the media moguls stage a road race, with satellites equipped with lasers, to bring in the viewers. The ostensible reason behind the races was that the drivers were smuggling much needed silicon chips to a electronics-starved USA. The chips were dug up from ruins in the Western states and raced across the western US desert.

The satellites were programmed to randomly miss the racing cars and it was only the hope (to the viewers) that a car would be hit kept them glued to their seats. Then there was a run of hits on the cars - destroying the cars and incinerating the drivers. Schuyler was one of the best of the drivers, and when he got the idea that the moguls were changing their tactics to bring in more viewers he decided to do something about it - he didn't want to go out in a blaze of glory. Jeter has been likened to Philip K. Dick with his style - in this novel he has created his own style and though some of the descriptions of the glass window are a little weird, the overall novel is easy to follow.

Good speculative fiction.

MISSION OF GRAVITY by Hal Clement. Gollancz SF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1953. 203pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

Everyone has heard about this novel - it is one of the most famous 'hard' science fiction novels published. Even after thirty-five years it still reads fresh and interesting.

The planet Mesklin had a surface gravity some 700 times that of earth, yet life existed on it - intelligent life. When the earth ship arrived in orbit they were fantastically lucky that the natives

were peaceful, intelligent and willing to work along with the terrans. Though it was apparent that they could never meet, the exploration of the planet in search of a lost rocket filled with scientific experiments went ahead.

Both the terrans and the mesklinites learned something from each other - the terrans did not find out just how much until the mesklinites reached the downed terran rocket and, before taking apart, proceeded to drive a bargain that would help them expend their knowledge.

Recommended

THE FORGE OF GOD by Greg Bear. Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1987. 473pp. On sale now.

When an alien spacecraft, with a dying alien alongside it is found in a Californian desert, a security blanket is quickly thrown up and the military moves in. Before long another ship is found in Australia and so, apparently in the USSR. Several US advisors travel to Australia to interview the robots which debouched from that ship, but before much more information can be obtained, the robots self-destruct, causing some bad feelings with some of the Australian scientists.

Back in the US the army has managed to find its way into the interior of the ship but it does them little good. At the same time the original scientific advisor to the President discovers that not only the ships have landed on the continents, but something has landed in the ocean and proceeded to the centre of the earth.

This is probably the best novel of its kind I have read - the description at the end is a good attempt to describe the incomprehensible.

Highly Recommended.

THE WYRM by Stephen Laws. Souvenir Press, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1987. 301pp. A\$29.95. On sale now.

It isn't often that I review horror. It so happened that I had run out of sf and good fantasy to read, so I picked this up to read on the train.

The story is set in England in the present day. Developers are putting in a highway through the village of Shillingham. They have to bulldoze a crossroads dating back to the Middle Ages. There is an ancient gibbet there, which the local historical society has managed to convince the main roads people to have resited. Their troubles begin when one of the local residents incoherently exhorts them to leave the gibbet where it is. They ignore him and try to uproot it. Imagine their incredulous looks when they find the gibbet descends through the roof of a cavern some thirty feet down and rests over an ancient box.

Needless to say what is in the box is the Wyrms and when the historical society removes the gibbet and box to the local hall events take a turn for the worst for the town. Halfway through the town is destroyed by the burrowing Wyrms and it starts for the outside world..

Not for starting early at night - you won't be able to put it down!

FORTUNE OF FEAR by L. Ron Hubbard. New Era Publications h/c, dist in Australia by same. (C) 1986. 365pp. A\$26.95 On sale now.

For those who have been following the Mission Earth series, this is volume 5.

Soltan Gris is stumbling around just saving his skin more by luck than lack of wits. When he gave out his credit card way by mistake he managed to get 30,000 pounds of gold from Apparatus headquarters, where it isn't worth as much as it is on earth. He salts it away and then tried to carry on his plan to do away with Countess Krak and others who followed him from his home organisation.

All through it the author pokes fun at a host of American customs and people. Though the use of exclamation marks could be cut down by about 90%, the book is an entertaining read if the reader wishes some light entertainment for a wet afternoon or if he or she is feeling down in the dumps. I guarantee it will cheer you up, or at least relieve your boredom. Also good for a present for that bookish pre-teen or a teenager who hasn't read any sf but likes adventure stories with a simple plot. For instance someone who is in hospital.

INTERVENTION by Julian May. Collins h/c, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1987. 542pp. A\$24.95. On sale now.

If you've read the Pliocene Exiles saga you won't need me to tell you to go and buy this book - you'll have done it already.

The title page is sub-headed: 'A root tale to the Galactic Milieu and a vinculum between it and the Saga of Pliocene Exile'. This large volume gives the story, mostly from the viewpoint of mainly Rogi Remilard and paints, over a large canvas, the emergence of the operant talents of humans on earth. All is not plain sailing. As with anything new, most people are against it, and even among the operants, there is the criminal element.

Remilard has a familiar - the Ghost, who throughout the novel helps him over obstacles and prevents him from harm. The story explains in detail much that is merely mentioned in the Pliocene Saga - with 542 pages there is plenty of room to do this. I found the whole book interesting and I could hardly put it down. If there is one hardcover you buy in 1988, make this it.

Highly Recommended.

THE GOBLIN TOWER by L. Sprague de Camp. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1968. 320pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

Jorian was only visiting Xylar City witnessing the execution of the king, when he was unfortunate enough to catch the severed head of the king. Thus is the future king picked. He rules for five years and then he too is executed. Jorian manages, with the help of an elderly wizard, to escape. Leaving his five wives, he decides to side with the wizard, who is on a mission to find a helper to steal the Kist of Avelen.

They pass through various adventures including several of the wizard Karadur's supposed friends. He meets up with a hot wizard's help and a princess who can turn into a snake at a moments notice (and whose hug is a lot deadlier in snake form than when she is making love, when she tends to throw her lovers out of bed).

This is volume one of The Reluctant King series (others are THE CLOCKS OF IRAZ and THE UNBEHEADED KING). de Camp is an excellent writer of fantasy and this is a smoothly told tale. He hasn't lost any ability since writing THE INCOMPLETE ENCHANTER with Fletcher Pratt over forty years ago. I am looking forward to the rest of the series. Good fantasy, all too uncommon among the sludge today.

RADIO FREE ALBEMUTH by Philip K. Dick. Panther SF, published by Grafton Books, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1985. 286pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

When I read parts of this novel out to Susan and asked her who did she think the author was, she couldn't believe it had been written by Dick. It isn't written in his style. It is written in a very 'open' style and, though it does have the usual Dickian hallmark - the two protagonists (one Dick himself) who are being hounded by government agents, there are outre elements in both the plot and the description (his buddy Nicholas Brady is being given information by an intelligence from another star. Brady calls this intelligence Valis and has a hard time convincing Phil of its reality until Dick sees a beam of light shoot out from Brady's cupped hands onto his forehead). The story is set in another world-line where the president of the USA elected after the Vietnam War is one Ferris F. Freemont, an agent of the Reds he eschews. Freemont is actively against the organization called ARAMCHEK which he is sure is out to destroy the United States.

All becomes clear in the end.. as far as Dick's novels are ever clear. For Dick fans.

WITCH WORLD by Andre Norton. Gollancz pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1963. 222pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

The Witch World series is quite well known - both in and out of science fiction fandom. Gollancz has added this book to their VGSF classic series and will be reprinting others in it.

Being the first in the series it introduces the protagonist, one Simon Tregarth, on earth. He is, or was, a colonel in the US forces. In his career in said forces, he has come across the organization, an apparently criminal group with wide influence. He was almost at the end of his tether when he met

up with Dr. Penronius who, for a price, said he would enable Tregarth to disappear and live his life free of the organization. Tregarth took him up on it and soon found himself passing through an ancient 'gate' into another world - the Witch World. Soon after arriving there he came across one of the 'Witches' running from a pursuing group of horsemen and dogs. He saved her and she took him to the castle she was going to.

Andre Norton is a good storyteller and WITCH WORLD is a good first novel for a series. I enjoyed reading it.

DEATH QUEST by L. Ron Hubbard. New Era Publications, dist in Aust by NEP. (C) 1986. 347pp. A\$26.95. On sale now.

Fanzine fans Eric Lindsay, Jean Weber, Leigh Edmonds, Valma Brown and I (along with a certain female fanzine illustrator) were invited along to the launching of Volume six of the Mission Earth series. Julie Jones, New Era's publicist was in attendance, directing the events. If you have seen the cover of DEATH QUEST you will have noticed the redheaded person standing on the motorbike. There were two actors/dancers in attendance - one had a knife between his teeth and went around terrorizing the women (and men) at the tables and growling, the other was a lissome young woman in not much at all as Miss Pinch (or was she Countess Krak.. I didn't quite take that in). The two were, along with their short dance sequence, illustrating some of the scenes in this latest volume, in which Gris works out that the earth is really controlled by two human-run 'bases', one the Octopus Oil Company, the other The Pokantickle Estate. Both are run by Delbert J. Rockecentre. And here Hubbard has another go at one of the sacred cows of the US establishment - the successful businessman with money behind him.

As I have said before above, these books would make a good present for a teenage or late pre-teen, possibly if said person is in hospital and wants light reading to cheer him or her up and with six volumes published so far that means that there is quite a lot to choose from and if the person likes them or is in for a long stay in hospital then the fact there is quite a few volumes means that they won't run out of reading matter for their stay.

THREE AGAINST THE WITCH WORLD by Andre Norton. Gollancz pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1965. 191pp. A\$6.95. On sale now

The protagonists of this fourth Witch World novel are the children of Simon Tregarth and Jaelithe. They were triplets and shared some magical abilities. The two brothers were both warriors and the sister used to help them in both their games and later on in keeping communications between them open. It was when their father disappeared and their mother went off to search for him that the Witch Council moved and kidnapped the sister, Kathlea. The brothers played calm and when the time was ripe they slipped into the building where Kathlea was being kept and all three fled East, into the unknown.

When they managed to scale the peaks and cross the broken lands that thousands of years before the fleeing Witches had scotched with upheavels they found the ancient land that the Old ones had originally fled from. There they found both good and evil in uneasy balance. Balance, that is, until they arrived and upset it.

OTHER SCIENCE FICTION RELEASES:

ASTRO PILOTS by Laura Mixon. An Omni pb, published by Grafton Books, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1987. 216pp. A\$5.95. On sale now

An SF book aimed at children, the heroine, Andrea Ito, is the top student in the senior class of the star pilots academy. All is going well until the arrival of Jason Stiletto, who soon has Andrea in all sorts of trouble.

THE JADE DEMONS QUARTET by Robert E. Vardeman. New English Library, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1985, 1986. 831pp. A\$14.95. On sale now.

Bob Vardeman is turning out some quite good fantasy these days, mainly in trilogies with other writers. This volume consists of four stories - **THE QUAKING LANDS**, **THE FROZEN WAVES**, **THE CRYSTAL CLOUDS** and **THE WHITE FIRE**. There is a heroine in this story too, Kesira, who managed to survive the destruction by jade fire of her Order.

THE WOMAN OF FLOWERS by Susan Shwartz. Pan books, dist in Aust by Pan Books Aust. (C) 1987. 292pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

Book two of the Heirs to Byzantium trilogy, **THE WOMAN OF FLOWERS** follows the career of Princess Alexa as she is rescued by Audun Bearmaster. She flees with him and his band, trying to escape the evil sorceress. If you liked **BYZANTIUM'S CROWN** this sequel will appeal to you.

THE THRONE OF SCONE by Patricia Kennealy. Panther pb, published by Grafton books, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1986. 475pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

Keltic myths and novels are being well received by readers. This novel is the second in The Keltiad series, in the first volume of which an earth scoutship finds a lost Keltic planet. In this volume, her planet taken over by the sorcerer Jaun Akhera. The Queen flees to earth to try to find the lost treasure of her ancestor, King Arthur.

STATESMAN - Bio Of A Space Tyrant by Piers Anthony. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1986. 365pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

Anthony's Space Tyrant odyssey is up to the fifth and final volume with **STATESMAN**. In this part Hope Hubris's rule of the Solar System comes to an end and he is exiled. He has other plans however, and tries for one last goal - one which will grant him immortality.

This series has been going for some time and no doubt it has many fans who will continue to read Anthony's other works - some of which are very good reading.

THE CHRONICLES OF CORUM by Michael Moorcock. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1973, 1974. 454pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

This book is a feast of Moorcock. It comprises three novels - **THE BULL AND THE SPEAR**, **THE OAK AND THE RAM** and **THE SWORD AND THE STALLION**. The prequel is the **SWORDS OF CORUM** (also published by Grafton) which introduces Corum of the Silver Hand and documents his slaying of the old gods. In this volume he finds he has not gotten his rest - new gods surface and he must face and defeat them otherwise humankind will be again oppressed.

PALACE OF KINGS by Mike Jefferies. A Fontana pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1987. 314pp. A\$8.95. On sale now

The second volume of Loremasters of Elundium. All was not right in King Holbian's land. He is, as the novel opens, trapped in Granite City with Nightbeasts laying siege against it. Thane, who he has sent for help, has managed to become important and plans to lead a revenging army to rescue him. To complicate matters, the wizard Nevian is said to be stirring...

THE SONG OF HOMANA by Jennifer Roberson. Corgi pb, dist in Aust by Transworld. (C) 1985. 348pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

Prophecy has a large part in many modern fantasies. The Song of Homana is such a prophecy. Prince Carillon is the subject of it. He is not too happy with that but when his kingdom becomes more and more broken under the yoke of the usurper he attempts to invoke it. He has help in the form of the race of Cheysuli which had some grasp of magic, and his faithful shapechanger friend but even with these the going was long and dangerous.

A BLACKBIRD IN DARKNESS by Freda Warrington. New English Library pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1986. 473pp. A\$12.95. On sale now.

The story of three warriors, Ashurek the Prince of Gorenthria, Estarinel from the island of Forluin and Medrian an Alaakian woman who maintained a secretive air. Their mission was to journey to Earth in a strange ship to destroy if they could the serpent M'gfulfn. Others had attempted this but had failed in horrible ways. Their journey was long and eventful, from the Blue Plain to the Glass City. A sequel to **A BLACKBIRD IN SILVER**.

THE THRALL AND THE DRAGON'S HEART by Elizabeth Boyer. Corgi pb, dist in Aust by Transworld publishers. (C) 1982. 332pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

This was more fully reviewed in an earlier issue of **THE MENTOR**. It is the third of The World Of The Alfir series. In it the hero and his sidekick call in to shelter the night at an old farmhouse. The owner is a witch and she has as a thrall an ugly young crone who, the hero finds out, can change a man into a horse at night at full moon and ride him to exhaustion. Author Boyer writes humorous fantasy, which is harder to succeed at than writing humorous science fiction. Elizabeth Boyer succeeds.

DAUGHTER OF THE BEAR KING by Eleanor Arnason. Headline pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1987. 239pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

This novel is something different - the protagonist is a shapechanging housewife. The action of **DAUGHTER OF THE BEAR KING** alternates between the present day and a far world where danger seems to follow her. She finds that the ability to shape-change into a bear has its advantages at certain times and that deserts and fortresses have one thing in common - the inhabitants are out to kill her.

A BLACKBIRD IN AMBER by Freda Warrington. New English Library pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1987. 437pp. A\$12.95. On sale now.

The sequel to **A BLACKBIRD IN DARKNESS** (reviewed above) this novel is presented quite well in trade paperback format. The plot takes place twenty years after the death of the serpent M'gfulfn, whose demise has released into the world the energy of magic. Melkavesh flees her lover, the ruler of Gorethria when he turns his talents to evil - she is determined to win back the country to the side of good.

FOUNDATION AND EARTH by Isaac Asimov. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1986. 510pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

Well, this is one book you can't do without. The hardcover edition has been reviewed in a previous issue. This is the fifth (and final) volume in the Foundation series - and Asimov has attempted to weave some of his other series into it, partly successfully. Aliens are found and when a native of Gaia finds strange thought waves he and his companions think that it may be that their search for the lost planet Earth is over...

FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON by Daniel Keyes. Gollancz SF pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1959, 1966. 216pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

Gollancz chose **FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON** to lead their new Classic SF paperback line. They couldn't have made a better choice. Winner of the Hugo award when it was first published in a shorter version, the novel expanded that work and was such that an Oscar-winning film was made based on it. The linked story of Charlie and the white mouse Algernon is a classic. Algernon went where no mouse had gone before when its intelligence was augmented. Later Charlie followed suit in his own fashion. If you don't have this book in your library, buy it now.

THE FOLK OF THE AIR by Peter S. Beagle. Headline pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1977, 1986. 330pp. A\$14.95. On sale now.

Another strange novel. Starting off in the present day, it mixes olden magic and witchcraft with modern thought. When a couple meet up with a strange dancer troop, they join it and, with the lines of moving jewels and smooth flashes of velvet, all it not what it seems. The dancers seem to be like folk of the air. They play at magic and time, but such things have a way of coming back at those who don't take them seriously, as Allister Crowley once said...

MURDER IN ORBIT by Bruce Coville. Omni pb, published by Grafton books, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1987. 187pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

A book aimed at children 11 years old and up, this novel concerns Rusty McPhee, who finds a corpse in the waste disposal system of Ice-3, a colony that up till then had been very stable. Unfortunately the body disappears before Rusty could show anyone. The eminent scientist, Dr. Puckett becomes interested if no-one else and when Rusty nearly has a fatal 'accident', Dr. Puckett joins forces with him to sort it all out.

WINTER IN EDEN by Harry Harrison. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1986. 486pp incl. appendixes. A\$9.95. On sale now.

The hardcover version has been reviewed in a previous issue. This is the latest in Harry Harrison's series of that time long ago when dinosaurs ruled the earth - intelligent dinosaurs. All was going well with them until an upstart race of humans in North America came into contact with their ancient civilisation. The use of fire put the humans to an advantage; the dinosaurs did have their biological expertise though and commenced to plan the human's downfall. Using all their cunning, they nearly succeeded in wiping the slippery humans off the face of the planet. Well thought-out sf.

IN YANA, THE TOUCH OF UNDYING by Michael Shea. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1985. 332pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

A subtle novel for those in the know. The tale of Bramt Hex who started off a student which occupation changed when he entered a contracted alliance with the widow of an homunculus dealer. This fell through when he bungled the sale of her brothel. After various adventures he ended up making time with a demon who sent him on to Yana, where a touch gave to the recipient the curse of undying.

I enjoy Shea's novels. Previous titles are **THE COLOUR OUT OF TIME**; **NIFFT THE LEAN** and **A QUEST FOR SIMBILIS** (reviewed in past issues) and am looking forward to any more he writes in the future. Hopefully he will be writing more.

ISLANDS OUT OF TIME by William Irwin Thompson. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1985. 270pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

A well written account of the last days of Atlantis, written by a 'cultural historian'. The conflict between the theocracy in the form of the High Priest who was trying to push human evolution forward in a giant leap and those who plotted against him - Brau of Eiru, Viracocha and Brigita, the Abbes of the One Thousand of Eru.

Of course the end is well documented by a certain Greek, but most readers will find this novel a fresh approach.

WIELDING A RED SWORD by Piers Anthony. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1986. 368pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

The fourth in Anthony's Incarnations Of Immortality series. The blonde Orb was with a travelling circus playing her Mountain King harp to earn her rupees when she met the mysterious man with his face hidden by bandages. He engaged her after he had seen her perform and asked to be able to travel with the group so that he could leave the Kingdom they were playing in. She agreed. Mym was plagued with a stuttering tongue, but in fact he was a prince in disguise.

Typical Anthony fantasy.

THE DRAGON IN THE SWORD by Michael Moorcock. Grafton h/c, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1987. 283pp. A\$24.95. On sale now.

Moorcock is still writing good fantasy - in his case extending the various series that he started, in the main. This novel is the third and last in the Eternal Champion series about John Daker, who was Garathorm, Eric Womanslayer, Hawkmoon, Corum and others. Their tales are told elsewhere; in this volume is played the last bars of Daker's story as he finds again the Dragon Sword and at last is shown the way to break free. In the end he finds that which he subconsciously wanted and in conflict, at last gained. More by a prolific author.

TIME OF THE TWINS by Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman. Penguin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1986. 398pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

Penguin are finding these Dragon Lance Chronicles good sellers. **TIME OF THE TWINS** is the first in the new Legends trilogy and tells of the archmage Raistlin who is working for the forces of darkness, and the two who oppose him - Crysanian, a cleric, and Caramon, Raistlin's twin brother. There is a third - Tasslehoff the kender. The three hold that the only way to defeat the evil brother is to travel back in time to before the Cataclysm and, in the city of Istar, attempt to undo the consummated evil. My ten-year old son is really into this kind of fantasy.

THE SEVEN ALTARS OF DUSARRA by Lawrence Watt-Evans. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1981. 270pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

Garth the overman is still fighting the humans in this, the second book of The Lords Of Dis series. The plot is straight forward and the writing plain and easy to follow. The Thirteenth Age was set to end soon and the Fourteenth Age - the Age of Destruction, begin. Little was Garth to know that his revenge on the Baron of Skelleth would invoke the dark gods and bring on a destruction that would not be easily forgotten. There was an additional factor that would both aid and dissuade Garth - the god Bheleu, who at various intervals, took over Garth's body and wrought destruction through him.

SWORDS AND MAGIC by Fritz Leiber. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1977. 189pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

There are fantasy authors and there are fantasy authors. One of the tests of time is whether the books that were big sellers at the time of first release, are reprinted ten or twenty years later. Fritz Leiber's Swords series, with the two heroes Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser, are such a series of books that have stood the test of time. There are eight stories chaptered in this novel, garnered from other sources: **THE SADNESS OF THE EXECUTIONER**, **BEAUTY AND THE BEASTS**; **TRAPPED IN THE SHADOWLAND**; **THE BAIT**; **UNDER THE THUMBS OF THE GODS**; **TRAPPED IN THE SEA OF STARS**; **THE FROST MONSTREME** and **RIME ISLE**.
If you like good fantasy and haven't read these - buy it.

THE SWORDS OF CORUM by Michael Moorcock. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1971/2. 509pp. A\$11.95. On sale now.

The Corum trilogy, being the chronicle of one of the Eternal Champions. The Million Spheres are in conjunction and bloody battle rages over the Earth. Prince Corum, the last of the Vaghadh, goes on a mission to have a last go at defeating, or at least damaging, the Nhadragh. I have reviewed this volume when it was issued in hardcover. **THE SWORDS OF CORUM** consists of three novels, now included in one volume: **THE KNIGHT OF THE SWORDS**; **THE QUEEN OF THE SWORDS** and **THE KING OF THE SWORDS**. This edition is good value for all three to be published in one set.

THE WIZARD IN WAITING by Robert Don Hughes. Fontana pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1982. 357pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

Fontana do not published much fantasy, but when they do it is worth reading. They were the first to publish Donaldson. The Imperial House of Chaomonous had been put to sleep to rest until the two-headed dragon which banished the use of magic from the kingdom had died. At length the House awakened. What it found was worse than it expected - the throne had been taken by a certain Queen Ligue, who had locked the heir to the throne in the deepest dungeon. To make it worse, the only powershaper, a certain Pelman Dragonsbane, was off earning his keep in a troupe of actors.

GROA'S OTHER EYE by Dennis Schmidt. Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1986. 280pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

Another well constructed fantasy. Voden had left Asgard in search of knowledge about the coming conflict. He would run into many beings and have different adventures before the goal he sought would become clear. He would find that others had their own ideas about the conflict also and that things were possibly worse than the Aesir thought - they were surrounded by enemies - to the north were the jotuns who were planning to strike suddenly; to the south was Surt, who ruled Muspellheim with a force that would try to shatter the Aesir. Yes, the coming conflict would be fierce...

CONAN THE VALOROUS by John Maddox Roberts. Sphere pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1985. 216pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

Book 27 in the current Conan series. I suppose the Conan movie has accelerated the sale of these 'fighting fantasy' books. The original Conan is sometimes somewhat submerged in the various author's styles; however the idea of the strong-thewed barbarian from the North battling gods, odds and various monsters, demons and treacherous women seems to have caught the public's pursestrings. In this edition, Conan returns to Cimmeria. He finds all is not well with his homeland - various invaders are playing hell with the populace and a certain wizard has teamed up with his old playmate, Hathor-Ka, the sorceress of Stygia, to divvi up the kingdom. Good blood-and-guts fantasy.

PEBBLE IN THE SKY by Isaac Asimov. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1950,83. 226pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

One of the Galactic Empire novels that are apart from the Foundation series. This is a good novel for those who are only being introduced to sf - the protagonist is a certain Joseph Schwartz, a retired tailor from the Chicago of 1949. Before he knows where he is, he is on the earth of the Galactic Empire - an earth that people either hate or ignore, because the natives of that radioactive wilderness claim it to be the birthplace of humankind. This is one of the novels that Asimov has incorporated some of the ideas from into the latest Foundation novel, reviewed above. For a novel from the 1950's it hasn't held up badly at all.

PELMAN THE POWERSHAPER by Robert Don Hughes. Fontana pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1985. 339pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

The third of the trilogy. Pelman was, as usual, in trouble. Things were in a mess - Serphimera had left without telling him why; the sorceress Mar-Yilot was after his blood and various factions were invading Ngandib-Mar with the idea of overthrowing the present rulers. Not only that, but the two headed dragon Chaomonous was awake and creating havoc around the countryside. Pelman did not have much choice - he had to help Rosha mod Dorlyth break into the High Fortress and try to keep the youngster from being killed. Various monsters under the control of magical adepts were also having a go at killing Pelman.

It was all he could do staying alive, let alone free the land of these aggressors!

THE SWORD OF BHELEU by Lawrence Watt-Evans. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1982. 301pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

The evil god Bheleu was determined that this time his takeover of Garth would succeed and, with his own sword he would bind together the overman armies and usher in the Fourteenth Age - his age, the Age of Destruction. Things weren't going well for Garth, even though he had the treasure from the Dark Gods' altars and wore Bheleu's sword on his belt he soon found that it doesn't take much to turn events. He soon found that the Baron of Skelleth still remembered him and was out to do him in... slowly. When he eventually reached the Forgotten King, said King refused to take the demon-wracked sword off him. Then Bheleu took him over...

STAR SURGEON by James White. Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Hodder and Stoughton. (C) 1963. 156pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

James White has not had published that many sf novels and stories. After Carnell left NEW WORLDS I don't think White had much published. Many of the Sector General stories were written and published in that magazine. The stories in these three collections - HOSPITAL STATION and AMBULANCE SHIP being the others - are unique in that the situations are both hard science and adventure. They are possibly also unique in that there is almost no violence in them - they are cerebral stories that have also been well received by all their readers. The patients of the great hospital in deep space are both weird and wonderful. If you haven't read any of these creative stories by White, at least buy this one and read it.

OTHER CURRENT FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION RELEASES TO BE REVIEWED NEXT ISSUE:

CENTURY HUTCHINSON: Three Against The Witch World by Andre Norton
COLLINS: Weaveworld by Clive Barker (h/c)

TRANSWORLD: Equal Rites by Terry Pratchett (Vol.3)
Guardians Of The West by David Eddings.

GRAFTON: To Live Forever by Jack Vance

AUSTRALASIAN PUBLISHING: We Who Are About To...by Joanna Russ
A Spaceship Built Of Stone by Lisa Tuttle.

HODDER & STOUGHTON: Between The Strokes Of Night by Charles Sheffield.

PENGUIN: Tiger! Tiger! by Alfred Bester
The Day It Rained Forever by Ray Bradbury
Genetic Engineering For Almost Everybody by William
Bains

Gabriel by Lisa Tuttle
A Circus Of Hells by Poul Anderson
There Will Be Time by Poul Anderson
Timescape by Gregory Bedford
Tyranopolis by A.E. Van Vogt
The Firebrand by Marian Zimmer Bradley
The Mirror Of Krynn by Weis and Hickman
The Earthsea Trilogy by Ursula Le Guin
Blood Of Amber by Roger Zelazny
Great Sci-Fi Stories ed Asimov & Greenberg
Isaac Asimov's Wonderful World Of Science Fiction

by Isaac Asimov

Neanderthals No.6 by Isaac Asimov
Children Of Arable by David Beldon
Eros At Nadir by Mike Resnick
Matters Of Form by Scott Wheeler
My Name Is Legion by Roger Zelazny

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