

THE MENTOR'S

REVIEW SUPPLEMENT

DAYWORLD REBEL by Philip Jose Farmer. Grafton trade pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1988. 301pp. A\$19.95. On sale now.

DAYWORLD REBEL is the sequel to **DAYWORLD**, which was reviewed several issues back. The world Farmer has postulated is one of which in the immediate past the vast overcrowding (eight billion people on earth) necessitated the use of the 'stoner' which froze people in such a way that they could be stored unharmed for an indefinite period. What happened is that everyone lived one day out of seven. Thus their lives covered seven times the normal time span. They lived their lives on their day of the week - be it Monday, Tuesday, etc, and then were 'stoned' until that day the following week. With total surveillance, the crime rate dropped to almost zero. Who wanted to be stoned and dropped into the ocean, to rest for who knew how long?

The hero of the novel is Jefferson Caird who had somehow managed to have seven personalities in him and had managed to live a seven day week that way. He also could lie under the truth spray. In this episode Caird escapes the prison he awakes in, joins a tribe of 'daybreakers' and attempts to break the governments monopoly on information. SF Adventure.

SPIDER WORLD: THE DELTA by Colin Wilson. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1987. 352pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

Another sequel - this time to **SPIDER WORLD - THE TOWER**. The world Wilson has created has been taken over by giant spiders and the remnants of humankind are fighting for their lives from the wind-born balloons.

The leader of the spiders is the Spider Lord and Niall is determined to destroy it. He has allies in the form of beetles and also renegade humans. They fight their way across the countryside trying to reach the delta where they believe the spiders have the ultimate power source whence they draw the power to revive the dead and direct them to attack the humans.

The way this is written reminds me of the earlier novel by Brian Aldiss - **HOTHOUSE**, with the earth reduced to primeval wilderness. This is a well-written adventure novel and is full of daring do.

GALACTIC EMPIRES edited by Brian Aldiss. Legend pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1950 - 1975. 649pp. A\$15.95. On sale now.

This is one large collection. Put together in 1975, the first sentence of the Introduction reads: "Galactic Empires represent the ultimate absurdity in science fiction." Don't let this put you off - the stories in this collection are included because they have Galactic Empires as their basic premise.

Galactic Empires are what bring most young readers into the sf environments - as the popularity of STAR WARS shows. This is Volume One of a series, and the stories are: BEEN A LONG, LONG TIME by R.A. Rafferty; THE POSSESSED by Arthur C. Clarke; PROTECTED SPECIES by H.B. Fife; ALL THE WAY BACK by Michael Shaara; THE STAR PLUNDERER by Poul Anderson; FOUNDATION by Isaac Asimov; WE'RE CIVILIZED by Mark Clifton & Mark Apostolides; THE CRIME AND THE GLORY OF COMMANDER SUZDAL by Cordwainer Smith; THE REBEL OF VALKYR by Alfred Coppel; BRIGHTNESS FALLS FROM THE AIR by Iris Seabright; IMMIGRANT by Clifford D. Simak; RESIDENT PHYSICIAN by James White; AGE OF RETIREMENT by Hal Lynch and PLANTING TIME by Hal Adams & Charles Nightingale.

SIGN OF CHAOS by Roger Zelazny. Sphere pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. (C) 1987. 214pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

It has been some time since I last read an Amber novel; the background was faintly familiar to me, the characters not. Zelazny goes straight into the plot without any attempt at giving background on settings and characters, so if you haven't read any Amber novels before, then I suggest you read some of the previous ones.

Merle Corey awakes to find himself in an exotic bar with an assortment of strange characters and an even stranger environment. He manages to escape and make his way back to the court of Amber, beating off several attacks on his person as he journeys forth. When he arrives back he finds that, as always, events have not stood still and he must make new friendships and renew old ones if he is to survive.

The action when it comes is well told and the suspense hangs on. A welcome addition to Amber.

SPELL OF THE WITCH WORLD by Andre Norton. VGSP pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1972. 220pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

Another physically well-constructed paperback and seven in the Witch World series. When I started into DRAGON SCALE SILVER, the first part, I thought 'Oh, oh, here we go again - the poor heroine, the brother and the older warrior who the heroine secretly longs for'. The story is nearly that, but luckily the book actually consists of three separate novelettes - DRAGON SCALE SILVER, in which the sister heroine saves her straying brother and goes on in the end with her (brotherly) warrior; DREAM SMITH, a shorter tale about a Smith who is horribly disfigured in an explosion but who has a gift of making beautiful figures from the strange metal which caused his disfigurement and who ends up with a damsel who also suits him; and lastly AMBER OUT OF QUAYTH, the story of a girl whose brother marries and manages to marry her off to a stranger out of the wastes. The girl goes off with him and finds he is not all he seems - he has trapped two of the true rulers of his land and it is up to Ysmay to free them and help defeat her evil husband.

In all, not a bad collection.

TERRY'S UNIVERSE edited by Beth Meacham. Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1988. 244pp. A\$29.95. On sale now.

Since the death of Terry Carr, there have been many articles in fanzines and other sources mourning him. His widow had financial difficulties after his death, so many of

his friends contributed their time (and stories) to this volume to help her. The stories are wide ranging, and some go to at least show that the New Wave has reached the USA and is firmly ensconced. The stories included are: HOUSE OF BONES by Robert Silverberg; KORE 87 by Ursula Le Guin; SLACK LANKHMAR AFTERNOON FEATURING HISVEI by Fritz Leiber; ISOSCELES by Kate Wilhelm; TRANSIENTS by Carter Scholz; THE DRAGON LINE by Michael Swanwick; LE HOT SPORT by R.A. Lafferty; THE LUNATICS by Kim Stanley Robinson; DEADBOY DONER AND THE FILSTONE CUP by Roger Zelazny; LUKORA by Gene Wolfe; AT THE DOUBLE SOLSTICE by Greg Benford and THE DANCE OF THE CHANGER AND THE THREE by Terry Carr. There is an afterword by Harlan Ellison.

Some of the stories from your favourite authors will not be quite what you expect from them...

LAVONDYSS by Robert Holdstock. Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1988. 367pp. A\$16.95. On sale now.

Lavondyss is a world of the mind - created by the deep unconscious and peopled from that area. LAVONDYSS is the sequel to MYTHAGO WOOD, and continues in the vein created with that first book.

The difference between the world of Lavondyss and that ordinarily created by the imagination is that several people can co-inhabit Lavondyss, and the landscape is a joint creation of their minds. Tallis Keeton was born, in a way, to be an explorer of the mythago wood, and all her young life was a visible pointer towards that exploration. Her environment, of the small farm and open fields and ancient wood surrounding it, worked together to bring her education directed towards this. Throughout the novel there is no mention of her schooling, though the modern (1940s) precepts would have had to create an imbalance with the ancient ways of her mind, embodied in the three crones who watched over her and ultimately showed her the way.

I did not think the sequel lived up all the way to the original novel - probably because the landscape is a typically Northern Hemisphere one - in more ancient parts of the world, and this country is one, much of the last 40,000 years is still visible and active, or has been in the last few hundred years.

NEW TALES OF THE CHULHU MYTHOS edited by Ramsey Campbell. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1980. 331pp. A\$10.95. On sale now.

There have been many writers attempting to write in the Lovecraft style and in most of them the artificiality of it is obvious. There have been two volumes of collected stories written by others that have been collected by two editors who had an eye for Lovecraft's style - one was TALES OF THE CHULHU MYTHOS, edited by August Derleth, and the second is this volume.

The stories are: CROUCH END by Stephen King; THE STAR POOLS by A.A. Annatasio; THE SECOND WISH by Brian Lumley; DARK AWAKENING by Frank Belknap Long; SHAFT NUMBER 247 by Basil Copper; BLACK MAN WITH A HORN by T.E.D. Klein; THE BLACK TOME OF ALSOPHOCUS by H.P. Lovecraft and Martin S. Warnes; THAN CURSE THE DARKNESS by David Drake and THE FACES AT PINE DUNES by Ramsey Campbell. Some of the stories are written about Lovecraft, and some of that period. Some are very good, such as BLACK MAN WITH A HORN. There are one or two plain horror stories, but the majority are about the Cthulhu Mythos.

PRELUDE TO FOUNDATION by Isaac Asimov. Grafton h/c, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1988. 461pp. A\$29.95. On sale now.

The Foundation series is growing with a new spurt of life. As it stands the titles are: FOUNDATION; FOUNDATION AND EMPIRE, SECOND FOUNDATION; FOUNDATION'S EDGE; FOUNDATION AND EARTH and now a prequel - PRELUDE TO FOUNDATION.

In this novel Asimov introduces a young Hari Seldon just after he has given his momentous paper on Psychohistory. There are various people in pursuit of him after hearing of the paper - the Emperor and several of the leaders of some of the 800 or so splinter enclaves of Trantor. Along with Dors, a teacher of history at one of Trantor's universities, Seldon tries to lose himself and get some background in History to enable him to at least find out for good if psychohistory has any practical use.

I found that PRELUDE TO FOUNDATION is a much better book than FOUNDATION'S EDGE, FOUNDATION AND EARTH and THE ROBOTS OF DAWN in that it has found again the sense of wonder and writing that the three early Foundation novels had. Well worth reading.

TO SAIL BEYOND THE SUNSET by Robert A. Heinlein. Sphere pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. (C) 1987. 438pp. A\$9.99. On sale now.

Robert Heinlein's last novel. It is set in the same universe at Lazarus Long; in fact it tells the story of one his ancestors - Maureen Johnson Smith Long, born on the fourth of July 1882 and still living at the time of the narrative. The novel traces her career as a young girl, in the late 19th Century and early 20th and her loves and exploits. It gives background to that time in the USA and follows her married life through its ups and downs.

The novel is set in a different universe to ours - Time Track 2, when ours is Time Track 3, but the history doesn't diverge until the early 1940s, so most of the novel is set in the early years that Heinlein himself would have heard about from his parents. As is most of his later works, the action mainly takes place offstage - most of the novel is description, with quite a few bedroom scenes. SUNSET is much better written than some of his other novels from several years ago. I enjoyed it, but not so much for the sf, but the background of the late Victorian age.

SEA OF GLASS by Barry Longyear. Legend pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1987. 374pp. A\$11.95. On sale now.

This is quite an engrossing novel. Set in the 21st Century after the population explosion has necessitated some drastic action, this book pulls no punches as it follows the life of young Thomas Windom. It takes up the tale as he breaks one of the cardinal rules his parents have set for him - NEVER look out of the window. Being only seven, at last the temptation is too great - the woman across the road sees him and calls the police.

Being a world where unauthorised children are hunted and lodged in concentration camp farms and beaten by the guards and attempt to live without going insane or getting shot, Thomas manages to get through his early years and manages to escape with some others. He finds himself a fugitive in North America with everyone's hand against him, aided by the MAC computer which is run by the programme that is trying to stave off the war which will destroy the human race. One of the better novels to come out lately.

THE SHORE OF WOMEN by Pamela Sargent. Pan pb, dist in Aust by Pan Books. (C) 1986. 456pp. A\$10.99.

Pan Books does not put out much sf, but whoever is picking it knows their business. THE SHORE OF WOMEN is an after-the-bomb novel, and is set some thousand years or so after the war that destroyed civilization. The people who survived did so in fallout shelters and life was strict. To test when the outside could support life, men who were slowly dying of cancer or getting too old to help much with shelter life went out to explore. When everyone eventually went out, things had changed and women had taken over - determined that men could never again gain power over the earth and them again.

The story takes up as a several women are expelled from walled cities of women into the wilderness, a wilderness that had tribes of men and boys (also expelled from the cities). The women of the cities milked the males of their seed and held power over them with a religion that ensured that a certain number of men were 'called'. The surviving woman met up with a young male who felt, because of the conditioning, drawn to her; she put up with him in order to survive. Throughout the novel the women of the cities killed numbers of men in raids aimed at killing the odd surviving expelled criminal woman.

A thoughtful book, for all its action. *Recommended*.

THE GODS IN ANGER by Adrian Cole. Unwin pb, dist in Aust by allen & Unwin. (C) 1988. 385pp. A\$12.95. On sale now.

This is book four of The Omara Saga, the previous volumes having been A PEACE AMONG THE FALLEN; THRONE OF FOOLS and THE KING OF LIGHT AND SHADOWS.

THE GODS IN ANGER is a basic type of fantasy - it is a quest novel, with Simon Wargallow and his friends setting out with a rod of power to try to find out what is the type and manner of the forces arranged against Omara. They have many adventures and there are many foes. Their friends are brave, and many of their friends (whole peoples, in fact) pay the price of friendship and end up dead.

All is well in the end, though and the Saga is wound up with the heroes finding that their friendship is truly that.

AN ALIEN LIGHT by Nancy Kress. Legend trade pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1988. 370p. A\$14.95. On sale now.

Set on a planet that was a nightmare to the humans in the two warring cities, AN ALIEN LIGHT is one of the better hard sf novels to have come out recently. It is hard to put down and the reader finds him/herself caring for the characters.

When the alien Ged set up their trap to study humans to get some background on their to help them fight their - losing - war against them, the Ged had no idea of how a species that warred and killed among themselves could have gotten into space and discovered the space drive. All other rapidly evolving species had destroyed themselves and their planets before reaching space.

The glass-blower Ayrys had been exiled from her city and trekked to the strange wall that rumour said people were returning from with precious jewels. When she eventually found her way inside, she found that her troubles didn't end there - people from the enemy city were inside also, and only her quick mind enabled her to survive...and later join the other outcasts from both sides to learn some of the alien 'science'. *Recommended*.

BEYOND HEAVEN'S RIVER by Greg Bear. VGSF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1980/88. 256pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

When Yoshio Kawashita's aircraft carrier was attacked by American planes in the Pacific in World War II and it began to go down he thought it was the end of the career of a good pilot. However while he was in the sea a strange aircraft came out of nowhere and saved him.

He came to in a world which seemed without limits, but strange things happened when he went further in certain directions - the landscape seemed to create itself in front of him and uncreate itself behind him, though he never caught it at it. Some four hundred years passed (unbeknown to him) and at last mankind arrived at the strange flat planet that had been off limits for centuries. When they broke in and

found him, by space law he became the majority interest in the wealth of the planet. Being flat and having a lot of concrete, this didn't seem that much of a bargain.

Why the aliens wanted him to study was an enigma, and whether the humans could figure it out was going to be a question that might not be answered.

THE SERPENT MAGE by Greg Bear. Legend pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1986. 343pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

THE SERPENT MAGE is the sequel to **THE INFINITY CONCERTO**, which I haven't read. Getting started into this novel, with its complex interwoven plot which refer back to events in the first novel takes tenacity. If you stick to it, though, it is rewarding, as it is possible to pick up, from background details, what happened and character descriptions.

When Michael Perrin returned from the Realm he found it hard fitting back into the mundane Los Angeles world. He set about going through the Waltiri house and managed to interest the university in the music manuscripts that he had been left. He also found some old wine. To bring in extra money he worked in a restaurant. Things were going along much as he thought they would when he found a building that was becoming a Gateway from the Realm. As events progressed he began to believe that his arch enemy, Clarkham, had not perished in the Realm as he had believed he had.

Greg Bear writes some great hard sf - here is some of his best fantasy.

THE AFFIRMATION by Christopher Priest. VG/SF Classic pb, dis in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1981. 213pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

This novel is more speculative fiction than science fiction. It explores the world of one man as he lives through a traumatic time in his life.

Things go wrong in everyone's life and sometimes, when the events that go wrong come one after another without letup, something has to give and a breakdown ensues. For Peter Sinclair this is what happened. He lost his girlfriend, father and his job. This nearly put him out of action. Luckily a friend of his had a country cottage which Peter managed to persuade him to lend him on the condition that Peter spend some time fixing up.

After several months Peter had worked on some of the rooms and also worked on setting down the story of his life till then. He had nearly finished when his sister turned up. This made some cracks in his reality when he had to admit that he had done nothing in fixing up the house and in fact the rooms were a grotty mess. In his own mind, though, his special room was light and airy.

And a comment from **THE MENTOR** 48 (Feb. 1984): "This book (**THE AFFIRMATION**) won the Ditmar, which is a dead give-away the book is speculative fiction, not science fiction. It is also an indication it will be literate, but convoluted. It is copyright 1981, which is another indication that Australian tastes are still years behind the rest of the world."

WAVE WITHOUT A SHORE by C.J. Cherryh. VG/SF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1981. 247pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

Freedom was a planet with a strange set of races - human and ahnit. The humans were stranger than the ahnit. They had evolved a reality that only they existed - other humans were Outsiders or were taboo and did not exist. These were outcasts from the citizens, for example those who had committed crimes or political gaffs.

Herrin Law was a strange lad among even among this strange people. He grew up in a small village and later went to the university and eventually became a Master at logic. His past friends at the university when they were students were Keye Lynn whom Herrin had slept with, and Waden Jenks who became First citizen after his father died

in circumstances which would have been mysterious on other planets. Things were going along quite to Herrin's liking - he had designed a monument to Jenks that promised to last thousands of years as a work of art, when the Outsider military landed to establish a base to chase the pirates that plagued the nearby systems. Things went downhill from then on.

Cherryh is always a writer who thinks up new and interesting ideas - as this novel demonstrates.

TREE AND LEAF by J.R.R. Tolkien. Allen & Hyman h/c, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. (C) 1964 & 1988. 101pp. A\$24.95. On sale now.

I had not read any of Tolkien's scholarly essays before **TREE AND LEAF**, so I didn't have anything to go by.

The first part of the book is an talk Tolkien gave as an Andrew Lang Lecture and was printed in book form to ensure it gained a wider audience. This it most certainly did in T&L. In the talk Tolkien discusses the history of the fairy story and the later developments, including science fiction. The essay is 66 pages long, so it is not a short effort. He shows that he is against the 'mechanical' toys of science fiction, but the reader can discern that what he hankers for is fast vanishing into the dead past, if not already done so.

Next comes a short story - **LEAF BY NIGGLE** - which is a short (22 pages) piece that shows that fairy stories, as Tolkien defines them, can still be written, though the modern field of fantasy has grown so as to swamp them. Lastly is his poem, *Mythopaeia*, a rebuttal to those who think the fairy stories of the past were pure lies told with through a breath through silver. For the Tolkien completist.

THE ATLAS OF THE DRAGONLANCE WORLD by Karen Wynn Fonstad. TSR paperback, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1987. 168pp. 215 x 272mm. A\$29.99. On sale now.

The DragonLance books have been a minor publishing miracle - they sell like hot cakes and are bringing many young readers into the fantasy fold. They are relatively simply plotted but the text is clear and easy to follow.

The maps in this Atlas are in three colours and are really detailed - they are not the usual maps that you get, for instance, in the front of a novel to give the reader an idea of where the hero's/heroine's journey takes him or her. Not only the lands are shown, but the various cities and buildings are detailed, showing levels and corridors. Many of the scenes are set in buildings in cave systems, and the Atlas gives the various levels, most times in three dimensions. The use of the three colours is a very good idea in that what would be a complicated construction is now simple to follow and understand. A definite buy for DragonLance fans.

THE DRAGONLANCE SAGA - Book Two adapted by Roy Thomas & Thomas Yeates. TSR paperback, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. (C) 1988. 75pp in full colour. 252 x 272mm. A\$14.99. On sale now.

TSR are determined to make the DragonLance novels available to the widest available audience, now the novels have proved a good selling point, so they are striking out with colour comics in paperback form. The paper is glossy and the colours are bright, and the cover is striking, so it should sell well.

Book Two is adapted from Book Two of **DRAGONS OF AUTUMN TWILIGHT** (volume one of the DragonLance chronicles) and the reader of that novel will find that the authors of this volume have followed the original novel well, as far as can be expected when one is a full length novel and the other is a comic and is limited to 75 pages.

All in all, however, it is a good introduction to the Saga, and would make a good present to a youngster who is not yet into reading full length novels - this will pique her or his imagination.

THE AMTRAK WARS - Blood River by Patrick Tilley. Sphere pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. (C) 1988. 361pp. A\$9.99. On sale now.

This is volume 4 of Tilley's series **THE AMTRAK WARS**, and continues the saga as Steve, Clearwater and Cadillac flee the land of Ne-Issan and head back to safety. It seems to be an open ended series and as long as Tilley can keep this up, his young readers will benefit.

For Steve safety is a problematic place as both his original people, the underground Federation and his adopted people, the Mutes are after him for one reason or another. In this volume the Ne-Issan catch up with the three, but not before Clearwater and Cadillac succeed in nearly destroying one of the wagon-trains by planting explosives on two of Steve's friends and blowing up them and the train.

The series is quite good post apocalypse sf and is written with the adventure element topmost, though there are several levels, the deepest is not that hidden. There are several present day slang terms and references, though they could be excused in that most of the references to the present are on films and no doubt tv shows of the late 20th Century.

A definite buy for followers of the Amtrak Wars.

A CLOUD OVER WATER and **THE STREETS OF THE CITY** by Alison Spedding. Unwin pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. (C) 1988. 348 & 338pp. A\$12.95 each. On sale now.

The continuing history of Aleizon Allix Ayndra and her search for power and glory in her own right. The two previous volume is **THE ROAD AND THE HILLS**. These are Books two and three, and would appear to be the last in this series.

Ayndra is still fighting her own wars against the noblemen and most of the time with the King. The fighting consists of both political and physical fighting, with loyalties changing much of the time and treachery everywhere. The books are set in some long-ago time before the invention of gun-powder - catapults are used to bombard cities. Spedding obviously has spent much time researching and creating a world where everything holds together. The writing is forceful and the machinations are complicated. If you like stories set in the past (say seven hundred years ago) but in a different world, this series will suit you. It is reminiscent of Jane Gaskell's **ATLAN** books.

ADULTHOOD RITES: Xenogenesis II by Octavia Butler. Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1988. 277pp. A\$34.95. On sale now.

ADULTHOOD RITES takes off where **DAWN** left off. Brought out of a long sleep by aliens who rescued them when war wiped out life on earth, the remnants of humanity, led by a few humans adapted by the Oankali, are trained on the living alien ship to survive on an earth that survived the war, but with vastly different flora and fauna.

The aliens demanded a trade with the humans - with races they help they give some of themselves and the other races give also - so much so that in several generations the humans will adapt and will have traits and abilities not human at all, and the surviving humans did not, in the main, like this at all. They lived in scattered groups over the countryside and several female children were born. The Oankali decided to try for an adapted male human, and the future of the surviving humans would depend on what Akin found in his relationships with the humans and his alien brethren.

Fascinating and unique sf.

THE ASCENSION FACTOR by Frank Herbert and Bill Ransom. Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1988. 381pp. A\$29.95. On sale now.

An intelligent plant is one thing, intelligent kelp is another. This novel is the third in the trilogy commencing with **THE JESUS INCIDENT** and **THE LAZARUS EFFECT**. It also is set on the world Pandora. Things are progressing nicely - a voidship is being constructed which the Director, the ruler of the planet, hopes will allow him, along with those under his power, to leave the planet.

Crista Galli is a woman with strange powers, and the resistance hope to use her in their fight with the Director and his head of Security, Spider Nevi. Crista is an enigma to most people: she was apparently grown somehow by the kelp and let go to make her way to the humans. Security attempt to keep watch on her but this proves difficult.

A novel to be read carefully.

DRAGONSDAWN by Anne McCaffrey. Bantam h/c, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers. (C) 1988. 380pp. A\$24.95. On sale now.

For those of you who have read and loved the Dragon series books set on the planet Pern, this book is a must. For those who have not yet read any of them, it is also a must.

DRAGONSDAWN chronicles the first colony on Pern, from when the ships first approached it and landed, and through the attack of the first fall of Thread. It tells how the colonists were nearly decimated and how the dragonets helped their human friends. How the Dragons themselves were created and trained, and how human politicking almost destroyed the colony is also part of the story.

I found this book much easier to read than the other later Dragon books - probably because all of the names are Terran. McCaffrey has done her homework with the background to the settings, both colony and biological and all ring true. By the end of the book they are relocated in the Northern landmass in Holds and the social structure is being formed that showed up in the later books. *Recommended*.

THE WELL OF TIME by Tom Henighan. Fontana pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1988. 394pp. A\$10.95. On sale now.

This novel is, I believe, Tom Henighan's first. He has had a book of short stories published, **TOURISTS FROM ALGOL**, and had stories in several magazines.

Being Associate Professor of English at a university has its advantages, I suppose. Henighan has used his (obviously) extensive knowledge of Norse myths and the North American countryside (he lives in Canada) to create a background to this fantasy. It is set in a North America inhabited by Vikings, and in addition has various supernatural creatures that have their creation in the Norse myths. The heroine is Ingrid, the daughter of a healer whose journey across the winter landscape to fetch back to her village the cup with the elixir of power is fraught with danger and death.

The book is a carefully constructed fantasy and all the elements are fitted together with care. Seasoned fantasy readers will find it a rewarding read; newcomers will find that it is a good read showing how well-crafted fantasy can be.

THE FIREBRAND by Marion Zimmer Bradley. Sphere pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. (C) 1987. 559pp. A\$12.99. On sale now.

Troy is very much the city of legends in fantasy; in **THE FIREBRAND** Zimmer Bradley has chosen for her protagonist Kassandra, the daughter of the priestess Hecuba and Priam the king.

With a novel this long, it takes a lot of work and skill to sustain it. This novel is fantasy, though using the ILIAD as part source background, it is literary fantasy, and the general fantasy reader, if she or he be young, might find the going heavy. It is lucky for that reader than Zimmer Bradley has a good command of english and knows how to write a good adventure novel, weaving literary historicity with fiction to make a novel that flows well.

If you are a reader that liked THE MISTS OF AVALON you will find this novel a little different in style - but you will enjoy it. It has much the same style as the former novel and Zimmer Bradley is obviously following up her win with that on with another with such historical background for the same readers.

INFERNO by Louise Cooper. Unwin Paperback, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. (C) 1988. 241pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

INFERNO is part of another trilogy - it is Book Two of the Indigo saga, and follows the adventures of Indigo, the princess who was thrown out of her world and had been forced to wander the earth until she destroyed the seven evil demons she had released.

In this volume she enters a landscape harsh and deadly - the populace are warring among themselves and, though she herself cannot be killed, those around her can be and she must be careful how she treads. As with most modern fantasies, this is a quest novel and is basically well written. These days there is a lot of fantasy available of this calibre, and much of it has only one thing that makes it stand apart from others - they are written by women. It seems that of those I have seen lately, the ones with the darker outlook are those written by women. The modern world may well be offering an escape via these fantasies, but sometimes those fantasies are worse than the 'real' world.

DISASTER by L. Ron Hubbard. New Era h/c, dist in Aust by New Era. (C) 1987. 333pp. A\$ On sale now.

Volume eight of the ten volumes of Mission Earth, the serial is still going. In this book Heller actually obtains a victory over Gris and the various assassins after him. Things are actually getting a move on with the implementation of his plan of ridding earth of various pollutants (including several nefarious characters). He goes about this in his own way, wiping out Moscow and Leningrad by way of an out of control ice asteroid.

The plot twists a bit halfway through the volume with the action going into the future a hundred years or so to the Royal prison again. After some activity there we are back in the present with Heller and Krak as they attempt to get away from their pursuers.

Hubbard must have many new readers by now with these books - with any luck New Era will start reprinting his old fiction from the 1940's and 1950's. I would like to see FINAL BLACKOUT back in print.

EON By Greg Bear. Legend pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1985. 502pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

When I first started this novel I thought I had read it all before...an asteroid is discovered approaching earth and a mission is sent to prise out its secrets. It is discovered that there are seven enormous chambers hollowed out in the interior. From there on the story diverges from any other I have read with this introduction.

The story begins some two years after the first exploration began. A young mathematician is sent up to the 'Stone' to do some research. When she arrives she

finds that what most people on earth thought was simple was far from that. Unfortunately for the scientists on the Stone their time was short. The Cold War had been simmering for decades past the present day and then, in 2005, the time of the setting of the novel, it threatened to erupt in out-and-out war. In fact, it was the arrival of the Stone that eventually precipitated it.

It was the seventh chamber that held the ultimate mystery. There was no end wall to the chamber - it appeared to stretch into infinity. Though the asteroid was only some 250 kilometres long, the Corridor stretched for far longer. Radar echoes had not been returned, and one expedition had travelled several thousand kilometres without coming to its end. If this novel doesn't kindle your sense of wonder, nothing will. And it will certainly stretch it. Excellent sf.

SILENCE IN solitude by Melissa Scott. VGSF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1979. 313pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

This is the second space opera set in a series. The plot is not that unusual - a space pilot gets into hot water and, along with her two husbands, flees. The person and organisation after her is the ruler of most of human space. The reason they are after her is that not only is she one of a few women pilots, but she is the only woman who is in training to be a magi.

Most of the work done on the far flung human works is done by artificial beings - created, not by science, but by magic. The spaceships fly through space powered by the harmonium - the keels of the ships resonating along with the rest of the planets and space itself. The pilots thread their way between the stars using something very much like the Tarot.

When I first began reading this series I didn't think I would like it - but it grows on one. Good reading.

TREY OF SWORDS by Andre Norton. VGSF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1977. 180pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

Volume 8 in the Witch World series that Victor Gollancz is re-printing. This volume consists of three stories that are titled **SWORD OF ICE**; **SWORD OF LOST BATTLES** and **SWORD OF SHADOW**. They form a running narrative that follows Yonan and Crytha as they battle opponents that had endured for thousands of years.

SWORD OF ICE introduces Yonan and Crytha and describes how Yonan finds the sword encased in solid rock and how he meets the lizard man Tsali who helped him escape from the crevice where he had fallen and found the sword. **SWORD OF LOST BATTLES** furthers their adventures and here Yonan meets the warrior from the past who recognises in him someone that he knew back then. The other personality takes over Yonan's body and the three (Yonan, Tsali and the warrior Uruk) fight and attempt to kill the evil being that the underground dwellers worship. **SWORD OF SHADOW** is the sword meant for Crytha and she has her own battle to win with another evil from the past.

A book that shows that Andre Norton is as good as ever.

THE JEWELS OF APTOR by Samuel R. Delany. VGSF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1967. 221pp. A\$

This novel is from the period when Delany was writing sf regularly. It is a straight forward sf adventure novel and most science fiction readers will find it easy going. I don't know where the **ANALOG** review came from, but it is wrong on two counts. Read **THE JEWELS OF APTOR** to find out why...

The world Delany has created is a post holocaust one - ruined cities in the jungles and mutants running around these jungles. There are three Jewels that years before a malevolent peoples used to attack and nearly conquer a neighbouring country. Two of the Jewels were captured by the country invaded - the third went back with the withdrawing armies. At the time of the novel the mystery surrounding the Jewels becomes important again as one of the two Jewels is stolen and later comes to light. Four comrades attempt to penetrate the enemy coast and find and steal the third Jewel to ensure that peace will prevail. They find, however, that that old adage, 'Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely'.

A good, simple novel for a relaxing read.

DEMON LORD OF KARANDA by David Eddings. Bantam h/c, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers. (C) 1988. 378pp. A\$27.95. On sale now.

The Malloreon saga seems likely to be as big a hit with fantasy readers as The Belgariad was previously. **DEMON LORD OF KARANDA** is book three of The Malloreon. I didn't receive book two for review, so I can only say that in book one Barion's baby son is kidnapped by Zandramas - a sorceress - and she disappears with him to journey to the Place That Is No More. She hopes to find the evil Jewel that is the Dark equivalent of Garion's Orb on his sword. She hopes that Garion, in following her in quest of his son, will fulfill his part as had been foretold and lose the world to the Dark.

The usual group is after her - Garion's wife Ce'Nedra, Polgara, Belgarath, Velvet, Sadi, Silk, Toth and Durnik. They are captured, at the end of the second book, by the soldiers of Kal Zakath, Emperor of Mallorea, who take them to him. For the first time in millennia, the King of the West meets the King of Mallorea. The two men find that they have much in common and there grows a grudging respect between them. However events force them apart and the group escape the king when plague strikes his city and make their way after Zandramas again. Though some readers don't like a slow moving story, in this case it adds to the atmosphere.

THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY; THE RESTAURANT AT THE END OF THE UNIVERSE; LIFE, THE UNIVERSE AND EVERYTHING and **SO LONG, AND THANKS FOR THE FISH** by Douglas Adams. Pan pb, dist in Aust by Pan Books. (C) 1979, 1980, 1982 and 1984. 159, 187, 161 and 191pp. A\$9.99 ea. On sale now.

The first I saw of The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy was the English TV show of the same name. I had heard of the books from Edwina Harvey and seen her characterisation of Zaphod at various Medtreks, but had not read them.

Here Pan have published all four as a set, with covers that can be moved around to set up four patterns with fish, a spaceship, Arthur Dent and a Don't Panic slogan in each corner. If you haven't read Adams famous books about the end of the earth (and of the Universe) and the answer to the ultimate question, now is the time to buy them.

Need I say that these books are a must for a sf library?

ABANDONATI by Garry Kilworth. Unwin Hyman h/c, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. (C) 1988. 162pp. A\$34.95. On sale now.

The Abandonati were those left on earth when the 'rich' left - and after they left, society fell apart almost at once. The set is the future, when cities cover most

of the land. The city the action takes place stretches for untold kilometres - the map some of the characters have only covers some of its vast area.

Guppy was one of its typical inhabitants - he wore rags and lived in a day to day existence. When he found liquor it was a major event and he would drink himself insensible. Another major event was when Guppy decided that things were in such a mess that he would move on. He did, picking up on the way two mates - the elderly negro Rupert and his sidekick Trader. They set out and it is only by luck that they make it through to the airport, which was one of their aims. None of the people in the city are healthy - most have running sores - and they spend some time there recuperating.

A well written and conscientious book.

BEYOND LIES THE WUB by Philip K. Dick. Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1987. 403pp. A\$29.95. On sale now.

This is Volume One of the collected stories of Philip K. Dick, and thus is a must for any Dick fan who hasn't all of his stories in a permanent format. There are twenty five stories and most are from the early 1950s. Most are straight space opera, though there are some of his 'later' stories that are more intricate.

The stories are: ROOG; THE LITTLE MOVEMENT; BEYOND LIES THE WUB; THE GUN; THE SKULL; THE DEFENDERS; MR. SPACESHIP; PIPER IN THE WOODS; THE INFINITIES; THE PRESERVING MACHINE; EXPENDABLE; THE VARIABLE MAN; THE INDEFATIGABLE FROG; THE CRYSTAL CRYPT; THE SHORT HAPPY LIFE OF THE BROWN OXFORD; THE BUILDER; MEDDLER; THE GREAT C; PAYCHECK; OUT IN THE GARDEN; THE KING OF THE ELVES; COLONY; PRIZE SHIP; NANNY and notes on the stories. There were quite a few of these stories that I hadn't read before and I found them quite entertaining - though very fifties in their construction.

Worth purchasing; or see your librarian about getting a copy for your local library.

THE ELFIN SHIP and THE DISAPPEARING DWARF by James P. Blaylock. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1982 and 1983. 379 and 319pp. A\$11.95 and \$10.95. On sale now.

These two fantasy novels are quite well written and the reader can feel himself being captivated in the world of the Valley.

The said valley was quiet and life went on much as it had for ages. The Master Cheese maker, Jonathan Bing used to make his different kinds of cheeses for the people of the valley and send any surplus cheeses down to the trading town where they were traded for other goods. What upset things was when the trading town was destroyed mysteriously and then an elfin ship, which was an unusual event, began to be seen in the sky. Bing found himself volunteering to journey down the river to the town. Shortly he was joined by the village simpleton and Professor Wurzle and their adventure began.

THE DISAPPEARING DWARF follows the same vein and much the same group sets off to visit a supposedly empty castle and, instead of returning, they venture off in search of treasure in a far land called Landsend. Smooth fantasy in the Hobbit style.

DREAMS OF STONE by Jonathan Wylie. Corgi pb, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers. (C) 1989. 363pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

DREAMS OF STONE is set fourteen years after the Servants of Ark trilogy, which described how magic ceased to be a force to be used. Cai was a wizard back then and now he was passing his knowledge on to his pupil, Gemma. Gemma did not believe that magic had died completely and chose to go on a journey to find where magic was still able to be used. She sought on, taking along with her Arden, who journeyed into the unknown in the search.

The novel is quite well told, with enough adventure and introspection to suit most readers. Gemma meets many people, of course, in her journey, among them Mallory, a female friend. The adventures they have are not as far fetched as some other fantasy ones (with gods, goddesses and demons) and one does not have to stretch the sense of disbelief too much in reading this.

ROSE OF THE PROPHET by Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman. Bantam pb, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers. (C) 1988. 444pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

A fantasy from the creators of the Darksword novels. This is a different land - almost Arabic, with djins and a host of gods (twenty in all...) who are in a state of chaos. One of the gods has upset the status quo that has lasted for ages and all is turmoil. One of the gods has the plan of uniting two desert tribes and he instructs the leaders of each tribe to end their enmity. Prince Khardan and Princess Zohra are the leaders of the tribes and it is almost impossible for them to obey the god. But it is a god instructing them to cease warring, so they give it a try...

Their own warring is not the only factor in the plot, however. The Amir is fighting both of them, and it is only logical for them to combine their resources. Then the wizard Mathew turned up. His only problem was that because of his looks, various people thought he was a woman...

Entertaining fantasy.

ENDGAME ENIGMA by James P. Hogan. Legend pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1987. 408pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

The cover illustration of a hammer-and-sickle space station is not quite what the author describes the Valentina Tereshkova to look like. Said space station is circling the skies in the not so distant future. The USSR's powers are loosening and in a last effort the Tereshkova is created. Two Americans try to find out if there are 'doomsday' weapons aboard, but they are captured. They are placed in a prison on board the station, but, along with some other dissidents, manage to escape and overpower the key stations and bring about the downfall of the USSR...

Apart from the question of why there is a prison in a space station in the first place, the story has a fairly straightforward sf background, though it is of that kind of story that is becoming more and more frequent - the mainstream story set several years in the future. Still, not bad.

DIANETICS by L. Ron Hubbard. Dianetics pb, dist in Aust by New Era Publications. (C) 1988. 605pp incl. index. A\$9.95. On sale now.

Well, this would be the first full marketing of DIANETICS by paperback in Australia. It is no doubt available in hardcover and limited paperback supplies in the Scientology offices, but this is aimed at the general reader.

I first read the article on Dianetics in a remaindered 1956 ASTOUNDING which is when Campbell first started pushing it. I thought it interesting. This is the full version in a new addition. It consists of three 'books'; the first being of five, the latter of ten chapters each. They describe 'The Goal of Man', 'The Single Source of All Inorganic Mental and Organic Psychomatic Ills' and 'Therapy' - that is, how to become a clear.

Good background reading for intelligent discussion of Hubbard and his ideas. This is the background book that started it all and gives some idea of how the man thought and how his ideas from Dianetics and on to Scientology.

TEGNE, Warlord of Zendow by Richard La Plante. Sphere trade pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. (C) 1988. 346pp. A\$14.99. On sale now.

TEGNE is a strange book in that if it had been written when the 'little cricket' had first seen the air, it would have been a raging success. That isn't to say that it might still not be. Who knows.

Richard La Plante has created a fantasy world using his knowledge of Japanese and Chinese philosophies and has woven them into this story. He claims that the text 'is based on actual personal experience'. If you have read the book, you may begin to wonder... Especially the scene in the bathhouse of the brothel where both father and son are, ah, worked over by two of the beautiful inmates (separately) and come to experience the ultimate ecstasy.

The adventure ain't bad, either. And this book is the first in a trilogy. It is certainly different to the run of the mill fantasy one sees these days, and is the better for it.

2061: ODYSSEY THREE by Arthur C. Clarke. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1987. 302pp. A\$10.95. On sale now.

The Odyssey series is growing nicely - and Clarke has left this novel open-ended. If you haven't read the first two volumes - 2001 and 2010 you really should read them. If you have seen both movies then you probably haven't lost that 'sense of wonder'.

Halley's Comet returns to the solar system and an expedition in a private space liner lands on it to do some exploration and experiments. They are nearly finished when they hear that their sister ship, the Galaxy, has crash landed on Europa. Heywood Floyd's son is on it, and by co-incidence he is on the Universe, the ship that landed on the comet. The Universe sets off on a rescue mission, mindful of the warning to "Attempt no landings" on Europa.

The blurb on the back of the jacket tells how Floyd again meets Bowman and Hal, but this actually takes place in the last twenty or so pages of the novel. Well worth purchasing.

THE SEA AND SUMMER by George Turner. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1987. 427pp. A\$12.95. On sale now.

This novel could, with some changes, have been set in almost any coastal city in the 21st Century. It has certain Australian peculiarities that shape it and that make it unique.

It is at its core a novel of the breakdown of civilisation and how a small group of people, from all levels of that society, interacted and tried to salvage a life that was at most selfish, and at best totally human.

Turner follows the fortunes of a family that loses its middle class privileges and has to find its legs in the 'Fringe' - that belt outside of the towers of decaying flats that rear into the Melbourne sky. The father suicides in the early chapters and the mother must keep the two boys together. It is not her fault that both of them leave her, though in the end both return.

I didn't think much of George Turner's previous novels, but **THE SEA AND SUMMER** will make an impression. *Recommended*. Buy it.

NEVERNESS by David Zindell. Grafton h/c, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1988. 444pp. A\$29.95. On sale now.

This is a complex book - it is 'hard' science fiction in that it is set in the far future when humankind has spread across the galaxy and 'carked' their bodies

into varying forms and lifestyles. The novel opens at the ceremony for the latest school of Pilots - humans who have shown that they can use the matrix ships to enhance their mathematical abilities to find the paths to the stars. It is a way of life that is at times a way of death. Young Mallory Ringess meets his long lost father and makes a rash statement for his quest - he will map the Solid State Entity. Said Entity is an enormous computer with neurons the size of moons, and which is spreading through the galaxy. Even worse for humankind is the Vild - a growing area of exploding suns.

Mallory makes it back from the Solid State Entity and is soon in the thick of intrigue with both his father and the leader of the Pilots (the Timekeeper) seemingly after his blood. The blurb on the cover is "The science fiction masterwork". It is David Zeindell's first novel (he was a prizewinning entrant in L. Ron Hubbard's Writers of the Future) and though only time can say if it is a "masterwork", it is certainly a brilliant book for a first novel and it is *Recommended* reading by this reviewer.

VICTIMS OF THE NOVA by John Brunner. Arrow pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1969, 1974, 1981, 473pp. A\$10.95. On sale now.

VICTIMS OF THE NOVA is a collection of the three 'Zarathustra' novels in one volume. Though set on different planets the three are loosely tied together by having as background the victims fleeing the Zarathustra sun's going nova and three thousand ships escaping from the night side of the planet with about two million people. They fled into mainly unexplored space and settled any planets that they could find; mainly descending into barbarism.

The first book, **POLYMATH**, introduced the refugees on one planet as they fight to remain alive against the dangerous creatures of the planet and the politics of the human refugees as they fight for dominance among themselves.

The second book, **THE AVENGERS OF CARRIG**, comes in later in time when a Patrol has been set up to make sure that various greedy humans from 'civilized' worlds don't try to take advantage of their more primitive cousins.

THE REPAIRMEN OF CYCLOPS shows a group of these greedy humans in action and the forces of law and order attempting to stop them without appearing too brutal to the watching worlds.

SYMBOL OF TERRA and **THE TEMPLE OF TRUTH** by E.C. Tubb. Legend pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1984 & 1985. 460pp. a\$10.95. On sale now.

Two volumes of the Dumarest Saga (#'s 30 and 31) in one. A good buy for those collecting it.

One of the two volumes is **SYMBOL OF TERRA** wherein Dumarest hears of a man who may have the key to finding the earth he had been seeking so long. Dumarest had told him of the symbol on the hull of the spaceship that he had left earth on and he had told Tama Chenault of it. Chenault had studied and collected ancient books and writings and Dumarest hoped to gain a clue from him. An added spice was the woman he met outside Chenault's stronghold - Govinda, who reminded him of long lost Kalin.

The second novel is **THE TEMPLE OF TRUTH**. Another legend of earth that brought Dumarest seeking the lost co-ordinates that would bring him home. The pursuing Cylan were getting closer to catching up to him and when he heard of the legend of the world of the Guardians he managed to penetrate the temple and gaze upon the golden-inscribed symbols of the location of earth. That was when all hell broke loose.

SF Adventure, quite well written.

FIRE DANCE by Scott Baker. A Legend pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1986. 380pp. A\$10.95. On sale now.

Book two of the Ashlu Cycle, this is a fantasy series that is different from most others. Book one was **DRINK FROM THE FIRE OF THE FLAMES** and introduces the firedancers - men and women who can walk of red hot coals as long as they keep their faith in the Earth Goddess.

Rafti is such a firedancer; she dwells with her people in a hidden valley whose entrance is guarded by a volcano - any who enter must do so across the cauldron of said volcano. The only people who do so are the sharmans who cross it to trade and take young firedancers to help them in their journeys. Rafti is also beautiful and she is seen by a young visiting shaman who tries to persuade her to join them on the journey back. While she is thinking this over she crosses the coals and, unfortunately, while doing so, loses her concentration and is killed in the searing heat. The young shaman and his companion come after her and 'rescue' her before the Goddess can take her. From then on her troubles really begin.

THE GATE TO WOMEN'S COUNTRY by Sheri S. Tepper. Bantam h/c, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers. (C) 1988. 278pp. A\$29.95. On sale now.

Sheri S. Tepper has written quite a growing collection of books now, including **THE TRUE GAME**; **THE CHRONICLES OF MAVIN MANYSHAPED**; **JINIAN FOOTSEER** and **THE AWAKENERS**. This novel is different in that it is set in a future that could be ours, rather than a fantasy setting.

THE GATE TO WOMEN'S COUNTRY's title refers to one of two gates leading into the woman's towns. Only women are allowed into it. The other gate is the Defender's Gate, which is for use by the warriors. In the three hundred or so years since the civilised world was nearly destroyed, society had set itself up so that such a thing could not happen again. One of the things done was the segregation of the adults into a women's town and a garrison for the males. The women studied arts, sciences and educated their own, while the men studied war and what would not happen again.

The society was very stratified and impossible for a small number of people to change. It was almost like Europe of the Reformation for the attitude of the people. An intense book.

VILLAINY VICTORIOUS by L Ron Hubbard. New Era h/c, dist in Aust by N.E. Publications. (C) 1987. 419pp. A\$26.95. On sale now.

The second-last volume in the ten in Mission Earth. The setting in this volume is Voltar, in the prison and in government city, where the Emperor resides.

Unfortunately for the Goodies, Lombard Hiss is sent to prison back on Voltar, rather than earth. Here he and other prisoners get together and manage to make good their escape and join up with other villains. With Heller back on earth it is relatively simple for them to run riot with drugs, mind control and other imports from earth and they managed to both ruin the government and kidnap the emperor.

One of the most feared of the Emperor's troops were the 434rd Death Battalion and they showed what they were made of when they attempted to capture Bolz. Unfortunately for them colonel Flay was with them and in his usual manner managed to wipe himself, Bolz and the Battalion off the face of the planet.

For those readers who like their action bold and resolute.

A FALL OF PRINCES by Judith Tarr. Pan trade pb, dist in Aust by Pan Books. (C) 1988. 401pp. A\$11.99. On sale now.

Fantasy novels and series are coming out of the walls.

This volume is three of Avaryan Rising. I can say this much for Pan Books - the sf and fantasy they publish are all good and worth purchasing. In the first two volumes (THE HALL OF THE MOUNTAIN KING and THE LADY OF HAN-GILEN) the background of this novel is told - how Mirain found Elian of Han-Gilen in the Temple of that name and made love to her. Their union brought trouble, of course, both with the nobility and other countries, but it held.

A FALL OF PRINCES begins with a heir to the throne of one of those other countries fleeing the hounds of his brothers. He falls in with one who says he is a priest of the god of Mirain, who is now emperor. The priest helps him to escape and heals his wounds. He finds out that the priest, Sarevan, is actually the heir to Mirain's throne. He also finds other things are not as he was told.

A well put together and interesting fantasy.

DARK NIGHT IN TOYLAND by Bob Shaw. Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1960-1989. 190pp. A\$29.95. On sale now

A collection of short stories by one of the best Irish sf writers. Shaw has had quite a good reception to his novels lately, and readers now have a chance to read his short stories, which have been collected from various sources.

The stories included are: DARK NIGHT IN TOYLAND; GO ON, PICK A UNIVERSE; STORMSEEKER; ALIENS AREN'T HUMAN; LOVE ME TENDER; TO THE LETTER; COURAGIOUS NEW PLANET; CUTTING DOWN; HUE AND CRY; THE K-Y WARRIORS; DISSOLUTE DIPLOMAT; WELL-WISHER; EXECUTIONER'S MOON; DEFLATION 2001 and SHADOW OF WINGS. They cover a wide range of situations, plots and genres. Some are short vignettes, some are tone pieces and jokes while others are short stories in the traditional vein. Several are biting satire and others are straight sf.

I enjoyed them - when you need a bit of relief this is the book to read a story of two from to change the pace.

AMBIENT by Jack Womack. Unwin pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. (C) 1988. 259pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

For a first novel AMBIENT is quite something else again. It is set in a New York some time in the future, and the future may not be so far ahead. There are elements of CLOCKWORK ORANGE in work (indeed the movie is mentioned in passing) and it has the type of atmosphere that Ballard creates, but the telling creates a clearer sense of scene and happening than Ballard created.

Seamus O'Malley is a bodyguard to Dryden, the son of possibly the richest and most powerful man in the world. Said son thinks the old man is going insane and determines to assassinate him. O'Malley is to be the tool. The son has, as a paid distraction, a lovely woman who he has hired to both protect and service him. O'Malley has a thing going for her.

It all comes together when Dryden instructs O'Malley to kill his father and that Avalon, the woman, will be his backup. A readable book that is better than most of its peers.

PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED IN H/C, NOW RELEASED IN PB:

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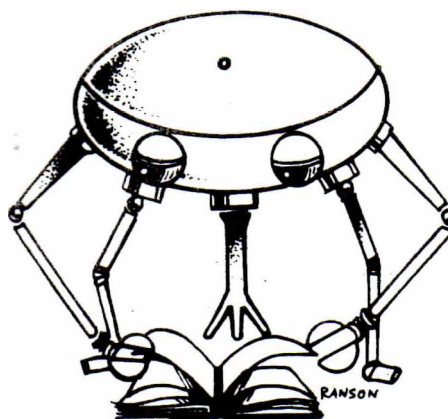
AMBIENT - Jack Womack
THE TOLKIEN CALENDAR 1990
OTHER EDENS - ed Chris Evans & Robert Holdstock

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