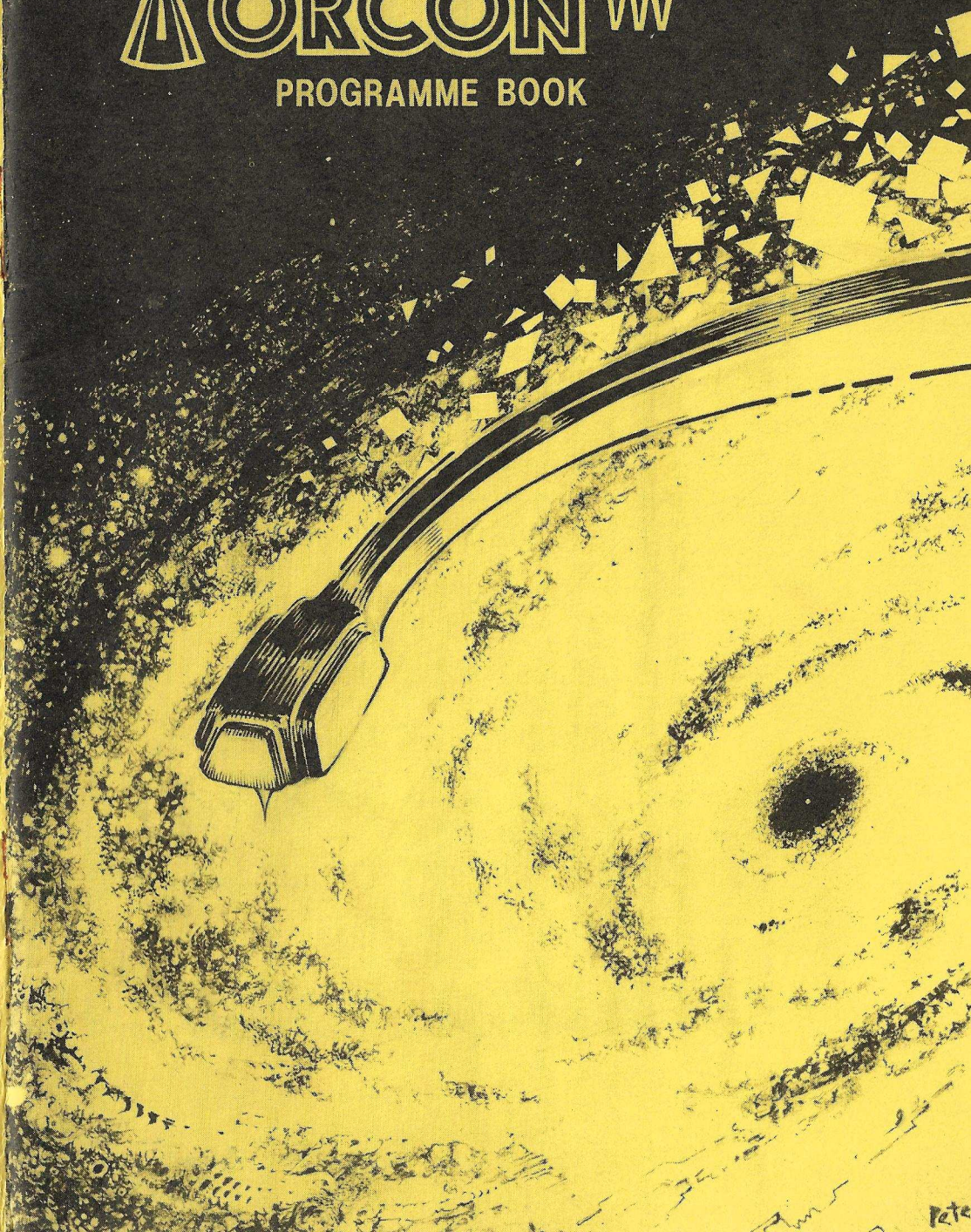


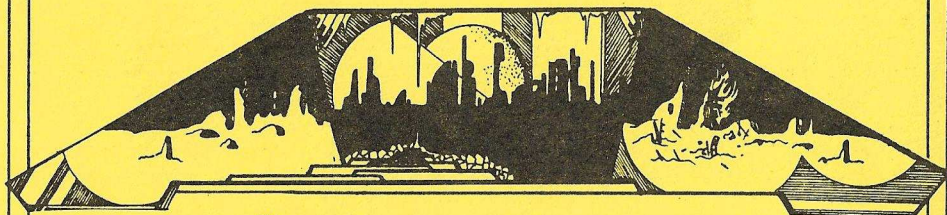
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# introduction ...

Conventions have been going through something of an identity crisis recently. "What are we for? Where are we going?" they have asked, laying their enormous clanking bodies down on the psychiatrist's couch.

Yorcon III is the heir of a tradition: that of the British National Science Fiction Convention, a tradition which began as long ago as 1937, when a small group of fans gathered in this very city to hold the country's first ever SF convention. Yorcon III is the 41st national convention since then, the 36th since the event became an annual one. In the intervening years, the national convention has grown in size and scope, reflecting the growing influence of science fiction in the public consciousness.

SF is no longer restricted to the written word, in magazines with self-adulatory titles read by a relatively small group of fanatical devotees. These days it is difficult to avoid the stuff, however hard you might wish to try. Turn on a TV commercial and you see a city transported through the sky. Open a packet of crisps and you're likely to find that they're shaped like bug-eyed monsters.

Recent Eastercons, while not paying too much attention to the shape of their crisps, have nevertheless taken pains to reflect the various forms which SF has come to adopt: films, video, artwork, costume, gaming, and music, along with the parallel sub-culture of fannish fandom, of which more later.

"Do I need all this?" the conventions have asked themselves, racked with self-doubt. Last year, Mexicon decided it could get along very nicely by concentrating on the written word, while other cons have chosen to ignore SF altogether. The sleek look is fashionable. Conventions have chosen to slim down.

Yorcon III, you will notice, remains obstinately plump and rosy, believing that while small conventions might very well be a good thing, big ones don't necessarily have to be a bad one.

It's long been a standing joke, and to some extent one based in truth, that hardened con-goers don't actually attend programme items, preferring to chat with their friends in the bar instead. In recent years, some con committees seem to have taken this idea a bit too literally. As attendances have grown in size, and the problems associated with running conventions have swollen accordingly, so much effort has been required on operational and administrative matters that the content of the programme itself has been shoved down the list of priorities. "Nobody goes to the programme anyway" might have a ring of truth to it, but it is also a self-fulfilling prophecy. The more the programme is ignored because people don't go to it, then the more people won't go to it. The current unpopularity of large cons might have less to do with their size *per se* than with the size of the effort required to run the damn things, and the siphoning off of the committee's creative energies into hiring equipment, making badges, and helping lord mayors up off the floor.

What I'm leading up to, as if you hadn't already guessed, is that Yorcon III has tried to bear in mind that the various strands of our programme are important, and that even the most hardened bar-proper has a secret wish to be enticed into a programme item at least once during the weekend. We think we've assembled a varied and powerful selection of enticements, with some new faces up on the stage and some new films on the screen. Full details are presented in the Programme Notes, the pull-out section in the centre of this booklet. In addition to a timetable and a plan of the hotels, the Programme Notes contain brief comments on

the programme items, so that you can get a good idea of exactly what you'll be sacrificing drinking time to attend and, where appropriate, have a chance to think about the item in advance. The Programme Notes are a space-saving miracle: sleek and slim as a small convention, they will fit easily into a pocket or handbag and serve as an informative companion throughout the weekend.

Actually, the rest of the Programme Book is pretty informative too. If you bear with me, I'll tell you about it.

The identity crisis facing conventions has coincided with a similar crisis facing written science fiction. While special effects are doing wonders for the genre on the big screen, written SF has lost much ground to fantasy blockbusters, most of them bearing more than a passing resemblance to the work of Tolkien, while some of its leading exponents in this country have chosen, at least in name, to become "mainstream" writers.

Increasingly, the future seems to be overtaking science fiction, with technological advances reshaping our society more quickly than authors can manage to write about it. "What do we do now the future is here?" asked Chris Evans in the Mexican programme book, and we thought this a sufficiently pertinent question to put it to the rest of you in our essay competition. The winning entry, by Richard A. Slaughter, is included in this booklet. The article provides some informed suggestions for the way ahead, and serves as an introduction to the panel discussion on the subject which we're running on the Main Programme.

Our Guest of Honour, Gregory Benford, is one writer who is in no danger of being overtaken by the technological revolution. Tom Shippey has provided an introduction to the writing of this author and physicist; while Colin Greenland brings us up to date with the state of science fiction in his survey of the books published in the UK during 1984. In case any of you should disagree with Colin, you have the opportunity to make your own views known about some of those books when you vote in this year's BSFA Awards. Mike Moir's article provides the background to these premier British science fiction awards.

Somewhere near the start of this article, I mentioned "fannish fandom", the extraordinary sub-culture which underlies this convention, like aliens under the floorboards. Up in the Fan Room, Jimmy Robertson has assembled some displays to illustrate the fanzines, apas, and local groups which, along with conventions, provide the framework for fandom. If you're interested, why not wander up there and see what's going on, perhaps even stay for one of the programme items. I can guarantee it'll either change your life or confuse you a great deal, perhaps even both.

As for fanzines, one famous example, **Void**, was published a few years back by Gregory Benford, while a very good current example, **Tiger Tea 2**, the latest offering from our Fan Guest of Honour Linda Pickersgill, is available free to members of Yorcon III. Linda herself will be giving "fannish advice" in the Fan Room, and Malcolm Edwards' introduction to this fannish mega-star will give you some idea of whether you want to risk taking it or not.

Lilian Edwards provides further illumination on fandom when she writes about the events of 1984; while Rob Hansen introduces two more special guests at the convention: TAFF winners Patrick & Teresa Nielsen Hayden. TAFF? Don't worry -- you'll find an explanation of that, along with various other fannish traditions, awards, and phenomena, later on.

The Film and Video Programmes, along with the rest of the Yorcon III events, are covered in the Programme Notes. All that remains for me to do is to wish you a very enjoyable convention, and to assure you that Yorcon III is foregoing psychoanalysis this weekend in order to concentrate on giving you a good time.

*Simon Ounsley*

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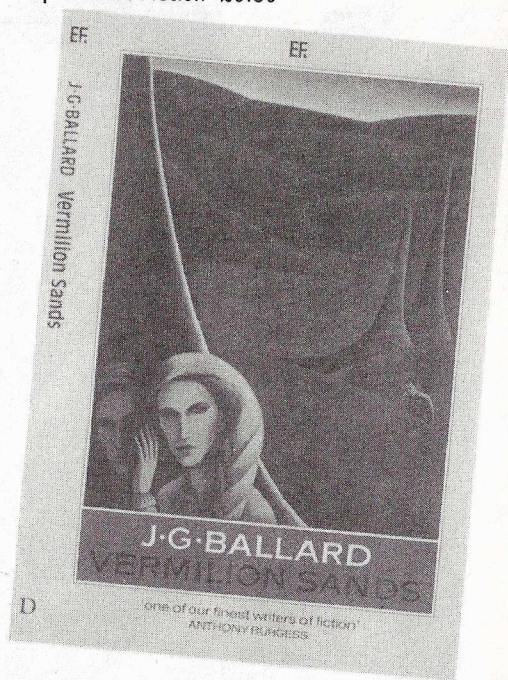
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An Introduction to our GoH

# Gregory Benford

'AN APPRECIATION OF A REALIST'

BY Tom Shippey

Oh, Aristotle would have been severe with Greg Benford! It's all down there in the *Poetics*, in black and white: "the unity of a plot does not consist, as some suppose, in its having one man as its subject." How do you like that, Benford? "As some suppose." Doesn't the refined Greek sarcasm really burn you up?

Benford tends to write books that are, in a way, like beads on a string. If *the Stars are Gods* (1977 collaboration with Gordon Eklund) begins in 1992 and ends in 2061, with different settings over those seventy-four years (Mars, the Moon, Africa, Jupiter, Titan), but everything happens to one long-lived person. In *the Ocean of Night* (1978 in the UK) only stretches twenty years, but still has a series of apparently separate incidents (alien derelict, alien probe, encounter with Bigfoot) that just happen to happen to one person. Meanwhile *Timescape*, which won all the awards in 1980, though not a "lifetime" novel, still asks you to keep putting together one sequence of events in the 1960s and another in the 1990s: it's a "shuttle" novel, like Ursula Le Guin's *The Dispossessed*.



But what does all this mean? [It means Shippey's dead set on showing off about Aristotle, and anything will do to get him in. Ed.] Maybe nothing. Maybe it's just a way to write. But it does point to one quality in Benford's work, and that is scale: he writes books which are difficult to shrink to a tidy pattern. They cover long periods, and though they don't -- by science fiction standards -- go haring about the galaxy splitting parsecs as if they didn't matter, they do get over something like a genuine sense of the size of space, especially as compared with the size of people. Even the titles -- *Against Infinity*, *In the Ocean of Night*, *Across the Sea of Suns*, *Deeper than the Darkness* -- point to a vision of "what it's like out there", which not many people can project, and which some people, of course, ever since the 60s and the New Wave and "Inner Space", think is just old hat.

Is Benford old-hat hard SF, then? Sometimes he looks like a writer of very "hard-hat" SF, you know, what Clint Eastwood would read if he ever did. I don't think it's just a joke that we have a Nixon Base and an Agnew Point (remember Spiro Agnew?) in one of the books. Sometimes, too, a Benford book will contain an absolutely vintage inset *Astounding* story, like the ones you could read back when it really was *Astounding*: there's the puzzle story in *Ocean* where the lady has to get an oxygen bottle from her wrecked moonflyer, and has nothing to get it with (except the alien force-field that wrecked her moonflyer), or the start of *Stars are Gods*, where the source of life on Mars turns out to be --

guess what? -- a Russian rocket. But the hero hushes it up, so as not to discourage exploration! All this has the authentic ring of 50s and 60s SF, the "up and out", "never know when you're licked" school.

But that's not where it ends. There are some very unexpected things in Benford. One is a very strong sense, not just of space as a problem to be licked and people as hero-figures to do the licking, but of people as they really are. This is very rare in fiction. Not just science fiction, any fiction. The novel is a very unrealistic art-form. For one thing, its authors are always telling you what people think (a thing no-one has ever known since the dawn of time, unless you believe in telepathy, that is). And they never reproduce real conversation, they always tidy it up. And (these days) they hardly ever say anything about what most people spend most of their energies if not time on, namely work.

Science fiction has cardboard characters, in short, but so has "mainstream". Now read chapter 20 of **Timescape**. To me, anyway, this is a lot more like real life than anything else I can remember reading. It is, it's true, deeply cynical ("Cynic" is a word invented by optimists to criticise realists", Benford 1980). It covers a physics PhD "candidacy" exam, and though I have never been to one of those, I recognise everything about it: the four participants, the one who is on the candidate's side (and so has to nail him sometimes to disguise the times he feeds him easy questions), the one who is anti (and so has to look extra fair), the one who appears to be asleep and for whose interest and vote the others are competing -- I recognise especially the way it switches from deadly dull to suddenly tense. People spend their lives, and wear out their hearts, fighting battles like that. But they are not a subject for fiction (except in Benford). Why not? People in reality get more het up over committees than over sex. Novelists just aren't allowed to mention it.

Benford is a major realistic novelist who actually thinks (a) about people (b) about his craft. I still think John W. Campbell would have bought all his stories, if Benford had been twenty years younger, and not just because of the "hard-hattery" and the fascination with space pioneers. Benford said, in the "Author's note" to **The Stars in Shroud**, a 1978 rewrite of **Deeper than the Darkness** (1970), that his first novel had been exhumed from the "attic" of SF's old ideas. He meant that he wanted to improve on that, but at least he's been up in the attic. Every now and then you get a hint of Heinlein, a dash of Blish -- as I read **Ocean** I muttered to myself at one point, "that's a notion from Clarke". Six pages later Clarke was quoted, on the rather alarming fact that too many novas come from one part of the sky. Is something doing them? Is it coming this way?

Respect/rivalry with the ancestors, a wish to go further than them but to see what they did. This is another quality of Benford's, a refreshingly undaunted one in a weary literary world where the big cry these days is "burden of the past" -- it's all been done, you know, so if you want to be fresh you must be miles off centre too. Well, Benford clearly doesn't believe it. He respects the SF ancestors, and the fiction ancestors, respects them enough to imitate them...

This gets him into trouble. **Against Infinity** (1983) started the row over Benford and Faulkner. Back in 1942 William Faulkner published a story called "The Bear" about how a boy, and General Compton, and Major de Spain, and the old Indian Sam Fathers, go out into the wilderness to hunt the bear Old Ben, which no-one can catch till they get the real dog, the brave dog Lion, to bring him to bay. **Against Infinity** is set on Ganymede. In it a boy, and Colonel Lopez, and Major Sanchez, and the old pioneer Matt, go out to hunt the alien artefact the Aleph, which no-one can catch till they get the real cyborg, the brave cyborg Eagle, to bring him to bay. Lion is killed halting Old Ben. "He died at

sundown" (Faulkner). Eagle is killed stopping the Aleph. "It died at noon" (Benford). There is a terrible row about burying Sam in the wilderness, Indian-style, ditto over freezing Old Matt in the Ganymede glacier.

This isn't coincidence. It isn't plagiarism either. It's a tribute, for Christ's sake! It's also a statement by Benford about being in the mainstream, but different. It's also (I think) a statement about like circumstances creating like social patterns (as Heinleinesque a statement as you could hope to find). There are also, of course, many many differences from Faulkner, like the fact that in Benford the Aleph comes back to life and almost seems to bring back with it the wilderness. For although America may be doomed to fill up and go suburban in Faulkner, that can't happen to space. Faulkner called another of his novels **The Undefeated**, but his style of hero -- the Southern woodsman, the gentleman hillbilly -- stays undefeated in Benford, because there's always a borderland for him, or a borderspace.

One other thing -- a hard thing for SF fans to take, with their general hard-boiled incurious beerswilling [I have cut out several sentences of abuse. Ed.] expect from oafish insensibility?

That is, that Benford is clearly fascinated by immortality. **Against Infinity** has, near the end, the boy Manuel seeing himself immortalized inside the Aleph's infinite memory. **Stars are Gods** has its hero rescued from "fluxlife" by the crystal lattice. **Ocean's** last paragraphs are a vision of time and eternity. **Timescape**, most memorably, ends up with Gordon Bernstein seeing the crowd who watch him get his physics prize for picking up messages from the future he has now altered, and with him having a vision of time as waves, and linear movement through it, past to future, as an illusion, an illusion his physics has just disproved. Really... but we don't know what "real", in a cosmic sense, is. Still, in Bernstein's vision death is an illusion too. For a moment, at the end of **Timescape**, you can see how that might be so.

Not many authors can make you feel that, in SF, out of SF, verse, prose, Aristotle, whoever. There are a lot of other things you can say about Benford, such as that he is very inventive, imaginative, prophetic (he had "diebacks" in Ethiopia three years before they happened), knowledgeable, Anglophile, etc. But I think he is ultimately a visionary, a soothsayer. He gives you moments when "the light of sense goes out/But with a flash that has revealed/The invisible world".

### Novels by Gregory Benford

**Deeper Than the Darkness** (1970) rewritten as **The Stars in Shroud** (1980)  
**Jupiter Project** (1970) rewritten, same title (1981)  
**If the Stars are Gods** (with Gordon Eklund) (1977)  
**In the Ocean of Night** (1977)  
**Shiva Descending** (with William Rotsler) (1978)  
**Timescape** (1980)  
**Find the Changeling** (with Gordon Eklund) (1980)  
**Against Infinity** (1983)  
**Across the Sea of Suns** (1984)  
**Artefact** (forthcoming)

*[Tom Shippey is Yorcon III's Programme Consultant.]*

An Introduction to our FAN GOH

# Linda Pickersgill

BY Malcolm Edwards

What are the ingredients which go to make up a Fan Guest of Honour? A significant contribution to fandom, preferably through both fanzines and conventions. A warm and wonderful personality. A deep current involvement in fandom. Add a touch of monosodium glutamate, a pinch of colour and flavour, and you have the complete recipe. It describes Linda admirably, though so far as I know she is constituted wholly of natural ingredients.



Linda is an American fan. You have to remember that. This used to be a bad thing, and still is if the American fan is living in (say) Puerto Rico. But after the 1979 Worldcon a strange phenomenon took place here, which sounds a bit like a Roger Corman horror quickie: **Invasion of the American Women**. They came, they married our male fans, they quickly started to run the place. (One of them is running this convention. As D. West might say, this proves it.) Americans have never had to contend with the Fall of the British Empire. They are not sickly, etiolated and exhausted. They have get-up-and-go. Merely watching them can be an enfeebling experience for the average Brit.

Linda is a case in point. Once she took up residence here she quickly began to tackle projects hitherto believed inconceivable in British fandom, such as running a successful APA and marrying Greg Pickersgill.

Those of you unfamiliar with the finer points of modern fandom will be asking questions now. What's an APA? What's a Pickersgill? Some things you'll have to find out for yourselves, but an APA (= Amateur Press Association) is somewhere between a collocation of (mostly small) regular fanzines and an extended correspondence chain. All members have to contribute regular written material to the mailings (which are sent out, typically, every six weeks or two months). For many years the folk wisdom of British fandom had maintained that an APA's chance of success over here was as remote as the likelihood of Leeds United getting back in the First Division this season. Linda and Chris Atkinson had been discussing the formation of some kind of women's group in fandom. Linda had been a member of American APAs (they infest US fandom like cockroaches), and suggested something of the same sort. **The Women's Periodical** was born.

People scoffed. It'll never work, they said. It's all very well to have a women-only organization, they said, but only if you let men join too. We'll show you what you ought to do, they said, starting **Shallow End** instead (anyone

remember **Shallow End?**).

But it did work. Chris soon got involved in traitorously adding to the male population, so it was Linda's energy that made it succeed. How well it succeeded can be judged by the number of other APAs which sprang up in its wake, like fantasy trilogies **apres** Tolkein. Men-only APAs. Teddy-bear-only APAs. (You think I jest?) This is all Linda's fault. But **TWP** was largely responsible for an amazingly rapid blowing-away of some of the sexist cobwebs from British fandom, as well as the most remarkable infusion of new talents and new personalities in years.

It was Linda, too (I am told), along with Abi Frost, who was responsible for pushing certain people into putting into practice some of what they'd been preaching, thus giving birth to last year's Mexican, of whose committee she was an important part. There's another Mexican next year, and she is deeply involved with that. And if (when) Britain wins the 1987 Worldcon, Linda will be committee supremo in charge of fan programming and fan room. If there were such a post as President of British Fandom, she would probably win a landslide victory.

So what is she like, this paragon of virtue and energy? Expecting to have to answer this question, and knowing that to understand someone you have to understand their background, I took a trip in 1980 to her home town of New Orleans ("Noo Awlins" to the locals). If you've ever listened to Credence Clearwater Revival records, or read **Fevre Dream**, or seen **Southern Comfort**, you'll know something about the place: the bayous, the Mississippi, the mad inbred Cajuns lurking in the swamps, the armadillos, the snakes, the heat. But there's more (and worse). In summer the major TV news items are the daily mosquito-warnings. The local cockroaches (which they call water-bugs, to disguise the truth) are the size of small mice and resistant to anything short of a tactical nuclear weapon. The murky bayou waters hide enormous catfish which make alarming clicking sounds and stare at you with expressions of primeval cunning and malevolence. The graves are all above ground, because if you bury anybody (or anything) the first heavy rain brings them floating back to your front door. All of this means that citizens of the place grow up either hopelessly psychotic or completely unflappable.

There are compensations, though. Half-a-gallon of Southern Comfort cost about \$9.00 in the supermarket when I was there (the supermarkets have drink sections larger than their food sections). The bars keep convention hours all the year round. This means that those citizens who aren't in drying-out clinics or in jail develop happy, hedonistic personalities and a remarkable capacity for driving in straight lines while unable to stand up.

Linda, fortunately, is neither psychotic nor incoherent, and is a free woman.

The thing is, you see, nobody has a bad word to say about her. (A cliché, but true: she even contrives to be permanently and improbably nice without offending the curmudgeons among us.) She is sensible and sane. Her experience as a schoolteacher with unruly American adolescents is ideal training for dealing gently but firmly with the cretins who comprise 99% of fandom when they get out of hand, as I can testify all too well. She also has amazing stamina: if there is a party going on somewhere, long after nearly everybody has gone to bed or passed out, she will be in the thick of it, still unflappable, still steering in straight lines.

So watch out for the blonde American who looks a bit like John Denver, listen for the funny giggle, and when you see her utter the magic words "You are Linda Pickersgill and I want to buy you a pint of Guinness". This is guaranteed to get you off on the right foot.

*[Malcolm Edwards edited the award-winning fanzine Tapper. He works as an editor for a leading London publishing house.]*

# UK SF 1984

## Colin Greenland

There were several brilliant unclassifiable books of special interest to sf readers in 1984. Angela Carter's baroque, big-hearted **Nights at the Circus** spilled out so many good things it was a wonder how she'd packed them all in. J. G. Ballard's **Empire of the Sun** finally delivered up the earliest fibrillations of that extraordinary imagination, and became his best and most successful novel. Thomas M. Disch gave a highly characteristic rendition of the afterlife in **The Businessman: A Tale of Terror**. Brian Aldiss took a break from Heliocography to assemble **Seasons in Flight**, a thoughtful set of variations on the imaginary folktale. Michael Moorcock's **The Laughter of Carthage** served another huge, spicy plateful from the memoirs of Col. Pyat, while "The Alchemist's Question" (in his collection **The Opium General**) really, really was the last Jerry Cornelius story ever, probably.

Which leaves... which leaves me sitting on the floor, surrounded by forty sf books. Say forty. Britain's top forty, disregarding that it's also Britain's bottom forty, Britain's only forty. I didn't read them all, and am inexpressibly grateful to two who did, it seems: Roz Kaveney, and Dave Langford (whose **The Leaky Establishment** gave me some of the wryest laughs last year, while lifting the lid off an unconsidered source of nuclear terror). Forty books, just about half-and-half British and American. If new Euro or Soviet translations came out here in 1984, they didn't pass by Roz or Dave or me.

Holding on grimly to the no. 40 slot, it's Old Blue Eyes himself, L. Ron Hubbard, with **Battlefield Earth**. Dave? "An 819-page opusculum which does for sf what the Rev. Jim Jones did for soft drinks." It's the Real Thing!

Not the Real Thing at all is **Koyama's Diamond**, from Adrian Berry. **Daily Telegraph** science correspondent mixes gung-ho capitalism, Ancient Roman kitsch and suspiciously simplistic Higher Physics, and reckons what he ends up with is science fiction. Come off it, Ade, says the Yorcon Programme Book, sticking him firmly down at no. 39. And clunking down to no. 38, oh dear, it's **The Chromosome Game**, Christopher Hodder-Williams's comeback. After the holocaust, the future belongs to a gaggle of kiddies raised from seed in a robot nursery



submarine. What do they invent? Civilization as we know it, wouldn't you know it. No. 37 is Frankie with **Heretics of Dune**. What's this one about, Roz? "Galaxy rulers swapping crabbed epigrams political and metaphysical, pausing occasionally to sip tea or break each other's necks." Sounds familiar. More big heavy names squatting at the bottom of the pile: Robert Heinlein's **Job: A Comedy of Justice** is superfluous, Dave reckons, as a cover-version of James Branch Cabell's much sneakier **Jurgen** (currently in paperback from Unwin). That's no. 36.

35, 35 -- oh, look, the rest of the bottom ten you can sort out for yourselves. 30th equal, then, are Anne McCaffrey's **The Survivors: Dinosaur Planet II** (Dave: "a sequel to what even rabid fans agree is her worst book... half-hearted and dull") -- Ian Watson's **Converts** (Roz: "an ill-judged attempt at a comic novel") -- Jack Chalker's back-to-back, **The Return of Nathan Brazil** and **Twilight at the Well of Souls** ("brought the interminable Well World series to a merciful yet hackneyed close": Dave) -- Larry Niven's **The Integral Trees** ("an amusing essay about a demented astrophysical setup, disastrously padded to novel size": Dave again) -- and Douglas Adams's **So Long, and Thanks for All the Fish**, which is marginally preferable to a slap in the face with a wet kipper; and almost but not quite entirely indistinguishable from a slap in the face with Douglas Adams's wallet.

Right. 27th equal. Robert Silverberg's **Valentine Pontifex**, in which the indigenous Metamorphs try to repossess Majipoor from the noble, pure, hygienic Valentine & co., whip up a nice line in biological warfare, and then fail at the eleventh hour because Silverberg remembers this is supposed to be a fairy-story. Me, I was cheering the Indians. Sharing that prestigious no. 27 spot is our own Ian Watson, whose **Books of the River** and **of the Stars** are very much, shall we say, in the spirit of Silverbob's dinky epic, but much more politically enlightened, of course. Just squeezing in at 26, **The Robots of Dawn**, Uncle Isaac's surprise sequel to **The Caves of Steel** and **The Naked Sun**. "Unlike them," says Roz, "it succeeds neither as sf nor as a detective story" -- but, Dave points out, it does have "more painstakingly described toilet scenes than sf has ever known!"

At 25: John Brunner's **The Crucible of Time**, a sort of escape saga, charting the growth of science on a doomed planet. Will they get into space in time? Neither as alien nor as novel as it could have been. No. 24 is William Rollo's **The Big Wheel**. Undercover Brit on orbiting Pentagon strives to stop the equivalent Astrogorodok from blowing them up when Earth goes bang. Taut heroics, and enough technical stuff to build your own (non-aligned) space station.

**A Theatre of Timesmiths** is at 23, a sort-of-symbolic mystery from Garry Kilworth. Morag MacKenzie penetrates the ice mountain that has always surrounded her city, only to find that the outside world is exactly what she supposed. As usual, lots of different ingredients in a Kilworth stew, but none quite cooked enough. Even more ingredients, funny animals, wild theories of physics, in Barry Bayley's **The Zen Gun**, a weirdo space-romp docking at no. 22. A pity he left out the style. Just outside that tingling top twenty, your guest and mine, Greg Benford, with **Across the Sea of Suns**, the continuing adventures of Nigel Walmsley (see **In the Ocean of Night**). Mixed, we reckon, but featuring "the most terrifyingly plausible alien invasion for years," says Roz.

No. 20! Hanging in there, it's Vonda McIntyre and **Superluminal**. Dave? "Combined OK writing and characters, silly science, corny plot and great icky dollops of sentiment... lightweight entertainment." Space, space and more space: James P. Hogan's **Voyage from Yesteryear** pits glum Terran anal-retentives against an agreeably laid-back space colony which had slipped their minds while they were busy doing other things, World War Three and that. Chiron 1, Earth 0, at no. 19. No no. 18: 17th equal are Sydney J. Van Scyoc's **Darkchild** and **Bluesong**, vols. 1 and 2 of the Sunstone trilogy. Potent if

lachrymose adolescent traumas in a world of inconceivably strange natural and mystical systems. Not as tacky as they look.

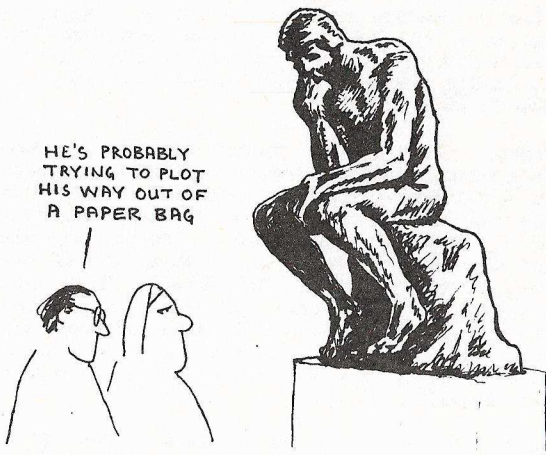
At 16, it's Donald Kingsbury's controversial **Geta**, an epic of ritual cannibalism on the poison planet. Others turn away, but Dave maintains: "Obsessively sub-Herbert biology and sociology make this succeed through sheer ghastly unremittingness... but venturers into the untamed interior of **Geta** should take a ball of string." Roz's vote for John Calvin Batchelor sees his **The Founding of the People's Republic of Antarctica** rising to no. 15: "Over the top in its depressing view of human cruelty, but intermittently starkly impressive, not least for its account of an entirely imaginary war in the Falklands." And a surprising leap to no. 14 for Mick Farren and **Protectorate**. A future-feudal Earth of decadent aristocrats and funky slum-dwellers, under the mandibles of inscrutable alien waspmen, is convulsed by the rise of a gutter messiah. The old tunes are the best, Mick, eh?

Garry Kilworth's second go hits no. 13, with **The Songbirds of Pain**, an evocative scrapbook of compulsions and convulsions, self-immolations and souls in torment, all elbowing for transcendence, makes you glad you're normal, really. No. 12: Harry Harrison, **West of Eden**, in which the dinosaurs don't die out but develop intelligence and imperialism, unchecked until they run into these mammalian bipeds unknown to science. Compulsive reading, but it ends far too quickly and anti-climactically. The Yorcon Programme Book asks, Who silenced Harrison? We name

the Dinosaur Men: L. Ron Hubbard, Robert Heinlein... Patrick Moore loved it, and if he's not descended from dinosaurs, who is? Stuart Gordon's busy, busy **Fire in the Abyss** burns at no. 11. Nasty US Navy Project Vulcan untimely rips Sir Walter Raleigh's stepbrother and a host of others from their several epochs into a near-future rapidly shaking itself to pieces. Good intentions crowded out by too many characters and incidents, but a striking, stirring read all the same.

It's the Top Ten! And at no. 10, Richard Cowper gently plucks the secret petals of memory in **The Tithonian Factor**, wistful tales of haunted ones. Soulful, sweet-natured, there's nothing more lyrical in the entire list. But you can dance to no. 9, **Fire Pattern**, a sure-nough Bob Shaw adventure. A middle-aged journalist on a small-town rag sets out to investigate spontaneous human combustion, ends up in the Antarctic (via Mercury) holding the fate of the human race, literally, in his hand. It promises at first to be more serious and adult than it really is, but it keeps you turning those pages. At no. 8, Paul Preuss with his **Broken Symmetries**: not so much sf as a disaster novel set around a particle accelerator in near-future Hawaii. The good thing here is that Preuss has thought much harder about his assorted characters and cultures than the made-for-tv regulations of the genre normally prescribe, and Dave recommends it for its look at "how science is really done".

No. 7 is Keith Roberts's **Pavane**, which you've all read, but which Gollancz published here in full for the first time in 1984. No. 6 is John Sladek's **The**





**Lunatics of Terra**, a juicy if repetitive collection with some wonderful afterwords. Chuckle, snort. And no. 5 is what turned out to be Walter Tevis's last novel, **The Steps of the Sun**: for my money an eloquent and effective journey from gloom to light, often reminiscent of Philip K. Dick. Others hated it, because it doesn't take its science fiction seriously, goddammit.

A big jump up to the top four, all books as near perfect as we're likely to get. At no. 4, **The Glamour** by Christopher Priest, who will tell you it's not sf at all, though it's the best treatment of (may I say it?) \*nv\*s\*b\*1\*ty ever, and, for so complex a book, superlatively readable. No. 3 is **Neuromancer** by William Gibson, hailed by many as a new Alfred Bester, and god knows the old one needs replacing. It's the first proper speculative look at information technology and its social and psychological consequences. It's also a tacky-glam hardboiled thriller, bursting with confidence and sparking in all directions. At no. 2: Robert Holdstock, with **Mythago Wood**, a rich, mysterious, enthralling journey to the heart of a very English inner landscape. An entirely original psychological invention growing from the sturdy stem of our oldest mythical tradition.

So -- roll the drums, flash the strobes -- yes, it's Britain's best and brightest hope for sf, Gwyneth Jones, straight in at no. 1 with the astounding **Divine Endurance**. **Divine Endurance** is impossibly good. I've been going on about it so long I've run out of adjectives. Gwyneth Jones (only the fourth woman in the whole forty, what's wrong with us all?) is like Gene Wolfe and Ursula Le Guin rolled into one. **Divine Endurance** is in paperback now, so you can buy it and read it, and then you can read it again while you're waiting for her new one, **Escape Plans**, which is the second proper speculative look at i.t. and its social and psychological consequences, and will be no. 1 in 1986.

*[Colin Greenland is a freelance writer and critic, and an editor of Interzone. His first novel, Daybreak on a Different Mountain, was recently published by Allen and Unwin.]*

# Albacon 85

July 19th-22nd 1985

Glasgow's 10th Science Fiction Convention

Guests Of Honour

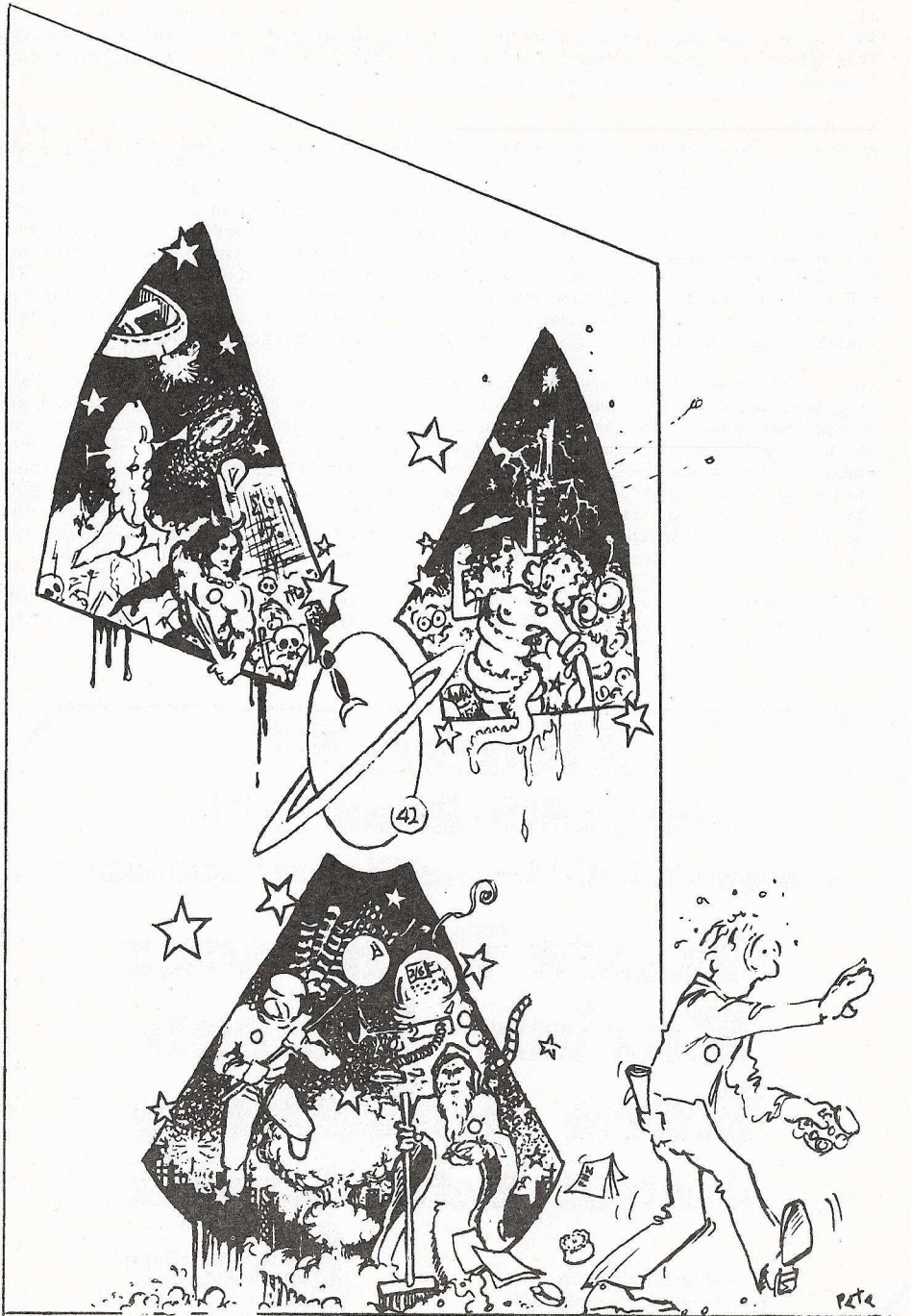
Harlan Ellison

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# Who Controls the Past Controls the Future;

## FANDOM 84

Lilian Edwards

It's a handy sort of generalization to say that fannish activity can be divided into fanzines and conventions. Looking back on 1984, the first comment that springs to mind is that 1984 was not a year for talking about fanzines (except in the negative sense of "where are they?" or "why is everyone doing apazines instead?", of which more anon). Indeed, for the first third of 1984, practically all the not-too-tremendous fanzine activity there was in the UK seemed devoted to the topic of -- guess what -- conventions, as both Seacon, the combined Eastercon/Eurocon, and Mexicon, the so-called convention for "real" science fiction fans, raised enormous clouds of controversy, obfuscation and hurt feelings in their ponderous wakes.

The Seacon controversy had its roots in years of steadily enlarging Eastercons, with more and more of the new attendees being members of the public drawn in by the heightened post-Star-Wars awareness of SF as a media phenomenon, rather than recruited from the traditional ranks of spotty adolescents who had spent the last sixteen years reading Robert Heinlein under the bedclothes. Popular myth had it that these new media fans, having been enticed to conventions by passively watching SF (as opposed to passively reading it) were more likely to be deadweight consumers, supercargo in the video programme rather than active fans. Not only did Seacon intend to actively pursue as many fans of all shapes and colours as it could get, but to add insult to injury it also proposed to add to the hordes of homegrown fringe-fans the massed garlic-scented ranks of Continental fandom, for the Brunner masterplan was to forge Eastercon and Eurocon into a synthesized spectacular which would rival the 79 Worldcon for size and significance, while still fulfilling the values of the traditional beer-swilling Eastercon (whatever they might be). Opposition to this scheme was expressed none too rationally as a fear that honest Brits would be driven from their own bars by evil-smelling Swedes and stamped on by spiky-heeled Servalan lookalikes -- or words very much to that effect. As with the Mexican arguments later, emotion had more to say than reason. In the event, it could scarcely be denied by any of the 6,000 or so Seacon committee members that the con definitely Did Not Work; but this failure seemed far more attributable to a combination of the Metropole Hotel's legendary doubling as a black hole, leading to people vanishing for days whenever anyone tried to find them, the incompetence of the well-meaning but frankly doomed committee, which often seemed, like the dinosaur, to have its brain too far from its body to be much use, and the most atrociously offensive security team ever mounted (the notorious "radio wallies" who even duffed up an, er um, committee member by mistake one night), than to any subtly corruptive European influence. Good things could be said about Seacon -- it secured a major coup in presenting a live concert by famed hippies Hawkwind, and most neos, as opposed to seasoned fans, appear to have had a great time -- but none of them occurred to this writer as she wandered lonely as a cloud through the Metropole's labyrinthine corridors except that it was a nice hot weekend.

Mexicon followed a bare month later -- a happenstance that led to a certain degree of perception of it as an alternative Eastercon, for Mexicon's philosophy was the very opposite of Seacon's. Rather than appealing to as many different areas of fandom as possible, including media, Trekkie, wargames, etc, Mexicon purported to be interested only in "real" SF or fannish fans -- which appeared to boil down in practice, though not in theory ((D West lives!)) to fanzine fans. Such an ideology naturally, if unfortunately, led to accusations of

elitism and a tediously prolonged analysis of the so-called "media-fannish split" in various fanzine lettercols. It was apparent, however, that beneath the rhetoric lay a perfectly laudable desire by a group of unusual con-runners to put on a con of manageable size with an innovative programme and an almost-forgotten sense of fun. Again, in the event actions spoke louder, if less coherently, than words; Mexicon was adjudged a success as widely as Seacon a failure, to the extent that a sequel, not originally contemplated, is now being planned for February 86. (And before Joy Hibbert accuses me of bias, I guess I'd better admit to being myself associated with that venture.) Mexicon was for most a revel, an orgy of high spirits; it certainly had the most hypermanic atmosphere, the most decadent discos and the most charismatic Guest of Honour in Alasdair Gray of any con of the year, and in Geoff Ryman's sensitive adaptation of Phil Dick's **The Transmigration of Timothy Archer** it may even have (gasp) produced an artefact of lasting cultural significance.

Later cons plodded somewhat after the Titanic shipwreck of Seacon and the glitzy pizzazz of Mexicon. There was the usual clutch of summer/autumn regionals -- another Albacon, another Cymrucon, even, after initial dread of what incendiary havoc Hugh Mascetti's mob might wreak, another Unicon, namely Oxcon, held in the city of overpriced punts while the more fashionable half of fandom (excepting Dave Langford) played pool at yet another Silicon. All of these cons appeared to be successful on their own terms -- that is, enough people came, most had fun and no-one lost any money, but none were remotely spectacular. The malaise of the continuing convention, where both the audience and the committee have gone stale through too many years of producing and attending the same product, became most apparent at the 84 Novacon, fourteenth of its line by god, where mumbblings and rumblings about "oh another Novacon" could not be stilled even by its unheard-of location in a hotel that was not the Royal Angus, and the innovative attempt at outraging at least half of the attending membership by presenting GoH Rob Holdstock with a stripogram at the closing ceremony -- a truly delightful concept in programming for which we have apparently Steve Green to thank.

1984, then, raised a great deal of questions about conventions. Do we want more large cons, like Seacon? More small ones, inevitably exclusive to some degree, like this year's successful Silicloné, and if so (as seems to be the case) do we, and how do we, attempt to open these to emergent new fans? Do we want more cons at all, or less, as the convention calendar becomes full to bursting with SF and media cons of every type and any successful local one-off seemingly spawns an annual series? Can "real" fans save themselves from being swamped by "media" fans and is this a desirable or even meaningful end anyhow? We'll be back for answers to these after this short commercial break.

So what about fanzines then? Well, as I've said they certainly took a back seat to cons for cubic inches of hot air expended, but whether this was a response to the *sturm und drang* going on in other places or simply because the zines were themselves just not up to scratch is hard to tell. There was certainly no three-volume epic to ignite mailboxes with. The most talked about offering of the year was not an original work at all, but a reprint containing no new text of any significance dated later than 1982 -- D West's long awaited doorstep, **Fanzines in Theory and Practice**, (otherwise known as his Collected Works and/or the Brighton Area Yellow Pages) which to everyone's utter consternation was not only an ideological triumph of perversity but also a commercial success, selling in vast numbers to Seacon-invading Swedes and even Americans despite a bitchily ruinous exchange rate. Next to D's mammoth tome, fanwriters of more current coinage trembled at their typewriters, many taking refuge in the apas or less likely excuses such as glandular fever. Steve Higgins made a much-needed attempt to reincarnate the near-forgotten art of in-depth fanzine criticism in his excellent **Stomach Pump**, and Anne Warren produced a beguilingly convincing sociological analysis of the whys and wherefores of fandom in her **Some Days You Eat The Bear**, largely on the strength of which she won the Nova for Best Fanwriter, but the only real new megastar of the year was Nigel Richardson, the manic lad from Leeds, whose

pyrotechnically paranoid way with words won him an instant cult following. (Meanwhile, the most intrinsically beautiful prose of the fanzine year may well have appeared with hardly any notice at all in the soft green pages of Chris Hughes' **Fantasmagoria**.) The BSFA zines tried hard and failed hard; **Vector** got better production values but stayed, sadly, as dull as ever; **Matrix** juddered along in the confusion it has fallen into ever since Simon Polley's departure and at last count appeared to be being run by someone who wanted to turn it into a collection of wargaming columns; only **Focus** showed some signs of renewal under the new team of Davies and Thomason. Prospects of a BSFA megamag were floated enticingly during the brief Chris Hughes regime but were immediately drowned by a Greek chorus of doubters. The most exciting thing the BSFA has done this year is to be thrown out of its London-meetings pub for alleged CND activities -- sadly, the BSFA is too disorganised to be even remotely subversive.

But the real action, in 84 as in 83, was not in the fanzines but in the apas. (Their declared alternative, the fanzine for getting neos into fandom, **Shallow End**, was buried in an unmarked grave in early May.) These reached new levels of profusity, if not of quality, in 84 and nearly every active fanzine fan in the UK now seems to belong to one, if not several (with a few uncommon and rather forlorn exceptions). An apa, for those who just changed channel, is an Amateur Press Association [Those of you reading this Programme Book in chronological order will probably have got the hang of this by now. Ed.], in which each member produces enough of a small fanzine for each other member to receive a copy; the copies are collated into a composite mailing and distributed by a central mailer and there are fairly strict rules about minimum contribution and frequency of mailings. The advantage of apas is that they prod both lazy old fans and tentative new ones into actually writing something on a regular basis; the disadvantage is that they tend to stop people having time to do work outside apas (though this may well be a fallacy). Anyhow, in 1982 there was one (1) apa, and now there are five and things are approaching the ridiculous. Besides the well-established **Women's Periodical** and **Frank's Apa**, 1984 saw the refurbishment of Birmingham's flagging **Apa-B** under the vaguely threatening new title of **The Organisation** (Brun fandom, post-Weston, seems to be sinking back into its customary torpor); the creation of **PAPA**, an apa for men only, designed to complement **TWP** but slightly hampered by the fact that only about 5% of its membership can actually write, and he's leaving soon anyhow; and in February, even the fannish soft toys got an apa of their own, called, imaginatively, **Get Stuffed** (thought up, typically, on the train home from a Dave Bridges party).

At times in 84, it seemed that at any lull in the conversation someone would start discussing whether apas were the Death of Fanzines as We Know Them -- but towards the end of the year, apas suddenly ceased to be fashionable and genzines came back into fashion (though not, as yet, actual existence). The truth was that, after two years, most apahacks were simply tired out from the schedule of churning out good, or even mediocre, stuff every month or so; and in fact it now looks like the joke Soft Toys apa is the only one still positively thriving. 1985 will, I should think, see a thinning of the apa ranks and some significant turnover in the membership rosters; with any luck, this will be healthy both for apas and for fanzines.

Of course, fandom isn't really only about conventions and fanzines, even if one pretends it is for the purpose of writing opening paragraphs -- there's scandal and gossip and *causes celebres* (and fan-groups too, now I come to think about it, but nothing interesting happened in that direction last year, not even in Glasgow (unless you count the Leeds Group's occasional re-enactments of High Noon)). The burning issue of the summer was an American soap opera import, the terrible question of whether Avedon Carol, American administrator of the Transatlantic Fan Fund (TAFF) had prejudiced the vote in favour of one of the candidates, famed bean-eating fanartist Rob Hansen, with whom she was not unknown to be romantically involved. Though the controversy rapidly went from

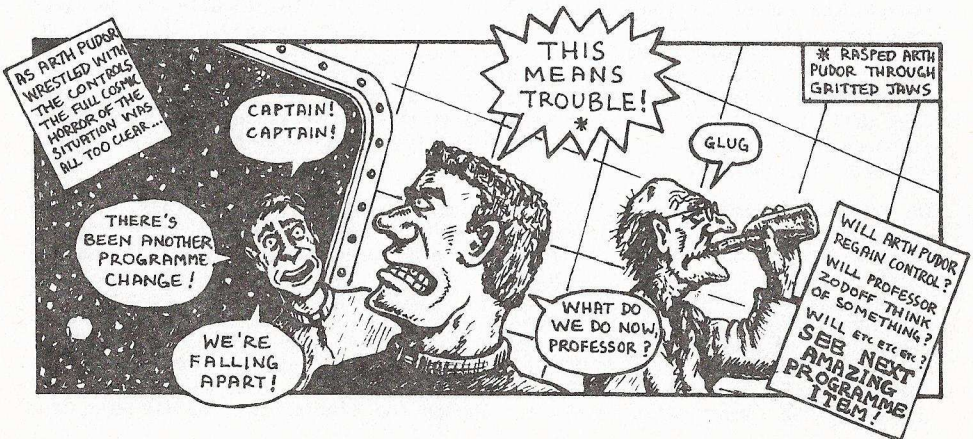
the farcical to the distasteful (and clogged mailboxes for months with Puerto Rican hate-mail) it did at least make the Hansen/West competition one of the most hotly fought and participated in races in recent years. (Hansen won, for completists.) And then, just when this storm looked like settling back into the teacup ("just when you thought it was safe to go back to reading fanzines") a new TAFF squabble reared its head (and flyer, and petition) but that, thankfully, is this year's problem and nothing to do with 1984 at all, no matter how Orwellian it all sounds, so I'll ignore it and just say that Yorcon III will be lucky enough to welcome as TAFF delegates two impeccably-credentialed people, Patrick and Teresa Nielsen Hayden. Just don't mention Earth Mothers to them, that's all.

While some hotly debated issues of ethics and acronyms, most of fandom meanwhile went on in its usual glaze of trivia. In the London environs at least, summer seemed to pass in a haze of fannish parties, but these mere local frivolities were dwarfed by Mafcon in Leeds, the best con of the summer even if it wasn't really one but only in actuality a party held to celebrate the return of Mike Dickinson and Jackie Gresham from Italy. Most of us are still occasionally wondering what those vegetarian thingies we ate at the James's really were. It was a cosmopolitan summer; Lucy Huntzinger and Avedon Carol came to spend a few months and launch a thousand anecdotes (Lucy's proudest achievement of her stay was her co-authoring with Linda Pickersgill of the Definitive and hence Officially Suppressed Guide to Fannish Carnal Relationships) and Justin Ackroyd, wandering GUFF winner, stayed so long and played so hard that no one seriously expected him to go home. Back at Mexico, Robert Stubbs introduced a new fannish vice (you didn't think it possible?) in the shape of iso-butyl nitrate, while an old one, marriage, became street credible again after not only CND supremos Judith Hanna and Joe Nicholas decided to take the plunge, but also ultracool Phil Palmer and Lucy Huntzinger, in the worst kept secret ceremony of the year.

And "ideological" was definitely the word of the year.

For a year pre-ordained by media and literature alike to doom, 1984 was better than one might have hoped. At least good enough to make it worth resisting the dramatically pleasing opening line, "1984 was not a good year for fandom". Primarily it was a year of flux and dissension rather than experimentation and achievement; but then, maybe that's true of every year in fandom?

*[Lilian Edwards is one of the editors of the almost-Nova-Award-winning fanzine This Never Happens.]*



# competition winner

# WHAT DO WE DO NOW THE FUTURE IS HERE ?

## Richard A. Slaughter

During research at the interface between futures study and education I have often been surprised at how people tend to associate the former with prediction. I suspect this indicates a need for reassurance, a search for security, a response to the disintegration of contemporary structures and meanings. But neither futures study nor speculative literature are concerned to predict the future, or even to forecast it. Rather, they utilise a range of views of the future as a means of elaborating the present.

The future is radically uncertain and the images and meanings read onto it at one time serve the needs of that time but tend to be falsified by later developments<sup>1</sup>. One generation dreams of multi-level mega-cities, personal helicopters and tourist trips to the moon while a later one dismantles its high-rise accommodation, speaks to the world from an armchair at home and cultivates the eastern arts. In other words, the future which becomes the present is always different from what was feared or expected. Only fragments of yesterday's tomorrows become our now, and in this sense the future is never "here". Forecasts are nearly always wrong and futuristic images cover a far wider imaginative range (or, in some cases, a much narrower one) than the subsequent course of history.

The wearing-out of genre materials and the rise of fantasy may be a disaster for SF but it need not be a permanent one. It does indicate that a new stage of development is due. The apparent exhaustion of images and ideas may well signal a temporary loss of confidence and creative insight, but not the decline of the speculative capacity itself. To account for this we need to look outside the genre at changing conditions in the wider culture.

As we near the end of the 20th century, we are witnessing a series of fundamental shifts in our perceptual categories, values, social and economic structures. While many of our leaders and leading institutions assert a "business-as-usual" approach, millions of ordinary people, particularly those without work and without prospect of work, know that we are near the end of an era, the so-called "industrial era". Even the well-heeled cannot insulate themselves from the changes taking place. The uncertainty, the feeling that the world is "shifting on its hinges", is unavoidable. Many of the core assumptions which underlay the social landscape have now run their course and no longer appear self-evident and compelling. One observer writes that

the structures of this civilisation, interdependent work, bargaining, mutual adjustment of individual ends, are beginning to be felt not as normal and best suited to man, but as hateful and empty.<sup>2</sup>

Much the same could be said of the assumed beneficence of science and technology, the ideology of continuous economic growth, patriarchy, the autonomy of the nation state, the earth viewed as a collection of inert resources to be exploited<sup>3</sup>. Where once a measure of consensus prevailed, albeit one imposed from above, there is now conflict and an unfolding series of seemingly irresolvable dilemmas<sup>4</sup>.

During this period, a hiatus between more settled times, the speculative imagination experiences all the stresses of contemporary life, yet finds the common reality-avoidance devices of the time largely unavailable because they represent the false solutions of yesterday. In such conditions fantasy has a certain attraction. It is a vital part of our imaginative repertoire and has a subdued radical potential<sup>5</sup>. Yet, like adultery, it is usually disappointing, drawing us away from an engagement with our world, our deepest needs and our highest selves. As Scholes has noted,

we require a fiction which satisfies our cognitive and sublimative needs together, just as we want food which tastes good and provides some nourishment. We need suspense with intellectual consequences, in which questions are raised as well as solved, and in which our minds are expanded even while focussed on the complications of a fictional plot.<sup>6</sup>

Not that SF is, or need be, merely an intellectual resource. I suspect that much of the heart-searching by those who have transcended the banalities of formula fiction is, at heart, a search for significance. One is bound, in such a search, to turn towards SF since it deals most centrally with those features of the 20th century commonly ignored by so-called "mainstream" fiction: the subversive realities and potentials of science and technology. But innovations in SF quickly turn into cliché, harden into orthodoxy, when writers retreat from the "leading edge" of social consciousness. In the context noted above, of breakdowns in meaning and purpose, writers who seek to retrieve the past, to re-animate the galactic empire, the mad scientist, the WWII space dogfights, the one-dimensional supermen and so on, are missing the chance to participate in the renewal of meanings which underlies our sense of significance in the present and our hopes for a livable future. In other words, SF which embodies dated world-views and assumptions, and which fails to deal with perennial human concerns as they appear to us at this historical moment, will remain moribund. We can therefore distinguish between our widely shared needs for fictional futures which reveal aspects of our particular present, and the narrower, basically critical and academic, task of re-assessing earlier work.

Our present reality necessarily incorporates aspects of yesterday, fragments of past aspirations and imaginings; and there are, of course, works which transcend their time and period. To some we accord the accolade that they were "ahead of their time" and hence a valued part of ours. But in the mid-80s our main interest is in the world we inhabit and construct. Thus, fiction which seeks to nourish our sense of significance must grow from this present world and reflect the nascent potentials and problems inherent within it.

False dawns have occurred before in the history of the genre and, no doubt, they will happen again<sup>7</sup>. All I would venture at this time is to say that the potential exists for SF writers to participate in negotiating our transition between cultural eras. While it is death for the writer of fiction to descend into overt didacticism, there are, within our own multiplex reality, more issues, images, dangers and possibilities to explore than ever before. We can hardly doubt that regressive elements will persist and even appear dominant. The primitive power fantasies, escapist hackwork, literary wet dreams will be churned out as long as there is an audience so out of touch with itself as to demand them. But those who are alert to the newness in and around them will write, and read, books which expand the boundaries of SF, and hence of contemporary awareness.

It is significant that in the Helliconia Trilogy, Brian Aldiss, ever the innovator, draws on recent debates about the "Gaia Hypothesis" and the possibility of a "nuclear winter"<sup>8</sup>. The standard props of SF largely occupy the background. In the foreground we witness the rise and fall of cultures upon Helliconia. Here we have a framework to speculate on the nature of cultural



change, a mirror in which to view our own anxieties and fears and a metaphor of mortality itself. Nor is the work simply a re-telling of Gibbon's well-known theme<sup>9</sup>. Work of this kind permits an imaginative grasp on our contemporary world which can be gained from few other sources.

Much of the best contemporary speculative fiction would hardly be called "SF" by those addicted to the norms of Van Vogt and E. E. Smith, though I hardly think this matters. The speculative imagination is not merely the wellspring of science but of social movements and philosophy too. One example of the former case is the feminist critique of culture, and books such as Sally Gaerhart Miller's *The Wanderground*<sup>10</sup> or Marge Piercy's *Woman at the Edge of Time*<sup>11</sup> reveal radical new sensibilities at work re-shaping the world, revising our notions about ourselves as social beings. The metafiction of Borges, D. M. Thomas and John Crowley function on even deeper levels not simply to comment on the external world but rather to interrogate the categories by which it is known. Crowley's novel *Little, Big* is, in my view, a masterpiece which tells a story to be sure, but discourses without preaching on time, causality, memory, reality itself. For me the focus of the book is the unlimited recursiveness of human identity and meaning. It therefore deals with issues of major importance in a period of gross technological overkill. Much SF writing and criticism has tended to overlook the power and insight of metafictional approaches preferring instead naturalistic narratives of worlds which never were, twice removed from reality (i.e. fictions of fictions).<sup>12</sup>

Many of the most interesting questions are, indeed, philosophical and metaphysical in nature, a fact understood best of all, perhaps, by James Blish<sup>13</sup>. But this does not mean that they have to be heavy or boring. Some of the finest SF classics are set in alternative worlds<sup>14</sup>. This device permits almost unlimited opportunities for speculation about time, identity, causation, and only a very rash critic could believe that its potential is exhausted. We may even be due for another look at the much-maligned utopia -- not in its classical, stifling, form perhaps, but as an imaginative rehearsal of plausible, even sustainable, futures. Callenbach's *Ectopia* gives some indication of what may be attempted but there must be a whole range of "solar-age futures" to be explored and falsified<sup>15</sup>. Some of the latter could involve plausible reactions against the new orthodoxies of wind, wave, solar power, methane digesters and the eastern arts. Others might look seriously at the kind of psycho/spiritual developments which could foreshadow entirely different cultural forms. Olaf Stapledon and C. S. Lewis, among others, may have passed this way briefly, but the territory is indeed vast and our world has moved on as well.

A significant proportion of future SF will probably continue to act as a kind of informal technology assessment literature. I've always enjoyed this "widget SF", particularly in the hands of a master like Philip K. Dick. But the genre as a whole has had very little to say about the realities of scientific and technological development, the social relations of innovation and R & D. With a very few exceptions, such as Benford's *Timescape*<sup>16</sup>, few have attempted to look seriously at how scientists actually function. An entire literature and field of study, often called "Science, Technology and Society, or STS, has developed in recent years and this could be used to inform and substantiate work<sup>17</sup>.

A literature of speculation is at its strongest when it draws on living cultural sources, is keenly alert to the changing concerns of the times and is focussed on human qualities and needs. Such a literature, one which looks below the surface to the deepest strivings of the human spirit for meaning and significance, is in no danger of dying out. Writers who will avoid the seductive simplicities of ennui and escapism can participate in a wider renewal of meaning and purpose by generating images of futures worth inhabiting. Such images are deeply involved in the processes of cultural continuity and change, and we will continue to need dystopian visions to depict what we may wish to

avoid. But the major creative task is to move away from the celebration of disaster to the exploration of that spectacular plateau of achievement where human capacities and purposes on the one hand, and technical skills on the other, achieve harmony with each other and with the natural world in which they are located. Such a balancing of incommensurable forces is bound to be only temporary and beset with numerous conflicts and practical difficulties. It therefore provides fertile ground for the imaginative writer.

My central proposition is that SF only has an identity crisis insofar as it is identified with a set of obsolete images, meanings and purposes. The disintegration of industrial-era belief systems and ways of life help to account for the crass, unhelpful nature of some SF, though clearly a public taste for reality-avoidance and other commercial factors to do with publishing itself are involved. Perhaps writers will acquire more creative freedom as the new information technologies begin to break publishers' monopolies over what is bought and sold. Again, as Michael Soper has argued, non-linear fictions mediated by computers open out new creative options<sup>18</sup>. In any event, it is not so much that space fiction or fantasy *per se* no longer provides appropriate forms within SF, but rather that the all-too-common preoccupations with conquest, domination and reality-avoidance have been superseded<sup>19</sup>. Nor are shifts toward the subjective, as exemplified within the "new wave", necessarily to be dismissed as mere narcissistic indulgence. It is not yet widely understood in the West that subjectivity conceals a universal objectivism in which conflicts, dichotomies and opposites can be re-interpreted, transcended or dissolved<sup>20</sup>. The tensions between Eastern and Western modes of perception (and indeed between "Northern" and "Southern") can inform radical new developments in fiction as in the wider culture which it models.

Within such a culture may lie many unexplored potentials. We remain a very long way from understanding novel interactions: computer networking, gene splicing, higher states of consciousness, tropical de-forestation, expert systems, the near-universal pollution of land, sea and air, disarmament, "green" politics, monetarism, and so on. Clearly, we are living within an unprecedented, global, experiment which requires our serious and sustained attention, and which implies unpredictable outcomes. Far from attempting to escape into the past or into spurious futures, it seems likely that the only real escape is by way of a deeper engagement in the present, a commitment to each other and to future generations to achieve this dangerous transition toward a more sustainable way of life.

This is not to suggest that SF should limit itself to present concerns. One of its notable features is the way it can transcend the latter, leaving a trail of awkward questions to nibble away at the conventional wisdom of the day. But it can draw more deeply on new sources of inspiration, on newly-available forms of knowledge which once were esoteric, the "property" of mystics and closed social groups, and on notions of personhood which recognise no upper limit to human capacities<sup>21</sup>. If, as seems likely, we are approaching a time when supra-human powers become much more widely available, we may see a steady decline of interest in technical feats as such and further sustained interest in human evolution. Thus, I would not be at all surprised if much of the gaudy hardware of early SF, along with the relatively primitive world views it sometimes represented, were superseded by some little practised use of the human mind and spirit. This process is already visible in the feminist critique of patriarchal culture and other radical perspectives<sup>22</sup>.

SF, finally, is less about galactic empires and external machine technologies than about the human spirit exploring its present boundaries from the vantage point of a particular place in space and time. As that viewpoint has shifted during the mid-1980s, as we move more rapidly from the known to the unknown, so the world in which the bulk of SF as a distinct genre was produced becomes increasingly remote. Hence, the present exhaustion of ideas signals the decline

of speculation within a particular cultural matrix, not the end of the speculative capacity itself. The latter is a permanent attribute of civilised life, and one that interrogates the new era even as it is shaped by what it perceives.

### Notes

1. See Clarke, I. F. **The Pattern of Expectation** Cape 1979.
2. Taylor, C. "Hermeneutics and Politics" in Connerton, P. (ed) **Critical Sociology** Penguin 1976 pp 189-190.
3. A useful synthesis is provided by Capra, F. **The Turning Point** Fontana 1983
4. Henderson, H. provides a concise interpretation in "The Entropy State" **Creating Alternative Futures** Berkley 1978.
5. So argues Jackson, R. in **Fantasy: the Literature of Subversion** Methuen 1981.
6. Scholes, R. **Structural Fabulation** Notre Dame, Indiana 1975 p 41
7. See Panshin, A. & C. **Farewell to Yesterday's Tomorrow** Berkley 1976 pp 207-212
8. Interview with the author, March 3rd 1984.
9. Aldiss believes that SF should not merely recapitulate past history.
10. Persephone Press, Massachussets, U.S.A. 1979.
11. Women's Press, London 1979.
12. This may help explain why story-telling in a "straight" SF mode presents particular problems for both author and reader. Also see Waugh, P. **Metafiction** Methuen 1984.
13. This is implicit in novels like **Dr. Mirabilis** Faber 1964. Ketterer, D. makes the point explicit in "The Last Inspirational Gasp of James Blish: The Breath of Brahma" **Science-Fiction Studies** 11, 1, March 1984 pp 45-49.
14. See Nicholls, P. **The Encyclopaedia of Science Fiction** pp 26-27 for outlines of some of the better-known stories.
15. Banyan Tree Books, California 1975.
16. Gollancz 1980.
17. A useful introduction is provided by Mulkay, M. in **Science and the Sociology of Knowledge** Allen & Unwin 1979.
18. Soper, M. "The Liberation of Fiction" **Vector** 116 1983 pp 27-28.
19. See Daly, M. **Gyn-Ecology** 1979 and **Pure Lust** 1984, both Women's Press, for hard-hitting criticism of such tendencies.
20. Wilbur, K. **No Boundary: Eastern and Western Approaches to Personal Growth** Shambhala 1979 provides a very clear exposition of this, and related, themes.
21. Sinclair, Sir J. provides an accessible example in **The Alice Bailey Inheritance** Thorsons 1984.
22. See examples quoted in notes 10, 11 and 19. Also Caldicott, L. & Leland, S. (eds) **Reclaim the Earth** Women's Press 1979.

It was a bright cold day in April and the clocks were striking thirteen as Wimpston Smythe turned into the doorway of Dragonara Mansions



# This year's **TAFF** winners **=====**

## **Patrick & Teresa Nielsen Hayden**

I suppose there will be quite a few of you out there who are wondering just what "TAFF" might be -- and as current European administrator I'm just the man to tell you.

TAFF -- the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund -- was created in 1953 for the purpose of providing funds to bring popular and well-known fans who have helped promote and sustain the relationship between our two fandoms across the Atlantic. Since then, TAFF has regularly brought North American fans to European conventions and sent European fans to North American conventions on an alternating basis, with each TAFF winner becoming the new administrator of the fund in their respective countries, thus ensuring its continuation. The winner is chosen during a "race" where fans get to vote for the candidate of their choice from among the duly nominated contenders, while TAFF itself is sustained financially by the voting fees collected during such races and through the generosity of those who donate money and material that can be auctioned. As for Patrick and Teresa...

I suppose the fact that I'm one of the few people in this country who's actually met the Nielsen Haydens is why Simon asked me to write this piece, but just what is there to say about this dynamic duo? A fair bit, as it happens. After all, Teresa has been nominated for the Best Fanwriter Hugo Award, while she and Patrick publish the Hugo-nominated fanzine **Izzard**, proof that they are not without honour in their own land. They're not without hospitality either, as I discovered when I visited New York last summer. As well as showing me the sights -- aided and abetted by Stu Shiffman and Bill Wagner -- they also entertained me on a couple of evenings in the cramped surroundings of their tiny flat, located in a fan-infested block at the unfashionable end of Manhattan, and so I got to observe them at close quarters...

Patrick is short and dapper, with a ready wit and an impressive knowledge of, and interest in, matters of history be they of the world or of our own little microcosm. An evening spent in his company is not only entertaining but usually informative as well, and I'm beginning to suspect that he suffers from pathological erudition. Teresa is quieter than Patrick and has an alarming tendency to fall over if you make her laugh (I kid you not), but she's no less entertaining company. As well as being an ace fanwriter she's a pretty fair artist, though as yet her work has been mostly confined to **Izzard**. Those of you wishing to make their acquaintance at this convention will find them friendly and approachable, while for those of you wondering (after reading the above) what they might have to say for themselves, here's the "platform" they wrote for the TAFF race:

"Given our history of producing fanzines like **Telos**, **Zed & Izzard** under trying and peripatetic circumstances (our motto: 'At least we'll get an article out of this...'), TAFF holds no terrors, we've been in training for it for years. We promise to sit up all night talking, sleep on floors, take part in whatever peculiar behaviours that UK fans wish to present as normal, and report it all as sober gospel truth -- in print within the year or your money back. We also promise to neither marry nor inveigle away unattached members of British fandom. Amen."

Personally I don't believe a word of it.

*Rob Hansen*

# THE SHAW FUND

The Shaw Fund is a special "one-off" Fan Fund designed to bring Bob Shaw (the real one) to the 1985 World Science Fiction Convention in Melbourne, Australia 22-26 August 1985.

Bob Shaw, as we all know, is a man of many talents. Quite apart from his professional writing, he has supported British fandom for more years than he'd care to remember, and has even won the Fan Writing Hugo. In addition, his "Serious Scientific" talks are legendary -- they have even been known to draw fans out of the bar! Because of all these talents, plus the fact that he's an amiable, friendly person, the Australians have set up this fund to ensure he can attend their Worldcon. To quote them, "The 1985 WorldCon in Melbourne will be a very special event, and we'd like to have Bob as a very special guest".

OK, the Aussies want him, why should you contribute towards sending him? Can you name a more fit representative of British sf writing/fandom? Come on now, be honest. We have enough money to get him there, but we need your help to bring him back.

Donations of any amount would be greatly appreciated. In addition, however, we have something tangible to give in return for your generosity. We have printed a special booklet containing Bob's Eastercon speeches 1982-84, all the proceeds of which will be donated to the Fund. These talks have never before appeared in print, so get yourself a copy. Rob Jackson has also donated some copies of his Inca Press publication containing Bob's 1974-78 speeches, but beware, stocks are very low. There will also be various auction items available, so watch out for them.

The 1982-84 speeches are available for a minimum of £1.50 (signed by Bob) or £1.00 unsigned -- prices include postage in the UK. The Inca Press booklet costs a minimum of £1.50. If you'd like to donate more than these minimum prices, we'd be more than grateful.

Send your money (cheques/postal orders payable to Eve Harvey) to:

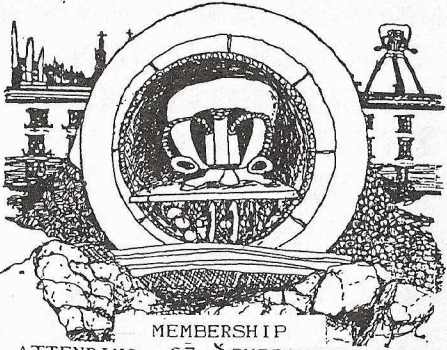
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*Eve Harvey*

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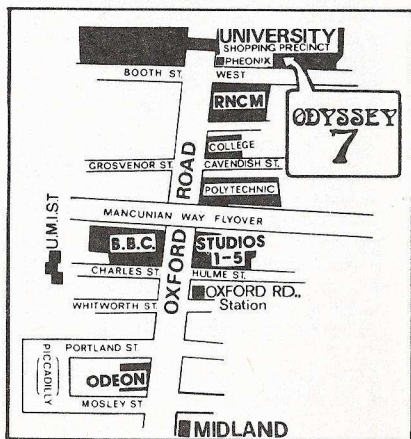


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# BSEFA AWARDS

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The 1985 BSFA Awards are given for the best novel, short fiction, media presentation and artist of 1984. The first ballot was only open to the members of the BSFA, but the final ballot is also opened to attending members of Yorcon III.

All ballots must be handed in at the registration desk no later than 6:00pm on Saturday, and the result will be announced at the awards ceremony on Sunday evening.

For anyone interested in what has won the awards over the last few years, these are the winners of the eighties:

1980 Novel: J. G. Ballard's **The Unlimited Dream Company**

Short Fiction: Christopher Priest's "Palely Loitering"

Media Presentation: **The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy**

Artist: Jim Burns

1981 Novel: Gregory Benford's **Timescape**

Short Fiction: Thomas M. Disch's "The Brave Little Toaster"

Media Presentation: **The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy**

(2nd series)

Artist: Peter Jones

1982 Novel: Gene Wolfe's **The Shadow of the Torturer**

Short Fiction: Robert Holdstock's "Mythago Wood"

Media Presentation: **Time Bandits**

Artist: Bruce Pennington

1983 Novel: Brian Aldiss's **Helliconia Spring**

Short Fiction: Keith Roberts's "Kitemaster"

Media Presentation: **Bladerunner**

Artist: Tim White

1984 Novel: John Sladek's **Tik-Tok**

Short Fiction: Malcolm Edwards's "After Images"

Media Presentation: **Android**

Artist: Bruce Pennington

This year, the final ballot is as follows:

Novel:

J. G. Ballard -- **Empire of the Sun** (Gollancz)

Angela Carter -- **Nights at the Circus** (Chatto & Windus)

William Gibson -- **Neuromancer** (Gollancz)

Robert Holdstock -- **Mythago Wood** (Gollancz)

Chris Priest -- **The Glamour** (Jonathan Cape)

Short Fiction:

J. G. Ballard -- "The Object of the Attack" (Interzone 9)

Scott Bradfield -- "Unmistakably the Finest" (Interzone 8)

Garry Kilworth -- "Spiral Winds" (Interzone 9)

Geoff Ryman -- "The Unconquered Country" (Interzone 7)

Lucius Shepard -- "The Man Who Painted the Dragon Griaule"

(F & SF Dec 84)

Media Presentation: **Company of Wolves** (Dir. Neil Jordan)  
**Dune** (Dir. David Lynch)  
**Nineteen Eighty Four** (Dir. Michael Radfield)  
**Star Trek III** (Dir. Leonard Nimoy)  
**The Transmigration of Timothy Archer**  
 (Adapted and Directed Geoff Ryman)

Artist: Jim Burns  
 Peter Jones  
 Ian Miller  
 Bruce Pennington  
 Tim White

Remember: awards are only as good as the number of votes cast.

PLEASE USE YOUR VOTE!

*Mike Moir*  
 (BSFA Awards Administrator)

# THE DOC WEIR AWARD

## Who was Doc Weir?

A fan; a schoolteacher who came into fandom late in life, with a keen interest in both science fiction and fantasy, who enjoyed participating in many facets of SF fandom. He helped get the infant BSFA on its feet in 1958, corresponded with a considerable number of fans and wrote scholarly articles for their fanzines. He was an active member of the Cheltenham SF Circle and attended conventions, where his talks were programme highlights. One of Doc Weir's correspondents back in the fifties was **Mal Ashworth**, who has put some of his memories of Doc on paper:-

"Is this for real?" asked one correspondent when, in **Rot 6**, I published a selection of a six-month correspondence I had with Doc Weir back in 1960; "I mean, he ranges over so much."

Doc was for real all right. Though sometimes the rest of us seemed a little cardboard by comparison. An elderly gnome of a Cheltenham science-teacher, he was at least twice the age of the average fan, but his prodigious energy, boundless enthusiasm and vast range of interests made it more comfortable to forget the fact. In his brief year or two in fandom he produced a truly impressive corpus of letters and articles, whilst staying well on top of his demanding Grammar School work, producing translations of scientific articles from French, German, Czech and Swedish and, I have no doubt, much, much more that I never heard about. Despite the fact that his forte was in science he was also breathtakingly well-read in Literature and the Humanities. He had, in fact, one of the most encyclopaedically-stocked minds I have ever come across. And for such a small man he was often disturbingly larger-than-life. Take, for instance, the way he tackled **The Lord of the Rings** on its first appearance: "I started reading the trilogy at about 2:30p.m. of a wet afternoon; ... I went early to bed taking the Books with me, and continued reading steadily in bed till I finished Volume III at 3:24a.m. the following morning..." He then re-read the whole thing within the next two days, and again, cross-referencing with all the appendices, in the next week. I love that "3:24a.m."; not "about haf-past three" or "sometime in the middle of the night", but "3:24a.m." That was Doc too. Precise, punctilious, painstaking. Because Lovecraft's **The Dream Quest of Unknown Kadath** was out of print and he couldn't get hold of his own copy, he borrowed one and typed it out -- all 48,000 words -- for himself. He once advised me to adopt his own method of



typing a dash, which involved six operations, including back-spacing, instead of making do with a mere slovenly little hyphen. Pedantic? Maybe. But never stuffy. He was tough-minded and unsentimental and had a lively and irreverent sense of humour, and he frequently indulged in simple goofing-off. He would spend ages doing daft but very intricate typewriter-drawings, which he called "TypoBEMs", using all the various marks of his special typewriter keyboard. But despite all that, Doc was by no means only a "paper" man. At around 60 he was still riding an old motorbike, which didn't quite fit with the rather fuddy-duddy schoolmaster image people had of him. He had done plenty of living in his time, too, meeting a panoply of interesting people from Olaf Stapledon to the South American explorer Colonel Fawcett, taking on Japanese zen swordsmen in fencing contests and, in his early twenties, narrowly escaping the clutches of a Black Magician -- "By the mercy of Heaven -- and I mean that entirely literally! -- I was able to get clear of him, but most of the others didn't, and I know what happened to them afterwards." (I asked Doc to tell me more, but even then, nearly 40 years later, he wouldn't put it on paper, but said he'd tell me more in person when we next met. But he died before that happened.)

No doubt about it, Doc Weir was for real. Whenever I re-read that slim file of his letters, which still vibrate with all the energy of a life lived richly and with great enjoyment, it seems like he still is.

#### What is the Award?

A goblet inscribed with the names of past winners, to be held for one year, and a signed certificate suitable for framing.

#### How is the Winner Chosen?

The Award is not given for any specific activity in the fannish area, but for things in general. The Award should go to the person you think to be the most deserving, be it in the field of fanzines, conventions, groups, BSFA, and so on. It is usually awarded to someone who has not been previously recognised.

The Award is decided by secret ballot, administered by the British Science Fiction Association, and ballot boxes will be in the Fan Room and at the Yorcon III registrations desk. Counting will be carried out by the BSFA committee, and only the winner's name will be announced. This will be at the awards ceremony on Sunday evening.

The Award itself is a valuable item, and general insurance cover will be arranged by the BSFA.

Ballot forms are enclosed with your Programme Book package and spare copies are available from the BSFA desk in the Fan Room and the Yorcon III registrations desk.

#### Who are the past winners?

1963 - Peter Mabey	1971 - Phil Rogers	1979 - Roger Peyton
1964 - Archie Mercer	1972 - Jill Adams	1980 - Bob Shaw
1965 - Terry Jeeves	1973 - Ethel Lindsay	1981 - John Brunner
1966 - Ken Slater	1974 - Malcolm Edwards	1982 - no award
1967 - Doreen Parker	1975 - Peter Weston	1983 - no award
1968 - Mary Reed	1976 - Ina Shorrock	1984 - Joyce Slater
1969 - Beryl Mercer	1977 - Keith Freeman	
1970 - Michael Rosenblum	1978 - Greg Pickersgill	

*Alan Dorey*  
(for the BSFA Committee)

# THE KEN MCINTYRE AWARD

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## Who was Ken McIntyre?

Ken McIntyre was an artist whose work appeared during the fifties in **New Worlds**, **Nebula** and **Science Fantasy**. Ken was a keen SF fan, a regular attendee of the Easter SF conventions and a Knight of St. Fantasy. He was always willing to do work for amateur publications completely free and his work can be seen in many fanzines of the last twenty-five years. Ken died from a heart attack in 1968.

## Why an Award?

Three people suggested independently that some form of memorial was needed and, after discussion, the Ken McIntyre Award was formulated. Although there are awards presented in the SF field, there was no award for artwork presented in Britain. It was felt that an award for art would help give encouragement to young artists in the field as well as giving some form of reward to established artists.

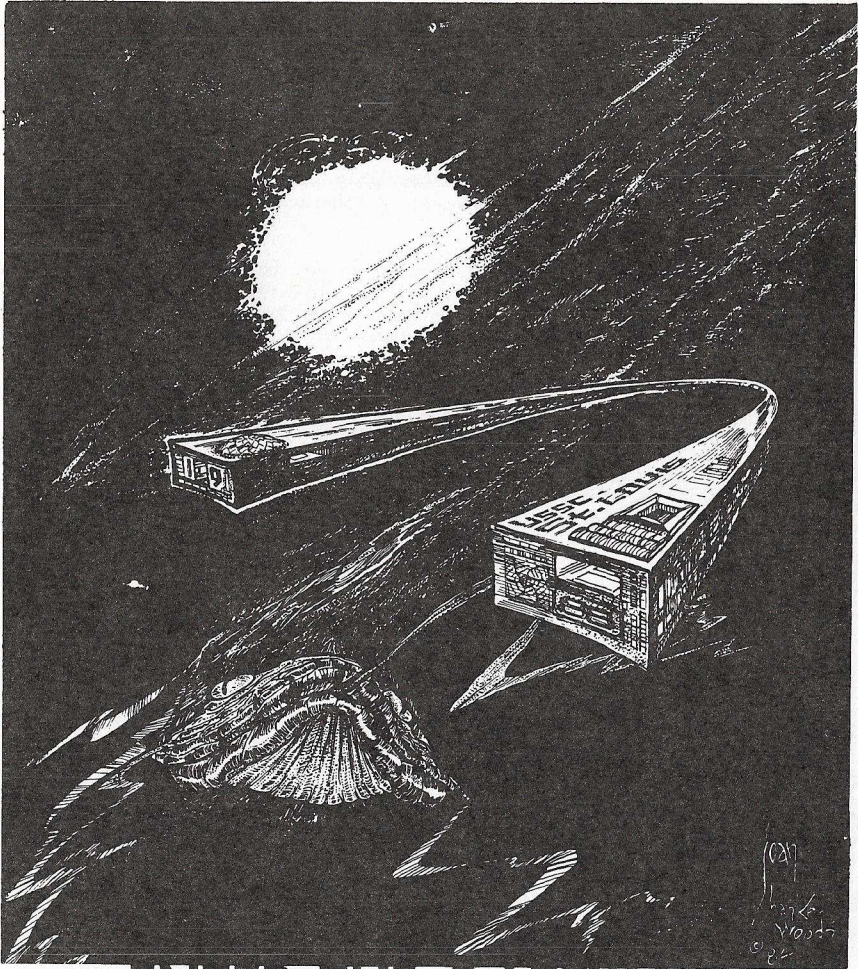
## Rules for Entry

1. The Award will be presented annually. Each year it will be presented to the artist who, in the opinion of the judges, submits the most deserving piece of artwork.
2. The artist must be resident in the UK.
3. The piece of artwork must have appeared in an amateur publication during the 12 months preceding the Easter at which the award is made.
4. The artwork must be accompanied by a copy of the publication in which it appeared.
5. The subject matter of the piece must, in the opinion of the judges, be Fantasy or Science Fiction.

## How to Enter

The piece of artwork may be submitted by the artist himself or by the editor of the publication in which it appeared. The original, together with a copy of the publication, must be handed in to the Art Show desk by 4p.m. on Saturday. The entries submitted will be displayed in the Art Show and the Award presented at the Awards Ceremony on Sunday evening.

*Keith Freeman*  
(Award Administrator)



# ENTER THE GATEWAY

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# The committee is .....

Paul Annis, a quietly-spoken Canadian noted for his extraordinarily modest intake of food and drink, is in charge of the Book Room. Paul used to run a book and comics shop in real life and is an assistant editor of **Interzone**.

Jim Darroch was on the committee of Edinburgh's successful Ra Con and was one of the founder members of the Forth group. A keen movie buff, he is responsible for our Film Programme.

Alan Dorey does not really run the entire Universe, only most of it. The BSFA Chairman, an editor of **Interzone**, and a co-administrator of **Frank's apa**, Alan rarely has time to publish his fanzine **Gross Encounters** these days. He has been in charge of advertising and publicity.

Rochelle Dorey is an enthusiastic co-administrator of **Frank's apa** and an enthusiastic mother. Rumour has it she's soon to become an enthusiastic mother again. Rochelle will be bringing her experience to bear on the Creche.

Christine Donaldson usually organizes a convention or two before breakfast. She is a keeper of the infamous Zoltan, to say nothing of various other animals, daughter Helen, and husband Paul. Chris is our Secretary.

Alan Ferguson used to edit the much-acclaimed fanzine **Second Hand Wave** but recently he has been busy looking for a house and a job and organizing our Video Programme.

Mike Ford is typing all this up on his word-processor, so of course he's a warm and wonderful human being. He's also one of our Membership Secretaries.

Graham James was once a successful editor of **Matrix** but these days he keeps a low profile, confining his writing activities to **Frank's apa**. Graham is in charge of the Main Programme and the Programme Notes.

Kate Jeary, like Mike Ford, works as a computer programmer and is one of our Membership Secretaries.

Paul Oldroyd, another keeper of Zoltan, is currently in mourning for the demise of Dr. Who. He may be placated if you send him money. Paul is our Treasurer.

Simon Ounsley is another person who's been too busy organizing conventions to publish his fanzine. He has, however, edited this booklet and one or two progress reports and helps bring out the occasional copy of **Interzone**.

Anne Page is one of the few people who are equally at home in both SF and media fandoms. She is also the world's greatest Masquerade organizer.

Simon Polley was once a well-known editor of **Matrix** but these days keeps a low profile by hanging out in the Queens Hotel, of which he is in charge for the convention. Simon has also been promoting the convention locally.

Jimmy Robertson, like many other people on this committee, used to edit a popular fanzine once, honestly. These days he's busy getting educated and running our Fan Room.

Sue Simpson is another expectant committee member and a fine artist into the bargain. This is her debut as Art Show organizer.

Linda Strickler James, our Co-ordinator, is actually running this show, having come over specially from California. Linda is not pregnant, but has been several times before.

## with the invaluable assistance of...

Arnold Akien has a wealth of convention-organizing experience and an astonishing talent for obtaining equipment at minimal cost. He is in charge of the technical side of the convention.

Pete Lyon is a famous loud-mouthed artist, who hopefully won't read this entry while he's pasting it up. As well as having masterminded the design of our publications and produced numerous pieces of artwork at the drop of a hat, Pete will be assisting Sue in the Art Show.

Chris O'Kane has been one of the mainstays of convention Film Programmes for several years now. He is running the technical side of our Film Programme, and has already proved himself indispensable by managing to get films out of a rather disorganized distributor.

Tom Shippey runs the English Department at Leeds University and writes SF reviews for the Guardian and the TLS. Tom is our Programme Consultant.

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The committee would also like to thank the following for their help: **Amanda Film Exhibitors** for provision of the cinemascope screen; **Paul Cousins** for the printer; **Saville Audio Visual Ltd** for projectors; **TVL Tyne Video Ltd** for video equipment; **Vallances Ltd** (New Market St, Leeds branch) for television sets; **Greenhead Books Ltd**, **Leeds Tourist Information Centre**, the **ABC Cinema** (Vicar Lane, Leeds), **The Leeds Weekly News**, and all the other outlets who have helped us with publicity; **John Hepworth** of the Dragonara Hotel for his tireless assistance; **Tony Ward** for printing this booklet; the **Albacon committee** for their co-operation; our US agent **Mary Burns**; and the **West Riding Hotel** for keeping us in drink.

Special thanks also go, of course, to our Guests of Honour **Gregory Benford** and **Linda Pickersgill**; all our programme participants; the contributors to the Programme Book and the Progress Reports; all the people who've offered to help us over the weekend; and -- indeed -- to all of you for coming along and, we hope, having a good time!

# registrations

(Correct to 21st March 1985)

157 Justin Ackroyd	050 Alan Boodson	533 John Christie
015 Arnold Akien	053 D M Kjell Borgstrom	437 Kevin J Clark
151 Kay Allan	525 Ron W Bounds	412 A V Clarke
397 Lynne Amer	526 Sophia Bounds	239 George Clarke
079 Brian Ameringen	086 Allen Boyd-Newton	240 Kathy Clarke
223 Patricia Ames (Melora Mac Aran)	225 Jim Braidon	081 Jack Cohen
102 Michael Ancell	082 Richard Brandshaft	317 Malcolm Cohen
133 Fiona Anderson	505 Declan Brennan	252 Peter Cohen
284 Stuart Andrews	119 Tim Breslain	433 Peter Colley
194 D A Angus	540 Dave Bridges	374 Etail Collins
012 Paul Annis	344 Matthew Brock	263 Clare Coney
059 Alex Armstrong	518 Gary Bromehead	121 Ben Connell
434 Steven Ashbee	517 Lol Bromehead	506 Chuck Connor
236 Hazel Ashworth	470 Nigel S Brooke	266 Barbara Conway
165 Mal Ashworth	373 Emily Louise Brooks	269 Alison Cook
448 Chris Atkinson	454 John Brosnan	549 Cecilia Cossentine
044 Denise Atkinson	488 Dawn Brown (Delicia of Srod)	531 Eileen Costelloe
362 Stuart Atkinson	078 Helen Brown	326 Erik "J S" Coune
460 Nick Austin	077 Sandy Brown	327 Frank "King" Coune
249 Jon Axtell	552 Sharon Brundy	325 Georges "Count" Coune
118 Linda Bagley	174 John Brunner	318 Jacinta Covington
208 S Rachel Bailey (The Minstrel)	441 Geoffrey A Bryant	430 Dave Cox
423 Christopher Baker	314 Steve Bull	090 Arthur Cruttenden
033 Helen Baldwin	197 Charlotte Bulmer	361 Michael Cule
478 Sue Bargh	074 Ken Bulmer	115 Tony Cullen
172 Phil J Barnard	425 E Bundred	396 Michael Curtis
550 Bob Barnes	413 John Bunyan	260 Oscar Dalgleish
551 Michele Barnes	184 Saul Anthony Bura	051 John Dallman
101 Bryan Barrett	321 Andrew Burke	275 Mike Damesick
122 Frank Barron	040 Bill Burns	017 Jim Darroch
495 Norman Baxter	039 Mary Burns	403 Kate Davies
352 Alan Bell	198 John Butcher	468 Malcolm Davies
139 David Bell	210 Jenny Campbell	123 Stephen Davies
064 Harry Bell	482 Kenneth A Campbell	259 Phil Dawson
001 Gregory Benford	212 Matthew Campbell	494 Caroline Day
348 Roger Benham (Lord Hrothgar)	209 Ramsey Campbell	281 Mike Day
253 Ron Bennett	045 Roger Campbell	235 Peter Day
048 Jose Bernard	211 Tamsin Campbell	328 Paul Dembina
247 Michael Bernardi	188 Anders Carlsson	206 Sylvie Denis
124 Tony Berry	114 Dave Caton	369 Sarah Dibb
191 Alan Blackley	504 Carolyn Caughey	496 Mike Dickinson
382 Judith Blish	221 James Cawthorn	421 Terry Dickinson
196 Hans-Ulrich Boettcher	031 Graham Charnock	422 colleague of T Dickinson
186 Jenny Bone	030 Pat Charnock	109 Vincent Docherty
185 Trevor Bone	528 Mike Cheater	010 Chris Donaldson
	217 Philip Chee	018 Alan Dorey
	498 Gail Chester	302 Amanda Dorey
	(Serendipity)	

- 019 Rochelle Dorey  
 131 Paul Dormer  
 409 T Drury  
 215 R Earnshaw  
 272 Stephen East  
 276 Lilian Edwards  
 166 Malcolm Edwards  
 094 Richard Edwards  
 026 Helen Eling  
 025 Stan Eling  
 419 Andrew Ellerby  
 420 colleague of A Ellerby  
 126 Dave Ellis  
 219 Thomas A Endrey  
 213 Magnus Eriksson  
 387 Les Escott  
 037 Bernie Evans  
 377 Mike Evans  
 501 Simon Farrell  
 395 Ian Ferebee  
 014 Alan Ferguson  
 021 Michel Feron  
 402 David Fielder  
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 350 Dave Firth  
 548 Phil Foglio  
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 407 Dave French  
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 265 Mike Hamilton  
 255 Tony Hammond  
 391 Mark Hansen
- 089 Rob Hansen  
 224 Dave Harbud  
 319 David A Hardy  
 248 Alun Harries  
 442 Chuck Harris  
 257 T Harris  
 480 Harry Harrison  
 438 Sue Harrison  
 243 Eve Harvey  
 244 John Harvey  
 222 Kamal Hashmi  
 170 S C Hatch  
 099 Martin Hatfield  
 087 Julian Headlong  
 073 Teresa Hehir  
 359 Julia M Hennessy  
 360 John Hennessy  
 280 Neil Hepple  
 279 Sue Hepple  
 234 Richard Charles  
     Hewison  
 543 Sara Hewitt  
 023 Joy Hibbert  
 250 Steve Higgins  
 500 Terry Hill  
 177 Katie Hoare  
 176 Martin Hoare  
 541 Iain Hobbell  
 159 Malcolm Hodkin (M)  
 323 Andy Hogbin  
 168 Nicholas Paul Holland  
 127 Marina Holroyd  
 190 Derek Holt  
 144 Mary Horsfield  
 145 Michael Horsfield  
 394 Catrina Howard  
 046 Nic Howard  
 485 Martin Howell  
 386 D Hudson  
 293 Chris Hughes  
 334 Hull Univ SF Soc  
     (Lady G)  
 335 Hull Univ SF Soc (Mr  
     B L Zeebub)  
 336 Hull Univ SF Soc  
     (Tragellan, the  
     Quelatzl Adept)  
 337 Hull Univ SF Soc  
     (Benjamin Franklin  
     Pierce)  
 338 Hull Univ SF Soc  
     (Ommayad Kahoutek)  
 339 Hull Univ SF Soc  
     (Jaru)  
 340 Hull Univ SF Soc  
     (Attila the Hun)  
 341 Hull Univ SF Soc  
     (Sheen)  
 342 Hull Univ SF Soc  
     (Richard the  
     Fireplace)
- 415 Stuart Hurlbut  
 070 Linda Hutchinson  
 071 Mike Hutchinson  
 292 Jan Huxley  
 106 Tim Illingworth  
 084 Aandi Inston  
 508 G R Ireland  
 066 Coral Jackson  
 447 Dulcie Jackson  
 356 Pete Jackson  
 065 Rob Jackson  
 297 Airasa James  
 301 Dylan James  
 462 Ed James  
 004 Graham James  
 298 Naomi James  
 487 Wilfred H James  
     (Undepoldus)  
 400 Kate Jeary  
 431 Chris Jennings  
 156 Jeremy Johnson  
 055 Anthony Johnston  
 426 Niki Jones  
 368 Peter Jones  
 202 Tom Jones (Major Tom)  
 041 Chris Jordan  
 042 Lesley Jordan  
 546 Jean R Joseph  
     (Kinsman)  
 167 Niall Judge  
 378 M R Kaill (Ozwolde  
     the Unready)  
 203 Sheila Kavanagh  
 390 Richard Kennaway  
 534 Debbi Kerr  
 288 Paul Kincaid  
 547 Sarah Krelle  
 354 Dave Lai (Travelogue)  
 285 Christina Lake  
 162 C R Laker  
 493 Geoff Landergeran  
 520 H J Landis  
 241 Dave Langford  
 242 Hazel Langford  
 201 David Leadbeater  
 200 Susan Leadbeater  
 536 Mandy Lee  
 320 Ali Liddell  
 143 Elsbeth Lindner  
 264 Steve Linton  
 443 M L Llewelyn  
 440 Sarah Lloyd  
 469 Carol Lockwood  
 230 Janet Lomas  
 036 Hans Loose  
 343 A Lord (Record Demon)  
 507 S Lovett  
 371 Nick Lowe  
 311 Alison Lynes  
 312 Murray Lynes  
 008 Pete Lyon

171 Peter Mabey	179 Roger Octon	075 David Row
542 Patricia MacLennan	011 Paul Oldroyd	038 Marcus Rowlands
277 Bruce Macdonald	486 Andie Oppenheimer	024 Dave Rowley
522 Simon Mace	346 Keith Ormsby (Ozz)	068 Barbara Rudyk
229 Brian Magorrian	006 Simon Ounsley	067 Simon Rudyk
453 Nicholas Mahoney	521 Darren Oxspring	034 B J Ryder
307 Jean Maudsley	020 Anne Page	509 Geoff Ryman
111 Jon May	429 Robin Page	510 Ryman players
261 Angus McAllister	112 Phil Palmer	511 Ryman players
479 Douglas McCallum	180 Paul Paolini	512 Ryman players
349 Paul McDermot (McDeep One)	483 Nellie Pardoel	513 Ryman players
061 Samuel McKay	538 Charles Partington	514 Ryman players
537 Hamish McKinlay	428 Gavin Patterson	515 Ryman players
096 Rory McLean	287 Eamonn Patton	516 Ryman players
306 Helen McNabb	491 John Payne	375 Marjorie Sachs
305 Mike McNabb	414 Chrissie Pearson	155 Bruce Saville
367 Ann McPhail	439 Nigel Pearson	148 Mike Scantlebury (Harry Nadler)
295 Simon Meacock	379 Ellen Pedersen	445 Matzaj Sekoranja
254 R Meades	304 Howard T Pell	120 Matthew Shackle
476 Mark Meenan	130 Roger Perkins	351 Charlie Sharpley
316 Trevor Mendham	231 Simon Perkins	251 Bob Shaw
436 John Merry	432 John Perry	399 Sadie Shaw
178 Andy Mills	193 John Peters	043 Moira Shearman
289 Nick Mills	290 Rog Peyton	110 Ian Sheppard
464 Rod Milner	472 Fran Pickering	492 D M Sherwood
150 Keith Mitchell	473 John Pickering	005 Tom Shippey
147 Debby Moir	088 Greg Pickersgill	455 Alan Simms
146 Mike Moir	002 Linda Pickersgill	016 Sue Simpson
154 Mike Molloy	214 Robert Pierce	028 Joyce Slater
187 Lee Montgomerie	245 Mickey Poland	027 Ken Slater
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370 Dave Mooring	300 Maureen Porter	216 David R Smith
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116 Steph Mortimer	410 Anne Pringle	258 Martin Smith
459 Simon Moss (Dreadnought)	062 David Pringle	175 Peter J Smith
489 Graham Mossman (Mossentity)	411 James Pringle	153 Robert J Sneddon
310 Julie Clare Moulds	183 Terry Pyle	499 Robert Sneddon
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267 Harry Nadler	545 Deborah Ramage	137 Peter Stampfel
268 Marie Nadler	324 Tricia Ramage	237 Helen Starkey
435 Steven Nadler	330 Richard Reiss	164 Liz Stephensen-Payne
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388 Nerry Newton	376 Anders Reutersward	076 John Steward
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417 Patrick Nielsen Hayden	529 John Richardson	142 John Stewart
418 Teresa Nielsen Hayden	238 Nigel Richardson	161 Paul Stewart
416 Migs Noddings	013 Jimmy Robertson	466 Graham Stokes
283 Lisanne Norman	286 Neil Robinson	052 Lars Strandberg
404 Heather North	091 Roger Robinson	003 Linda Strickler James
393 Andrew O'Donnell	452 Steven Robinson	296 R Stubbs
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	363 Heather Rogerson	502 Eileen Sutherland
	158 Andrew Rose	173 David Swinden
	097 Howard Rosenblum	315 S M Taylor
	098 June Rosenblum	



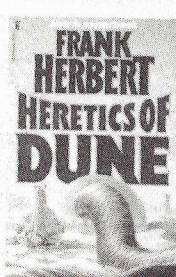
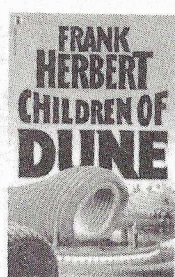
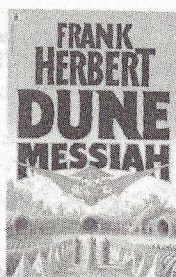
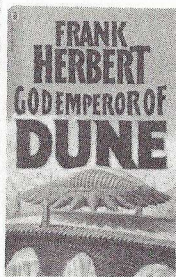
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| 444 Steven Tew                      | 274 Christine Ward                  | 256 Kim Whysall                      |
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| 022 Paul Thorley                    | 384 Jeanette Warren                 | 233 Jeff Wilks                       |
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| 047 Tibs                            | 481 Steven James Watson             | 129 Ian Williams                     |
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| 309 Margaret Tout                   | 232 Matthew Webb (Ambassador Savak) | 105 M V Williams                     |
| 308 Richard Tout                    | 366 Margaret Welbank                | 450 Madeleine Willis                 |
| 535 Sue Townsley                    | 322 Suzanne Welham                  | 449 Walter Willis                    |
| 385 Andrew Trapnell                 | 160 Pam Wells                       | 331 Heather Wilson                   |
| 141 Lisa Tuttle                     | 471 D West                          | 357 Mark Wilson (Bouncin Blue Beast) |
| 353 Jim Unsworth (Jimbo Fluffytail) | 093 Kathy Westhead                  | 451 Martin Wilson                    |
| 524 Angelique Vantoor               | 092 Mike Westhead                   | 149 Paul C Wilson                    |
| 523 Kees Vantoor                    | 490 Charles Weston (Star Mouse)     | 136 Betsy Wollheim                   |
| 083 Paul Vincent                    | 278 Peter Weston                    | 134 Don Wollheim                     |
| 303 R J Vine                        | 282 Elda Wheeler                    | 135 Elsie Wollheim                   |
| 539 Martin Wallace                  | 527 Jonathan Whitehead              | 218 Richard W Zellick                |
| 058 Mike Walshe                     |                                     | 205 peter pinto                      |
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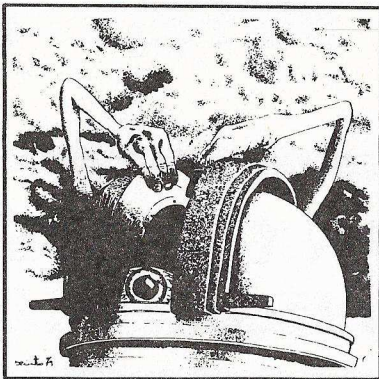
*"...I have a kind of amorphous sense of an audience out there and I really care about that audience, I really do. I want them to be entertained, I want to give them the frosting on the cake. I want all these good experiences to come out in it. I sort of see myself as the jongleur who comes into the castle to sing for his supper, telling about the other castle down the highway. And, my God, people pay me for it. What a marvellous thing!...."*

## GENE WOLFE

*"....I really started writing The Book of the New Sun as a short story, and it got out of hand. . . . I kept having characters walk into the damn book. I came across an old letter that I wrote back in 1976 or 1977 to some friends, describing the thing, and I said it was like owning a two-foot square of the sea and thinking that you had an aquarium, because sharks and so forth pass through it, in and out. . . ."*

## STEVE GALLAGHER

*"...The Doctor Who office has no problems attracting would-be writers. The problem lies in coping with the influx of junk that makes Sturgeon's Law look like a serious underestimate..."*



## GREGORY BENFORD

*"...The science fiction field is clearly developing into a two tiered system in which a fairly small number of people perhaps a dozen or so, make reasonably large amounts of money; and everybody else stays down there, trying to leap up and catch onto the parapet...."*

## RICHARD COWPER

*"...The night before I was due to start work on the new book I had a vivid dream. In this dream I was walking along a gas-lit street. It was winter. Snow was falling. Hearing footsteps behind me I glanced back over my shoulder and saw a small child with a 'bird mask' on its head running through the snow towards me. As it drew alongside it spread its paper wings and simply vanished. I woke up wondering what on earth the vision meant and jotted down its essential elements...."*

## CHRIS PRIEST

*"....I was no longer a child, but it was still very tempting to think of any nuclear attack as being a sort of super-blitz, one which would devastate perhaps hundreds of square miles of land rather than hundreds of acres, and one which would kill millions of civilians rather than several thousands. Such a war would be essentially survivable by some people.... But the twentieth century is full of lies and the greatest of all is that nuclear war, even all out nuclear war, is going to be survivable by some...."*

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