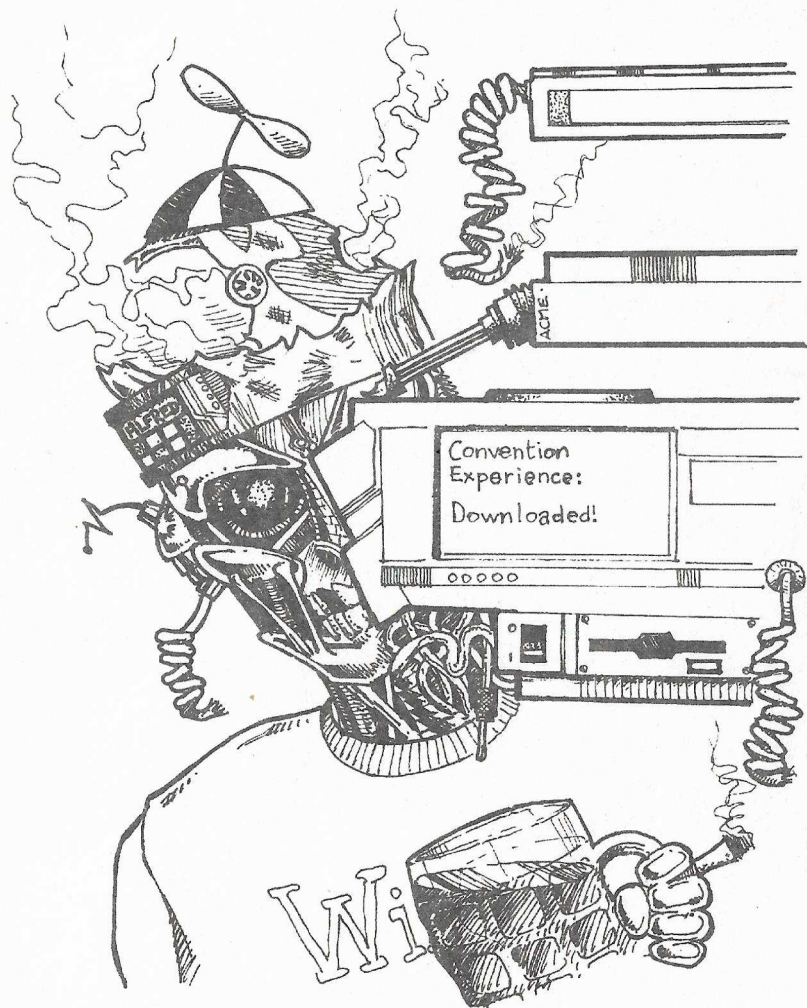

Wincon III

29-31 July 1994, King Alfred's College, Winchester



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Wincon III

Science Fiction—Ideas in Focus

King Alfred's College, Winchester
29–31 July 1994

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Chairman's Welcome

by John Richards

The hall goes dark as the music starts. It is the conclusion of the Prologue in Heaven of Boito's *Mefistofele*. Across the stage spills a fog of dry ice lit from below to give it a rosy pink glow. A red spotlight gives the impression of the sun rising from the mist. The back of the stage is now lightening as dawn begins. Suddenly above the heads of the audience on a flying wire we see the infant Rachael Wright (co-opted on to the committee to spread their personal liability when both her parents were unwise enough to miss a meeting); she has been equipped with foil-covered cardboard wings and therefore resembles a cherub.

As the music swells up the rest of the committee appears in ones and twos from the various entrances to the hall. They are dressed in togas, have laurel wreaths on their brows and are preceded by young girls (borrowed from one of the local schools). As they proceed into the body of the John Stripe Theatre (JST) the girls scatter rose petals from the shallow straw baskets that they carry before them. The light is now no longer pink but white. At the steps from the auditorium to the stage the girls retire. The committee take their places on the stage as the final fanfare starts.

With the first notes of the trumpets the trap door in the stage is opened and in an all but blinding golden glow the guests of honour rise from the depths. Rose petals are now falling from the top of the stage to produce a similar effect to that used by Akira Kurosawa in the Peach Orchard episode of *Dreams*. The final notes are drowned in the applause of the audience and the shot with which Keith (the treasurer) blows out his brains having just come to realise why Pete, Andy and I appropriated the cheque book for a few days last week passes unheard.

Well... maybe not.

Hello and welcome to Wincon III—the third SF convention to be held at King Alfred's Teacher Training College Winchester. This, unfortunately, will be our last at this site but we hope to make up for that by ensuring that this one is the best. If the enthusiasm of the offers of help we have been receiving for the last few months is anything to go by, this should be entirely possible.

The extent to which people genuinely appear to be looking forward to this convention has been a tremendous boost to the committee and each time we felt inclined to sit back for a minute and let things freewheel, someone would come along with an absolutely amazing idea that we just had to follow up. Unfortunately time prevents us putting on all the items that have been suggested or offered to us—honestly, we have gone through enough items to put on a full size Eastercon (about which more later)—and if your idea hasn't made it to the final cut, that doesn't mean that we didn't like it (or even that we didn't think it was as good as some of the things we did put on).

The themes of the programme have gone through a number of changes since we first sat down to think about them. Themes are sometimes a useful guide to thought but should never be allowed to achieve too much dominance. If one has to choose between sacrificing thematic consistency or a good item, then it should be the theme that suffers every time.

To start with we decided that we would concentrate on science. This was for two reasons. First, Wincon II had eventually turned out to be broadly sociological in content and we wanted to do something rather different. Second, we could think of several items about science that we could put on. As time went on and ideas got polished, and the limits of our resources became clear (and more conventions started to push science programming) the emphasis of the programme seemed to change to being more about the differences between the perception of science and its actuality. In a world where the increasing importance of technology is matched only by the antipathy of the population to the concepts behind it; where the convenience of a simple explanation is considered more important than the fact that it isn't actually true, and where the lack of discipline in writing is taken as a sign of 'deeper', 'hidden' truths this seemed to be an interesting area for discussion.

Although this will be the last you will be seeing of King Alfred's College, this is not the last of Wincon (for one thing we still have all those programme items left over from this time). Plans for the future include a hotel-based convention in the winter of 1996/7 followed by a bid for the Eastercon in 1999 (when I told the chap who phoned up to tell me that I won a holiday in his grand free draw that I didn't have a free weekend until the turn of the century I wasn't kidding). So enjoy yourselves and spread the word around. We're going to need you in the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Hugh Richards". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'H'.

Algis Budrys: Who?

by John Bark

In *Who Writes Science Fiction?*, Charles Platt remarks that most SF writers seem to be men with funny names. People called Greenland, Baxter, McAuley, McDonald, or Langford couldn't possibly be real SF writers and had better get themselves pseudonyms (or take a lead from earlier SF writers with mundane surnames: C. 'Doc' Greenland? Col. S.M. Baxter? Dave 'Planet-Buster' Langford?)



On the other hand 'Algis Budrys' seems ideal. It might easily be the invention of some respectable suburban businessman who writes SF in his spare time. That it is his real name (Algirdas Jonas Budrys in full) is well known. More surprisingly (except perhaps to those who are familiar with the rates paid to SF writers) Mr Budrys has never been a full-time author despite his high reputation in the field. He is a professional publicity consultant who has worked for, amongst others, truck makers, jewellery designers and manufacturers of macaroni.

Fun with names does have a serious point, for the development of SF in general and Algis Budrys's fiction in particular. The reason for all those Asimovs, Heinleins, Pohls, Kornbluths, Zelaznys etc. is that the USA is an immigrant society. It is not surprising that SF in the USA has tended towards the expansive and optimistic. The space ship takes off where the immigrant train ends. There are aliens at every street corner. By contrast, British authors have tended to specialize in books where our small, crowded island is invaded by Martians, drowned, covered in green radioactive snow and dominated by walking vegetables.

Unlike most SF writers of his generation, Algis Budrys has experienced immigration directly at an age when such experiences can have their greatest impact. He came to the USA in the 1930s, when he was six years old. He had lived in East Prussia where his father, a Lithuanian diplomat, was stationed. All his neighbours were

German. 'They were nice, pleasant people, very neighbourly, and very loving towards this very Aryan kid', he told Charles Platt in an interview over 40 years later. 'I spoke German with such an impeccable East Prussian accent, and carried myself like a little soldier, they doted on me. And then they did something that completely changed my life. They elected Hitler.'

The Budrys' neighbours' adulation of Hitler had a profound impact on the young Algis: 'I'm four years old and I suddenly realise that I know absolutely nothing about the world except that it is populated entirely by monsters—werewolves.'

So a Lithuanian child comes to America. He must learn to talk and behave as an American. And he does so, more successfully than many native-born American English speakers. He grows up to write some of the most distinguished post-war SF novels. He wins awards. He teaches creative writing. He writes regular review columns. He has had a long career in PR and advertising. He becomes a respectable East Coast suburban businessman. But who does he think he is?

'Basically, I'm a Lithuanian peasant', he said in 1979.

It is scarcely surprising then that questions of identity have been a common theme in the works of Algis Budrys. By this I mean both questions of personal identity—of what is the self constructed and what holds it together; and of social identity—how does the self find its place in society?

Rogue Moon, for example, sets a classic identity problem straight out of a philosophy text book: does a man destroyed and recreated by a matter transmitter remain the same person? *Who?* is an investigation into the identity of a man who has been physically rebuilt after a road accident.

In *The Falling Torch* Michael Wireman, the son of the exiled president of Earth, returns to aid the resistance against the occupying invaders. This begins a process of growth in self-knowledge that will eventually enable him to become leader of Earth. At the heart of his struggle is a conflict of social identity: is Wireman his father's son, a Centaurian, an earthman or can the invaders offer him more? When he surrenders to them, a perceptive interrogator lays bare his motives:

'Don't you realise, Michael Wireman, what one thing will make a man give up his birthright?' Michael Wireman had no answer. 'You want to fit in.'

Honor Jackson in *The Iron Thorn* is also a misfit who surrenders to his ostensible enemies. He is a hunter who breaks out of the closed world of a genetic engineering experiment on Mars to visit Earth, where he struggles to come to terms with an alien society. Here self-knowledge gives Jackson the strength to fit in:

'knowing yourself lets you be part of a group... being part of a group is the only thing that lets you be yourself'.

In *Michaelmas*, the eponymous hero has a secret identity—ruler of the world—in which guise he confronts aliens hidden in our midst. This theme is taken up again in Budrys's most recent novel, *Hard Landing*, which ingeniously combines problems of identity with an outrageous conspiracy theory. One of his stranded aliens marries an Earth woman, settles down in Chicago and makes an honest living in public relations. He does not, however, write science fiction!

This by no means exhausts the themes and complexity of Mr Budrys's writing, and I do not wish to imply that his fiction is some kind of unconscious biography (and I'm sure any biographical elements are very consciously placed. Mr Budrys is above all a deliberate, professional writer). Politics and art, appearance and reality are also important, but the problem of identity, especially of the outsider who must either discover or build his identity to survive appears so often in his work that we must assume it is of great personal importance to him. Fortunately for SF readers, he has chosen the genre of SF to express his concerns. In the blurb to the 1964 Penguin edition of *Who?* he wrote:

'I have been called a Nazi, a Communist, a petit bourgeois, and a long-haired egghead. I am, in short, a child of the twentieth century.'

Mr Budrys certainly knows who he is. Now at Wincon you have a chance to meet him and discover more about him for yourself.

Algis Budrys Bibliography

Novels

False Night (abridged, Lion Books 1954)

Man of Earth ('The Man from Earth' in *Satellite* 1956; rev. Ballantine 1958)

Who? (Pyramid 1958; UK hb Gollancz 1962)

The Falling Torch (fix-up, pb, Pyramid 1959)
Rogue Moon (pb, Fawcett/Gold Medal 1960; hb, Gregg Press 1977)
Some Will Not Die (Regency Books, 1961)
The Amsirs and the Iron Thorn (pb, Fawcett/Gold Medal 1967) (retitled *The Iron Thorn*, hb, Gollancz 1968 UK)
Michaelmas (Berkley 1977)
Cerberus (chapbook, Pulphouse 1989)

Hard Landing (The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction, Oct/Nov 1992; Warner Questar 1993)

Collections

The Unexpected Dimension (pb Ballantine 1960; hb Gollancz 1962)
Budrys's Inferno (Berkley 1963) (retitled *The Furious Future*, hb Gollancz 1964)
Blood & Burning (Berkley 1978)

Non Fiction

Truman and the Prendergasts (as Frank Mason, Regency 1963)
Bicycles: How they work and how to fix them (Rand McNally, 1974)
Benchmarks: Galaxy Bookshelf by Algis Budrys (Southern Illinois University Press 1985)
Non-Literary Influences on Science Fiction: Essays on Fantastic Literature (Borgo 1983)

As editor

L. Ron Hubbard Presents *Writers of the Future* series: Vol. I (1985), Vol. II (1986), Vol. III (1987), Vol. IV (1988), Vol. V (1989) Vol. VI (1990) Vol. VII (1991) (Bridge Publications Inc.)

Audio-visual

Dinosaurus! (Screenplay scenario 1957)
Rogue Moon (radio script 1978 produced by National Radio Theatre)
Rogue Moon (teleplay, paid for but not produced by American Playhouse)

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SCIENCE FICTION TODAY?

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The Programme

Friday Evening

Election Special: The Issues 18:00 Fan Room

The issues are Comics and TV SF. The purpose of the item is to introduce the poll which will be taking place throughout Friday and Saturday. Our distinguished panel of experts stick their necks out as to which will be the top entries in each category. Statements made during this item will be noted by the chair and brought up again after the results are declared to give our people a chance to explain what they really meant.

Mixer Quiz 19:00 Room 12

The ice-breaker event. Large Scale Quiz. A knockout section to separate the sheep from the goats followed by a cutdown *Fifteen to One* format.

Welcome Back My Friends... 20:00 JST

The Grand Opening Ceremony

GoH: Algis Budrys 20:30 JST

Algis will be giving a reading.

Film : *Delicatessen* 21:30 JST

The film has a Ballardian post-apocalyptic setting; the cast are the inhabitants of an apartment building owned by a butcher in an unnamed town. There is a massive famine (cereals have become money) but the butcher is feeding his tenants by slaughtering hired handy men. The latest handy man is an ex-circus clown with whom the butcher's daughter falls in love. To save her boyfriend from her father she turns to the underground vegetarian group the Troglodystes.

Just A Minute 21:30 Fan Room

A game stolen quite unrepentently from Radio 4. Contestants have to speak for 60 seconds on the subject on the card without repetition, hesitation, deviation or repetition. (N.B. Anne cast herself in the Nicholas Parsons role, not me!)

Saturday Morning.**Business Breakfast 09:00 Breakfast Room****Video: *Who?* 10:00 Room 12**

Based on the book by Algis Budrys the film is directed by Jack Gold and stars Elliot Gould and Trevor Howard as rival spy masters. An American scientist is injured in a car crash while at a conference in Eastern Europe. Is the cyborg returned by the Soviets' the original man? If he is, how can he prove it?

Wake Up Call 10:00 Fan Room

Wincon's very own Breakfast TV show.

Logic As A Plot Device 11:00 Exam Hall

The effect of the discipline of science on writing. Why do SF books seem to some mainstream reviewers to 'die on the page'? Is nit-picking not merely an acceptable but a necessary approach to reviewing SF?

Kari on King Alfred 12:00 Room 12

Kari, a lecturer in history at Cambridge University presents her undergraduate lecture on the man behind the Wincon image, Alfred the Great, King of Wessex.

The Litmus Test 12:00 Fan Room

Another Radio 4 quiz game shamelessly hi-jacked including one of the regular contestants. (It is to be hoped that the *Captain Scarlet* signature tune can be dispensed with.)

IN THE FUTURE, SCIENCE
FICTION WILL BE AVAILABLE
IN ALL FORM...



Saturday Afternoon.**The Jupiter Collisions 13:00 Room 12**

The first public showing of the enhanced video of recent astronomical events (subject to availability, but there will be slides).

BSFA/FoF Present Jeff Noon 14:00 JST

Jeff Noon is the winner of the Arthur C. Clarke and Eurocon awards.

A Life in Science 14:00 Room 12

How do the realities of scientific work differ from the images of the bubbling retorts and flashing lights of the mad scientist's laboratory.

Kids' Programme 14:00 Fan Room**GoH: James P. Hogan 15:00 JST**

James Hogan does his bit on 'One Way to Become an SF Professional in the States' stopped only by a man with a bucket of water.

British Short Horror Films 16:00 Room 12

A selection of home movies made by British filmmakers followed by a discussion on the current state of the British film industry, the problems of censorship and the joys of schlock.

Cake Burning 16:00 Fan Room

The traditional Wincon food-tasting event. The judges promise that they are susceptible to bribes but will not necessarily stay bought.

Spotting The Pseuds 17:00 JST

How to distinguish between 'real' and 'pseudo' science. James Hogan provides a traditional response while Terry Hunt takes a more Fortean view.

Social Science Fiction 17:00 Exam Hall

Stories that deal with the social effects of technical development, whether this is in the form of new sources of information, new methods of transport or simply new types of recreational drugs.

Film : *Inherit The Wind* 18:00 JST

Stanley Kramer's dramatisation of the Scopes Trial, perhaps the most public clash between science and fundamentalism in the 20th century, starring Fredric March, Spencer Tracy and Dick York.

Friday

Time	John Stripe Theatre	Room 12	Exam Hall	Fan Room
18:00				Election Special: The Issues
19:00		Mixer Quiz		
20:00	Welcome Back My Friends...			
20:30	GoH: Algis Budrys			
21:30	Film: 'Delicatessen'			Just a Minute

Saturday

Time	John Stripe Theatre	Room 12	Exam Hall	Fan Room
10:00		Video: 'Who?'		Wake-up Call
11:00			Logic as a Plot Device	
12:00		Kari on King Alfred		The Litmus Test
13:00	Lunch	The Jupiter Collisions	Lunch	Lunch
14:00	BSFA/ToF Presents Jeff Noon	A Life in Science		Kids' Programme
15:00	GoH: James P. Hogan			
16:00				Cake Burning
17:00	Spotting the Pseuds	British Short Horror Films	Social Science Fiction	
18:00	Film: 'Inherit the Wind'		Science Bookshelf	
19:00		Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
20:00			ping: Eric Frank Russell	Fanzines: Why Bother?
21:00		Film Quiz		How Green was my Warp Drive?
22:00	Film: 'Legend of the Seven'			Fannish Fortunes
23:00	Golden Vampires'		Astronomy: The Sky Tonight	The SHSFG Party

Sunday

Time	John Stripe Theatre	Room 12	Exam Hall	Fan Room
10:00		Teaching Science Without Lying		Wake-up Call
11:00			Satellite Navigation	What's My Line
12:00		Tunguska		Forgotten Futures
13:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
14:00		Trek & the Liberal Conscience	Magazines from First to Last	Kids' Programme
15:00	GoH: Norman Spinrad			
16:00	Ideas Out of Focus			Election Special: The Results
17:00	Improving the Image			
18:00	...The Show That Never Ends			

Science Book Shelf 18:00 Exam Hall

John Dallman, Jack Cohen and Simon Ings discuss each other's favourite science books. Under the microscope go: *Godel, Escher, Bach : An Eternal Gold Braid* by Douglas Hoffstadter, *The Collapse of Chaos* by Ian Stewart and Jack Cohen.

Saturday Evening**Bing: Eric Frank Russell 20:00 Exam Hall**

An open discussion on the works of Britain's foremost Fortean Novelist. Maybe we'll finally find out how many endings to *Dreadful Sanctuary* there are.

Fanzines: Why bother? 20:00 Fan Room

A panel discussion of the state of fanzines and why they are important to fandom.

Film Quiz 21:00 Room 12

A somewhat more straightforward version of the Quiz premiered at Wincon II. With rounds on Mad Scientists, Infernal Devices, Things That Go Bump In The Night and much more.

How Green Was My Warp Drive? 21:00 Fan Room

What are the implications of some of our favourite SF McCuffins? Our panel of experts consider the potential for disaster in some familiar situations.

Film : *The Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires* 22:00 JST

Van Helsing goes East in this collaboration between Hammer and Run Run Shaw. Tired of continually beating up Christopher Lee's Dracula, Peter Cushing goes off in search of the latest movie fad in an effort to boost Hammer's failing fortunes. He finds it in the mysterious East where Vampirism and Kung Fu are mixed to provide a healthy dose of complete twaddle.

Fannish Fortunes 22:00 Fan Room

The results of all those surveys that Peter Cohen has been doing since Eastercon stand revealed.

Astronomy: The Sky Tonight 23:00 Exam Hall (and/or outside!)

A look at the stars currently above your head.

Sunday Morning

Business Breakfast 09:00 **Breakfast Room**

Wake Up Call 10:00 **Fan Room**

Our presenters reveal who possess most of the 'F' Factor.

Teaching Science Without Lying 10:00 **Room 12**

Is the level of simplification used in teaching science sufficient to distort the truth? Are science popularizers simply liars? Is it necessary to sugar the pill when dealing with 'the big ideas'? Kathy Westhead is a teacher, Terry Hunt a former textbook editor, Dave Clements a scientist and JFW Richards an opinionated sod.

Satellite Navigation 11:00 **Room 12**

Simon Bradshaw's Space Discussion Society talk on navigation of and by satellites.

What's My Line? 11:00 **Fan Room**

This game is so old I can't remember from whom we stole it. Our panel has to guess the occupations of a number of the artisans of SF.

Tunguska 12:00 **Room 12**

David Wright and Alan Bond tell the story behind the 1908 explosion at Tunguska in Siberia.

Forgotten Futures 12:00 **Fan Room**

Marcus L. Rowland gives his spiel on some of the more eccentric views of what the day after tomorrow would bring.

Sunday Afternoon

Trek & The Liberal Conscience 14:00 **Room 12**

A recently published book claimed that *Everything I Needed To Know I Learned From Start Trek*. This is only the latest of a long line of claims that the denizens of the 'final frontier' provide a moral example for the rest of us poor mortals. This item exams the more unpleasant face of the Federation.

Magazines From First To Last 14:00 **Exam Hall**

An examination of the life cycle of magazines with Laura Hill, production editor for *Super Ted*, Algis Budrys (publisher of *Tomorrow*) and Jeff Suter (retailer of this

parish). A chance to examine the decisions that get taken at each stage of the process.

Kids' Programme 14:00 Fan Room

GoH: Norman Spinrad 15:00 JST

Norman wants to interview the audience.

Ideas Out of Focus 16:00 JST

Dave Langford explains how non-SF writers trying their hand at the genre can get it wrong.

Election Special: The Results 16:00 Fan Room

The time has come for our experts to justify their original statements and to explain the refusal of the electorate to fall in with their predictions. Alternatively a bunch of smug gits say I told you so.

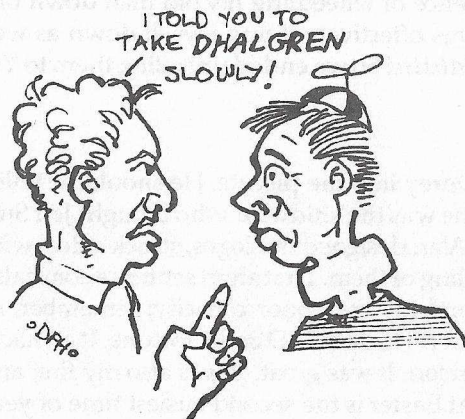
Finale: Improving The Image 17:00 JST

Why is SF regarded with such disdain by the mainstream? Why do reporters never listen to what you tell them? Does SF owe the Scientific community a duty of optimism? If the function of SF is 'not to predict the future but to prevent it' (Tim Illingworth) who is left to build the Great Glass Elevators to the stars?

...The Show That Never Ends 18:00 JST

The Grand Closing Ceremony. See you next time!

... CARE WILL BE NEEDED, ..



The First Con-bid T-shirt

by Ric Cooper

In 1979, the Leeds SF Group won the bid to hold that year's Eastercon, hence called Yorcon (we never thought there'd be Yorcon II, let alone III.) At that time I was in a depression of Marvin-like proportions. I had just finished my three years at Leeds University, where I had enjoyed a state of idyllic bliss that is only possible when one has all the rights and freedoms of an adult and the reckless and feckless irresponsibility of a child.

Now I was working as a shop assistant and general dogsbody in my father's menswear shop, which, apart from the fact that my old man owned the joint, was what we nowadays refer to as a McJob. In addition, I was living in my parents' home, so I couldn't get pissed or shag a bird without them knowing about it and exercising industrial strength emotional blackmail—and let's face it getting pissed and shagging are the only things that give meaning to life.

Now, fifteen years down the pike, I'm proud to be the owner of Milletts (Gosport) Ltd., my dad having retired, and I own my own house as well. I'm my own master. But in 1979, my undergraduate days already seemed an impossibly bright and tragically lost Eden that I'd never see again. So you can imagine how I jumped at the chance of re-capturing just a fleeting taste of that vanished glory by supplying the con bid T-shirts. The quantity was small; thirty or forty as I recall it. I had the rather strange experience of wheedling my old man down on the price, which, I was acutely aware, was effectively doing myself down as well: a Cut-My-Own-Throat Dibbler *avant la lettre!* So we ended up selling them to Yorcon at £1 a pop—I remember the price.

Comes now Alan Dorey into the picture. He should be telling this story really, not me, especially as he was the 'midwife' who brought Jeff Suter and me together to create the SHSFG. Alan designed the logos, struck a deal with a printer in Leeds and organized the selling of them. That short sentence conceals a task of Herculean proportions, far beyond my own poor capacity; remember, in those days, there were no PCs capable of DTP, and CAD cost a fortune. It all had to be done by hand and eye. I went to Yorcon. It was great. It was also my first and last Eastercon for the simple reason that Easter is the second busiest time of year in our trade, and,

after that time I had too much business responsibility to go swanning off at such a crucial time.

1979 was the end of an era. At that time, we despised the 1970s as being pompous and overblown and hankered after the simpler spirit of the 1960s. In retrospect, we can see that in fact the 1970s were a true Golden Age, better than the Edwardian era, when there was peace, prosperity and unlimited shagging for all, before the start of the new Dark Age in which we live today.

Fanzines: Why Bother?

by Steve Green

The first science fiction fanzines, published in the early 1930s in the wake of Hugo Gernsback's decision to promote fandom through the pages of *Amazing Stories*, attempted to reprise the professionalism of the news-stand digests which fuelled their editors' enthusiasm. Within the decade, the fiction had largely disappeared, replaced by anecdotal libels and commentaries on the latest novels.

By the beginning of the 1980s, about the only fanzines which still used the word 'science fiction' did so in the context of discussing Gene Roddenberry's contributions to the genre's popularity. Generalizations, all of them, but each containing the germ of truth, because every version of the fanzine is intrinsically valid. A 200-page convention report, a 25-page tribute to some obscure *Bewitched* episode, a double-sided petition for the summary execution of the Intersection committee; genzines, perzines, apazines, tapezines, faanzines, ficzines, gamezines, filmzines, comiczines, a panoply in print.

But questions remain. Is the fanzine anything more than an interactive vanity press? Did the advent of amateur press associations foster new writers as once promised—and if so, where are they? Was 'KTF' reviewing destructive grandstanding or a legitimate style of literary criticism? Where's this bloody 'renaissance' we keep hearing about?

Don't expect this weekend's panel to have all the answers, but everyone interested in the fanzine format—as writers, editors, artists, readers, past and/or present (or future, for that matter)—is warmly invited to join in what I hope will be a discussion in which many of the questions are at least given an overdue airing. See you there?

INTERSECTION

AUGUST 24-28 1995

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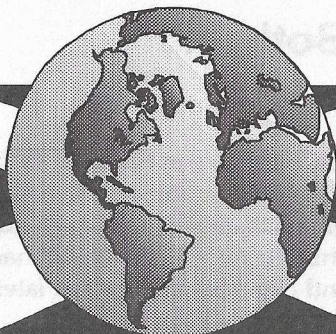
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James P. Hogan: The Logic of Scientific Discovery

by John Bark

When James Hogan took over sales training in the scientific computing division of Digital Equipment Corporation, he found to his horror that his trainees knew next to nothing about their customers. What do scientists do? How do they think? They didn't know. He immediately set about re-organizing his courses to fill this gap in their education. He told them about research methods and gave lessons in basic science. Continental drift arrived on the sales training syllabus.

But computer salesmen aren't the only ones who don't know what scientists do and how they do it. On the evidence of their writings, a lot of SF writers don't either. (And as for media SF... 'Mad? I who have discovered the secret of life? You call me mad?!') Science in SF is usually just there to facilitate and justify the plot: genetic engineering to produce telepathic dragons, black holes for interstellar travel, time machines for bizarre Oedipal paradoxes. As H.G. Wells said:

'It occurred to me that instead of the usual interview with the devil or a magician, an ingenious use of scientific patter might with advantage be substituted.'

Wells of course was both a good writer and trained as a scientist, so he knew how to make his 'ingenious patter' sound convincing. Not every subsequent writer has been up to that standard, or bothered with ingenuity. Too often they just take some old McGuffin down from the shelf, dust it off and away they go. Scientific research is something that happens off stage, sometimes done by aliens or artificial intelligences who conveniently disappear down a wormhole in space leaving behind only 'technology indistinguishable from magic'.

This is not to say that there is anything wrong with SF that is light on science. Many great SF stories make little or no reference to the sciences. It can certainly be argued SF is about the consequences of science, so the scientific process need not be depicted. Just as you don't have to be a car mechanic to drive a car, you don't need to know about the chemistry of rocket fuel to be an astronaut. But (and this is a big 'but') when SF turns away from the sciences it leaves behind one of the distinctive pleasures of the genre.

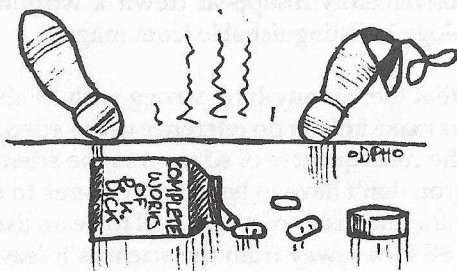
Science may crop up occasionally in other areas of fiction—Peter Ackroyd's *First Light*, William Boyd's *Brazzaville Beach*, C.P. Snow's *Strangers and Brothers* sequence, even one of the characters in *Middlemarch* gets into trouble for carrying out basic medical research on his patients—but nowhere else will you get the same play with scientific concepts that you get in SF.

'Hard' SF is the name given to the type of stories that engage most in this kind of play. But even here, the 'science' content can turn out a bit on the squidgy side. Furthermore, scientists can be just as thin on the ground as in the most pixilated of four volume fantasy trilogies. So when James Hogan turned to writing SF, he set out, as he had in his sales training courses, to take corrective action.

The first three volumes of the *Giants* sequence: *Inherit the Stars*, *The Gentle Giants of Ganymede* and *Giants' Star* epitomize his approach. Dr Victor Hunt, an expert in 'mathematical nucleonics' is seconded to the UN Space Arm to help solve a problem: a 50 000-year-old dead man on the Moon called 'Charlie'. The chief delight in this sequence is not so much the solution, but the step-by-step description of the process by which it is reached. In *Inherit the Stars*, Hunt acts as a catalyst, going to and fro between the various teams of specialists analysing the body and its effects: 'When Hunt talked to the mathematicians one afternoon, he was surprised to learn that they were unaware that the chemists and anatomists in other departments had computed estimates of surface gravity.' Hunt suggests Charlie might have carried an identity card with a record of his weight. Taken together with the known weight of the corpse, this information would give them an understanding of the alien system of weights and measures:

'The discussion ended abruptly, with the head of the mathematics section departing in great haste and a state of considerable excitement to talk to the head of the linguistics section.'

,,, SOME MAY HAVE TO BE
PRESCRIPTION ONLY,,,



Although Hunt is very much a Heinleinian 'competent man', he is not the lone inventor who solves all problems single-handed. He is part of a large team, which is the reality of much scientific work. The book is filled with impassioned argument and discussion as the various temperaments and disciplines within the team try to make sense of the evidence. Hunt's chief antagonist is Prof. Christian Danchekker, a biologist who at first takes exception to what he sees as Hunt's intrusions into his field. In other hands the climax of the novel would have been the flexible hero's triumph over the specialist's narrow-mindedness, but in this case Mr Hogan allows a mutual respect and friendship to grow between the two men, and it is Danchekker who comes up with the book's final conceptual breakthrough.

The scientific explanations in these books also reflect the complexity of the real world. In *The Gentle Giants of Ganymede* there is description of why the Ganymedeans evolved without the capacity for aggression found in humans. As an ex-biologist, I found myself arguing with this explanation, but only because there was enough detail to provoke some sort of response. How often have you come across gentle, peace-loving aliens without the slightest attempt to explain how they got that way? The logic of scientific discovery is vital to Mr Hogan's novels. While his characters may have intuitive ideas that eventually turn out to be correct—as indeed happens in the real world of science—those ideas have to be analysed very carefully and ultimately backed up by evidence. But scientists are only human, and this is reflected in the stories. The highly rational Danchekker lectures his colleagues:

'You're trying to fit the evidence to suit the answers you already want to prove.'

—only to be hoist by his own petard moments later when he denounces as preposterous the idea that an alien enzyme could distinguish two isotopes of one chemical, in defiance of evidence to the contrary.

'These are the facts—check 'em.' says Hunt.

The books, then, ring true in their depiction of the scientific process. They also manifest James Hogan's faith in the ability of the human race to use the power of science to explain and control the universe.

'Let us go out, then, and claim our inheritance,'

says Danchekker in *Inherit the Stars*.

'We belong to a tradition in which the concept of defeat has no meaning.

Today the stars and tomorrow the galaxies. No force exists in the Universe that can stop us.'

You may part company from Mr Hogan at this point, but you had better have a good logical argument ready if you do.

James P. Hogan Bibliography

Novels

- Inherit the Stars* (Del Rey/Ballantine 1977)
The Genesis Machine (Del Rey/Ballantine 1978)
The Gentle Giants of Ganymede (Del Rey/Ballantine 1978)
The Two Faces of Tomorrow (Del Rey/Ballantine 1979)
Thrice Upon a Time (Del Rey/Ballantine 1980)
Giants' Star (Del Rey/Ballantine 1981)
The Minervan Experiment (the three *Giants* novels in one volume) (Nelson Doubleday SF Book Club 1982)
Voyage From Yesteryear (Del Rey/Ballantine 1982)
Code of the Lifemaker (Del Rey/Ballantine 1983)
The Proteus Operation (Bantam 1985)
Endgame Enigma (Bantam 1987)
The Mirror Maze (Bantam 1989)
The Infinity Gambit (Bantam 1991)
The Giants Novels (repackaging of the three in one volume) (Del Rey/Ballantine 1991)
Entoverse (Del Rey/Ballantine 1991)
The Multiplex Man (Bantam 1992)
Realtme Interrupt (Bantam forthcoming)
The Immortality Option (Del Rey/Ballantine in progress)

Novella

- 'Out of Time' (Bantam 1993)

Collection

- Minds, Machines and Evolution* (Fiction/non-fiction) (Bantam 1988)

Uncollected Short Fiction

- 'Sword of Damocles' (in *Stellar 5*, Del Rey 1980)
 'Identity Crisis' (in *Stellar 7*, Del Rey 1981)

'Leapfrog' (in *What Might Have Been*, Bantam 1989)

'Last Ditch' (in *Analog*, Dec 1992)

Uncollected Non-Fiction

'Think of a Number' (in *Galileo 9*, 1978)

'Who Says It's All Over?' (in *Future Life 23*, 1980)

'Paint Your Booster' (in *New Destinies*, Vol. 8, 1989)

'Boom and Slump in Space' (*Bri? Libertarian Alliance*, May 1990 and *Prometheus*, journal of US Libertarian Futurist Society, Summer 1991)

'Ozone Politics: They Call This Science?' (in *Omni*, June 1993)

Attack of the Video Nazis

by Steve Green

In a country which—according to Brian Aldiss—effectively created the science fiction genre, it's somehow understandable we could live under the national fantasy that Britain is a democracy. Artistic expression, needless to say, is on the cutting edge of that illusion. Within days of the David Alton-inspired amendments to Michael Howard's already deeply misguided Criminal Justice Bill, the British horror film *Beyond Bedlam* has its '18' certificate revoked; a move which may cost the producer his house and scarcely bodes well for the imminent resurrection of Hammer Films.

In an ideal world, Wincon III would be paying tribute to the new generation of low-budget film-makers who—like Scorsese, Romero and Coppola in the 1970s—are currently honing their skills in preparation for the 'big time' projects which might or might not shake the industry with the force of *Mean Streets*, *Night of the Living Dead* and *The Godfather*. Hold that dream.

More realistically, however, we will be screening a handful of works by the more interesting low/no-budget directors, including the award-winning gorelick *Bad Karma* and the Mancunian thriller *Crysis*, warmly welcomed last year at that city's fourth Festival of Fantastic Films. Directors Alex Chandon and Steve Ellis also plan to join us for a post-screening discussion on the future of the industry in general, and to outline their future projects in particular. And if David Alton happens to be wandering past, he's also welcome—though only if Alex remembers to bring the BK buttsaw along with him.

On Norman Spinrad

by John Clute

This was the late 1960s. It was somewhere in Soho, in some restaurant, now sanded over by the daguerreotype of years. Michael Moorcock presided, as he did in those days; and there were several other *New Worlds* people eating Greek hors d'oeuvres; and I arrived late and sat at the edge; and there was Norman Spinrad. He had a smooth dangerous face, his eyes did not seem to blink very much, and his hair was very curly. He talked—at times he talked pretty volubly—but he seemed immobile, like a daguerreotype, even then. And though he was sitting in the middle of the group, he seemed at the same time to be hovering at the edge of vision, like the ghost of Jesse James at a clambake. He looked like an exile born, a farouche savant, a street picaro, a mocking citizen, a rambler. He was, of course, all of these.

I'm not a writer of much fiction myself, so little in fact that it's very hard to put it in any context, and Norman has written prolifically for decades, so (quality aside) there's not much point in looking there for similarities of approach to the world; but I do feel a certain affinity with him as a writer of reviews and criticism—it's an affinity I think I share with Tom Disch's work as a critic too. It may derive from nothing more than the fact that we were all born in the same year; but I'm inclined to think that being born when we were has induced in us an exilic sensibility about SF, about the genre so many of the people we all know thought of as home for many years, and may still do. In a piece I've just written for another occasion, I ascribed this exile's thin-skinnedness about some of the oppressive or feel-good tendencies of a community genre to one very specific event we must all three of us have shared as teenaged readers of SF: that event was, of course, Sputnik.

Sputnik was an exile-maker. It ripped out the heart of the old SF—what in the same piece I ended up calling First SF—because it took free space away from us, transformed the platform of space, which drew us into the future, into the awful gabble of real-world history. For people like Norman, this may or may not have been an event of conscious (or even unconscious) significance (though I do know it was for me); but it did occur at the same time that the Eisenhower Years in America were reaching their numb apogee, at the same time that First SF had begun in any case to show signs of becoming retro.

Something was coming down on teenagers in 1957; and I think that something may well have been a tendency to self-exile. Whatever the causes (Norman—as an urban, New York Jew—had reasons of his own for feeling perhaps less than entirely at home with a genre whose heroes tended to come from Des Moines, Andromeda), Spinrad very quickly became a writer whose books were necessary to read (and to understand as texts which made extraordinarily fruitful use of SF material), but which were *never comfortable*. He was always in the group when needed—indeed he even served as president of the SFWA for a year or so—but always with that removed, blank gaze, like an outlaw staring back at you from the heart of the feast.

His less-good books are a bit loud but lonely; his best books—like *Bug Jack Barron*, *The Iron Dream*, *The Void Captain's Tale*, *Deus X*—are rich, skewed, deeply acerbic, knowing, populous with voices. They are mensch tales. They taste of forbidden meat. When you read them, you see the face of Norman Spinrad, which may have been unsmiling for a moment or two, break into a grin. It's the grin of a man who's forged his own books. It's the grin of a man's who's known fame, and deserved fame. It's the grin of the cat who walks alone. It's the grin of an exile who is at home with himself.

Norman Spinrad Bibliography

Novels

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Agent of Chaos (Belmont, 1967)

The Men in the Jungle (Doubleday 1967)

Bug Jack Barron (in *New Worlds* 1967-68; Avon 1969; hb Walker & Co, 1969)

The Iron Dream (Avon, 1972; hb Gregg Press, 1977)

Passing Through the Flame (Putnam's, 1975)

Riding the Torch (in *Threads of Time*, 1979; Dell double, 1978)

A World Between (Pocket Books, 1979)

Songs from the Stars (Simon & Schuster, 1980)

The Mind Game (1980, variant title: *The Process*, 1983)

The Void Captain's Tale (Pocket Books, 1983)

Child of Fortune (Bantam, 1985)

Little Heroes (Bantam, 1987)

Russian Spring (Bantam, 1991) *The Children of Hamelin* (Tafford, 1991)

Deus X (Bantam, 1993)

Vampire Junkies (chapbook, Gryphon, 1994)

Collections

The Last Hurrah of the Golden Horde (Doubleday, 1970)

No Direction Home (Pocket Books, 1975)

The Star-Spangled Future (Ace, 1979)

Other Americas (Bantam, 1988)

Non-Fiction

Experiment Perilous: Three Essays on Science Fiction (Algol Press chapbook, 1976)

Fragments of America (New Library Press, 1970)

The Reasons Behind the SFWA Model Paperback Contract (chapbook, 1978)

Staying Alive: A Writer's Guide (The Donning Company, 1983)

Science Fiction in the Real World (Southern Illinois University, 1990)

As Editor

The New Tomorrows (Belmont, 1971)

Modern Science Fiction (Doubleday, 1974)

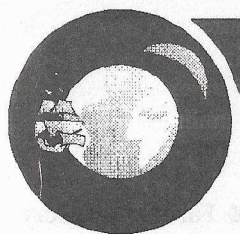
Teleplay

The Doomsday Machine (episode of *Star Trek*, 1966)

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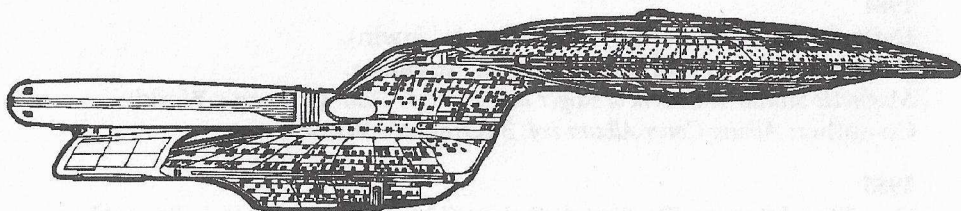
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Colin Greenland Bibliography

1982

'Miss Otis Regrets', 2nd prize, *The Fiction Magazine*/Faber & Faber short story competition.

1983

The Entropy Exhibition: Michael Moorcock and the British 'New Wave' in Science Fiction (Routledge)—J. Lloyd Eaton Award for SF Criticism, 1985.

1984

Daybreak on a Different Mountain (Allen & Unwin).

'A House of Straw and Paper', *Imagine* magazine.

Magnetic Storm: The Work of Roger and Martyn Dean (Dragon's World).

Co-author: *Album Cover Album vol. 3* (Dragon's World).

1985

Co-editor: *Interzone: The First Anthology* (J.M. Dent, St. Martin's Press, New York).

1986

Rückkehr im Morgenrot (Goldmann, 1986).

Co-author: *The Freelance Writer's Handbook* (Ebury Press)

1987

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'The Living End', *The Fiction Magazine*.

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'The Wish', *Other Edens II*, (Unwin Human).

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1989

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1991

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'The Stone Face', *Final Shadows*, (New York: Doubleday).

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Take Back Plenty, (New York: Avon).

1992

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Michael Moorcock: Death is No Obstacle, (collection of interviews—Savoy Books).

'Candy Comes Back', *In Dreams*, (Gollancz).

'Seasonal Greetings from Bacup', *R.E.M.*

'The Foreign Post', *Eurotemps*, (Penguin).

Variété Tussen de Sterren, (Holland: Luitingh-Sijthoff).

Reconquistar Plenty, (Barcelona: Martínez Roca).

1993

Den Ny Alice, (Århus: Klim).

Harm's Way, (Harper Collins and Avon).

Begegnungen auf dem Möbiusband, (München: Heyne).

'The Girl who Changed Everything', *The Weerde 2*, (Penguin).

'Lodgings', *Touch Wood*, (Little, Brown).

Work in progress

Seasons of Plenty, (Vol.2 of the Tabitha Jute trilogy).

The Sun Garden of the Infanta with Iain M. Banks, Paul J. McAuley, Mary Gentle and Bob Shaw, (serial, BBC Radio 4).

Tempesta, with Dave McKean, (Graphic novel).

'Temptations of Iron', *Elric: Legends of the White Wolf*, (Atlanta: White Wolf).

Spanish and Portuguese translations of *Take Back Plenty*; German translation of *Harm's Way*.

Acknowledgments

As with any other convention, a lot of hard work has been done in order to make Wincon III possible. The committee would like to give their heartfelt thanks to our guests, Algis, James, Norman and Colin; to several people outside the normal fannish universe for coming to talk to us, namely Alex Chandon, Steve Ellis, David Wright, Alan Bond and Laura Hill; and to Steve Green; to Roger Robinson for bibliographic help; to all the participants in the many and varied items held over the weekend; to John Murray of the bar; to everyone who volunteered, even if we couldn't find anything for you to do this time; and finally to all the members, without whom this whole exercise would be completely pointless.

A number of other people who aren't part of the convention deserve thanks, too. These are; the staff of King Alfred's College; Southern Arts; Carys Thomas of Hodder & Stoughton for books; Little, Brown; The Womens' Press; Transworld; Rosemary Day of John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., for reducing the printing costs of the PRs just about as far as it's possible to; Adobe UK, for providing a trial copy of Acrobat™ Exchange; Steve Tait of John Wiley for help with the T-shirts; and Michael Yden and all at KEY Print for working to a nearly impossible deadline.

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Membership, Publications

John Bark (comparable to Tolkien at his most emaciated), Promotions

Andy Croft (comparable to Tolkien at his most Welsh), Tech

Anne-Marie Wright (comparable to Tolkien at his most curvaceous),
Programming, Fan Room

Terry Hunt (comparable to Tolkien at his most peripatetic), Site Liaison,
Publications

Jeff Suter (comparable to Tolkien at forty), Programming, Fan Room

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and **Rachael Wright** (comparable to Tolkien at his most dribbly), Financial
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A26	Mike Allum	A75	Tom Nanson	A124	The Reverend Jim
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Colophon, or Technical Stuff for the Sad

This Programme Book was edited and produced by Pete Wright. Most of the articles were presented in electronic form; either on disk or by e-mail. Those articles submitted on paper were scanned by a Mustek GS 800 hand scanner and run through Perceive Personal, an optical character recognition package. Graphics were scanned and retouched in Picture Publisher LE. The page make-up was done in Pagemaker 4.0 for Windows on a Salamander 486 DX 33 MHz PC. Proofs and CRC were produced on a Hewlett Packard Deskjet 510 printer, the CRC being printed on to Mellotex 115 gsm paper.



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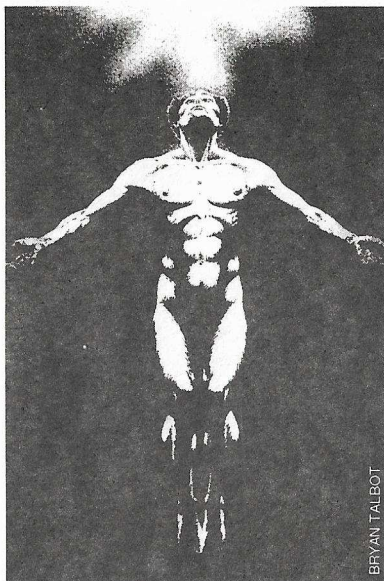
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