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The News Magazine of the
British Science Fiction Association

Issue 122

November / December 1996

Xploiting the X-Files

Gwyneth Jones
on the
World Fantasy Con

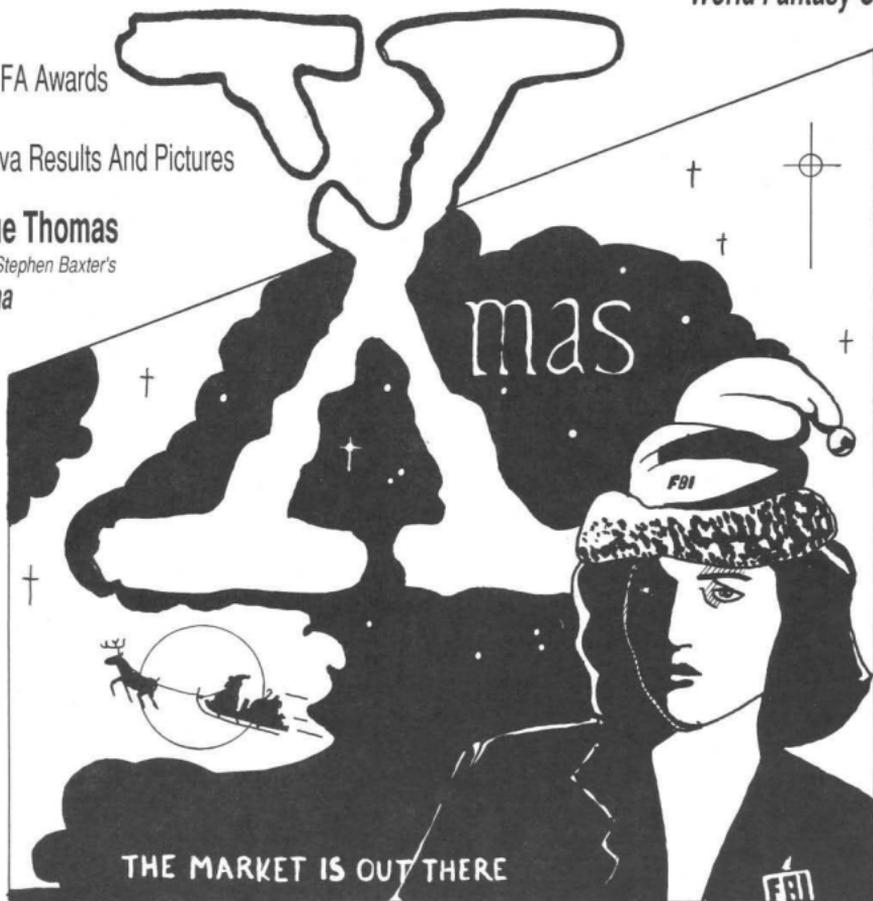
BSFA Awards

Nova Results And Pictures

Sue Thomas

on Stephen Baxter's

Irina



TAFF Scandal . . Another UK Worldcon? . . Taking SF Seriously . . Books . . Letters

matrix

the news magazine of the



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TAFF FUNDS MISSING

The Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund suffered a major blow when it emerged that Martin Tudor, this year's winner, did not receive any money from the European fund for his trip to the Los Angeles Worldcon in August. The 1993 winner, Abigail Frost, was the previous UK administrator of TAFF and has not passed on the money in her care, estimated by her to be about £2,700. She has also failed to publish the detailed voting figures for the election, which was contested between Tudor and SFX journalist M. J. 'Simo' Simpson.

Frost claims to have been suffering from "severe clinical depression or worse", according to one of the few members of fandom to have seen her recently, visiting US fan Gary Farber, quoted in *Ansible* 112. This led to "a period of sheer inability to deal with the world, and [she] has partially recovered only after therapy." Frost told Farber that she feels wholly culpable and deserves only condemnation; she has handed over a cheque for an initial £200 and has promised to repay the balance in monthly instalments of £80.

Tudor's trip was eventually financed by a combination of loans and donations from individuals – some anonymously – and organisations such as the Mexican Hat. The financing problems were kept a tightly-guarded secret during Tudor's American trip, only emerging when the US fanzine *Apparatchik* decided to break the story in the first week of November. A statement was subsequently posted on the net (reprinted overleaf) from various past

TAFF winners. This secrecy has itself been the subject of criticism, though the justification offered – that Tudor's trip "would be ruined by endless argument and recrimination if [the facts and their implications] were publicly discussed at the time" – has largely been received sympathetically.

RESCUE EFFORTS

Novacon was dominated by efforts to save the fund from the "potentially disastrous consequences of the actions of one misguided individual", as Tudor put it. Two highly successful auctions were held on Saturday and Sunday evening, in which the 281 attendees raised £1,308.90. Items sold included a piece of stained glass produced by the late Bob Shaw and a full colour painting by Arthur 'ATom' Thompson, as well as fanzines, T-shirts, books, and much else. Nic Farey organised a beer tasting and raised an additional £132.40. – and further promises and pledges add considerably more.

Continued overleaf

WHAT IS TAFF?

The Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund was created in 1953 for the purpose of providing funds to bring well-known and popular fans familiar to those on both sides of the ocean across the Atlantic. Since then TAFF has regularly brought North American fans to European conventions and vice versa. TAFF is wholly supported by fandom; the candidates are voted on by interested fans from all over the world, and each vote is accompanied by a donation of not less than \$2 or £1.

Candidates need five nominators from within fandom: Martin Tudor's included Dave Langford and the late Bob Shaw, a long-time friend and supporter of fandom. The winner pledges to perform the trip, and it's hoped that he or she will write and publish a trip report, though of the 37 winners (there hasn't been a race every year) only 19 have done so, in whole or in part. Eleven have published complete reports, of which Dave Langford's *The Trans-Atlantic Hearing Aid* is perhaps the best known. Each winner is subsequently responsible for the fund and administering the next 'race', including fund-raising activities, issuing regular newsletters, and counting the votes.

Previous winners have included Walt Willis (1954), Ken Bulmer (1955), Terry Carr (1965), Dave Langford (1980), Avedon Carol (1983), Patrick & Teresa Nielsen Hayden (1985) – Patrick is now editor at Tor Books), Lilian Edwards & Christina Lake (1988 – editors of *Time Bytes*, the Intersection fanthology), Pam Wells (1991 – co-editor of *Attitude*), Dan Steffan (1995), and Abigail Frost (1993).

The 1996 BSFA Membership Survey

- Send completed •
- surveys to •

Claire Brialey
26 Northampton Road
Croydon
Surrey
CR0 7HA
UK

• by •

31 January 1997

- and you could win a •

£15 book token

With this mailing you'll find a membership survey which is seeking to find out what it is you like about science fiction, and what you think about the BSFA. It's seven years since the last time we had a survey of members' opinions, and it would be very helpful for the committee to know what you think about what we're doing, what you want from us, and what we might be able to do to improve things.

As an incentive for you to fill in the survey, and as a thank-you to at least a few of you for doing so, we'll be running a mini 'prize draw' into which we'll enter all of the survey forms received. The first three pulled out of the hat will each win a £15 book token.

All of the survey forms will be considered confidential. We propose to use a computer database to analyse the results; in line with the Data Protection Act 1984 (the BSFA is registered with the Data Protection Registrar) if you do not wish data pertaining to your responses to be held on computer, please tick the box on the first page which indicates this. No information will be passed on to other agencies. It would obviously be helpful for us if you could answer as many questions as possible, but there's no obligation to do so. In particular, there's no actual need for you to fill in your name, address, or other personal details in the first section if you prefer not to – although if you are willing to contribute anything to the magazines, please provide some contact details so that the editors can get in touch! (And, of course, if you remain anonymous you won't be able to win a book token.)

We would also be interested in any feedback you want to give us in relation to anything not covered by the survey, or if you want to elaborate on any of your answers; we'd far rather know about something you don't like, or any ideas you have for improvements, than to be left to carry on unaware of your views. Equally, if there's something you particularly like about the BSFA and would want to see continued, let us know.

The deadline for responses is 31 January 1997: completed surveys should be sent to me at the address on the form. An analysis of the results will be provided in a future edition of *Matrix*, together with details of the book token winners.

Thanks very much for your help.

— Claire Brialey, Publicity & Promotions

TAFF Crisis continued from page 3

The following statement was issued on 3 November on behalf of TAFF, with the approval of Martin Tudor, by various past administrators: Avedon Carol, Rob Hansen, Dave Langford, Patrick and Teresa Nielsen Hayden, Greg Pickersgill, and Pam Wells.

As has been the subject of extensive recent gossip in fandom (especially UK fandom) the TransAtlantic Fan Fund in Europe has suffered a major financial setback. The European fund has not been passed on to the 1996 TAFF winner and current UK administrator, Martin Tudor.

Thanks to general fanish goodwill, it was assumed that pass-on delays following Tudor's victory in early May were the result of simple disorganisation on the part of former administrator Abigail Frost. Frost has additionally failed to publish the usual detailed voting figures and list of European voters, which are still not known. In late June, after repeated urgent enquiries, Frost responded indirectly by informing a non-involved person that no money was available; that person then passed the news to Tudor.

The missing sum is assumed to be some £2,600, based on the amount known to be held by Frost at the end of 1994 (in her first and last TAFF newsletter she gave the then balance as £1,933.06), plus subsequent identifiable donations, estimated income from voting fees, etc. Expenses in the same period are thought to have been minimal. Frost has not directly responded to any TAFF-related letters or phone calls to her answering machine since the announcement of Tudor's win, nor made her usual appearances at London pub meetings since early June.

TAFF traditionally has no secrets, except of course for individual voters' choices in the balloting. But it was felt that Martin Tudor's 1996 US trip - made possible only by personal loans, anonymous contributions, the Mexican Hat, and other donations - would be rained by endless argument and recrimination if all of the above, and its implications, were publicly discussed at the time. The matter was therefore kept confidential until Tudor had returned and recovered from his travels.

Unfortunately, despite Tudor's determination to release the full facts immediately on return to England, this announcement was delayed for several weeks by unavoidable personal crises - including illness. All those involved would like to apologise to fandom for the unintended and most regrettable delay.

The position remains unclear in several areas, including the possibility of TAFF's representatives taking legal action. What is certain is that the European TAFF fund is desperately short of cash, and that Martin Tudor's difficulties in performing (and performing well) as the 1996 TAFF delegate were an order of magnitude worse than those faced by any previous winner.

Since the above was issued, Frost met with Gary Farber and corrected the estimate of the missing funds to £2,700; her initial cheque for £200 was handed to Farber and he passed it on at Novacon.

The 'non-involved person' referred to was sf critic John Clute, who, on 23 June, received a phone call from Frost in which she admitted that the money was not available. Clute contacted Roger Robinson who then informed Martin Tudor. Contact between Frost and Tudor resumed, with Frost promising to deliver a repayment schedule and the voting figures, but by the middle of July she was refusing to acknowledge messages and letters again. On 30 July Tudor wrote a final time, "giving her an ultimatum that if she didn't contact me immediately I would have no option but to go public with the fact that she had failed to pass over the money". There was no response.



TAFF winner Martin Tudor at Novacon

For the future, Martin Tudor is now administering the European side of the fund, now looking much healthier since the generous response at Novacon. The North American side has funds available to send a representative to Intervention, the 1997 Easterncon in Liverpool, though at press time - due to the uncertainty - no candidates had yet come forward; nominations closed on 2 December, and voting will continue until 8 February.

Tudor has also produced a preliminary version of his trip report, *Have Bag, Will Travel* (see below for details), with the full version to follow early next year; as usual, the proceeds go to TAFF. Early next year he'll be organising a postal fanzine auction, and he's determined to get the fund back on its feet.

• The full story of Martin's travels with the fund can be found in *TAFFion Tudor 2*, available from him for an SAE (and a small donation to TAFF would be welcome).

• *Have Bag, Will Travel* costs £2 to cover P&P. It's also on the web at: <http://www.ansible.demon.co.uk/TAFFprep.html>

• *The Tudor Dynasty* contains much of Martin's fan-writing and was produced for TAFF; it also costs £2. Contact: Martin Tudor, 24 Ravensbourne Grove (off Clarks Lane), Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HX

Critical Wave Folds After 9 Years

Critical Wave, the Birmingham-based sf news and reviews magazine, has decided to cease publication with its next issue, the forty-seventh. Launched at Novacon 17 and NIcon II in October 1987, *Wave* guiding lights Steve Green and Martin Tudor have reluctantly come to the conclusion that "accelerating production and administrative costs" have made further issues unviable.

A statement issued at Novacon blamed "banks apparently able to conjure charges out of thin air, photocopier suppliers under no visible obligation to fulfil their contracts, and the advertising departments of British genre publishers" who, they claim, are "pointedly contemptuous of the small press which provides so many of their readers with primary information on new releases". The statement continued: "On many occasions over the past nine years, it was only our joint enthusiasm and that of our supporters which won the day, but there are always limits and now, sadly, we have passed them."

Green and Tudor paid fulsome tribute to those who helped keep the magazine afloat, and reflected that while it was "a sad time for both of us, that shouldn't overshadow the fact that *Critical Wave* achieved many of its original aims and a few that weren't actually in our initial plans." *Wave* featured news, interviews, regular reviews of fanzines, books and films, comprehensive convention listings, and - particularly - provided a showcase for artists, with regular features and portfolios. European coverage was also emphasised; its logo included the byline "The European Science Fiction & Fantasy Review." □

Penguin Lays A Rotten Egg

Penguin Books got themselves into trouble when they issued a fake virus warning as part of the publicity campaign for an 'interactive novel', co-written by Stephen Baxter.

Around 20 September, a letter apparently from a Professor Edward Prèdeaux at the College of Slavonic Studies in London was sent to a number of reviewers and journalists, including *Matrix*. It was headed "Virus Warning from the Internet" and started: "There is a computer virus that is being sent across the Internet. If you receive an email message with the subject line 'I'm DO NOT read the message, DELETE it immediately.' It explained that the virus could wipe your hard disc or put the processor in an rth-complexifiable infinite binary loop - which can severely damage the processor, and would propagate itself to everybody in your computer's address book.

The warning itself soon spread virus-like over the net, as worried recipients spread the word. But neither Prèdeaux or the College appeared to exist, and defective word on tell-tale typos on the address labels suggested that someone had gained access to Penguin Books' sf mailing list; urgent enquiries to the

publisher soon established that they were in fact responsible themselves. Moreover, this virus alert was not in fact original - it bears a strong similarity to the infamous 'Good Times' virus hoax which has occasionally surfaced on the net over the last few years.

The letter was followed up a few days later by an official Penguin publicity sheet for *Irma*, a Web-based interactive novel co-written by Baxter, Guy Gadeny (Penguin's former Head of Electronic Publishing) and Hugh Barnes (an Executive Editor there). This began: "You may have received a letter from a Professor Edward Prèdeaux recently falsely warning of a virus called 'Irma'. Please note that 'Irma' is not a virus, and the views of Prof. Prèdeaux are not those of Penguin books." While this flyer did not accept responsibility for the original warning, Gadeny was quoted in the *Daily Telegraph* of 23 September as saying: "It is very unfortunate that we have created a scare - it was not our intention." Baxter himself was unaware of the campaign, though he knew it would be of the 'teaser' type.

Gadeny explained: "The intention of the release was to convey the tone and the conspiratorial nature both of the plot of the novel, and of some areas of the Internet itself. [...] we were keen that the information should be kept by the journalists and not sent out electronically. To this end, the release was

sent in hard copy by post to named individuals to avoid any wider dissemination," which is a truly bizarre claim considering that the whole point of the exercise was publicity, and the original letter actually told recipients to "alert your friends". Gadeny concluded with an apology, of sorts: "I am sorry about any misunderstanding and hope that you will find *Irma* interesting." □

• See *Thomas reviews Irma* on page 13.

IMPORTANT!

Please note that
Elizabeth and Paul Billinger
 have now moved.

Send all renewals, address changes etc. to
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 BSFA Membership Secretary
 1 Long Row Close
 Everdon, Daventry, Northants., NN11 3BE
 Tel: 01327 361661
 Email: billinger@enterprise.net

Brits Dominate World Fantasy Awards, MacLeod Wins Prometheus

World Fantasy Awards

Presented at the World Fantasy Convention in Schaumburg, Illinois, on 3 November 1996.

NOVEL: Christopher Priest *The Prestige*

NOVELLA: Michael Swanwick "Radio Waves"

SHORT STORY: Gwyneth Jones "The Grass Princess"

ANTHOLOGY: A. Susan Williams & Richard Gijb Jones (eds.)

The Penguin Book of Modern Fantasy by Women

COLLECTION: Gwyneth Jones *Seven Tales and a Fable*

ARTIST: Galan Wilson

SPECIAL AWARD (PROFESSIONAL): Richard Evans, for contributions to the genre.

SPECIAL AWARD (NON-PROFESSIONAL): Marc Michaud, for Necronomicon Press

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT: Gene Wolfe

Five of the seven regular awards went to Britons. Editor Richard Evans's award was particularly poignant, after his sudden death in May; it was accepted by his colleague at Gallonaz, Jo Fletcher.

• Double winner **Gwyneth Jones** reviews the *World Fantasy Con* on page 18.

British Fantasy Awards

Presented at Fantasycon XX in London's Docklands on 6 October 1996.

NOVEL: Graham Joyce *Requiem*

SHORT STORY: Michael Marshall Smith "More Tomorrow"

COLLECTION: ANTHOLOGY: Andy Cox (ed.) *Last Rites and Resurrections*

SMALL PRESS: Andy Cox (ed.) *The Third Alternative*

ARTIST: Josh Kirby

SPECIAL AWARD: Mike O'Driscoll & Steve Lockley for "Welcome to my Nightmare"

Prometheus Award

The Prometheus is given by the Libertarian Futurist Society, based in America. This year's award, presented

at LaCon III, went to **Ken MacLeod** for *The Star Fraction* (an extremely interesting choice, given that the normal perception of the LFS is somewhat right-wing, to say the least). A 'Hall of Fame' special prize went to **Robert A. Heinlein's Red Planet**.

Rhysling Awards

The Rhysling is given for SF poetry, and this year the Short Poem Award went to **Bruce Boston** for "Future Present: A Lesson in Expectation" in *Asimov's*, MK 95; and the Long Poem Award went to **Marge Simon** for "Variants of the Obsolete" from her collection *Eonian Variations*.

Golden Ducks

Awarded for excellence in children's SF, the 1996 Golden Ducks went to:

PICTURE BOOK: V. Vagin & F. Asch (ill.) *Insects From Outer Space*

MIDDLE GRADES: Margaret Bechard *Star Hatching*

YOUNG ADULT: E. M. Goldman *The Night Room*, and H. M. Hooper *The Winds of Mars* (tie)

Sidewise Update

The Sidewise Awards, as reported in *Matrix* 121, are given for alternative history books and stories. The judges are currently reading for next year's awards and would appreciate nominations and comments; UK authors won both main prizes last year (Stephen Baxter's 'Brigantia's Angels' and Paul J. McAuley's 'Pasquale's Angel') so it's a subgenre particularly strong here.

Contact: Evelyn C. Leeper, 80 Lakeridge Drive, Matawan, NJ 07747, USA

Email: ec1@lucent.com

Web: <http://www.panix.com/~rbs/SH/sidewise/>

Sten Gun

Chris Bunch, co-author with Alan Cole of the 'Sten' militaristic SF series, was involved in a fatal shooting incident in June. According to *Locust*, Bunch got involved in an argument with squatter and pit bull terrier owner Michael Mauch, and when the latter rushed him Bunch shot the "5'11", shaven-headed, multiply-tattooed" man six times with a .9mm pistol, in August a jury in South Bend, Washington, judged that the incident was "justifiable and excusable" homicide.

Babylon 5 APA Launched

A new APA (Amateur Publishing Association) will be launched in New York, concerned with *Babylon 5*. Run by Ros Calverley and called 'StellarCom', it's open to anyone over 18 and will be bimonthly; contributions may consist of comment, criticism, discussion, fan fiction and artwork concerned in some way with *B5*, though 'flagging-off' is strongly discouraged. A subscription will cost £5 per year, and the minimum contribution is two sides of A4 in every other mailing.

If you're interested in joining, contact: **Ros Calverley**, 100 Cambridge Street, Wolverton, Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK12 5AH, UK. 01938 320664. Email: rainbow.bridge@aol.com

Chung Kuo Soundtracked

Edinburgh-based band *Tranceport's* third CD *Chung Kuo* will be wholly based on David Wingrove's eight-volume SF series, now nearing completion. Due early in 1997 from Deep Phase records, Wingrove acted as creative consultant to the year-long project. Deep Phase's Stewart Robinson said, "The band are very pleased to be involved with the 'Chung Kuo' universe. The music speaks of the world of levels, the great wheel of change and deals intimately with the characters." The tracks are "A Spring Day at the Edge of the World", "Gods of the Flesh", "Clyburn", "De Vore", "Tree of Heaven", "Bambo", "King of the World" (not the Bee Gees' song, I assume) and "Moon Dragon".

Contact: **Deep Phase**, 160 Easter Road, Edinburgh, EH7 5RL

Master Anthology

Robert Silverberg's Masters of Fantasy set a new record for advance payment for an anthology. Elaine Koster of Dutton / Signal paid \$650,000 for the US rights in a five-way auction. UK rights are expected to fetch a similarly high sum. The all-original anthology features stories set in the contributors' 'signature' worlds, and the authors include Stephen King, Terry Pratchett, David Eddings, Anne McCaffrey, Ursula K. Le Guin, Robert Jordan, Terry Brooks, George R. R. Martin, Raymond E. Feist, and Silverberg himself with a 'Maipoor' story. Delivery is set for 1997, with the book due to be published in 1998.

Cold Equations Filmed

A TV movie version of **Tom Godwin's** short story "The Cold Equations" has just been completed in America. The story is described thusly in the *SF Encyclopedia*: "... a girl stowaway on a precisely pay-loaded spaceship must be jettisoned by the one-man crew because to transport her extra mass would require more fuel than the starship carries, so making disaster inevitable and dooming also the colony to which the ship is headed." The film stars newcomers Bill Campbell and Poppy Montgomery. Being a TV movie it either got straight to video in its country or turn up at about 2am on Sky in about a year's time. — John Ashbrook

In The Studios

* **David Cronenberg**, currently outraging the tabloids with his adaptation of Ballard's *Crash*, has just announced that his next Toronto-based project will be *Crimes of the Future*. Funny thing is, if you look at his filmography you'll find that his second film, back in 1970 and made in black and white when he was just out of college, was also called *Crimes of the Future*. Wow, déjà vu!

* The American TV network NBC is now part way through airing its new SF detective show *Dark Skies*, which goes out primetime on Saturday nights. The pilot episode (directed by Tobe Hooper, who hasn't really troubled the world since *Pollanest*) follows two government workers, John and Kimberley, as they uncover a devilish government plot to withhold the 'truth' that, back in the 60s, America was visited by aliens. It ends with them escaping the conspiracy and setting off across America to learn more and state one step ahead of the authorities. Doesn't remind me of *The X-Files* one bit. Or *The Invaders*. Or *The X-Files*.

* **Scott Peter Capaldi** (last seen acting in BBC2's rendition of *Bank's The Crow Road*) has signed a deal to direct his first Hollywood movie. Having helmed the Britpic *Soft Top*, *Hard Shoulder* and the Oscar-nominated short *Franz Kafka's It's a Wonderful Life* (which deserved the award for its title alone, as far as I'm concerned), he will now bring his own particular vision to a remake of *X - The Man With the X-Ray Eyes*. Apparently he is going back to the source rather than relying on Roger Corman's 1963 schlock rendition. That said, the first thing they have done is change the title to *Beyond's Violet*.

* Marvel Comics' flagship team, those fine, upstanding supporters of truth, justice and the Pennine Way — *The Fantastic Four* — are about to hit the big screen. They've been languishing in production hell for several years while some legal wrangles were ironed out, but now it's *dolberri* time! Having already been transformed into an unimpressive cartoon and a laughably inept TV movie, this version promises a huge budget, a script by Michael France (who wrote *Saboteur's Cliffhanger*) and direction by *Mrs Doubtfire's* Chris Columbus.

John Ashbrook

One wonders if this will break *Marvel's* duck. Their main competitor, DC Comics, own *Superman* and *Batman*, both of whom have been adapted successfully to the big and / or small screens several times. Yet *Marvel* can put its name and no more than a few tedious (and ancient) TV series like *The Incredible Hulk*, *The Adventures of Spider-Man* and *B movies like The Punisher*. James Cameron's plans to do a big-budget rendition of *Spider-Man* have been on and off for a decade now, so *Marvel* really are long overdue a hit.

* An undeserved straight-to-video fate was awarded to the excellent horror-nor film *Prophecy* earlier this year. Starring Christopher Walken and Eric Stoltz, it's about a renewed war in Heaven and angels visiting Earth to drum up recruits. Walken will be back next year in *Ashtown (Prophecy II)* alongside Jennifer Beals. Meanwhile, go and hunt out a copy of the first film, as witty, literate and compelling a dark fantasy as you are going to see or read this year!

* Before even contemplating *id5*, Hollywood's new golden boys Roland Emmerich and Dean Devlin have been given the green light to go ahead with a monstrously expensive version of *Godzilla*. Oh no, there goes Tokyo. Again. Meanwhile, *id4* continues to break records all over the world. When it's finished it will nicely settled in behind *Jurassic Park* as the second biggest earner of all time. At time of writing, its worldwide total is an astronomical \$635 million, which puts it \$180 million ahead of its nearest rival *Twister*.

Back in 93, *Jurassic Park* pretty much had the field to itself, the only serious competitor being *The Last Action Hero*. It seems certain that *id4* has *Twister* and *Mission: Impossible* not earned over \$400 million each, and *Goldeneye*, *The Rock* and *Toy Story* not made over \$300 million each (amounts which would easily have made any of them last year's biggest grossing movie, by the way), then *id4* would have had a clear run at the world's pocket money, guaranteeing it unprecedented box office returns. It was just unfortunate for them (but great for us) that this year has been the strongest and most consistently entertaining that this writer can remember in 15 years of dedicated cinema going.

— John Ashbrook

Big-Wig Digs At Igs

Sir Robert May, the science advisor to the British Government, has asked the organisers of the 'Ig Nobel' Prizes to stop giving them to scientists, even when they want to receive them. The Igs, a good-natured spoof of science and the Nobel Prizes, are handed out every year to people whose achievements "cannot or should not be reproduced". Nevertheless, this year's ceremony, held on 3 October at Harvard University's Sanders Theatre, included yet another prizewinner from England.

The event was reluctantly presented by *The Annals of Improbable Research* and co-sponsored by the Harvard Computer Society, *Tangents* (the Harvard-Radcliffe mathematics bulletin), and the Harvard-Radcliffe Science Fiction Association. The prizes were handed out by real Nobel Laureates Dudley Herschbach, William Lipscomb and others.

BIOLOGY Anders Berheim and Hogné Sandvik of the University of Bergen, Norway, for their tasty and tasteful report, "Effect of Ale, Garlic, and Sour Cream on the Appetite of Leeches" which appeared in the *British Medical Journal*, vol. 309, 24-31 Dec 1994, page 1689. Drs Berheim and Sandvik sent a videotaped acceptance speech, and watched the ceremony live on the Internet.

MEDICINE James Johnston of R. J. Reynolds, Joseph Taddoe of US Tobacco, Andrew Tisch of Lorillard, William Campbell of Philip Morris, and the late Thomas E. Sandefur, Jr, chairman of Brown and Williamson Tobacco Co. for their unshakable discovery, as testified to the US Congress, that nicotine is not addictive.

PHYSICS Robert Matthews of Aston University, England, for his studies of Murphy's Law, and especially for demonstrating that toast always falls on the buttered side. ("Tumbling toast, Murphy's Law and the fundamental constants" in *European Journal of Physics*, vol. 16 no. 4, 18 July 1995, p. 172-6.) Professor Matthews sent an audiotaped acceptance speech.

PEACE Jacques Chirac, President of France, for commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of Hiroshima with atomic bomb tests in the Pacific.

PUBLIC HEALTH Ellen Kleist of Nuuk, Greenland and Harald Moi of Oslo, Norway, for their cautionary medical report "Transmission of Gonorrhoea through an Inflatable Doll" (*Genitourinary Medicine*, vol. 69 no. 4, Aug 1993, p. 322). Dr Moi travelled from Oslo to Cambridge — at his own expense — to accept the Prize. While in Massachusetts he also delivered a lecture at Harvard Medical School about his achievement.

CHEMISTRY George Goble of Purdue University, for his blistering world record time for igniting a barbecue — three

seconds, using charcoal and liquid oxygen. Professor Goble's colleague Joe Cychosz travelled to Cambridge to accept the Prize.

BIODIVERSITY Chonosuke Okamura of the Okamura Fossil Laboratory in Nagoya, Japan, for discovering the fossils of dinosaurs, horses, dragons, princesses, and more than 1,000 other extinct "mini-species" each of which is less than 1/100 of an inch in length. (For details see the series *Reports of the Okamura Fossil Laboratory*, published by the Okamura Fossil Laboratory in Nagoya, Japan during the 1970s and 80s.)

LITERATURE The editors of the journal *Social Text*, for eagerly publishing research that they could not understand, that the author said was meaningless, and which claimed that reality does not exist. ("Transgressing the Boundaries: Towards a Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantum Gravity" by Alan Sokal, *Social Text*, Spring / Summer 1996, pp. 217-252.)

ECONOMICS Dr Robert J. Genco of the University of Buffalo for his discovery that "financial strain is a risk indicator for destructive periodontal disease".

ART Don Featherstone of Fitchburg, Massachusetts, for his ornamentally evolutionary invention, the plastic pink flamingo. Mr Featherstone travelled to Cambridge to accept the prize.

This year's ceremony also featured the world premiere of Lament del Cockroach, a mini-opera for Nobel Laureates and mezzo-sopranos, an auction of plaster casts of the left feet of four Nobel Laureates, and several tributes to the concept of Biodiversity. Thirteen-year-old Kate Eppers, spokesperson for the Committee for Bacterial Rights, said: "We live in a diverse society. Our biggest ethnic groups are not the Asians, the Africans or the Caucasians. Our biggest ethnic groups are the Bacteria. I used to wash my hands every day. My mom made me. But then I learned about ethnic cleansing. Every time you wash your hands, you wipe out billions and billions of Bacteria. That's not fair. Bacteria have rights, too. So let's be grown-ups about this. When mom asks you to wash your hands, just say No." □

snippings

FINISHED AT LAST! John Clute and John Grant, co-editors of the mighty (over 4,000 pages of printout) *Fantasy Encyclopedia*, finally delivered the enormous tome to Little, Brown on 21 September. All apart from the introduction, anyway. Plans are underway for a launch at Intervention, the 1997 Eastcon.

POACHER TURNS PREY Jane Johnson's proper job is Editorial Director of HarperCollins's *SF* / fantasy imprint Voyager, but she's been moonlighting: she wrote two fantasy novels, one called *The Wild Road*, the other as yet untitled, and submitted them under the pseudonym "Gabriel King". Random House bit, and weren't they surprised when it emerged who the author was. They'll be out next year, under the "King" moniker.

EDITORS EDITED Following the resignation of Kristine Kathryn Rusch from the helm of *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* in order to concentrate on her writing, Gordon Van Gelder has been appointed to take her place. Gelder will still be an editor at St Martin's Press, but only for the sf list.

WORLDCON STATS LaCon III, the Los Angeles Worldcon, had an attendance of 6,667 from 7,369 total members; fairly low by US standards. 348 paid-up members and 354 supporters didn't attend, and there were 1,389 on-the-day attendees, including 501 who paid full attendance rates (the remainder being one- or two-day members, and children).

The Art Show exhibited 2,796 pieces and raised \$107,498; 155 attracted enough bids to enter the auction. There were about 175 dealers and exhibitors in the dealers' room, though booksellers reported poor sales.

HUGO Intersection passed a motion to eliminate the 'Best Artwork' category of the Hugo Awards, and this was ratified at LaCon III (though reportedly attempts are being made to reinstate it). • The Retro Hugos will not be awarded at next year's Worldcon, LoneStarCon in San Antonio, Texas.

SERIAL THRILLERS The success of Stephen King's *The Green Mile*, released in six monthly instalments at a price of £1.99 per episode, is tempting other publishers in America; at one point all six parts were in the top 15 of the *New York Times* bestseller list. Ballantine have jumped, and will be releasing John Saul's next novel, *The Blackstone Chronicles*, in this form, starting next February.

THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE The International Astronomical Union has named asteroids after the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal: "Skeptikus" (sic), and CSICOP's Paul Kurtz', Martin Gardner', and sceptical magician James Randi'.

WILSON ILLUMINATIONS Robert Anton Wilson, author (with Robert Shea) of the 'illuminatus' trilogy, will be visiting London's Imperial College for an evening on 28 Jan 1997, with Richard Bandler; the tagline is "running your own brain has never been this much fun before". Bandler is the co-creator of something called "Neuro-Linguistic Programming", which brings with it symbols so it's probably Californian and money-spinning. Hosts are Paul McKenna and Michael Breen. The event costs a whopping £39.95 and its advance-only, enquiries to 0181 348 0629 or McKenna Breen Ltd., PO Box 10778, London, NE 5FQ.

CARRY ON PLUGGING Upcoming signings: • At London's Forbidden Planet: 30 Nov, 1.00pm Lisa Tuttle (*The Pillow Friend*); 14 Dec, 2.00pm Jody Lynn Nye (*The Ship Errant*).

Scribble, Scribble, Scribble

- Gwyneth Jones's next 'Ann Halam' book will be called *The Power House* and is about art and demonic possession. It's been finished and is now at the copy-edited stage for publication early next year by Orion.
- John Jarrold at Legend has bought Ken MacLeod's third novel.
- Out from US publishing house Necronomicon is a collection of Brian Stableford short stories, *Fables and Fantasies*.
- Alasdair Gray collectors should note that the first US edition of his sf novel *The History Maker* (HBJ, 1996) has extensive revisions not present in the current UK edition.
- Gillian has bought Diana Wynne Jones's new adult fantasy, *Deep Secret*. It'll be launched at the World Fantasy Convention in London in October 1997.
- Also from Gillian in the latter half of next year are Ian Watson's *Oracle*, Paul McAuley's *The Child of the River*, and Jenny Jones's *Where the Children Cry*.
- Nigel Bennett, star of cult vampire TV show *Forever Knight*, has put tang to neck in *The Keeper of the King*. It's co-authored with P. N. Eldrod and will be out early next year.
- Larry Niven has delivered a first draft of his four-year-delayed sf novel *Destiny's Road to Tor*. Niven says, in *Locus*, "This is perhaps my most ambitious work. The focus is very fine... and covers most of a man's lifespan."
- Harry Harrison has sold *The Stainless Steel Rat* Goes to Hell to Orion for March 97 publication.
- Other Orion signings: James Buxton impressed your editor with *The Wishing Tree* earlier in the year, and his next, *Bermudsey* set novel *Pity* is due in June next year; Lucius Shepard's collection of novellas *Barnacle Bill* the Spacer comes in March; and John Barnes's collection of shorts *Apocalypses and Catastrophes* is out in July.
- Stephen Palmer has an unpublished short story on his Web site, <http://www.geocities.com/Area51/2162>
- Dan Simmons has finished the final 'Hyperion' book, *The Rise of Endymion*.
- William Gibson has contracted with Putnam to write two sf novels, *All Tomorrow's Parties* and another, untitled volume.
- Sue Thomas has finished her third novel, *The Net of Desire*. You can sample it on the net at #87887 LerdabamOO.
- Biorecursion: Jody Lynn Nye & Robert Asprin are writing a novel together... • Katherine Kurtz & Deborah Turner Harris have finished a fantasy novel about the Knights Templar... • Holly Lisle & Marion Zimmer Bradley are working on a sequel to their *Glenraven*... • Storm Constantine and psychic Debbie Bestden are working on "a book of ritual magic".
- A. A. Attanasio has finished *Centuries*, a "novel for the millennium". He says it's "a science fiction epic that spans the ten centuries between our own apocalyptic age and the next millennium. It's a bridge to the futuristic era of Solis. My novel set on Mars a thousand years in the future." *Centuries* will be out from Hodder & Stoughton next August.
- Stephen Law's novel *Darkfall* has been optioned by the Newcastle actor Tim Healy's production company.

Many thanks to

Michael Abbott, Brian Ameringer, John Ashbrook, Claire Briley, Andrew M. Butler, Kim Campbell, Jack Cohen, Tony Cullen, Gary Farber, Jo Fletcher, Alison Freebairn, Eve & John Harvey, Steve Jeffrey, Gwyneth Jones, Paul Kincaid, Dave Langford, Pat McMurray, Dave Mooring, Oisín Murray-Lawless, Chris O'Shea, Stephen Palmer, Greg Pickersilly, Mark Plummer, Chris Reed, Jody Rigby, Roger Robinson, Stewart Robinson, Ian Sales, Maureen Kincaid Speller, Brian Stableford, Carys Thomas, Sue Thomas, Julie Tiller, Martin Tudor, Pam Wells, and D. West

• Special thanks to Andy Sawyer •

1995 BSFA Awards

BEST NOVEL

The Time Ships
Stephen Baxter
(HarperCollins)

Second Place
Fairyland
Paul J. McAuley
(Gollancz)

Third Place
The Prestige
Christopher Priest
(Simon & Schuster)

BEST SHORT STORY

"The Hunger and Ecstasy of Vampires"
Brian Stableford
(*Interzone* 91 / 92)

Second Place
"The Ant Men of Tibet"
Stephen Baxter
(*Interzone* 95)

Third Place
"Warmth"
Geoff Ryman
(*Interzone* 100)

BEST ARTWORK

Cover of Seasons of Plenty
Jim Burns
(By Colin Greenland, HarperCollins)

Second Place
Cover of *Interzone* 100
SMS

Third Place
Cover of *Interzone* 96
Santos Garijo

How The Voting Works

The voting system used by both the BSFA Awards and the Hugo Awards is a version of the Single Transferable Vote, which is also known (for reasons that escape me) as the Australian ballot. Voters rate the nominees 1, 2, 3 etc. The winner is the first nominee to gain a clear majority of the votes cast. Thus, if 100 votes are cast, the winner would have to gain at least 51 votes.

All first place votes are counted, and if none of the nominees has the necessary majority, then the bottom place nominee is eliminated. Those who voted that nominee first then have their second place votes counted instead. If this still doesn't give one nominee the majority, the next lowest-placed nominee is eliminated and the whole process continues.

Baxter, Stableford, Burns Win BSFA Awards

The 1995 BSFA Awards were presented on Sunday 10 November 1996 at Novacon in Birmingham's Hotel Ibis, where Paul Kincaid announced the winners to a crowded and enthusiastic audience at the closing ceremony. Unfortunately none of the recipients were present to collect their awards, but they have all been informed. Congratulations to the winners and all those shortlisted!

• **Stephen Baxter's** *The Time Ships* has additionally won the John W. Campbell Memorial

Award, and the German Kurt Lassitz Award; it also came second in the Hugos and was nominated for the Arthur C. Clarke Award.

• **Baxter** is becoming extremely collectable in the US, with first editions of *The Time Ships* going for an astonishing \$250. Over here you'll pay £20-£40 for first editions of novels like *Flux*, *Timelike Infinity* and *Anti-Isce*.

• **Brian Stableford's** sequel to "The Hunger and Ecstasy of Vampires" will appear in the January and February issues of *Interzone*. It's called "The Black Blood of the Dead" and is narrated by Oscar Wilde.

• Next year's BSFA Award ceremony will be back at its normal venue of the annual Eastercon, which will be at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool.

Commentary

Awards Administrator
Kev McVeigh
reflects on this year's awards and looks forward to next year

By the time you read this the 1996 BSFA Awards will have been voted on and presented. Unfortunately this year saw a variety of problems both with the award administration and with BSFA mailings, but I am personally very pleased with the number of nominating ballots returned and votes submitted. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

Clearly a lot of you are interested in the Awards, which is vital to their credibility. I believe that this year we have managed to produce a healthy and intriguing shortlist under difficult circumstances. It is notable, for instance, that all the novelists on the shortlist are British. Personally, as many of my favourite authors are American as are British, but it can only be good for British sf to have this attention focussed upon it. Such is the potential importance of these Awards. The BSFA can promote can promote them in the press, for instance, and stress such things. So let's have lots more nominations for next year.

There were a total of 32 different novels nominated from 1995, ranging from the hard sf of Greg Egan through the steampunk of Stephen Baxter and the

slipstream fantasy of Christopher Priest to epic fantasy from Robin Hobb to name but four, and over 40 short stories. The majority of the latter came from *Interzone*, unsurprisingly, but there were other sources too, and I hope this trend continues. *Interzone* is a fine magazine, but sf needs other short story markets too. I'm sure editor David Pringle would be the first to welcome serious competition for his magazine. The same applies to the Artwork Award, of course.

For me, and I suspect for many of you too, the Awards process has another benefit. It is impossible to keep up with every new novel and story, and while I hesitate to buy a book purely because it had been popular, shortlists do offer pointers towards things I may have missed. So if you've read and enjoyed anything new this year, note it on a postcard and let me know. You can nominate as many different titles as you wish any time up until the end of the year. To get you thinking here are the latest nominations, and I hope to hear from you all soon with your thoughts. Don't forget, it doesn't matter if somebody else has already nominated a work, every vote counts towards the shortlist.

— Kev McVeigh

Novels

Amitav Ghosh *The Calcutta Chromosome* (Picador) — "A rip-roaring old fashioned yarn about a conspiracy to subvert all the principles of Western science and thought, both provocative and pacy", says Mark Valentine.

William Gibson *Idoru* (Viking)

Peter F. Hamilton *The Reality Dysfunction*
Russell Hoban *Fremder* (Cape)

Ken MacLeod *The Stone Canal* (Legend)
Jeff Noon *Automated Alice* (Doubleday)

This might seem cumbersome compared to a simple first-past-the-post system, but it does have significant advantages. It could happen (indeed it has happened on at least one occasion in the Hugos) that there is one nominee favoured by a minority of those eligible to vote but which every other voter unanimously rated below 'No Award'.

Short Fiction

Barrington J. Bayley "A Crab Must Try" (*Interzone* 103)

Storm Constantine "Kiss Booties Bye Bye" (from *Cybersex*, ed. Richard Glyn Jones, Raven)

Paul di Filippo "The Blankie" (from *Ribotunk*) — di Filippo won the 1995 Short Fiction Award

George Saunders "Bounty" (from *CivilWarLand in Bad Decline*)

Don Webb "The Literary Fruitcake" (*Interzone* 113)

However, the votes of the majority would be fairly evenly spread among the other shortlisted titles, so that in a first-past-the-post system the unfavoured title could sneak the award. But because the unfavoured title gained no second or third place votes, a more genuinely popular title won.

— Paul Kincaid



1996 Nova Awards

The 1996 Nova Awards were presented on Sunday 10 November at the closing ceremony of the 26th Novacon, held at Birmingham's Hotel Ibis.

Left: "And lo, the spirit of D. West did move across the face of the convention . . ." Best Artist D. wasn't present, but his award was accepted by runner-up and fellow Leeds-based artist **Dave Mooring**.

Below left: Best Writer **Alison Freebairn** just after the ceremony, wondering where the hell she's going to put her award and why I haven't bought her a drink.

Below right: **Claire Brialey** and **Mark Plummer**, editors of *Best Fanzine Waxen Wings & Banana Skins* (now renamed *Banana Wings*), at the presentation.

Bottom: Claire, Mark, and Alison, basking.

• Photos: **Chris Terran**



1996 Nova Awards

SPECIAL "BEST FAN" AWARD

Bob Shaw

BEST FANZINE

Waxen Wings & Banana Skins
Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer

BEST FANWRITER

Alison Freebairn

BEST FANARTIST

D. West



The Full Results

Here are the full voting figures for the 1996 Nova Awards, courtesy of **Martin Tudor** and **Tony Berry**. Fanzines qualify if one or more issues appeared between 1 Oct 1995 and 30 Sep 1996; writers and artists qualify if a piece of writing or artwork appeared for the first time in a fanzine between the same dates. A fanzine is defined as "an amateur publication which is concerned with science fiction, fantasy, sf and fantasy fans and / or related subjects, copies of which may be obtained in exchange for amateur publications or in response to letters of comment". Voters qualify by being attending or supporting members of the relevant Novacon, and by receiving at least six fanzines. Eligible voters are asked to rank in order of preference the three fanzines, writers and artists they most enjoyed. A first place gains 5 points, a second place gets 3, and a third 1 point.

Special "Best Fan" Award: Bob Shaw

Best Fanzine

- 1 *Waxen Wings and Banana Skins*, ed. Claire Brialey & Mark Plummer (161)
- 2 *Attitude*, ed. Michael Abbott, John Dallman & Pam Wells (81)
- 3 *Ploika*, ed. Steve Davies & Alison Scott (75)
- 4 *Pogonophobia*, ed. Alison Freebairn (67)
- 5 *Bob!*, ed. Ian Sorensen (49)
- 6 *Have Bag, Will Travel*, ed. Martin Tudor (32)

- 7 *Empties*, ed. Martin Tudor (28)
- 8 *Götterdämmerung*, ed. Mark McCann, Tommy Ferguson & James McKee (19)
- 9 *Archie*, ed. Dave Langford (16)
- 10 *The Diabolologist*, ed. Anthony J. Shepherd (13)
- 11 *Shufkin's Bum*, ed. Maureen Kincaid Speller (11)
- 12 *Zorn*, ed. Mike Scott (11)
- 13 *Anorak Redemption*, ed. Nigel E. Richardson (10)
- 14 *Reading Matters*, ed. Tibs (10)
- 15 *Malachite Green*, ed. Alison Freebairn & Mike Siddall (9)
- 16 *Platypus*, ed. Simon Ounsley (9)
- 17 *Eyeballs in the Sky*, ed. Tony Berry (8)
- 18 *From the Kelpie's Pool*, ed. Alison Freebairn (8)
- 19 *Wallbanger*, ed. Eve Harvey (7)
- 20 *Dog's Basket* (6)
- 21 *FTT*, ed. Judith Hanna & Joseph Nicholas (6)
- 22 *Gerald* (6)
- 23 *Siddhartha*, ed. Ian Williams (5)
- 24 *Balloons Over Bristol*, ed. Pete & Sue Binfield (4)
- 25 *Femat* (4)
- 26 *Tudor Dynasty*, ed. Bernie Evans (4)
- 27 *Flying Pig*, ed. Darroll Pardoe (3)
- 28 *Never Quite Arriving*, ed. Christina Lake (3)
- 29 *Fans Across the World Newsletter*, ed. Bridget Wilkinson (2)

- 30 *A Balanced Diet*, ed. Paul Kincaid (1)
- Psycho Dyspepsia* (1)
- Sailormania*, ed. Michael Ashley (1)

Best Fanwriter

- 1 Alison Freebairn (117)
- 2 Mark Plummer (108)
- 3 Dave Langford (61)
- 4 Martin Tudor (51)
- 5 Claire Brialey (50)
- 6 Ian Sorensen (46)
- 7 Helena Bowles (27)
- 8 Nigel E. Richardson (17)
- 9 Alison Scott (15)
- 10 Mike Siddall (14)
- 11 Michael Abbott (11)
- 12 Anthony J. Shepherd (10)
- 13 Paul Kincaid (10)
- 14 Sue Mason (9)
- 15 Maureen Kincaid Speller (7)
- 16 Tommy Ferguson (7)
- 17 Simon Ounsley (7)
- 18 Greg Pickersgill (6)
- 19 John Dallman (5)
- 20 Steve Jeffery (5)
- 21 Christina Lake (5)
- 22 Mark McCann (5)

- 23 Mike Scott (5)
 - 24 Judith Hanna (4)
 - 25 Tony Berry (3)
 - Kat* (3)
 - Jilly Reed* (3)
 - 28 *Jim de Liscard* (2)
 - Dave Hicks (2)
 - 30 *Steve Davies* (1)
 - Tibs (1)
 - Pam Wells (1)
- #### Best Fan Artist
- 1 D. West (93)
 - Dave Mooring (88)
 - 3-Dave Hicks (84)
 - Sue Mason (84)
 - 5 Steve Jeffery (45)
 - 6 Jim Barker (15)
 - 7 Shep Kirkbride (11)
 - 8 Ann Stokes (9)
 - 9-SMS (5)
 - 10 Ian Sorensen (5)
 - 11-Dave Hardy (3)
 - 12 Reddy (3)
 - 13 Tony (3)
 - 14 Ian Brooks (1)

recent & forthcoming books

What to do with that book token

This Matrix is very pushed for space, so there's a severely curtailed books column this time. Apologies for that, but here are some ideas for spending those Christmas book tokens. All are books I've particularly enjoyed in the past year, though - as always - caveat emptor.

First off, my book of the year is **Ken MacLeod's** *The Stone Canal* (Legend) - see below. If you thought it was dead, try this. **Jonathan Aitoff's** creepy horror tale *The Matrix* (HarperCollins) warmed me up last winter. **Iain M. Banks's** *Excession* (Ork) provided exuberant summer thrills, and **Greg Bear's** hard sci-fi anthology *New Legends* (Legend) included a wonderful return by **Carl Sagan**. **James Burton's** excellent and Holdstockian *The Wishing Tree* (Orion) combined science fiction with a police thriller, while **John Clute's** collection of critical columns *Look at the Evidence* (Liverpool University Press) exercised my brain and dictionary. Best anthology of the year was **Gardner Dozois's** *The Best New SF 1995* (Bantam), best collection was **Greg Egan's** *Axiomatic*, while his *Distress* (both Millennium) was

deceptively complex. **Robert Holdstock** returned to Mythago Wood with *Ancient Echoes* (Voyager), while **Richard Gray Jones's** anthology *Cybernetic* (Flamingo) explored other aspects of sexuality. **Glyn Jones & A. Susan Williams** *The Penguin Book of Modern Fantasy* (Penguin) was severely mislabeled, including much sci-fi but didn't suffer from that. **Paul J. McAuley's** collection *The Invisible Country* (Gollancz) brought together much of his best short fiction, but **Jack McDevitt's** *Empires of God* (Voyager) provided a splendor of whodunit. **Kim Newman's** *The Bloody Red Baron* (Simon & Schuster) entertained hugely, and **Stephen Palmer's** *Memory Seed* (Ork) was a memorable first novel. **Michael Marshall Smith's** *Spares* (HarperCollins) was entertainingly metaphorically murky, and **Brian Stables's** *Salamander's Fire* (Legend) successfully traversed the middle volume of his 'Genesis' trilogy. **Bruce Sterling's** *Holy Fire* (Orion) brilliantly surveyed a post-industrial Europe. **Philip Treiman's** *The Burning* (Gollancz) was an excellent bleak horror novel, while newcomer **N. Lee Wood's** *Looking for the Mahd* (Gollancz) combined political intelligence with efficiently told sci-fi thriller. And all that only scratches the surface.

—Chris Trean

Legend



Including Arrow, Century, Hutchinson

- ★ **Ken MacLeod** *The Star Fraction* (5 Dec; £5.99 pb 1) — Paperback of the Clarke Award runner-up, recommended. Set in the same future history as:
- ★ **Ken MacLeod** *The Stone Canal* (5 Dec; £15.99 hb, 322pp) — Follow-up to the highly successful *The Star Fraction* from the West Lothian based author. Both witty and funny, zestful, and written with extraordinary panache, this confirms MacLeod as a great white hope of British sci. There's a joyous relish in this tale - which brackets *The Star Fraction* in its telling - of a coming-of-age in contemporary Scotland (last year's Glasgow Worldcon is an off-stage locale) through to a working anarchy on a colony planet via a European revolution. There's much play with such current sci icons as A.S. nanotech, VR, resurrection of the dead, information science and cosmology, but all properly subservient to a cracking story with engaging and convincing characters. It's all reminiscent of the excitement generated by John Varley in the 70s (though MacLeod writes from a very British perspective and with a most welcome political intelligence. Very highly recommended, and my book of the year. Why wait till it cleans up the awards? Buy! Read!)
- ★ **Stephen Fry** *Making History* (Hutchinson, 19 Dec; £15.99 hb, 389pp) — Fry's novel *Liar* had staid elements: as does this, an alternative history story rather tiredly concentrating on Hitler and the Nazi death camps - in which you could adjust history so he never existed, what would happen? There's some vague quantum handwaving to justify this, but the core of the novel shows Fry trying - and failing dismally - to write about something serious without ever facing it directly. He shies away from real pain, and his normal cynical frivolity does not mix well with the subject matter. In particular, the passages depicting Hitler's family are very unconvincing. He does name-check PKD though, so at least he's aware of his history. For a much more interesting (but still morally questionable, though in a different way) treatment of this theme, try to get hold of Jerry Vulsman's unseeded obscure *Eileander Morning* (1984).

- ★ **Tim Powers** *Earthquake Weather* (17 Oct; £16.99 hb, 496pp) — Powers's new novel "mixes Multiple-Personality Disorder with a network of sorcerors and corporate politics."
- ★ **Tim Powers** *The Anubis Gates* (Oct; £5.99 pb R) — Reissue of the exuberant Dick Award winning fantasy. Recommended.
- ★ **Oliver Johnson** *The Forging of the Shadows* (3 Oct; £5.99 pb, 608pp) — Epic fantasy, Book One of *The Lightbringer Trilogy*. This is getting a big autumn push: Johnson contributed to *White Dwarf* magazine, has written five children's books, and is currently an Editorial Director at Random House.
- ★ **Alan Dean Foster** *A Call to Arms* (17 Oct; £5.99 pb 1) — St.
- ★ **Terry Brooks** *First King of Shannara* (17 Oct; £9.99 pb 1)
- ★ **Simon Archer & Stan Nicholls** *Gerry Anderson: An Authorised Biography* (17 Oct; £14.99 hb, 0, 256pp)
- ★ **Tad Williams** *Otherland* (14 Nov; £16.99 hb O) — Not to be confused with 'Jonathan Williams's' *Otherlands*.
- ★ **Robert Jordan** *Country of the Mind* (21 Nov; £15.99 hb O) — New hard sci novel.
- ★ **Robert Jordan** *Conan the Unconquered* (21 Nov; £4.99 pb 1) — Heroic fantasy.
- ★ **Christopher Stasheff** *The Wild Doctor* (21 Nov; £4.99 pb O) — Humorous fantasy.
- ★ **Harry Harrison & John Holm** *King and Emperor* (5 Dec; £5.99 pb 1)
- ★ **Alan Dean Foster** *The False Mirror* (5 Dec; £5.99 pb 1)
- ★ **Maggie Furey** *Harp of Winds* (2 Jan 97; £16.99 hb R) — Fantasy.
- ★ **Diana Gabaldon** *The Drums of Autumn* (2 Jan; £16.99 hb O) — Historical fantasy.
- ★ **John Damon** *Neanderthal* (2 Jan; £4.99 pb 1)
- ★ **Andrew Harman** *A Midsummer Night's Gene* (6 Feb; £4.99 pb O) — Humorous fantasy.
- ★ **Maggie Furey** *The Sword of Flame* (6 Feb; £16.99 hb R) — Fantasy.
- ★ **Robert Jordan** *Conan the Magnificent* (6 Feb; £4.99 pb 1) — Heroic fantasy.
- ★ **Paul Barnett** *Strider's Galaxy* (6 Mar; £5.99 pb 1) — St.
- ★ **Terry Brooks** *First King of Shannara* (6 Mar; £5.99 pb 1) — Fantasy.
- ★ **Robert Jordan** *Conan Chronicles II* (6 Mar; £15.99 hb O) — Heroic fantasy.
- ★ **Maggie Furey** *Diamara* (3 Apr; £16.99 hb, £5.99 pb O) — Fantasy, first publication. Delayed from November.
- ★ **Terril Winding** *The Wood Wife* (3 Apr; £5.99 pb O) — Fantasy.
- ★ **Robert Jordan** *Conan the Triumphant* (3 Apr; £4.99 pb 1) — Heroic fantasy.

Gollancz



Including Vista

- Vista continues its superb programme of re-issues, and the squeeze is on for Pratchettophiles:
- ★ **Terry Pratchett** *Hogfather* (7 Nov; £15.99 hb, 285pp) — The twentieth Discworld novel concerns the kidnapping of the Hogfather, the Discworld's Santa Claus. A substitute is needed to fill the kiddies' stockings and dispense good cheer, and there's only one suitable candidate: HO HO HO EVERYONE . . . A. S. Byatt says, "I'm addressed to Terry Pratchett" and she's won the Booker, so he must be a Good Thing [c.f. Sellers and Yeatman's 1066 and All That, to which TP's made more than passing reference]. Also reissued on 7 Nov are 'uniform collectors' editions of *Equal Rights*, *Mort*, *Sourcery* and *Wyrd Sisters* (all £15.99 hb).
- ★ **N. Lee Wood** *Looking For the Mahd* (Vista: 7 Nov; £5.99 pb, 383pp) — "Blade Runner meets *The Fist of God* in a blistering novel of an ominously familiar near future." Actually it's a first-rate sci thriller set in a fictional Moslem country, from a new US writer who's married to Norman Spinrad and lives in Paris. A homey journalist is offered a job escorting a modified human bodyguard to a Saddam-like figure; betrayals and complications ensue, while she struggles to retain her humanity. Recommended.
- ★ **N. Lee Wood** *Faraday's Orbits* (7 Nov; £16.99 hb, 351pp) — The magnetic poles reverse, causing an eco-catastrophe. This is "a tough post-holocaust story with the pace, colour and tension of *The Stand* and *Damntor Alley*." Terrifically bleak.
- ★ **Ursula K. Le Guin** *The Catwings* (7 Nov; £10.99 hb)
- ★ **Ursula K. Le Guin** *A Fisherman of the Inland Sea* (Nov; £15.99 hb, 192pp) — Coll. of Le Guin's recent short fiction.
- ★ **Paul Kearney** *Hawkswood's Voyage* (Vista: 14 Nov; £5.99 pb, 382pp) — Prequel to: **Paul Kearney** *The Heretic Kings* (14 Nov; £16.99 hb, 320pp) — Book 2 of the well-received fantasy series "The Monarchies of God," from the Northern Irish writer who now lives in Copenhagen. Tiny gripe: yet again a publisher mars the appearance of a series by changing the spine design.
- ★ **Ian McDonald** *Sacrifice of Fools* (7 Nov; £16.99 hb, 384pp) — "The great Northern Irish stylist turns to alien 'invasion' here: "The Shian arrive in 2001, seeking a world to colonise. In exchange

- for access to their technology, they are given rights to settle on Earth and now they live alongside humanity, outwardly similar but inwardly deeply different, a challenge to all mankind's established notions of society, family, gender, sex, law . . ." The core of the book is a murder mystery set in Ireland, after a Shian family is brutally killed, and the hunt for a serial killer.
- ★ **Diana Wynne Jones** *Minor Arcana* (28 Nov; £16.99 hb, 287pp) — Coll. of Jones's adult stories, with six shorts and a novella ("The True State of Affairs").
- ★ **Vera Chapman** *The Three Damosels* (28 Nov (R 1976); £16.99 hb, 352pp) — Arthurian fantasy, originally published in 1976 as three novels: *The Green Knight*, *The King's Damosel* and *King Arthur's Daughter*. Chapman, who died earlier this year, was instrumental in founding the Tolkien Society; this re-issue appears to be partially motivated by next year's *The Quest for Camelot* animated feature film, which marks Christopher Reeve's return.
- ★ **George R. R. Martin** *Fevre Dream* (Vista: 5 Dec (R 1982); £5.99 pb, 350pp) — Martin's fine Mississippi vampire novel, in a welcome reissue. It's sort of American steampunk, with Mark Twain rather than Dickens as progenitor.
- ★ **Mary Settle** *Ancient Light* (Vista: 5 Dec (R 1987); £6.99 pb, 707pp + appendices, maps) — Sequel to *Golden Witchweed*, languorous and involving *Bildungsromans* set on a colony planet ripe for exploration by Earth. I still find *Genie's* occasional jerky terse switches mildly off-putting, but both are must-reads.
- ★ **Ursula K. Le Guin** *City of Illusions* (Vista: 5 Dec (R 1967); £4.99 pb, 192pp) — Early 'Hanish' novella.
- ★ **Arthur C. Clarke & Mike McQuay** *Richter 10* (Vista: 5 Dec; £5.99 pb, 442pp) — Earthquake thriller. Clarke's only input was a 3-page movie outline, reprinted here as an addendum. McQuay died shortly after finishing the book.
- ★ **George Benford** *Timescape* (Vista: 5 Dec (R 1980); £5.99 pb, 412pp) — Benford's best book, a time paradox story which is almost an homage to *Heyle's* *The Black Cloud*, though better written. The story's still terrific. Benford's view of the English class system still rings false (it's all surface), 60s California still convinces. Well, he was there; but he was in the UK, too . . .
- ★ **Ian McDonald** *Chaga* (Vista: 5 Dec; £5.99 pb)
- ★ **Philip Treiman** *The Pastor* (20 Feb 97; £16.99 hb)
- ★ **Isaac Asimov** *Robot Dreams* (Vista: 20 Feb; £5.99 pb)
- ★ **Isaac Asimov** *Robot Visions* (Vista: 20 Feb; £5.99 pb)
- ★ **Stephen King, Dan Simmons & George R. R. Martin** *Dark Visions* (Vista: 20 Feb; £5.99 pb)
- ★ **Arthur C. Clarke** *Imperial Earth* (Vista: 20 Feb; £4.99 pb)

taking — Sf — seriously

Andy Sawyer

THE MAGAZINE REVIEWS here are based on a handout prepared for students of Liverpool University's MA in Science Fiction Studies, but it is also a quick look at the critical journals I find most useful. I've restricted myself to academic or semi-professional critical journals which are still being published on a fairly regular basis, though I could have added fanzines like Bruce Gillespie's *SF Commentary*, which appears when Bruce has time and money to bring it out, but which is as valuable as anything here as a source of good, informed critical writing about sf. There are certainly other zines which are on the same level. However, I have included *Vector* to remind BSFA readers of where it stands in the hierarchy of criticism – and because people will hit me if I don't.

Why have sf criticism in the first place? Well, if you really *have* to ask that question, how can I persuade you otherwise? But given that many people are studying science fiction in some form, and that fandom has had a long tradition of informed and – yes – critical discussion which largely predates the interest of academia, the question ought to be, "What criticism is there available which will extend and illuminate my love of sf?"

Science fiction criticism is not, of course, confined to journals specialising in sf, although where it appears in more mainstream critical magazines it is usually focussed on a small, arguably unrepresentative group of writers. But this is par for the course: other specialist interest-groups – whether they're devotees of Charles Dickens, specific theoretical approaches, or 17th century literature – tend to have their own journals which are part of the mainstream of critical discourse. The situation with sf is merely that it stands half-in, half-out of this mainstream. The three 'academics' – *Extrapolation*, *Foundation*, and *Science Fiction Studies* – are indexed in the Modern Languages Association bibliography on CD-ROM, as are *JFA* and some extremely valuable if occasional sources not mentioned here, but that still leaves a lot of useful material out there in no man's land. We are gathering it together. Meanwhile, here are some pointers.

— Andy Sawyer

SFRA Review

SFRA Review is published by the Science Fiction Research Association, founded in 1970 to improve classroom teaching, encourage and assist scholarship, and evaluate and publicise new books and magazines dealing with fantastic literature and film. The editor is Amy Sisson. It is available to members only, but benefits of membership include receiving *Extrapolation*, *Science Fiction Studies* and *Foundation* (and soon if not at the moment *NYRSF* at an extra but reduced subscription). It is an internally-oriented publication, but is a useful source of news and information about the science fiction academic world – particularly in the USA – and about recent novels and critical works. The SFRA also organises an annual conference, which I am told is well worth attending.

— Andy Sawyer

SFRA Review: Published six times a year. Individual membership of the SFRA costs \$60 annually (£70 outside the USA). Details from Robert J. Ewald, SFRA Treasurer, 552 W. Lorncorn Street, Friday, OH 45840, USA.

How seriously do you take sf?

On the next couple of pages you'll find information about various journals dealing with the field, what their approach is (from unashamedly academic to cutting-edge cybercultural), how and where to obtain them... and, courtesy of BBR Distribution, we've been able to arrange special discounts for BSFA members on certain titles.



The International Association of the Fantastic in the Arts sponsors an annual conference and a scholarly journal. As the title suggests, the range is much broader than pure science fiction, and issues have included papers on fantastic art, romantic poetry (Byron, etc.), gothic fiction and film: any literary form with a Fantastic element is open to discussion. The first issue, in 1988, featured an article by Brian Aldiss who is a permanent special guest at the IFA conference. One special feature is the number of theme issues and 'special guest editors' which bring a strong focus to the contents, which otherwise (given the broad remit) would be more dispersed among virtually every literary form you can think of. If you see sf as a form of realism, this is not a relevant journal, but if you see it as part of the wide tradition of non-realist fiction (arguably the true mainstream of literary development, the realist novel being a mere whippersnapper of a century or two) then this will illuminate your understanding and gratify.

— Andy Sawyer

Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts: Published quarterly. Editor and subscription address: Carl B. Yoke, *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, 1157 Temple Trail, Stow, Ohio 44224-2238, USA.

Subscription rates: individuals \$20 (one year), \$35 (two years); institutions \$25 and \$45. Cheques payable to 'IAFA'. A message to me from the IAFA reads: "The editorial folks are still working out their plans for international subscriptions, but they estimate that costs will be roughly \$8 / year more in each category to cover the cost of first-class mailing."

IAFA Web site: http://ebbs.english.vt.edu/ifa/ifa_home.html

• *JFA* is available from BBR (see box).



Like *The New York Review of Science Fiction*, *SF Eye* can best be described as 'independent small press'. Published and edited by Stephen P. Brown, it started with a bang in 1987 by jumping straight into the cyberpunk debate with a first issue which featured interviews with Gibson and Sterling, and has kept straight to the cutting edge ever since. In fact, the ethos of the magazine is that it is much more than an sf critique: regular columns by Sterling, Paul di Filippo, and Richard Kadrey are as likely as not to have very little to do with sf as such, but be more (as with Kadrey) reviews of obscure (to me) records and videos or (as with Sterling) discussions of John Updike or Lafcadio Hearn. Contributors like Takayuki Tatsumi provide fascinating insights from the Japanese cyberpunk scene. Interviews have featured Connie Willis, Samuel R. Delany, David Wingrove, Lewis Shiner and Howard Waldrop, Lucius Shepard and Iain M. Banks... but also Brian Eno. Article about strange science, techno-eroticism, and Oz mingle with long reviews from people like Gwyneth Jones, Elizabeth Hand, and Kathleen Ann Goonan. William Gibson reviews Irvine Welsh. Charles Platt despairs of the publishing scene. Rudy Rucker describes domestic confrontations with far-right Republican neighbours. How Stephen P. Brown ever brought out more than one issue, I do not know, but I *want* his address book and whatever keeps him up and enthusiastic about the whole thing.

This is as far from fannish earnestness about Robert A. Heinlein and Isaac Asimov as you can get. It may be fannish in a different way, even earnest, if 'earnest' means taking things seriously, but it's not a smooth and predictable read and you'll always find something new. The letter column, by the way, is pretty confrontational – worth a read in itself.

— Andy Sawyer

SF Eye: Published irregularly ("approximately 3 times a year", but issue 14 was two years after 13). Subscriptions: \$12.50 in USA, \$20 outside USA (three issues).

• *SF Eye* is available from BBR (see box).

Science-Fiction Studies

Science-Fiction Studies was founded by R. D. Mullen in 1973, at about the same time as *Foundation*; it also comes out three times a year, but has developed along different lines. The editorial team now consists of Mullen as managing editor, Arthur B. Evans as Publisher, Istvan Csicsery-Ronay, Jr and Veronica Holliger. Previous incumbents of the editorial chairs have included Darko Suvin, who has perhaps had more influence on sf criticism than any other critic.

SF Studies looks firmly to the academic world: one of its aims is to provide a platform for younger scholars with an interest in sf. It has also been a platform for criticism with a theoretical and ideological basis, and

has developed something of a reputation for 'Marxism' or 'Postmodernism'. Indeed, it has published articles which look at sf - particularly cyberpunk - as a postmodernist phenomena (but then again, so has *Extrapolation*), and has provided a platform for pomo theoretician Fredric Jameson. It does have a tendency to name-drop fashionable philosophers like Deleuze and Baudrillard (the latter has actually written for the journal). But the stimulating links it makes between sf and High Culture surely ought to be welcome. It has played a major part in extending the reputations of Philip K. Dick and J. G. Ballard (though to the latter author's dismay at the time), and has produced some extremely valuable material on early proto-sf material: issue 61, for instance, published a 19th

century New Zealand tale and an examination of four French-Canadian dystopias. (Its Canadian links are strong: at one point it featured abstracts in French.) *SF Studies* has also published on writers such as Cordwainer Smith and John Brunner, and recently featured a bibliographical study of Hugo Gernsback's *Ralph 124c 41+*. Its market isn't fandom as such, but fans can get an awful lot from reading - and occasionally taking issue with - its contents.

— Andy Sawyer

Science-Fiction Studies: Business address: Arthur B. Evans, East College, DePauw University, Greencastle, IN 46135-0037, USA.

Subscriptions (for three issues): Individuals outside USA \$18; add \$7.50 for airmail. Within USA \$15. Canada \$17. Different rates for institutions. Cheques payable to 'SF-TH Inc'.

How The Academics Spend Your Money

"Just a bit of fun, just a bit of fun..." as Peter Snow would put it. The table shows the number of times various works, critics, and authors have been referred to in major academic articles since 1980, as culled from a standard citation index. The graph shows how citations of three 'core' works of genre sf have fluctuated over the same period. — Chris Terran

Source: *BIDS Arts and Humanities Database*. Figures for 1996 are necessarily incomplete. Research courtesy of **Andrew M. Butler**.

Ursula Le Guin	304	Larry Niven	34
Joanna Russ	199	Octavia E. Butler	33
William Gibson	151	James Tiptree, Jr	26
<i>Neuromancer</i>	90	Alfred Bester	20
Brian Aldiss	144	<i>The Demolished Man</i>	7
Samuel R. Delany	131	<i>Tiger! Tiger!</i>	8
Philip K. Dick	128	John Clute	18
<i>Blade Runner</i>	113	Robert Sheckley	12
Robert A. Heinlein	107	Keith Roberts	7
J. G. Ballard	85	K. V. Bailey	7
<i>Alien</i>	63	Paul Kincaid	5
Brian Stableford	53	Gwyneth Jones	4
<i>Scientific Romance...</i>	16	Dave Langford	4
'Cyberpunk'	49		

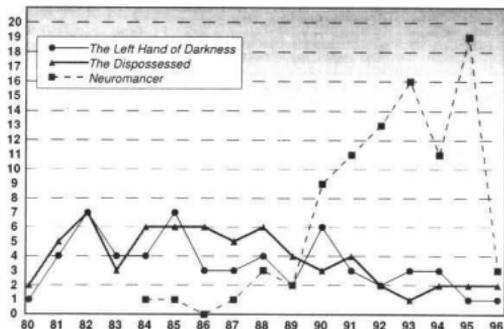
the view
from the
ivory
tower

Vector

Now I really shouldn't have to say anything about *Vector*! But it has for many years been an invaluable source of features, interviews and reviews and has kept the flame of serious comment about sf going when all around it was a wasteland. Just about everyone in the science fiction world - and many of those only partly associated with it, such as Angela Carter, a current fave among the critics of modern British fiction - have written for it or been written about or interviewed in it. Over the years, *Vector* has waxed and waned with the fortunes (financial and personnel) of the

BSFA, and occasionally its format has looked distinctly dodgy as the bank balances dwindled, but successive editors have always striven to make it something more than a cubzine: something which can be thrust at someone who says, "But science fiction's all the same..." to tell them "Well, read that and get some ideas." My own involvement in it owes a lot to *Vector*, and I'm sure many people can say the same.

Vector: Published bimonthly by the BSFA. (If you're reading this, you'll know how to subscribe!)



EXTRAPOLATION

Extrapolation is the longest-lived of all the 'academics', dating back to 1959 when it was founded by Thomas D. Clareson as the Newsletter of the Conference on Science Fiction of the Modern Languages Association. It is now edited by Donald M. Hassler of Kent State University. Much early material was bibliographical, and as befits its origins the atmosphere was fairly staidly academic (though what reads like 'staid' sf criticism now has to be read in the different context of the early 60s). An increase in frequency to quarterly created more room for variety, and *Extrapolation* has published on a number of writers such as Philip Jose Farmer, Fred Saberhagen, James Gunn, Lord Dunsany, Arthur Machen and Aloys Budrys, as well as on *Star Trek* and other media phenomena. It still

lacks the bite and contentiousness of *Science Fiction Studies* or the energy of *Foundation* at its best: many of its contributors appear to be young American graduate students exploring new avenues for career development. But this does not necessarily mean that its opinions are not of worth, nor that its contributors are somehow 'not owners' of science fiction.

It may be the case that (to pick somewhat unfairly on one example) David Moyle in the Winter 1995 issue, writing on science fiction themes in recent work by Martin Amis, could have treated a more informed - and certainly more useful - essay by examining more closely Amis's influences from the sf tradition, but it is still of value as a first attempt to have such facets illuminated for the academic world. Many older fans will find some of the assessments in *Extrapolation* of

less use than will many students of Literature (or Science Fiction), but that does not make them unnecessary, or unworthy of being read by less erudite sf readers who want some serious attention given to the field. Both fans and students will find the range of material covered by the journal extremely useful, while occasional topics, such as the collision of *Star Trek* and Shakespeare in the Spring 1995 issue, are fascinating, even inspiring. (And the piece on *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure* in the most recent issue I have seen is delightful!)

— Andy Sawyer

Extrapolation: Published quarterly. Subscription rates (for individuals outside the USA) \$24 one year, \$40 two years. Within the USA \$18 / \$34. Inquiries to Kent State University Press, Journals Department, Kent, Ohio 44242, USA.

taking Sf seriously

Galactic Central Bibliographies

Prepared by Phil Stephenson-Payne and the recently deceased Gordon Brown, Jr, these bibliographies are cheap and reliable. There are about 45 of them so far, covering authors such as Poul Anderson, John Brunner, Piers Anthony, Keith Roberts and Philip K. Dick, each costing between £1.50 and £3.00. As well as novels and stories, the coverage includes pseudonyms, interviews, critical articles, awards, poems, reviews, and much else. —Chris Terran

SAE for full list and prices to Phil Stephenson-Payne, 'Imladris', 25A Coppage Rd., Leeds, W. Yorkshire, LS8 2SP

Quantum

Although *Quantum* has now ceased publication, back issues are more than worth getting hold of. Formerly called *Thrust* – and allegedly changed to avoid clashing with certain top-shelf titles – the US-published magazine aimed to bridge the gap between fanzines and the more professional publications. It was nominated five times for a Hugo, and the final double issue celebrated its twentieth anniversary; it featured interviews with Lois McMaster Bujold, Brian Herbert and Shen Tepper, and articles from Poul Anderson, David Langford, Charles Sheffield, Gene Wolfe, Charles Platt, Michael Bishop, and many others. Other recent issues have included interviews with Ray Bradbury, Geoff Ryman, Connie Willis, and Michael Coney, alongside articles by Ian Watson, Joe Haldeman, and Kim Stanley Robinson.

Quantum: No longer published, but back issues are available from BBR (see box).

InterZone

I shouldn't have to say much about *Interzone*, which in any case is a fiction magazine rather than a magazine of criticism, but don't forget its regular interviews, which often get there before anyone else (Joseph Nicholas and Judith Hanna in issue 13 will have been among the earliest Brits to interview William Gibson) and are of very high quality. Of extreme value to anyone with an interest in science fiction are the occasional feature articles, such as the current 'Creators of Science Fiction' series by Brian Stableford which has covered E. E. Smith, Philip K. Dick, Leigh Brackett and David Keller, among others. With John Clute, Paul McAuley, Chris Gilmore and Gwyneth Jones among the reviewing stable, a stimulating read beckons in every issue, and David Pringle keeps wonderful order among the flood of books which appear every month. All this and fiction too.

—Andy Sawyer

Interzone: Published monthly. £30 for one year in UK. Enquiries to David Pringle, 217 Preston Drive, Brighton, BN1 6FL.

Special Offers

Magazine Offers From BBR

BBR is a distribution company specialising in small-press and import publications, and those hard-to-find magazines. Run by Chris Reed, its beautifully produced catalogue lists books from writers such as Gwyneth Jones (*Seven Tales and a Fable*), Garry Kilworth (*Hogfoot Right and Bird-Hands*), Misha (*Prayers of Steel*), Ke-Qiu-Hank-Ao, Rudy Rucker (*All the Visions*), Cherry Wilder (*Dealers in Light and Darkness*), poetry from Steve Sneyd (*Bad News From the Stars*) and much more. BBR also handles sf magazines such as *Albedo 1* (from Ireland), *Aurealis* (Australia), *Black Brain Recluse* (UK), *New Pathways* (USA), *On Spec* (Canada) and *Yazyk* (Czech Republic).

BBR also distributes some of the magazines listed here, and have very kindly offered some special discounts to UK resident BSFA members until the end of January 1997. All prices include P&P to UK destinations.

SF Eye: Normally £4 per issue. BBR offers the most recent two issues for £5. That's a saving of £1.50 per issue.

Quantum: The final double issue (counts as two) normally costs £5, and single issues £2.50; buy two and get £1.50 off.

Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts: Normally £3.50, offer price is £2.50 per issue.

Send cheques / POs, payable to 'Chris Reed', to BBR, PO Box 625, Sheffield, S1 3GY, stating your BSFA membership number. For the catalogue only, send two first class stamps.

Competition: Win *The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*

Carlton Books have very generously donated two copies of David Pringle's new book, *The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, worth £19.99. Profusely illustrated and with contributions from David Langford, Brian Stableford, Paul di Filippo, John Grant and Chris Gilmore, the book includes thematic essays, extensive coverage of film, TV and radio, an A-Z of fictional characters, biographies of writers, and much more in its 300 pages. To win a copy, simply choose a humorous or apt 'Ultimate' Christmas present for the sf writer of your choice, write it on a postcard marked 'Ultimate Competition', and send it to Roger Robinson, 75 Rosslyn Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex, RM3 0RG by Friday 27 December 1996.

The New York Review of Science Fiction

It may be the title which undermines *The New York Review of Science Fiction*, set in motion in 1988 by a team including pro editors David Hartwell and Kathryn Cramer, the first issue contained an article by Samuel R. Delany who has been a frequent contributor ever since. It may be the drab appearance, which spells less 'Academic Journal' – which it isn't, despite its frightening intellectualism – than 'sercon fanzine' which it isn't either, quite: 'fanzine' belies the commitment to regular publication and serious criticism which is the magazine's hallmark. It may be the often too-serious air about some of the articles: lengthy, erudite, and at first sight sometimes deterring. But don't let this fool you. NYRSF has published some extraordinary material

in recent issues, such as a massive and immensely revealing self-justification by John Norman, Brian Stableford on "Black Magic, Pagan Rock and the Tradition of Literary Satanism", and a study of Samuel R. Delany's pomography. Of course, these topics may not grab you, but it's undeniable that NYRSF goes where most reviews of sf don't.

—Andy Sawyer

New York Review of Science Fiction: Published monthly. Address: Dragon Press, PO Box 78, Pleasantville, NY 10570, USA. Annual subscriptions: \$31 in USA, \$44 overseas. Cheques payable to Dragon Press.

Web site: <http://ebbs.english.vt.edu/olp/nyrsf/nyrsf.html>

• NYRSF is available from BBR (see box).

FOUNDATION

Probably the most user-friendly of the critical journals to British readers, *Foundation* may strike a chord to BSFA members with names like K. V. Bailey, Stephen Baxter, Andy Butler, Gwyneth Jones, and Paul Kincaid appearing in recent issues. *Foundation's* 68th issue is due out this autumn. The critical journal of the Science Fiction Foundation, it began publication in 1972 with Charles Barren at the editorial helm, although Peter Nicholls, the Foundation's administrator, soon took over, to be followed by Malcolm Edwards (now Fiction Director at Gollancz) and David Pringle (Editor / Publisher of *Interzone*). For the past ten years, however, the editor has been Edward James, who rumour has it works as a medieval historian, but where he gets the time I do not know.

Considering that I recently took over as Reviews Editor from Colin Greenland, and am so closely associated with the magazine in other ways, what I say about *Foundation* may not be the most objective of criticism, but it is generally agreed that it is the most readable of the academic-oriented journals. Its determination to keep contact with the writers and readers of sf as well as those who criticise and study it has resulted in many of the best-known

practitioners of the field writing for it. The long-running series 'The Profession of Science Fiction' began in the first issue with John Brunner on 'The development of a science fiction writer' and has continued through Gene Wolfe, Brian Stableford, Gwyneth Jones, Brian Aldiss, J. M. Straczynski and J. G. Ballard. *Foundation's* coverage is wide: of the three 'academics' it features articles on Hal Clement and Michael Moorcock and was the first to cover William Gibson. One of its strongest qualities has been its reviews of fiction, where depth of coverage and critical acumen have made up for comprehensiveness – a vain quality to strive for in a thrice-yearly magazine.

—Andy Sawyer

Foundation: Editor: Edward James, Department of History, University of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading, RG6 6AA. Business address (for subscriptions, back numbers, etc.): c/o New Worlds, 71-72 Charing Cross Road, London, WC2H 0AA.

Subscriptions: Institutions anywhere £34 for three issues. Individuals within UK and Ireland £14 for three issues. Europe £17. Elsewhere £17. Students £10 (proof of status required). Cheques should be payable to 'Foundation Journal'. For further information contact the Business Address or Andy Sawyer.

Web: <http://www.rdg.ac.uk/~lshjanesw/fnd.htm>

Irina Authors

Stephen Baxter
SF Author (right)
Photo: Roger Robinson

Guy Gadney
Former head of
Electronic
Publishing at
Penguin

Hugh Barnes
An Executive
Editor at Penguin



Irina Info

Irina
A
Penguin Books
Interactive
Novel

Irina Reviewer

Sue Thomas
is the author of the Clarke Award nominated cyberfiction
Correspondence and has just completed her third novel *The
[+]NET[+]* of *Desire* which uses old-fashioned paper but can
also be visited in its virtual location at #87887 LambdaMOO.

She also runs the trAce Writing and Technology Research
Project
<http://human.ntu.ac.uk/foh/ems/trace/trace.html>
and is Course Leader of the MA in Writing at Nottingham Trent
University
<http://human.ntu.ac.uk/foh/pg/navwrit.html>
She is also co-founder of The Virtual Imagination: Scientists
and Writers Working Together in Cyberspace
<http://uhavax.hartford.edu/~suthomas/>
(under construction ...)

Irina URL

<http://194.217.172.1/Penguin/homepages/index.html>

Irina Review - Page 1

In the late 70s, Joe Weizenbaum noticed that his computer science students were so obsessed with the process of problem-solving that they lost sight of the actual outcomes and purposes of their work. So a group of these geeky kids could easily get deeply engrossed in the pleasurable challenge of designing landmines which exploded faster and more efficiently than any other landmines before them. But since the consequences of their superior designs were no more than a colourful splatter which occurred after the event and had no direct input into the functioning of the process itself, they considered themselves free to ignore them. Joe tried to fix this, bless him, by implanting a little humanitarian subroutine inside every one of his students - it's called a Liberal Arts Course - and hopefully that's still running without a hitch. But the same peril lies in wait today for a different breed of programmer: the programmer of fiction. Oh George Orwell, what did you do when you invented those novel-writing machines? It's still 1984 even though it's 1996!

Irina is a web-based interactive novel which you can't buy off the shelf. It can't be held in the hand, it can only be surfed. But let Irina explain it herself - let's go to the first page of her web-site. First we see a picture of a woman, and if I were three men looking for a heroine for my story this is the kind of face I would choose. Pointed gaze, dark eyes, long dark hair, deep red lips. OK, fair enough, I'll go along with that. Here she is:

Hello, I am Irina Iotova.
Welcome to my homepage.
I was one of the designers of the Penguin WWW site. On my own Web site I will tell you about my quest for the truth about my father's disappearance [sic]. I would welcome any help you could give me. Please tell me which country you are from so that I can correspond with you and tell you my story.
See you soon.
Irina.

Pretty enthralling stuff, eh? You're probably hooked already and just dying to find out what happened to her father (and what happened to the person who proofread the site - buried in an unmarked grave, if there is any justice in the world).

Irina Review - Page 2

Anyway, the line "Please tell me which country you are from so that I can correspond with you and tell you my story" is an invitation to type in your country name, but this is really just a trick to get some interactivity going. Beware! You have filled it in, and Irina now has your email address. You are about to be subjected over the next few days to a slow stream of rather stilled messages which purport to be real. And sure enough, the next day I wake up to find an email directing me to the URL of Professor Edward Prideaux of the School of Slavonic Studies, and once more I am enjoying myself. Or I would be if the prose were not so wooden. And anyway, I have seen this name before - in the press release sent to reviewers. The PR purports to be a warning of an email virus which will send itself to everyone on your private address list and then trash the host computer it is being read on - <yawm>. To pay homage to *Wired* magazine - viruses are tired, not wired.

And so the trail continues, with emails turning up every now and then to tell me where to go next. I link, I hypertext, I read, I track back, and follow as best I can until at last I hit a dead-end and am forced to stop.

According to Penguin, *Irina* is "the first ever truly interactive piece of fiction ever produced".

Well, it's not so very new. Interactive fiction has been around for years, both on the web and off, and most of it is much more sophisticated than this. (See trAce for links to some other interesting hypertext sites). The idea of *Irina* is great but I suspect that the makers? compilers? have got too involved with being clever and forgotten that this is supposed to be a 'fiction'. That means it is - or should be - a seduction and enticement to follow. At first I am excited by it - what a clever idea, to link the story like a treasure trail through other people's websites! - but then I start to falter as I realise that actually they all look much the same. And the types are still there. And the typefaces are not identical, but close enough, until in the end, I am not convinced by the fiction.

Technologically, *Irina* must have been fascinating to put together, and the expertise acquired from doing so will surely stand the compilers in good stead for other similar projects, but as Joe Weizenbaum's students were finally made to appreciate, there has to be more to it than clever technology.

Hypertext authors take note - the story must be well-made in a hypertextual sense, but it should also be well-made in a literary sense: seductive, nicely-written, and hypnotic. Sadly, this time round *Irina* hasn't quite made it, but the site has great potential and of course can be constantly changed and updated. And I wonder what will happen to her? Will she mature and grow, or be abandoned out there in cyberspace? Keep an eye on this site.

— © Sue Thomas 1996

mailbox

T-Shirt Winner

From Roger Wilson

PO Box 5443, Redditch, Worcs. B88 9EE

Being a new member of the BSFA (spring '96), and seeing your request for comments in *Matrix* 120 (tucked away in a corner of page 6, tsk tsk!), I thought I'd write. New blood, new ideas, all that old rot . . .

First of all please note that any criticism is meant positively – doing anything on a voluntary basis can be a thankless task – and hopefully will come over that way.

My first opinion is that more 'media' sf coverage would be good, without straying into interviews, criticism etc. There are plenty of mags for that! This includes computer software where feasible. I feel it's all sf, and if the BSFA's main aim is to promote sf, then it needs to do this any way it can. The printed word is not the key media technology any more . . . especially if you get into viewer / reader numbers (read the right parts of the right newspapers!). I guess we all know when *Star Trek's* on, etc., but for instance Radio 4 pops up with gems occasionally. I haven't noticed a mag out there that does this comprehensively. A listing like the events section in *Matrix* would be brilliant. This would be more useful than someone else's view of something that's been on!

Whilst still on 'other media', should the various magazines available be discussed? I could start with *SFX* being grossly overpriced . . .

I must confess I joined the BSFA purely out of curiosity, but the news pages in *Matrix* are invaluable to me, as I collect sf paperback books and it's impossible to keep up with what's going on out there! If anyone believes they have a definitive short story / novel list of any 'key' sf author, I would like to hear from them. Conversely, I have on a database all the stories I know about (and mostly have!). This sort of info, and occasional bibliographies in *Matrix* / *Vector*, is I feel where the BSFA could help promote sf to its members, how can you read it if you don't know about it? An interview with the author, or his / her comments on the books would be interesting, though the numerous anthologies out there are doing this to some degree, particularly the excellent Philip K. Dick series published by HarperCollins.

Another area where *Matrix* (the Members' Forum?) could help members to help themselves is information about purchasing sf. This means where are the good shops? What do they sell? After all, if we don't buy it the industry doesn't make any more sf for us! For instance, I find Forbidden Planet in London very disappointing, having no more than a good high street shop. Conversely I would commend Black Cat (second hand) in Leicester as having a much larger than average sf range, though the last time I went there was a lean towards fantasy. Also, if you are near the Welsh Border, Hay-on-Wye is full of second-hand shops, one of which specialises in sf / fantasy. For new books, Blackwell's Paperback Shop in Oxford is superb, importing a lot of American editions; I found some Larry Niven I didn't know existed . . .

One more about British publishers: they don't list most other stuff by the same author, while US books do. I imagine it's to do with what they publish, but it's a pain!

My main moan about the BSFA so far is I have not got my *Matrix* / *Vector* on time, receiving them after the deadlines for the competitions for instance. From the committee notes in *Matrix*, hopefully this will improve . . .

To close, a final discussion point: is it feasible to include a list of eligible books for the 1997 BSFA Awards? I haven't got a clue, other than *Blue Mars* and the next Terry Pratchett! ☺

Lots of points there. First, thanks for writing, and welcome. The BBC will not issue future schedules more than a few weeks in advance, with some exceptions for major TV series. This is useless for us, so much as I'd like to list upcoming radio items it just isn't possible. That's the reason you don't see other cines doing it either.

On bibliographies, there may be a tendency for us to assume that everyone has access to The Encyclopedia of SF (and its forthcoming sister volume on fantasy), which has pretty comprehensive lists of titles. Not true bibliographies though: if you want these I suggest you try Phil Stephenson-Payne's Galactic Central series, which are cheap and usually reliable; see the "Taking SF Seriously" feature for details. We hope to include selective bibliographies in future when Vector covers an author.

Reportedly, Hay-on-Wye is disappointing for sf fans; it's overpriced and there are few knowledgeable dealers there. I agree with Roger's gripe about 'also written by' lists, to which I'd add the loathsome and now common practice of not crediting cover artists. Which creates problems for the BSFA Artwork Award, of course.

Regrettably, it simply isn't feasible to list every work eligible for the BSFA Awards. If you want anything else in Matrix, anyway. However, the "Forthcoming Books" columns and all Vector reviews carry publication dates. And I'll try to be more careful to mark reprints and issues (that is, ineligible works) in future. — Chris

From David Curi

Flat 8, 19 Hilltop Cres., Holloway, London, N7 0JF
John Ashbrook, in his review of *Independence Day*, comments that *id4*, on the face of it "an unshamed love-letter to the United States", in fact subverts conservative expectations by letting "a hippie Jew and a street-smart black guy" save the world rather than the WASP President.

Well, fair enough. But to me this entertaining if mixed-up film reveals something a bit different about the current American mindset (and body-image). Initially, *id4* comes across as a confidently postmodern movie, one which namechecks a few other recent sf flicks, for example *ET* and *Close Encounters*, in order to set itself up as bigger and somehow more real. After that, though, it all rather falls apart, and far from being more "real" than, say, *Close Encounters*, the plot holds together with the Sellotape of cliché and with the bits of string of ridiculously improbable coincidence. *ET* and *Close Encounters*, though sentimental in places, manage to retain their shape, while this film, which with one part of its divided mind attempts to be a 'back to basics' movie à la *The American President* while with the other it celebrates diversity, sluttishly allows itself to sag and grow shapeless.

'You know, they say that one third of American adults are clinically obese.' ☺

From Kev McVeigh

37 Firs Road, Milnthorpe, Cumbria, LA7 7QF

In the David Pringle interview [*Matrix* 121] both David and Lee Montgomery complain about the 'literary' submissions *Interzone* used to receive. This surprises me. The earliest issues of *Interzone* were filled with the likes of Angela Carter, M. John Harrison and J. G. Ballard, all intensely literary writers. It seems unlikely that such authors submitted to a brand new, unproven magazine run by 'fans' without solicitation. Presumably the *Interzone* board courted these people? So having

set out their stall quite deliberately, it seems obvious that subsequent submissions would follow this lead. After all, isn't every aspiring writer advised to read the magazine to see what is already being published?

It makes me wonder, though, how would *Interzone* have looked if issue 1 had led off with Bob Shaw, James White and their ilk. It is possible that the more 'literary' types would have been put off by such a line-up, but perhaps Bob Shaw etc. felt they wouldn't be wanted amongst the literati? Might the ghost of this literary start explain some lingering resentment towards *Interzone* in a few fans?

Personally I think *Interzone* is an important magazine, and in general it has achieved a fine balance of material. David Pringle knows I have been strongly critical of some of his past actions, but I still read *Interzone* and I must applaud his stamina in publishing the magazine for so long, and it is precisely because *Interzone* is so important, so central in UK sf that its failings need challenging and criticism. I hope to be still finding faults in another fifteen years. (But preferably new ones.) ☺

From Arthur C. Clarke

Columbu, Sri Lanka

Although gentlemen never discuss financial matters, I was much annoyed by the wildly inaccurate reference to the 300f advance (*Matrix* Sep/Oct, p. 6).

I should hate anyone to imagine that my services are available for so trifling a fee, and this unfortunate news item may well have jeopardised negotiations for my forthcoming (2017) autobiography *Modest Genius: or, I Was a Teen-Age Centenarian*.

Unless you publish this correction, I am afraid I shall have to call upon the services of my solicitors, Messrs Gleditsch & Blubberclutch – or even my Q.C., Sir Slightly Bent. ☺
Glad to oblige . . . would Sir Slightly appreciate a T-shirt, do you think? — Chris

From Terry Jewes

56 Red Star Drive, Scarborough, N. Yorks., YO12 5RQ

I'm one of those sleeping people who accept *Matrix*, read and enjoy it, but then fall to LoC. Don't ask me why, maybe pressure of other fanac, but *Matrix* 121 is another excellent issue. I like the layout, I like the number of photographs, I like the puzzles (especially the crosswords) and the articles are all well-written, but . . . yes, there is a but, isn't there always.

With *Vector* giving so much coverage to printed sf (even a review supplement), isn't *Matrix* a bit overbalanced that way? Once it used to be the sort of fanzine organ of the BSFA, so what has happened to fanzine coverage? I'd far rather read them than recipes for dishes which I have no intention of trying. How about getting a regular fanzine reviewer to skim the field rather than half page, 'in depth' coverage of only two or three? ☺

Thanks for the kind comments and courteous criticism. I take your point about fanzine coverage: although space precludes it in this issue, regular fanzine reviews will be back next time, though I'll continue to use a range of reviewers: there are as many opinions about fanzines as there are fanzines, and I'd like to reflect that.

This issue inevitably has an increased coverage of fanzish matters; the survey in this mailing specifically asks about that, and I'll be very interested to see the responses.

Sorry you haven't enjoyed the recipes. Just be glad we didn't go for knitting patterns as well: X-Files sweaters, anyone? (Actually, that isn't such a bad idea . . .) — Chris

From Alison Cook

52 Woodhill Drive, Grove, Oxon., OX12 0DF

Re: Maureen Kincad Speller's article in *Matrix* 121, p15

I presume Maureen is "... very pleased with what [she's] done so far" in the same way that the RAF was pleased with the bombing of Dresden.

In the last two years that she has steered the BSFA, it has lost many more issues than had been lost in the previous fifteen years!

Well done Maureen, Great Administration and a Great Title for your Piece! ☺

Maureen Kincad Speller replies:

No one would attempt to deny that we have had problems with the mailings over the last couple of years, but I do think that comparing the BSFA's problems with the bombing of Dresden is gratuitously nasty. I have not, to the best of my knowledge, been responsible for the deaths of thousands of innocent civilians (death toll estimated at between 35,000 and 135,000, according to *The Hutchinson Encyclopedia* 1995 edition).

In fact, our problems have been more on the lines of mailings being unduly late rather than missing altogether. In the last two years we have published every issue of *Focus* that was scheduled. We should have published 12 issues of *Vector* and 12 issues of *Matrix*. We actually published 10 issues of *Vector* plus an extra Reviews Supplement, and we published 10 issues of *Matrix*, including one Double Issue. We also published the booklet *A Very British Genre*, which is available free to members and which was specially produced as an apology for missing mailings.

Over the last few months the BSFA Committee as a whole has worked hard to identify and correct the faults that caused those missed and delayed mailings.

Steve Jeffery has stepped in as Publications Manager and we have changed to a new mailing service. Our hard work is paying off, but we did, effectively, lose one issue of *Vector* and one and a half of *Matrix*. Is that really equivalent to the bombing of Dresden? — Maureen Kincad Speller

Chris Tetzan replies:

I'm responsible for both the article title, "The MKS System", and the series title, "Who the Hell ...", which was shamelessly lifted - as admitted in *Matrix* 120 - from a long-running series of profiles in *Q* magazine.

I also take full responsibility for the problems with *Matrix*. — Chris

Teresa Hehir has recently rejoined after a long absence.

From Teresa Hehir

PO Box 505, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 7QR

Things have changed a bit since I was last a member but *Matrix* is as good as ever. The Chocolate Pudding Pudding sounds great - I'm hoping to try it out this weekend. I'm not convinced that letting yourselves be photographed like that was a good idea though - now we know who to look for.

The Silent Majority. As I was a member of this bunch for a long time I thought I'd explain why I was 'silent'. I was a member of the BSFA, read many APAs and letterzines and loved reading everyone's comments on books and films but it never occurred to me that I could write back. Yes, I know that sounds stupid now but it just never occurred to me. It is easy to say, yes, I liked / hated this book, but to say why is another matter, just as difficult as articulating what you think or believe in. I guess it's one of those negative ego things - I just don't think that anyone would have any

Write To *Matrix* and win a T-shirt!

Send letters to
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9 Beechwood Court, Back Beechwood Grove
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(marking it clearly 'For Matrix')

Letters may be edited. If you don't want your full address printed please indicate this clearly. Anonymous letters will be printed at the editor's discretion.

interest in what I think. It's taken me a long time to get it together to join in those APAs that I'm a member of. I will now write to APAs, letterzines, even *Matrix*. I don't know how you persuade the 'silents' to join in. I got started because I wanted to read a particular APA, and to be a member you had to produce a minimum of a page of text. My desire to read the APA overcame my knowledge that no one wanted to know what I think; after all, they could all ignore my page if they wanted. But people didn't ignore me, they wrote back and started conversations that have been going on for years now. Once I'd started I couldn't stop. That first letter / article is a major step that maybe *Matrix* could help with - just don't ask me what you could do. I haven't the foggiest. ☺

• We also heard from: John Ashbrook, Colin Greenland, Steve Jeffery, Dave "sawz" Langford, Mark Plummer. D. West (a valuable dissection of *Matrix's* many design faults), and last but by no means least Michael Abbott (indirectly, for his review in *Attitude* 9). Warm thanks to all, and keep 'em coming! ☑

points arising

• Extreme brain failure caused the erroneous captioning of the photograph at the top right of page 6 in *Matrix* 121: the person third from the left is **Freda Warrington**, not **Storm Constantine**. My sincere apologies to both, and thanks to Steve Jeffery for pointing this out.

• On page 7 of *Matrix* 115 I was rather rude about **Stephen King's** silly 1994 novel *Insomnia*, so I was interested to come across the following comment on it:

It's no good. I know it's not publishable. And I've been writing and publishing books for a long time... And maybe someday you'll read it, but it won't be for a long time.

Who said it? Stephen King, of course, in a 1992 interview with W. C. Stroy. (Quoted in *The Stephen King Story* by George Beahm.)

• Apologies to **Jon Bing** for misnaming him as 'Jon Berg' in the Events listings in *Matrix* 121. Jon is a Guest of Honour at Intervention, next year's Eastercon at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool. He was born in Norway in 1944, and has a list of accomplishments that I can only summarise: he's written over two dozen of novels and collections, edited many anthologies, translated Douglas Adams, Brian Aldiss and Ursula K. Le Guin into Norwegian, adapted for the theatre, television and radio works by Aldiss, Harry Harrison, Ray Bradbury and others, scripted comics, and written countless reviews, articles and essays about sf.

Phew. And we've only just begun: he has a doctorate in Law and is professor of computers and law at the University of Oslo; he's written textbooks about this, of course. He holds over a dozen editorial positions in magazines connected with his professional work in the fields of artificial intelligence, information and law. He chairs the Norwegian equivalent of the British Council, Norsk Kulturråd. He's won several international prizes for all this.

He also co-founded Norwegian fandom with Tor Åge Bringsværd in the early seventies, when they also introduced the British New Wave to the Scandinavian cultural establishment and revived the Oslo University SF Society. He's won every award Norwegian fandom could give him, and although he is less active as a fan these days his interest is still considerable. He's also famous for his taste in ties. It'll be very interesting to meet him at Eastercon, not least to see how tired he looks....

Other guests at Intervention are **Brian W. Aldiss**, **Octavia E. Butler**, and **David Langford**, for more details see the Events listing on p22. (Thanks to the Intervention team, including **John Bark**, **Steve Green**, and **Pete Wright**.)

• The feature on the Clarke Awards in *Matrix* 121 omitted the SF Foundation and International Science Policy Foundation judges for the 1992 Award; they were, respectively, **Neil Gaiman** and **Roz Kavenay**, and **Maurice Goldsmith**. My apologies to them, and thanks to Kev McVeigh for this information.

• **Greg Egan's** novel *Distress* is still reaping very mixed opinions and causing much discussion (see *Matrix* 121, p8). In *Attitude* 9 **M. John Harrison** says, in the course of a *cri de cœur* for emotional responses from writers and readers using notes for his *The Course of the Heart* as illustrations:

In the past I've used Heinlein, van Vogt and Donald Wolheim as examples of the classic autistic male sf writer / reader, unable to relate successfully to others and wincing away into a fiction which approves and codifies that inability. If I had to find a modern example it would be Greg Egan's *Distress*, in which a man who cannot understand other people's feelings learns not to worry - autism is not only biologically OK, it's politically correct, and it gives you the secret of the universe too. [...] Who needs a girlfriend, he is able to conclude, when being right is so much more satisfying?

Meanwhile, in *SF Eye* 14, up-and-coming writer **Kathleen Ann Goonan** takes on both *Distress* and *Permutation City* in a piece titled 'Imagine: Greg Egan's Subjective Cosmology'. Note the word 'subjective': Goonan claims that *Distress* is actually a discussion - and a very frightening one - of the destruction of people's belief systems:

[...] Egan makes us believe that the possibility of freedom exists, and that, if it were truly and deeply realised, the act of realisation would liberate humanity. Lennon's elegiac 'Imagine' is a hymn of heresy to any number of people whose entire reality revolves around powerful belief systems which arise from imperative biological survival mechanisms rather than rational thought. In the past several hundred years, more and more of the underpinnings of ancient beliefs about reality have been dealt serious blows. These blows are truly frightening, when taken to their inexorable limits [...]

Goonan makes it clear that autism is but one of Egan's answers to the 'problem' of dealing with others.

Greg Egan, *Distress*: Millennium £16.99 pb; Phoenix £5.99 pb, out in December. *Attitude* is available 'for the usual' (send an A4 SAE and a couple of stamps) from 102 William Smith Close, Cambridge, CB1 3QF. ☑

X P L O I T I N G T H E - F I L E S

Picture the scene:

a languid American in garish spectacles hovers in a suburban doorway.

He addresses us in a language which is almost (but not entirely) quite unlike English: "Who lives in a house like this? Let's look at the clues."

The nameplate above the door assures us that 'The Truth Is In Here!'

The American looks worriedly at the Millennium Falcon wallpaper and the Star Fleet curtains as he heads upstairs. A shelf at the top of the stairs bears little pewter figures; one appears to be of a steamer trunk supported by dozens of legs.

The door to the spare bedroom bears the legend 'The Bureau'. Inside is a wooden bureau, almost buried under magazines, books and videos. The drawers seem to be bulging with brightly coloured cardboard packaging. **Everything bears a conspicuous letter 'X'...**

The mountains of kipple which have been thrown up around the various icons of media science fiction over the last twenty years (starting with a few superhero foothills and a *Thunderbirds* hummock or two, then spawning their first snow-capped peak with the advent of *Star Wars*), are growing ever more unscalable. The air is filled with the sickening sound of dead horses being flogged, while the cheap detritus piled high around the shattered frames of old bandwagons casts a long shadow.

Scuttling around in the dark, scurrilous business people furtively mass-produce low-quality trinkets to hock at great expense to 'a discerning public'. They have learned that adding the words 'collectors' item' or 'limited edition' to the packaging of any old rubbish can add an extra zero to the price.

In amongst this bustling mayhem there is one new peak, still quite small but growing daily, that has everyone's attention. A beam of Heavenly Light has broken through the lowering cloud and shines on 'Mount X-Files'.

Firstly, we must congratulate Fox Video for their extraordinarily skilful marketing of *The X-Files* videos. Back in 1995 they began releasing the episodes in sequence, two to a tape, two tapes per month, and encouraged you to buy all the tapes by promising 'exclusive' T-shirts and 'collectors' badges to the faithful.

Then they had a brainwave. *This is too predictable, they thought. The hard core fans are going to get into the habit of buying a tape a fortnight, but no one else will bother. So they changed to publishing, completely out of sequence, all the two-part stories,*

JOHN ASHBROOK
puts on his anorak
and investigates

with plenty of time to hype every single release. These videos have completely different packaging from their predecessors, which has served to disrupt the collections of those poor deluded fools who would just like to watch the episodes in the order they are supposed to be seen.

Then there are the boxed set editions - all of series one, for example, for £79.99 (which, for twenty-four episodes, is actually quite reasonable) with the 'exclusive' interviews with the stars' nextdoor neighbours' third cousin, all in a box with - you guessed it - different packaging.

Marvellous. It is really quite inspirational to see the video buying public treated with such undisguised contempt, which, since they can't seem to buy the tapes fast enough, they so obviously deserve.

The philosophy behind the 'merchandising', the memorabilia and other miscellaneous kipple which springs from the series, would be equally honourable, you would think. Not so; on closer inspection you realise that the official kipple has, at least thus far, been produced with admirable restraint. Apparently series creator Chris Carter vets all of the merchandise himself; so, one must assume, he just doesn't get round to it very often.

There are no computer games, no epoxy resin model kits (sorry, that 'Nude Scully' figure you saw on that con stall wasn't legit!), no bubble bath, bedsheets or boxer shorts. Duchovny and Anderson have not flounced down a catwalk, advertised coffee, sponsored a line of jewellery or run for political office. Yet.

In fact, the official face of the merchandise mountain is a fairly unimpressive spectacle. A couple of watches, a phone card or two, several mugs (all with logos or slogans, none with pictures), the inevitable calendar, a range of bookmarks (daringly available with or without tassy bits) and a couple of keyrings.

My favourite piece of official kipple is *The World According to the X-Files*, a map showing you where all the episodes happened. Curiously, it's published by Collins, who have a full time map division. So it couldn't, perchance, be just one of their regular maps of North America, with a few x's stuck on it, could it? Surely not.

Soundtrack albums are always a reliable standby for any merchandising venture and, true to form, the first such release - *Songs in the Key of X* (Warner Bros. Records) - actually had bugged-naff-all to do with the series. Mark Snow's oogie-boogie theme tune (stretched almost to breaking length) opens the disc, and is followed by an array of tracks, some specially recorded, some lifted off existing albums.

Purchasers of soundtrack albums have long been accustomed to scrutinising a film to find out where exactly each track appears, often finding a ten second snatch of it playing quietly on a car stereo in the background of a dialogue scene. This album doesn't even take that expedient. It is more like a compilation culled from Chris Carter's record collection than anything related directly to the series. Also, the cover art stinks, making the album look like a bootleg.

Finally, in October and long overdue, came *The Truth and the Light* (also Warner Bros.), a compilation of pieces taken from early episodes of the series, and yes, it really is a soundtrack album!

Photos seem to be big sellers – can't think why – with my local X-Files Bureau (Coventry's Forbidden Planet) reporting that while women do occasionally wander in to purchase a portrait of Dreamboat Duchovny, the lads buying glossies of Generous Gillian are three deep and need to be beaten back with sticks.

Which leads me nicely to magazines, perched at the very summit of the mountain. Back in April this year, that bashon of feminist values *FHM* published a not very revealing interview with Gillian Anderson and accompanied it with slightly more revealing photographs. Those of you who are salivating may like to know that, in a non-exploitative, caring kind of way, the same magazine is repeating the procedure (with different shots of Gillian in her grundles) for its December edition... which should be coyly peeping out from behind *Loaded* in your newsgate even as you are reading this.

Yes, the magazine publishers of the world have realised that slapping *The X-Files* on their front covers can increase sales by up to 300%. Copies which traditionally end their days in the W. H. Smith incinerators are suddenly 'collectors' items. *Rolling Stone* featured the twosome in bed (and looking particularly uncomfortable about it, I must say) on the cover of its July edition, a copy of which will now cost you between thirty and forty quid to buy off some huckster. In other words: David and Gillian are dynamite!

So o'erwhelming is this phenomena *SFX* felt moved to put together a November giveaway dedicated to *The X-Files*, listing and evaluating much of the kipple out there and reporting on the 'collectability' of certain key items. Of course, this giveaway is itself now worth money!

If the wise and infinitely patient Chris Terran had time to give in to my exhortations and bang a whacking great X-logo on the cover of this edition of *Matrix*, it too will become a 'collectors' item' and, in years to come, some twitching, sweaty youth in an ill-fitting capote will offer you ludicrous amounts for it. Don't forget, I'm in for 10%!

So, finally, to books. As with magazines, book publishers have realised that they have a license to print money with *The X-Files*. Only problem is... Simon and Schuster and HarperCollins have the license exclusively, the former for non-fiction, the latter for novels. They alone can use the all-important X-logo.

This hasn't stopped almost every other company out there pushing out its own 'unofficial' books. Indde, 'unofficial' has actually become something of a badge of honour, insinuating that 'the Truth' can only be found in books which don't have to toady to the great god of franchise. Ordinarily, this would be true.

Yet, far and away the best books so far released are official: *The X-Files Book of the Unexplained* volumes one and two. Typically for Simon and Schuster, these hardbacks are beautifully presented, having had a lot of had work lavished on them. Written with a little too much enthusiasm by Jane Goldman, they take the

TV shows as a starting point for further reading. Profusely and colourfully illustrated, they chart the actual research that supposedly fills Spooky's basement hideaway. Featuring an extensive bibliography, the books also provide a respectable starting point for further research into the various arenas of 'the paranormal'.

Legend obviously agree that this is a neat angle on the series, as they have effectively duplicated it in *The Science of The X-Files* by Michael White.

The rest of the flock seem to trade wholly on episode guides. Which is fine, but once you've bought one and finally know what the damn episodes are called, you've effectively bought them all. The Coventry Bureau reports that the same people seem to be purchasing all the books, irrespective of how redundant, and despite the ease of obtaining perfectly adequate episode guides from the net.

The best looking of these fiercely 'unofficial' guides is Macmillan's *X-Files Companion* by N. E. Genge (now into its second volume) for which Macmillan have at least forked out for some photos (including some amusing behind-the-scenes shots – such as the 5' 3" Anderson standing on a box so that she and 6' Duchovny can see eye to eye). However, as with HarperCollins' excruciatingly sycophantic *Official Guide to The X-Files* by Brian Lowry, this book quickly falls back onto trivia. If you want to send a Trekkie fleeing in fear, these books are for you.

Having not read any of the novels (all of which are published by HarperCollins), I can't comment, but I have been told that the range of junior novelisations aren't being bought by the children they are marketed at, but by the same transporers who buy everything else. What it must be to have such exacting standards.

For something actually related intimately to the show, there are the scripts. Retailing for around £10, five shooting scripts have so far been published officially, all from series one, all by Chris Carter: 'Irresistible', 'Deep Throat', 'Fire', 'Darkness Falls' and 'Red Museum'. The script for 'Duane Barry' (series two), autographed by Anderson, Duchovny and Carter, was apparently sold at an American this year for \$780. Hinn.

The American pushes his kitsch spectacles back up his sweat-slicked nose and swings the door shut cautiously. His fingers shake as they let go of the handle. Backing away from the door, he turns and flies down the Mickey Mouse star carpet, positively launching himself over the 'Do You Know Where Your Towel Is?' doormat.

Still half convinced that a towering colossus of X-Files kipple is poised in that room at the top of the stairs, ready to collapse around his ears and swallow him in an avalanche of posters, trading cards, photos and badges, tapes, T-shirts and comics, he runs out into the road attempting to flag down traffic, yelling hysterically at passing motorists: 'The Xploitation has just begun... you're next... YOU'RE NEXT!!!'

But before then, the author would like to thank Steve Holland and Steve Johnson (no relation) for doing all the hard work. Cheers, chaps.

—John Ashbrook

Flying Saucers In The Black Hole Of Calcutta: The BSFA At Novacon

☉ The BSFA's presence at Novacon was slightly constricted by a book room apparently modelled on the Black Hole of Calcutta, thanks to the Hotel Ibs's inability to be certain of the dimensions of its own room, and its own tables. Paul and Elizabeth Billinger set up the tables after Maureen Speller and Paul Kincaid unexpectedly had to go to Manchester on family business, but the much-travelled pair arrived back in time to help with the weekend's promotional activities. Elizabeth's financial breakdown shows that we did extremely well given the size of the convention and the general conditions. It must be the sherbet flying saucers we were giving away to everyone taking part in the tombola. They certainly had a restorative effect on several people working behind the desk during the weekend.

	£
T-shirts	13.00
New members	36.00
Renewals	54.00
Back issues	1.25
Tombola	220.75
Total	325.00

Thanks for assistance must go to Jane Carnall, Chris and Penny Hill, Sue Jones, Jilly Reed, Moira Shearman, as well as the usual suspects, Paul and Elizabeth Billinger, Claire Brailey, Paul Hood, Paul Kincaid, Chris Terran (and apologies to anyone I've missed). John D. Rickett and Ian Sales in particular contributed to the tombola above and beyond the call of duty. All in all, a satisfactory conclusion to an eventful year on the convention circuit.

—Maureen Kincaid Speller



The BSFA contingent recovering after a hard day's tomboling. From left: the back of Paul Hood's head, Chris and Penny Hill, Elizabeth Billinger, Maureen Kincaid Speller, and Paul Billing.

conventions

The Shadow Over Schaumberg

Gwyneth Jones

Brits Clean Up At World Fantasy Con

Photograph by Roger Robinson
Cartoons by Dave Mooring

World Fantasy Convention
The Woodfield Hyatt Regency Hotel
Schaumberg, Illinois
31 Oct - 3 Nov 1996

Guests of Honour: Katherine Kurtz, Joe R. Lansdale, Ellen Asher
Guest of Honour: Ron Walotsky
Toastmaster: Brian Lumley

It was sometime in September. David Hartwell rang up when I was out, with the message that I ought to come to World Fantasy Con in Chicago. I didn't take this very seriously. A few days later he rang again: You know, you really ought to be there Gwyneth. Hmm. For me, a phone call from my American editor isn't that common an event: but this could equally be regarded as a phone call from a friend and fellow-fan, who is simply convinced I shouldn't miss a great convention. Nice idea, I agreed. But I've already been to Wiscon this year. I am not made of money. You're my editor, you ought to know. The campaign would cost. Why don't you at least find out what the cheapest air-ticket would cost? You know, we'd feed you, Tor is prepared to do that... after all, you don't eat much. I demurred: it's still a lot of money. The stakes were raised: The committee say you can have a free room at the hotel, and a free banquet ticket... Finally, he broke down and confessed. OK, don't tell anyone, but you've won an award. Now I had known that I was nominated for two World Fantasy Awards, but I had paid not the slightest attention to this fact. I had not even told my nearest and dearest. The thought of winning one of them had not crossed my mind.

So, great, I have won an award. Still feeling bemused, I offer to write up the convention for *Matrix*, and I'm off to Chicago.

Friday

On a cold and windy afternoon, feast of All Saints, I reached the suburb of Schaumberg: a flat, spread-out, desolate place, completely inimical to humans, who are not supposed to venture outdoors on foot. The Woodfield Hyatt was impressive, with one of those huge hushed atrium lobbies. All was light and calm and greenery, the only noise a murmuring of running water from the moat, where prosperous koi carp sported. Groups of well-dressed conventioners (among them Neil Gaiman) stood about or nestled in the plushy furniture, discussing important things discreetly. World Fantasy Con is a little different from your average sf gathering....

That evening my main activity, aside from sitting in the bar and drinking Murphy's Stout with David Hartwell, Kathryn Cramer, David Drake, and Heather Wood (an ex-Brightonian who used to belong to famous sixties folk group The Young Tradition) was attending the traditional Fantasycon mass signing event. I sat between Patrick O'Leary and Scott Baker. The two lads were pleasant company, and notched up about a dozen hits each. I think I signed three books, but I may be exaggerating. By eleven, which was four in the morning UK time, I'd been up for very nearly twenty-four hours and decided I'd had enough. Disturbingly, when I reached my room it was midnight. As far as I was aware, I had simply walked out of the hall and taken the stairs to the mezzanine. What had happened in the missing hour? What is this dark, rusty stuff that's coagulating under my fingernails...?

I spent a disturbed night.

Did I mention there was an impro H. P. Lovecraft murder mystery going on? It was about some people making a TV show of an eldritch tale called "The King in Yellow"... One stumbled over the corpses from time to time. At one point during the signing, there was screaming and a fist fight... Though instructed by our programme books to co-operate if we happened to be co-opted into this drama, most of us rather meekly ignored the disturbances (*What's going on over there? Looks like a bit of a domestic, better take no notice...*).

Saturday

In the morning I went down with my breakfast buffet ticket at ten to nine, and found the restaurant strangely deserted, except for Gordon Van Gelder, sitting alone and brooding over his future as the new editor of *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*. He revealed that it was ten to eight, and my missing hour vanished: my hotel clock had been wrong. For the rest of the weekend, I would keep coming across Gordon looking hunted in various locales, pursued by old friends and long-time admirers he could not remember ever having met before. The erstwhile wild young radical boy of US / sf publishing will now have to deal with being a pillar of the establishment. How is he going to cope? Time will tell.

After breakfast I wandered about a bit and eventually went to find the Committee. I asked them did they run a newsletter. Err, no. No newsletter, no costumes, no fanish clowning. World Fantasy Con is dignified. I cornered Nancy Ford, and took her off to a quiet alcove by the koi carp moat, to interview her about the convention for *Matrix*. Definitely no costumes here, she declared, just as a resplendent King In Yellow crossed the hall behind her, his hideous robes flapping and ghastly crown gleaming horribly in the morning light... Fantasy Con, she explained, is the business. Agent and editors and publishing executives come here to wheel deals, writers come to be led around the paddock and have their paces shown off and their teeth examined. The programme is modest and restrained in size, the 'fun' is muted, the real convention is going on in those quiet, quiet conversations....

Failing to come up with any Committee problems to chew over, we talked at some length about pet fish, cat hierarchies, the curious habits of toads; and discovered a shared passion for children's literature. As we parted, she gave me a small black rubber rat.

Then I went to a panel on the State of Horror, which circled around the central difficulty of successful horror fiction: the fact that it operates at what David Hartwell calls "a high level of comfort". People like to read about how the characters' intestines get squished out of their ears, and how they get anal-raped by undead baby rabbits and so on. But they don't like

to be frightened or disturbed, no way. And in the US especially - a bit of a poser for British Horror writers - they don't like to be faced with anything so alien and horrid as a story set in *another country*. Then I did my own panel, which was about "New Directions in Fantasy". Ah... now, there's something Nancy hadn't mentioned about the few panels available. *Everybody comes to them*. Walter Jon Williams, Katya Reimann, Nancy Springer, Ginjer Buchanan, Graham Joyce, Gwyneth Jones (sic): we talked about what kind of fantasy you write for people who no longer believe in the Return of the King. If we don't dream about the golden age, and don't want order to return to the cosmos, what are we going to write about? And what kind of coming-of-age experience happens, when the young readers who come looking for Tolkien rereads get Walter Jon's highly disordered Sandanista fairy tales instead? We chewed on this, and a sea of faces, rank on rank, looked up and listened: weird! Don't you folks have any serious drinking to do? - I wondered.



Gwyneth Jones (right) and her baby, held by Lisa Tuttle. Photo taken in about 1990

Abandoning the idea of getting into downtown Chicago (too far away, too complicated) I visited the famous Woodfield Mall, which would have been great if I had been suffering from Armdale Centre starvation. I wished my Mum could have been with me, but it would have been no good really, as there was no Marks and Spencers. I made some extremely silly purchases, and went to a Jonathan Lethem reading in the Cthulhu Café (a respectable American cocktail lounge, refurbished by gothic irony, with plastic dead flies scattered on the clean white tablecloths); and then retreated to the bar until feeling time.

And so it went on. I lurked in the bar. When I needed to be fed I would go and find David and Kathryn and sit and stare at them: luckily they both like cats. I went to the Meet The Brits party, where the incoming Committee was flying the flag for next year's con in London's Docklands. I chatted to the heroic and beleaguered Jo Fletcher, and became aware of a strong undercurrent of puzzlement, as my friends and acquaintances wondered (not terribly quick on the uptake): what on earth is she doing here? Ralph Vicinanza, the only hot-shot New York agent I know who digs Proust, stopped me in passing. "So, how are things?" he wants to know. "Who's acting for you now? Remember when we met that time . . ." Um . . . This is getting rather unwell. Talked in a more normal way to Caroline Oakley, and Ellen Datlow . . .

Sunday

I met Caroline huddled outside the restaurant area at about nine a.m., looking exhausted. She'd been at one meeting after another since Thursday, and was beginning to gibber . . . I had breakfast with Judith Clute. "So," she asked, brightly but firmly, "have you been doing lots of business?" I mumbled something, feeling deeply embarrassed. I don't do 'business'. I've never wheeled a deal (or had one wheeled for me) in my life. I do 'discussing the state of the art', I'm fine at that: but I'm not known for investing the price of a transatlantic trip for the privilege. I was beginning to wonder how I would cope if this award thing turned out to be some kind of strange misunderstanding. Maybe I could pretend I was over here visiting relatives, or fleeing from the police . . . The kindly hotel staff, who spotted me for what I am the moment they first saw me, were much wiser. My friend the waiter waded us away. No need to worry about the bill for your friend, he said. You can both eat on that ticket, after all, you don't eat much. (I must say, it's nice being at a con hotel where the staff stay friendly the whole weekend. Allowance must be made for the soothing presence of many genuinely rich people, but it is also true that at WFC *nobody* was messing about. Graham Joyce and Paul McAuley claimed to have been thrown out of the bar on Friday night, but I have no proof that violence, vandalism, vomit or even raised voices were involved. I darkly suspect they were simply told it was closing time. . .)

COULD I HAVE A WINE LIST, PLEASE?



Oh yes, and then it was time for the Banquet. The concept of a Banquet without wine is still a mystery to me. I first encountered this phenomenon at Wiscon 1992, where the Midwesterners drank big glasses of milk . . . Steve Pasechnick, small press publisher of my nominated Fantasy collection *Seven Tales and a Fable*, wasn't at the convention, he couldn't afford it. So I was one of the Tor tables. Far away, the British table was making merry with Union Jack balloons. (I heard afterwards that they tried to order wine and were refused: story possibly apocryphal.) They soon sobered up when Brian Lumley, toastmaster, stood up, and became rather quiet (so did I) as a spirited and sincere homage to Bernard

Manning gathered strength and pungency. *Oh dear, oh dear, I hope Graham doesn't get up and hit him . . .* Anyway, the US audience laughed at most of it. So I suppose that's OK. Fantasy Con has its strange traditions.

So, the awards. Jo Fletcher had to get up on the podium and make an acceptance speech for Richard Evans's Special Award (Professional). That was a tough bit. It was not easy at all for Jo to get up and say, "I'm honoured and delighted . . ." and all that. She got through it, just about. And yes, it was good to see the award go to Richard, even in his absence.

More awards. In the end, five of the eight went to Britain. The Best Anthology went to *The Penguin Book of Modern Fantasy by Women*, edited by A. Susan Williams and Richard Glyn Jones. The Best Novel went to Christopher Priest, for *The Prestige*. I actually won two of them, for *Seven Tales and a Fable*, the collection (editor and publisher Steve Pasechnick, Edgewood Press); and for a short story out of that collection, called "The Grass Princess". The rest of the details you'll have to pick up elsewhere, because I was a little distracted. When it was done, people told Gene Wolfe stories (Brian Lumley having retired in triumph) until the star, who was busy celebrating his fortieth wedding anniversary, turned up all rubicund and happy to receive his Lifetime Achievement Award . . .

In the bar afterwards, relief was palpable. Graham Joyce insulted me, Paul McAuley bought me a drink, I began to feel human again. Phew! So that explains the mystery of Gwyneth's presence at the business convention. Order was restored to the cosmos. I tried to phone Steve, and couldn't get through. We went out to eat at an Irish-Midwestern restaurant, where I struggled and was ignominiously defeated by the public telephones. Ellen Datlow had to rescue me. Finally we got through to Steve Pasechnick, to tell him the great news. "Oh, hello Gwyneth," he said, "congratulations." Ah well. I bet I'll still be waiting a while for that \$24 he owes me.

At the dead dog party, Caroline regaled us with an increasingly vile and disgusting series of stories about How I Deal With Vermin. She was only talking about the mice in her flat, but if you were thinking of giving aggravation to Ms Oakley, friends and colleagues, I should think again. The one about the vacuum cleaner was the worst, but the one about what she did to the mouse with its arm torn off was *fairly nasty*. A group of exhausted people well old enough to know better struggled to stay awake and keep drinking, simply because we're GROWN UP see, and grown ups do not go to bed at 10.30 when there's a party going on . . . In the end, I left Graham and Paul discussing the meaning of the term "politically incorrect" with a poor innocent drunken American (it's a long story), and went off to collapse.

SO, HOW GROWN UP DO YOU FEEL?



Monday

On the plane from Chicago to Newark, going home, the woman in the seat next to me endured the flight in mortal dread, clutching a small pink statue of Our Lady. I gave her a boiled sweet. When we'd established that no, I didn't come from New Jersey but actually from England, she at once asked me, "Have you met Princeess Di?" "No," I said. "But my husband shook hands with Prince Charles once." Order was restored to the cosmos.

— © Gwyneth Jones 1996

• *Seven Tales and a Fable* is available for £6 inclusive of P&P from BBR Distribution, PO Box 625, Sheffield, S1 3GY. Cheques / POs payable to "Chris Reed".

opinion

- Do It Again? - Do we need another UK Worldcon? KIM Campbell thinks so ...

A Worldcon should be a great opportunity to stir up interest in Science Fiction and its fandom. Pat McMurray and I feel that the last two in this country – Conspiracy at Brighton in 1987, and Intersection last year in Glasgow – failed in this respect by being too inwardly directed.

We want to try again, early in the next decade. Our aim is to reach out to all aspects of fandom in Britain and invite them to show what they can do. We feel that Active Fandom is in need of revitalisation. Any culture needs new ideas and perspectives to remain vital. The days when SF Fandom meant solely reading the books and writing the fanzines are gone, there is now so much more. We need to encourage fans established in one area of activity to take a look at what else is available. We also want to introduce the diversity of fandom to a generation who have grown up with science-fictional things happening as part of everyday life, but who may not realise there is a fine social life attached.

Pat and I have made our decisions to commit the necessarily large chunks of lifespan to this endeavour. We will start developing our plans and hopes, wishes and dreams with you at conventions, in publications and in person over the next few months and years.

— KIM Campbell

Both KIM and Pat are experienced fans and have had a substantial involvement in running conventions, including the finance and organisational side of Intersection. They would welcome comments on their plans, either personally or through these pages.

KIM can be reached online at kim@dircon.co.uk or via snailmail at 69 Lincoln Street, Leeman Road, York, YO2 4YP. Pat can be reached online at pat@cooky.demon.co.uk

- The Floundering Foundation -

Edward James, in this personal view, argues that the Science Fiction Foundation does not exist

To understand the future, you need to know the past ... (and those who already know the past can skip to the last few paragraphs). The Science Fiction Foundation was the brainchild of George Hay and a few others at the very beginning of the 1970s. He brought together writers like James Blish, John Brunner and Kenneth Bulmer, as well as fans, and managed to gain the ear of Dr George Brosnan, the first director of the North East London Polytechnic. Thanks to Dr Brosnan, and the hard work of people like Charles Barren, Ralph Cook and the late Ellis Hillman, the Science Fiction Foundation was established as an autonomous unit of NELP in 1971. The statement of its intentions is still printed on page 2 of each issue of *Foundation*, which it founded in 1972 and which has been going strong ever since.

Since the beginning it [the SFF] has had the aims of [1] promoting a discriminating understanding of the nature of science fiction; [2] of disseminating information about science fiction; [3] of providing research facilities for anyone wishing to study science fiction; and [4] of investigating the usefulness of science fiction in education.

The SFF has been better in accomplishing some of these aims than others: some, after all, have been an uphill task (1, for instance), and some (like 4) really require more resources in personpower and money than the SFF has ever had at its disposal.

The high point of the SFF was the mid-1970s. Arthur C. Clarke and Ursula K. Le Guin had become its patrons; Peter Nicholls was employed as a full-time Administrator of the SFF; he organised a National Book League travelling exhibition of sf, two seasons of sf films at the National Film Theatre, and a series of sf lectures at the Institute for Contemporary Arts, which was eventually published as a book; he established *Foundation* as a significant arbiter of critical opinion on sf.

After he resigned, to work on the first edition of *The Encyclopedia of SF* full-time, Malcolm Edwards and David Pringle both took over parts of his job, and in turn served as editor of *Foundation*, but the funding was always in peril, and the SFF's general status at the NELP was clearly on the wane. The history of the SFF in the 1980s was, in general, a history of decline. Although the secretary, Joyce Day, did an excellent job in keeping things going into the early 1990s, above all running the steadily growing library and administering the journal, she was not really in a position to take initiatives. The SFF had a Council, made up of people from the sf world (writers, publishers, critics, even the odd academic like myself) and people from NELP (or, as it became, first, the Polytechnic of East London and then the University of East London), but although there was a lot of enthusiasm for carrying out the ideals of the SFF, there was little time and no money. The inauguration of the Arthur C. Clarke Award was one of the new initiatives; another was the formation of a group of concerned fans, the Friends of Foundation (FoF), who provided welcome extra help for Joyce in the library.

When the Librarian of UEL decided that the SFF's occupation of part of her space had to end, it was crisis time. By that stage, the main activities of the SFF were reduced to the Library and the Journal. Luckily, the Librarian of Liverpool University was happy to rescue the Library, and Andy Sawyer was appointed as the Administrator of the SFF Collection. The Journal *Foundation* continued under my editorship as before (I have never had any formal connections with UEL), and FoF took over its administration from Joyce. FoF applied for, and received, official status as a Registered Charity. Since the SFF itself had never really had any legal status, its Council, at its last meeting, agreed that the ownership of the Collection should reside with FoF; and in January 1995 FoF signed an agreement of curatorship with the University of Liverpool.

Peter Nicholls was full-time paid Administrator of the SFF, Andy Sawyer is full-time paid Administrator of the SFF Collection. There is a subtle but important difference. The SFF has not moved to Liverpool; the University in fact made it very clear that it was not taking over the SFF itself. The University does keep up relations with the SFF: a liaison committee meets twice a year. FoF itself has regular meetings (and an AGM at Eastercon), as a proper charity, there are also Trustees, who also meet regularly and have an AGM. But where is the SFF?

Although I continue to announce, in *Foundation*, that the journal is published by the Science Fiction Foundation, in effect the SFF has vanished. The 'Friends of Foundation' (always a misleading name, because they were the Friends of the SFF as a whole, not just of the journal *Foundation*) are Friends of an institution which is invisible, or deceased ... an ex-institution.

Does it matter? Aren't there enough bodies duplicating each other's work anyway? There is FoF; the Academic Fantastic Fiction Network; the BSFA. Well, personally I think there is room for something else. None of the three bodies mentioned above actually represents or involves all the people involved in the sf world today, which includes writers and publishers, as well as academics, other educationalists, and fans. FoF is certainly still desperately needed, as a group of people to help run *Foundation* and to support the SFF Collection. (The University of Liverpool has provided space and an Administrator, but little else in terms of funds: the SFF Collection there will only continue to grow with outside help.) But so far FoF has not been able to fulfill the other original aims of the SFF. And should they be trying? The core of the Friends is a group of people very busy in fandom and in what is laughably called 'the real world'. Demand more from them, and they might leave.

Of the original aims of the SFF, arguably *Foundation* fulfills no. 1; and the SFF Collection certainly fulfills no. 3. But 2 and 4 need doing in 1996 just as much as in 1971. The SFF could do it, and should do it. I do not think the SFF should just be FoF under another name (although FoF, as a charity, might for instance be in a position to apply for lottery money on behalf of SFF projects). A new SFF should involve a much wider group of people, including Big Names, if they can be attracted, and – this is the crunch – some people with time as well as ideas. What do BSFA members feel about this?

— Edward James

WHO THE HELL DOES TANYA BROWN THINK SHE IS?

Tanya Brown, the drinking man's reviewer, edits the paperback reviews in Vector. But why does she need

IMAGINARY FRIENDS

WHY ME? Why now? Why here? The first organised science fiction event I ever attended was the 1987 Worldcon in Brighton. (Will the oddly-dressed person in the bar, who uttered the immortal line "Greetings, earthling. Need a place to crash?" to a fresh-faced, innocent young female graduate, please stand up?) It was all very strange and not terribly friendly, and there were people in what I naively assumed to be fancy dress. ("Character, please.") After one day I had seen enough. I fled fandom and all its trappings, vowing never to return. Instead, I read a lot of books, and conducted long and meaningful discussions of them with my imaginary friends.

I would still be talking to imaginary sf-reading friends today, and life would be very different, if someone hadn't convinced me to go to Dublin in 1992. My friend Tim (who is not wholly imaginary) wanted to go to Trincon - a mini-convention organised by the Science Fiction Society at Trinity College - and thought I might like to accompany him. I'd never been to Ireland, and the guidebook said there were plenty of art galleries and the like. (Some authors I really liked were going to be at the convention, but I didn't hold out much hope of actually meeting them; after all, I'd been to Brighton....)

Gosh

We proceeded, as one does, to the bar. "Dave," said Tim to the person next to us, "this is Tanya. She wants to meet Storm Constantine." "Fine," said David Garnett (for it was he). I stuttered at Storm for a bit (a real published author, oh gosh) and she gently pressed me on to two more Complete Strangers. These turned out to be Steve Jeffery and Vikki Lee France, who run Storm's information service and the fanzine *Inception*. Thus was I re-introduced to fandom, and now you all know who to blame for my presence.

After a few months the initial shock of being able to talk about books I had read - and being told about books I should have read - began to fade. I started writing again, a habit I had given up at university when I found I couldn't get the hang of post-modernism. I ran a writers' workshop for a while. I met more people, all of whom apparently read entire books and were capable of saying more about them than simply "It's good." Dim memories of my literature degree began to flare in my brain.

Prenuptial

I daringly attended some more conventions. At one of these Vikki introduced me to a strange woman in purple. Remarkably soon after meeting the prenuptial Maureen Speller, I joined the BSFA, so that I could read intelligent science fiction criticism. (Nearly all my friends were in it, anyway.) I began to review for

Vector, but that was as far as it was going to go. I had a full-time job; I wanted to write fiction; I am neither organised nor perfectionist. I was determined not to spend my evenings producing hand-crafted magazine articles....

Somewhere this plan went awry. The vacancy for Paperback Reviews Editor coincided with a period of unemployment; suddenly I had all this spare time in which to read, and no new books to enjoy. Previous reviews editors assured me that it didn't take up too much of one's time. They mentioned publishers' parties, and advance copies, and the power of choosing one's own review books. And somebody had to do it. I volunteered.

Computerised

I started receiving review books the week that I started my current job. Suddenly there didn't seem to be much time at all any more. There is something faintly depressing about receiving a mint-condition copy of a book you really want to read, and having to give it away to a reviewer before you have time to read it. I will not dwell on the back-breaking effort of lugging a dozen Jiffy-bagged paperbacks up eight flights of stairs when the lifts aren't working, only to discover they are all media tie-ins. (I don't do media. I only discovered that my TV aerial wasn't connected when I decided to watch *Neverwhere*, and that was only because I'd read the book.) The learning process of my new job (the paid, real-world one) involved taking a lot of database software home and acquainting myself with it; thus I am able to see at a glance just how many *Star Wars* novels have passed through my hands since last autumn. The entire book-handling process is now computerised, which makes it much easier to match books and reviewers. Now I just need the add-on which goes to collect the books....

A Good Thing

The BSFA? We're getting there, like dear old British Rail. Every mailing seems a little better, a bit closer to some fantastical ideal. As a forum for talking about the literature of the fantastic (a long-winded way of saying sf 'n' fantasy 'n' oh-all-right-then-horror) it is unique in this country. Something for everyone - the aspiring author, the avid reader, the casual con-goer. It is a Good Thing.

If I had discovered the BSFA (or it had discovered me) in Brighton, I wouldn't have spent five years talking to my imaginary friends about the latest novel by Zelazny or Gibson or Le Guin. (I might even have known which novel really was the latest.) Maybe there's an advertisement in there somewhere... join the BSFA and find real imaginary friends!

—Tanya Brown



Tanya and the unimaginable Jim de Liscard at the 1996 Clarke Awards in the Science Museum (at least I think that's what "SM" stands for). All other captions rejected for reasons of taste.

events

IMPORTANT

- Please enclose an SAE when contacting conventions.
- Efforts are made to ensure the accuracy of all the information here, but check with the convention before booking.
- If you run, or know of, any unlisted conventions or events please let me know at the editorial address.
- Please mention Matrix when enquiring.
- Special thanks to: **Dave Langford, Chris O'Shea, Bridget Wilkinson; errors are mine.**

27 Nov: BSFA London Meeting

See box. This month's guest is **Pat Cadigan**
 ☐ **Paul Hood** on 01621 816440 for further information.

5 Dec: London SF meeting

Wellington pub opposite the Old Vic exit from Waterloo Station. London Circle meetings are held on the first Thursday in each month, and usually start about 5pm. No special events but very popular and crowded.
 ☐ Just turn up!

24 - 26 Dec: YuleCon (CANCELLED)

There were insufficient bookings for this and the event's been cancelled. Please enquire about refunds.
 ☐ **YuleCon**, 56 York Road, Torpoint, Cornwall, PL11 2LG
 ☐ 01752 812698

25 Dec: BSFA London Meeting . . . Not Happy Christmas!

2 Jan 1997: London SF meeting

3-5 Jan 1997: European Anime Convention
 Anime Convention at the Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow.
 ☐ **Shinnenka**, PO Box 3038, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 3JT
 ☐ shinnenka@epsdown.demon.co.uk

22 Jan 1997: BSFA London Meeting

31 Jan - 2 Feb 1997: HarmoniX
 Filmmakers' related music convention at the Royal Hotel, Weston Super-Mare. Guests: Sue Mason, Mary Ellen Wessells (MEW). Registration £20, child £10.
 ☐ **HarmoniX**, 3 West Strubbery, Redland, Bristol, BS6 6SZ

31 Jan - 2 Feb 1997: Pegasus 97

Sci-Fi / Trek / general convention at the Hilton National Hotel, Coventry. Guests include **Dennis Ashton**. Full membership is £30, child £15, or £15 per day, cheques payable to "Pegasus Convention" (please include 2 large SAEs). Room rates £46.50 pppn single, £31.50 pppn double / twin / triple.
 ☐ **Pegasus 97**, 16 Bramwell St., Eastwood, Rotherham, S. Yorkshire, S65 1RZ

6 Feb 1997: London SF meeting

8 Feb 1997: Compulsion 97
 Gaming con somewhere in Edinburgh with guests **Steve Jackson, Andrew Harman, Andrew Rillstone**. Registration £2.50.
 ☐ **Geas Convention**, c/o **Kenny Haycox**, 67 Maitland Hog Lane, Kirkliston, ED29 9JX
 ☐ geased.ac.uk
 ☐ <http://www.ed.ac.uk/~geas/>

14-16 Feb 1997: Attitude: The Convention

Convention organised by the Attitude fanzine team, with the emphasis on participation. Membership until 31 Jan is £27 attending, on the door £35 (if available). Venue is the Abbey Hotel, Great Malvern, Worcs. (where the 1997 Novecon will be held); rates are £33 pppn single, £29 pppn double, twin, triple or quad.

☐ **First Floor Flat**, 14 Prittlewell Square, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 1DW
 ☐ 0114 281 0697
 ☐ Attitude@btch.demon.co.uk

21-23 Feb 1997: TrinCon 2

"Ireland's Premier Science Fiction Convention at Trinity College, right in the heart of Dublin." And who could possibly deny it, with this amazing guestlist: **Gill Alderman, Ian Banks, Pat Cadigan, Jonathan Carroll, Magie Furey, Stephen Gallagher, Harry Harrison, Michael Marshall Smith, Paul J. McAuley, Ian McDonald, Kim Newman, Nicholas Royle, Geoff Ryman, Lucius Shepherd, and David Wingrove**. And there'll be more. Bankside seed of last year's TrinCon 1, "I had a total spilling time and if the next one is remotely as good as the last TrinCon, it'll be the hook of the year." Incidentally, all this costs only £15 for the weekend. That's the pre-booking rate, which must be paid before 15 Feb 97, on the door it'll be £20. Under 14s and one-day passes cost £12. Cheques / POs payable to "Dublin University Science Fiction Society".

☐ **TrinCon 2**, 40 Daniel Street, Dublin 8, Ireland

☐ sf.soc@nats.tcd.ie

☐ <http://www.tcd.ie/~sf/soc/trincon>

26 Feb 1997: BSFA London Meeting

2 Mar 1997: Piccon 14

Imperial College's annual one-day convention, held on a Sunday, 10am-6pm. An ideal and cheap introduction to conventions. Guest is **Simon Ings** and membership is £8 (students only £3).
 ☐ **ICSF**, c/o Union, Beil Quad, Prince Consort Road, London, SW7 2BB

6 Mar 1997: London SF meeting

26 Mar 1997: BSFA London Meeting

BSFA London Meetings

On 25 September, **Harry Harrison** was the guest of the London BSFA meeting. Harry, himself an early member of the Association, talked for over an hour on his early days as a science fiction writer and the hand-to-mouth existence so typical of writers in the 1950s, of writing for (and editing) **John W. Campbell**, and the contemporary sf field and ongoing research for his next book.

BSFA London Meetings take place on the fourth Wednesday of every month (except December, where the fourth Wednesday usually falls dangerously close to, and this year on, Christmas Day). Each meeting usually features a guest speaker and although it isn't always possible to arrange this sufficiently far in advance to allow publicity in Matrix details can usually be found in *Ansible* or by contacting **Paul Hood** or **Mark Plummer** (contact details below) beforehand, but please remember that phoning on the day won't do you any good as both of us go straight to the meeting from work. Meetings are held in the upstairs room of the Jubilee Tavern on York Road, London SE1, which is on the south bank of the Thames between Waterloo and Westminster Bridges. The nearest stations are Waterloo (mainline or Underground) or Westminster (Underground). Although the official start time for events is usually about 7.00 - 7.30 pm, early arrivals are drifting in from about 5.00; if you get there early and the upstairs room is closed, we'll be in the main bar and, if in doubt, the landlord will be able to point us out to you. Several committee members and *Vector* / *Matrix* contributors are usually in attendance so it's a chance to see some of the faces to go with the names that you've seen in the magazines. There is no charge and meetings are open to members and non-members.

— **Mark Plummer**

Contacts: **Paul Hood** on 01621 816440
Mark Plummer on 0181 656 0137

28-31 Mar 1997: Intervention

The 1997 Eastcon, themed around 'Communication'. Venue is the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool. Guests are **Brian Aldiss, Octavia Butler, Dave Langford** and **Jon Bing**. Membership is now £30 attending, £20 supporting or unaged, rising to £35 and £25 on 1 Dec.
 ☐ **Intervention**, 12 Crowsbury Close, Emsworth, Hants, PO10 7TS
 ☐ 01234 502596
 ☐ intervention@popsy.demon.co.uk
 ☐ <http://ds.dial.pipex.com/minerva.tech/interven.htm>

3 Apr 1997: London SF meeting

1 May 1997: London SF meeting

23-26 May 1997: Year of the Wombat
 Humour convention at the Bestwood Lodge Hotel, Nottingham. £25 until Easter.
 ☐ **Year of the Wombat**, 22 The City, Beeston, Nottingham, NG9 2ED

24-26 May 1997: Fantasticon UK

General convention at the Harrgate International Conference Centre. Guests include **Harry Harrison, David Gemmell, Lisa Tuttle, Ramsey Campbell, Jack Cohen** and **Reg Poynt**, proprietor of the *Andromeda Bookshop* in Birmingham. Events include items on cult radio sf and a comprehensive video programme. Rates until 1 Sep 1996 are £40.50 attending, £13.50 supporting with reductions for individual days. Children aged 5 and below are free, children under 14 half price.
 ☐ **SAE** to **Fantasticon UK**, 38 Planterie Ave., Ferham, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE4 9TH
 ☐ mr195@aber.ac.uk

28 May 1997: Arthur C. Clarke Award

Science Museum. Invitation only.

25-27 Jul 1997: Voyage 97

The second *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* convention, held at the Novotel, Arundel Gate, Sheffield. "Wonderful friendly atmosphere, episodes, discussions, costume party, writers' workshop, zine library." But no details of rates, unfortunately.
 ☐ **Voyage 97**, 15 Fullers Court, Exeter, Devon, EX2 4DZ

3 - 5 Sep 1997: LoneStar 97

The 55th World Sci convention in San Antonio, Texas.
 ☐ **PO Box 27277**, Austin, TX 78755-2277, USA

23 Oct - 2 Nov 1997: Coachcon

Coach trip starting in London, via Portsmouth, to Euro-Octcon '97, Ireland, and back to London for the World Fantasy Convention.
 ☐ **SAE** or 2xIRCs to 64 Richborne Terrace, London, SW8 1AX

24-27 Oct 1997: Euro-Octcon '97

The 1997 Eurocon and Ireland's national con combined.
 ☐ **Euro-Octcon '97**, 211 Blackhorse Avenue, Dublin 11, Ireland.
 ☐ mamchugh@tcd.ie
 ☐ <http://aragant.ltc.ici.ie/Octocon.html>

31 Oct - 2 Nov 1997: World Fantasy Convention

1997 sees the centenary of **Bram Stoker's Dracula**, and the WFC will be celebrating this (which doubtless explains the contact address). Venue is the *Britannia International Hotel* in London's Docklands, now restored after being blown up by the IRA. Membership is now £75.
 ☐ **PO Box 31**, Whitby, North Yorks., YO22 4YL

10-13 April 1998: Intuition

The 1998 Eastcon at the Picadilly Jarvis Hotel in Manchester. Guests **Connie Willis, Ian McDonald** and **Martin Tudor**. Enquire for current rates.
 ☐ **Intuition**, 43 Onslow Garden, Wallington, Surrey, SM6 9QH
 ☐ **INTUITION@smof.demon.co.uk**
 ☐ http://www.ast.cam.ac.uk/~acb/intuition/intuition_index.html

21-24 Aug 1998: The Wrap Party

Convention to celebrate the conclusion of *Babylon 5*, to be held at the Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow, London. Confirmed guests are **J. Michael Straczynski** (creator of the series), **Harlan Ellison** (series consultant), **Jack Cohen** (xenobiologist), **John Ridgeway** (comics artist), **Bryan Talbot** (artist), **Adam 'Mojo' Lebowitz** (computer animator on the series), **John Matthews** (expert on Arthurian mythology). Membership until the 1997 Eastcon is £90 (restaurant scheme available), under 17s half price, under 12s free. Room rates: £400ppn triple, £420ppn double or twin, £470ppn single.
 ☐ **The Wrap Party**, PO Box 506, Reading, RG1 7QZ
 ☐ TheWrapParty@bipin.co.uk
 ☐ <http://www.bipin.co.uk/TheWrapParty>

2-6 Sep 1999: Aussiecon 3

The Workcon goes down under. Guests are **George Turner, Gregory Benford** and **Bruce Gillespie**. Membership is \$140 (US).
 ☐ **The UK Agent** is **Marlin Hoare**, 45 Tlustrath Road, Reading, RG1 7TT

27 Dec 1999 - 2 Jan 2000: Millennium

See in the new millennium (a year early if you're a pedant) at this con, to be held somewhere in northern Europe, probably the UK, or a BeNeLux country. £3.00 per year, to be deducted from the eventual membership cost.
 ☐ **Malcolm Reid**, 186 Casewick Rd., West Norwood, London, SE27 0SZ

Members' Noticeboard

Advertisements and announcements are FREE to BSFA members.
Send your ad to the editorial address.

LOCAL GROUPS

FONT, the Manchester SF Group, meets on the second and fourth Thursdays in the month, at the Crown and Anchor Beer Engine, Hillyon St. / Port St corner in Manchester city centre. Usually from about 8pm till late. The group's not formal enough to have a secretary, but anyone who wants to find out how to get to the pub a welcome to phone **Mike Oram** on 0161 226 7882.

LEICESTER SF GROUP. If you live in the Leicester area then the Leicester Science Fiction Group would like to hear from you. We meet on the first Friday of the month, with the venue to be arranged. Contact: **Tim Groom** on 0116 279 2280, or email cteam@lobanet.co.uk

COLCHESTER SF / HORROR / FANTASY GROUP. We meet on the third Saturday of each month at 12.30pm in The Playhouse pub in St. John's Street. We are mainly a discussion over a few books of kind. If you fancy coming along either give **Des Lewis** a ring on 01255 812119 or you can just turn up.

CAMBRIDGE MEETINGS: If you live in the Cambridge area and would be interested in getting together for regular Sunday meetings, **John Oram** would like to hear from you. Contact: **John Oram** 3 Oatlands Avenue, Bar Hill, Cambs, CB3 8EQ or phone 01954 781797 after 6pm.

WANTED

WANTED: a copy in any condition of *Star Light* by Hal Clement. Contact: **John Ollis**, 51 Belmont Road, Luton LU1 1LL.

WINNER CLASSICS WANTED - not for me, for a friend. honest guy. Market rate is around a quid, will pay up to £2 dependent on condition or will swap for duplicates. Titles wanted include: *Amazing Fall*, *Collier's Travels*, *Homer*, *and So On*, *King Solomon's Mines*, *Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, *Matchless*, *Master of Ballantyne*, *Mill Flanders*, *Phoe and Phaedrus*, *Turn of the Screw*

Daisy Miller, *Prince and the Pauper*, *Wind in the Willows*, *Wuthering Heights*
Andy Butler, Flat 3, 28 Louis Street, Hull, HU3 1LY. Tel: 01482 229166

HELP A DESPERATE EDITOR. Wanted: a copy in any condition of Brian Stableford's novel *The Parasol of the Gods*, published by Ace Books in the 70s. **Chris Terran**, 9 Beechwood Court, Back Beechwood Grove, Leeds LS4 2HS

WANTED: Complete set of BBC TV Video Survivors. Will also pay carriage or collect if local. Contact: **Geoff Hunt**, 71 Poplar Grove, New Malden, Surrey, KT3 3DN

BOOKS REQUIRED - Ace Doubles, Banks, Conno, Delany, Niven, Saberhagen, Stableford, Sterling, New Worlds, series, and many more. Send SAE for wants list to **Ian Forsshaw**, 12 Windsor Way, Farnell, Cambs, PE7 3BU. Tel: 01733 241839

BOOKS WANTED: Original Ace paperback editions of the following books by **Michael Lindsay**: *Wings! Flight*, *The Wingsingers*; *The Emerald Gate* and *Wizard of the Pillars*.

Offers in any condition of *The Unicorn Territory* edited by **Bruce Collier**, published by Doubleday in 1988, and *Universities of Fantasy* by **Brian Attebery**, published by Indiana University Press in 1992.

Please contact: **Michael Braithwaite**, 27 Marsh Drive, West Hendon, London, NW9 7QE or phone 0181 202 8018

BOOKS WANTED: must be hardback first editions in line condition with dust wrappers:

David Edings: *Magician's Gambit* and *Castle of Wizardry*

Raymond R. Feist: *Magician*, *Silverthorn*, *Darkness At Seltanon*, and *Prince of the Blood*

John Brunner: *Teleglyph*, *The Stone That Never Changes*, and *The Jagged Orbit*

Contact: **John Oram**, 3 Oatlands Avenue, Bar Hill, Cambs, CB3 8EQ

FOR SALE

COLLECTION CLEARANCE: I have lists for Paperback, Hardcover, Aerospace, and Magazines including sales and runs and ASIF / An Arbor for 1934 to 1995. Send SAE for lists, please say which. Contact: **Terry Jewess**, 56 Red Star Drive, Scarborough, N. Yorks. YO12 5PQ

DANCER FOR THE WORLD'S DEATH, an illustrated signed and numbered limited-edition booklet by **Storm Constantine** with cover art by **David Mouring**. Due October from inception at £3.50 inc. p&h. Cheques payable to 'Inception'. Also available by Constantine from inception *An Elemental Tale* (a fantasy) and *Colours* (a poem). We also have stocks of 'now out-of-print' books. *Apathetic*, *Stomach Regiment*. Sign for the *Sacred Burning* the *Shadow*, plus a few copies of the original 'Wraiths' books. Please send SAE for details / booklet. Contact: **Inception**, Steve Jeffrey & Viki, Lee France, 44 White Way, Kidlington, Oxon, OX5 2QA

HARMY WAY by **Colin Greenland** - "What if Charles Dickens had written a space opera?" (Locus) - large paperback, the one with the pretty cover, £3.50. Also the two linked fantasy paperbacks, *The Hour of the 7th Ox* and *Other Visions* (great covers by Roger Dean and Ian Miller), £1.50 each. Prices include postage. **Colin Greenland**, 98 Sturtin Street, Cambridge, CB1 2QA

THE WAY TO WRITE SCIENCE FICTION by **Brian Stableford**. Signed gb copies available at £5. Also available: *The Empire of Fear*, £10 hardcover, £5 C-format pb. *Sensory Chemistry*, *Sardonic Tales of the Genetic Revolution* £8 hc. *The Argard Trilogy*, £10 boxed set (limited to 500 copies) of 3 pb. All prices post-inc. Order from **Brian Stableford**, 113 St Peter's Road, Reading RG6 1PG

COLLECTION FOR SALE New review copies of SF and Fantasy fiction and related nonfiction (criticism, books about film / TV, author studies etc.) plus my personal collection of fiction, related nonfiction, American magazines about fantastic literature, hardcovers and paperbacks, most in excellent condition. Some collectables. All very reasonably priced from £1 up. US \$1 brings complete lists. Please contact **Nell Barron**, 1149 Line Place, Vista, CA 92083-7428, USA.

CRUCIFORM VARIATIONS: a collection of 12 science-

fictional cryptic crosswords (including annotated solutions) by **John English** is now available! Price £2.00 from **Becon Publications**, 75 Rosslyn Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex, RM3 9EG.

SF BOOKS / MAGAZINES FOR SALE The Science Fiction Foundation Collection has a large number of science fiction / fantasy books and magazines for sale at bargain prices. Proceeds to the SF. Contact: **Andy Sawyer** on 01451 784 2696 / 2733 or email asawyer@liverpool.ac.uk for further details.

A LOAD OF OLD BS&N from **Bob Shaw's** serious scientific lake! Produced by **Becon Publications** for **Contribution**, the 1995 British National SF Convention. All profits will be donated to the RNB Talking Book Fund. £4.95 from **Becon Publications**, 75 Rosslyn Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex, RM3 9EG

MISC

SOME LOVELY MAN sent me - that's **Jilly Reed** - a copy of **Emma Bull's** *War for the Oaks* a couple of months ago in response to my ad here and I LOVE HIS NAME AND ADDRESS. If you are he, please write or ring so I can pay you what I owe and not expire of mortification.

Please contact **Jilly Reed** at: Hill House, Meads Tye, Sotwick, SP4 0EX

JAINTING ON THE SCORIAN **Tomposts** and **REELING BULLIONS OF HELL**, a centenary essay on M. P. **Shel's** *Shapes in the Fire*, by **Brian Stableford**, in the latest *Rebeller*. **Science Fiction**, from **Mark Valentine**, 22 Southfield Terrace, Airdingham, Wkly, W. Yorks, LS29 0PA

INFORMATION SOUGHT. After nearly 100 years of involvement in it I was straggled to have my first trace of the 30's writer **Robert J. Hogan**, described as a hero of the pulp. In the latest *Encyclopedia of SF*, I would be very grateful for whatever information any members might be able to let me have on his pre-war namesake of mine. Contact: **Robert J. Hogan**, 30A Glasgow Avenue, Street, Somerset, BA16 8PF

GADZOOKS! Studies in swashbuckling fiction. Orcy, Sabatin, Farnol, Thordmieke et al. New fanzine seeks contributors and readers. Details: **Mark Valentine**, 40 Ash Grove, Wkly, West Yorkshire, LS29 9EP. Enter the last great unexplored genre.

COMPETITION EXTRA: RESULTS OF COMPETITION 119: α and ω , "Jane Chord"

This competition had easily the best entry ever, both in numbers and amount of work done by all the entrants. The most letters I got from one person was three, and the most entries in one letter was well over twenty. The list on the right is only a small part of the total entry and is in no particular order, except I have kept the winner until last. I think I should really give a prize to the author who has submitted, probably unwittingly, the best set of **Jane Chord**s. So far the winner of this is **Kim Stanley Robinson**, who just pips **Roger Zelazny** and **Iain (M.) Banks**.

Thanks to all entrants, especially those who incorporated their entries into longer letters about life, the universe and everything. PLEASE keep entries for this continuing competition going - you never know, we might come up with another prize in a couple of issues time. Here are the rules, simplicity itself: a 'Jane Chord' is obtained by removing all but the first and last words of a work and seeing what results. Remember, it doesn't have to be a novel - short stories, articles or any other works are all eligible. Send all entries to **Roger Robinson** at the address on the back page.

— Roger Robinson

FROM	TITLE	AUTHOR	JANE CHORD
Lots!	<i>The Wasp Factory</i>	Iain Banks	I sister.
Kevin McVeigh	<i>Icehenge</i>	Kim Stanley Robinson	The ends.
Paul Hood	<i>The 'Helliconia' Trilogy</i>	Brian Aldiss	This snow.
Syd Foster	<i>Schismatrix</i>	Ruce Sterling	Painted wonderful.
	<i>The Memory of Whiteness</i>	Kim Stanley Robinson	Now forever.
	<i>The Bridge</i>	Iain Banks	Trapped, yeah?
Andy Mills	<i>Red Mars</i>	Kim Stanley Robinson	Mars again.
	<i>Blood Music</i>	Greg Bear	Each forever.
John Oram	<i>Teleglyph</i>	John Brunner	After man.
	<i>Fairyland</i>	Paul J. McAuley	The children.
Paul Lennox	<i>The Fabulous Riverboat</i>	Philip José Farmer	Resurrection day.
Theo Ross	<i>Podkayne of Mars</i>	Robert A. Heinlein	All me.
	<i>The Ship Who Sang</i>	Anne McCaffrey	She singing.
	<i>ET</i>	William Kotzwinkle	The geranium.
Ian Forsshaw	<i>Damnation Alley</i>	Roger Zelazny	The garbage.
Peter Griffiths	<i>We</i>	Yevgeny Zamyatin	I prevail.
John D. Rickett	<i>A Case of Conscience</i>	James Blish	The grief.
Chris Shuring	<i>Consider Phlebas</i>	Iain M. Banks	The Culture.
	<i>Tiger! Tiger!</i>	Alfred Bester	This awakening.
Philip Muldowney	<i>The Courts of Chaos</i>	Roger Zelazny	Amber always.
Graham Smith	<i>Titus Groan</i>	Mervyn Peake	Gormenghast stronghold.
The winner!	<i>Gormenghast</i>		Titus world.
	<i>Titus Alone</i>		To home.
	<i>The 'Gormenghast' Trilogy</i>		Gormenghast home.



Skull Cracker's

Roger Robinson's

COMPETITION 122: "HE(A)RD OF ELEPHANTS"

A simple idea – but one that should give a lot of scope for your imaginations. You remember all those bizarre collective nouns – an exaltation of larks, a subject of herons, a crash of rhinoceroses; what about adding to the list with some of ones? The subjects can be authors, characters, rags (both TAFF and otherwise), books, fans, etc. etc.

The one that I thought of which sparked off this idea was 'A shortage of *Dangerous Visions*' which nicely links the editor and the publishing history of the 'trilogy'. Over to you – the interstices of the matrix?!

RESULTS OF COMPETITION 120: "IT'S VERSE, JIM, BUT NOT AS WE KNOW IT"

A small entry here, but nonetheless of quite a high quality. Just space for two or three samples.

Barbara Davies sent:

The Anderson idea of fashion
In *LFO* shows a peculiar passion
For Nylon Wings & Beige String Vests
And Uniforms which show off breasts.
But surely in the age of rockets
They could have given Straker pockets?

Roddy Williams came up with the following "Ode to Mr Worf":

Of all the gorgeous personnel aboard the Enterprise
It's hunky chunky Mr Worf who makes my fluids rise.
I love his James Brown haircut and his bony forehead ridge,
And the way his tunic sparkles as he stomps around the bridge.

You can keep Commander Riker for he's fat and wears a wig,
Data is an android and his ears are far too big.
Picard has not survived the vicious ravages of Time,
So for Warp Ten rumpy-pumpy it's the Klingon every time.

And one from regular entrant Nigel Parsons sums it up nicely:

Long as my VCR still goes
I'll tape and play my favourite shows
Star Trek – *X-Files* and *Dr Who*
And late-night films on BBC2
The "Five Year Arc" of *Babylon 5*
Is all that keeps my brain alive
But though my teacher pushes Plato
I'll just sit here: a couch potato.

But the winner Lesley Milner showed that small is beautiful by submitting a haiku:

Long Ago
I Lived for *Blake's Seven*
Now I live within *Babylon 5*.

RESULTS OF COMPETITION 121: "INDEPENDENCE DAY BLUES"

A small but well thought-out set of suggestions for sequels to *Independence Day* which included some plots that the Yanks would never swallow!

Nigel Parsons suggested *Ego 5*, *ID 4* with the subtitle of *Clinton Scores in Extra Time*, while *Kevin McVeigh* suggested that Hollywood should draw the list of perfectly good titles that already exist, such as *The Day of Their Return*. The winner is John Cox (living in France) who suggested a plot for a film to be called "*Bastille Day* (although this might have to be delayed as it really should be *ID14*). Lesley Milner only lost out with her suggestion *Easter Day: The Aliens Rise Again* because she was already a winner of the verse competition.

— Roger Robinson

Please send all entries,
together with any
competition correspondence,
to the usual address:

Roger Robinson
75 Rosslyn Avenue
Harold Wood, Essex
RM3 0RG

by

Friday 27 December 1996

boring
stuff
nobody
reads

matrix is sketched out on a creaking
acorn a5000, cut to fit by various bits of
software, notably zap (never consistently over-
dressed), sewn together by an hp laserjet 5i,
supermodelled by pdc copyprint, folded
neatly and packed in tissue by bramley
mailing services, flounced down the
catwalk, by the royal mail, and
ogled all by you

—matrix 122— soundtracked by brass monkey, lush, speedy j,
dread can dance, adrian legg, conion nancarrow, sterelab,
martin simpson, assorted political conferences, the incredible
string band, kevin ayers, j a bach's -b minor mass— mark
radcliffe, afro-cell sound system, and steely dan
—felicitations of the festival of your choice to you

Big Butt Aleph

squints at the news

• **CORRECTION** Aleph wishes to apologise for the reference to "Uncle Bob" in his previous column, in connection with TAFF's financial problems. It should of course have been "Auntie".

• **NOVACON EXPRESS** Aleph's spies at Novacon report . . . • **Mark Plummer** was severely embarrassed by his Nova Award for Best Fanzine (The Fanzine Formerly Known As *Waxen Wings & Banana Skins*, co-edited with Claire Britley) and being runner-up to Alison Freebairn in the Best Writing category, which came on top of his Doc *Frei Award* – for being an all-round Good Egg – earlier in the year. His shy discomfort was so obvious that everybody instantly started calling him 'Hugo'. • Claire practised dimpling and going red – very charmingly – and later denied that Croyd was in fact a suburb of Leeds. • Alison's win was greeted with much woo-woooing and whistles; we understand this to mean that the result was popular. Aleph finds the spectacle of the rest of fandom putting and wheezing in the distance as Alison attempts to drag them into the 1990s highly amusing. • Runner-up **Dave Moothing**'s acceptance of **D. West's** Best Artist Nova was brilliant, as usual.

• **SPIN DOCTOR** A highlight of Novacon's TAFF auction was a guest appearance by a large tarantula spider, seen frightening the beard of **Rhodi James** and giving visiting US fan **Gary Farber** (among others) an intimate examination, probably involving palpation. Unfortunately the owner of the beast – who shall be nameless – had a momentary lapse of reason and forgot to take the poor creature home. The spider was last seen in Andromeda boss **Rog Peyton's** office, staring balefully out of a carrier bag. Check your purchases carefully. . . . • **Gary Farber's** promise to proceed down the aisle on hands and knees towards **Martin Tudor** and kiss his feet in recompense for unwarranted intrusion into British TAFF affairs raised lots of laughs and cash. **Dave Moothing** added insult to injury by pledging £10 if Tudor was barefoot. • Notable absentees at Novacon included **D. West** (whose spirit nevertheless hovered watchfully, roll-up in mouth), a certain staff writer of a leading skiffy zine (who couldn't wrangle it on expenses, and isn't he glad he didn't win TAFF), and one **Abigail Frost** who she turn up at Eastercon next year? Someone paid for her supporting membership. It could have been you. . . .

• **SURFAR SUVA** Finally persuaded to "surf" the internet, Aleph was happy to see that his tax dollars were being spent on anagram generators, translating **Chris Terran** into "Richer rants". Paper and pencil was still required for "Incur rik please lend me a . . ."

• **GREAT LITERARY BEGINNINGS** The creator of the great post-modernist classic **Bill and Ben** has revealed that she got the names from her brothers. And the "fib-a-lob" dialogue came from their childhood, after discovering the delights of farting in the bath.

• **SHEEP WORRYING** The Welsh-language edition of **Kim Stanley Robinson's** *Mars* trilogy has been scrapped due to the inability of HarperCollinsForeignDivision's reps to distinguish between *Glas Mawth* and *Glas Mawth*.

• **MURDER IN SPACE** (Allegedly) Efforts continue to rehabilitate the lawyers' friend, **O. J. Simpson** – the latest wheeze is to send him into space on the shuttle. NASA is unlikely to be sympathetic; Simpson starred in the 1977 film *Capricorn One*, in which the organisation was depicted as faking a Mars landing on a movie set. On second thoughts, they did co-operate in the film's making. . . .

• **PST** . . . Aleph can exclusively reveal how the judges for the Clarke Award are actually chosen: trivially. **Mark Plummer** tells all: David Barrett just sort of came up to me in the Wellington and said something like, "Wanna be a Clarke Award judge?" and I said, "Er . . . OK."

• **WHAT GOES UP** As yet another lump of space probe falls towards Australia, Aleph wonders where the Antipodes are hiding their magnet. Or who the space agencies are trying to hit. Let's hope **Greg Egan** has a tin hat.

• **PEAK PRACTICE** What is it about the North of England? OK, it's full of whippets and dark satanic mills, but even that doesn't explain the number of horror writers pop north. And it can't be something in the water – there isn't any. There's Ramsey Campbell and Clive Barker (Liverpool), Stephen Laus and Chaz Brenchley (Newcastle), Jonathan Yee (Leicester), Stephen Gallagher (Hull, Ribbles Valley), Graham Aycliffe (Durham), John Douglas (Manchester), Mark Morris (Leeds, Huddersfield), Sheila Holligan (Teesside, North Yorks moods), new recruit **Mark Pepper** (Stockport), and **Simon Clark** in Doncaster: 'I'd written some sequences where I destroyed Doncaster, and as I was driving into town one day I thought, that really is a tremendous feeling: I've destroyed a whole town. It gave me a real buzz.' Aleph has been to Doncaster, and understands this perfectly. Clark's next novel is set in Leeds: *Matrix* editors take note.

• **WHO'S WHO** Aleph understands that certain people in Novacon were heard to ask, "Who is Aleph?" He's on to it. ☺ - N, < > X,



BSFA MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Please return to: BSFA Survey, 26 Northampton Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 7HA
by Friday 31 January 1997.

Please tick relevant boxes and print clearly where appropriate.

YOU AND YOUR INTEREST IN SF

1. Name: _____ 2. Sex: M F 3. Age: _____ 4. BSFA membership no: _____
5. Address: _____
6. Postcode: _____ 7. E-mail address: _____
8. Marital status: _____ 9. Occupation: _____
10. Do you: Own your own home/have a mortgage Live in rented accommodation Live with your family Other
(please state) _____
11. In what range is your annual income? Unwaged Up to £10,000 £10,001-£15,000 £15,001-£20,000
 £20,001-£25,000 £25,001-£30,000 £30,001-£40,000 More than £40,000
12. Does SF/fantasy form the major part of your reading for pleasure? Yes No
13. If not, what is your major preference? _____

14. What types of SF do you read?

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Alternative history	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time travel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Near future	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Space opera	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hard (scientific) SF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Military SF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cyberpunk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feminist SF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social/psychological SF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Humorous SF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fantasy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Horror	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Novelisations/spin-offs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. How long have you been a regular SF reader? 0-2 years 3-5 years 6-10 years Longer than 10 years

YOU AND THE BSFA

16. How long have you been a member of the BSFA? 0-2 years 3-5 years 6-10 years Longer than 10 years
17. Which other SF or fantasy-related organisations (if any) do you belong to, and how long have you been a member of those organisations? _____

18. What do you think BSFA's role is, and how well do you think it is performing that role (tick all that apply)?

	Part of role (tick if you agree)	Performing well (tick if you agree)
Providing information about SF (eg through the magazines)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing SF-related publications (eg <i>A Very British Genre</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promoting appreciation/understanding of SF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing contact for SF fans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing support for SF writers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. Do you have a copy of *A Very British Genre*? Yes No

20. Which of the following events have you attended in the last two years?

Intersection (the 1995 Worldcon):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No		
	Never	Once	2-5 times	More often
Other conventions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signings/promotional events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BSFA London meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other local SF group meetings (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. Are you currently actively involved in the BSFA in any of the following ways, or would you like to be involved in the future (please tick all that apply)?

	Currently involved	Would like to be involved in future
Contributing to magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending local meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helping out at conventions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending the AGM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Voting in the BSFA Awards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

22. What might encourage you to get involved?

23. Do you think the BSFA is good value for money? Yes No

24. If no, why?

BSFA MAGAZINES

25. Which of the magazines do you usually read? *Matrix* *Vector* *Focus*

26. How many other people usually read your mailing?

27. Which other SF magazines (if any) do you read?

28. What do you think of the contents of the magazines in general?

	Excellent	Good	Poor	Very poor	Has improved	Has got worse
<i>Matrix</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
<i>Vector</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
<i>Focus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>					

29. What do you think of the overall look (design) of the magazines?

	Excellent	Good	Poor	Very poor	Has improved	Has got worse
<i>Matrix</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
<i>Vector</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
<i>Focus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>					

30. How much do you enjoy these features in the magazines?

	A lot	Quite a lot	Not at all	Want more?	Want less?
<i>Matrix</i>					
Editorial	<input type="checkbox"/>				
News	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Publishing news/previews	<input type="checkbox"/>				
BSFA news/interviews	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Media (non-book) coverage	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Convention reports	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Fanzine reviews/fandom coverage	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Letters	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Aleph (gossip column)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Events diary	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Noticeboard	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Puzzles and competitions	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<i>Vector</i>					
Editorial	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Interviews	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Cognitive Mapping	<input type="checkbox"/>				
General SF criticism	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Hardback reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Paperback reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Letters	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<i>Focus</i>					
Editorial	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Fiction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Poetry	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Forum	<input type="checkbox"/>				
General advice	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Letters	<input type="checkbox"/>				

31. If you actively dislike any features, why is this?

32. Do you like illustrations in the magazines? *Matrix* *Vector* *Focus* Would like more Would like fewer Would like better quality

33. Are you content with the coverage given to writers in *Focus*? Too much About right Too little

34. Would you like biographies or bibliographies to be appended to articles in *Vector*? Biographies Bibliographies Neither Don't care

35. Would you be willing to contribute to the magazines in the future? Yes No

36. If yes, which of the following would you be interested in doing (please tick all that apply)?

- | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Book reviews | <input type="checkbox"/> | Interviews | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Film reviews | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fiction/poetry | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Video reviews | <input type="checkbox"/> | Artwork | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| TV/radio/audio reviews | <input type="checkbox"/> | Critical features and articles | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Theatre reviews | <input type="checkbox"/> | General articles | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Convention reports | <input type="checkbox"/> | Providing news | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (please state) | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

37. On which authors would you particularly like to see interviews/features in *Vector*?

38. What other features would you like to see in the magazines?

39. Would you be prepared to write/contribute to these features? Yes No

OTHER BSFA ACTIVITIES

40. Do you know what Orbiter does? Yes No

41. Are you a member of an Orbiter? Yes No

42. Do you think Orbiter is fulfilling its role? Yes No

43. If no, what do you think it should be doing?

44. Would you be interested in more BSFA publications? Yes No

45. Would you be interested in the following items of BSFA merchandise (please tick any that apply)? T-shirts Sweatshirts Postcards Posters Mugs Bookmarks Pens Other (please state)

46. Would you be interested in buying publications and other merchandise: at conventions? by mail order?

47. Do you think the BSFA should increase its use of the Internet? Yes No Don't have Internet access

48. If you have Internet access, would you like to join the BSFA mailing list? Yes No
(If yes, remember to fill in your e-mail address (question 7).)

Data relating to your responses will be analysed on a computer database. Please tick this box if you are *not* willing for such data to be kept on computer: (Information about individuals will not in any case be released to sources outside the BSFA.)

Thank you for completing this survey. If you have any specific opinions or comments about the BSFA which you can't fit into the space provided, or which relates to something we haven't covered in the survey, we would welcome any further feedback. Please send such comments to the survey address in the first instance.