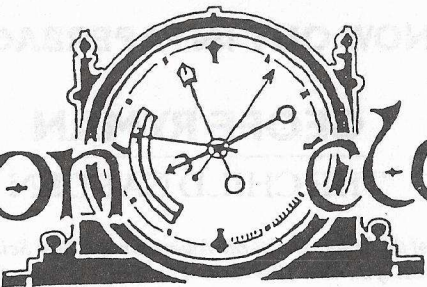
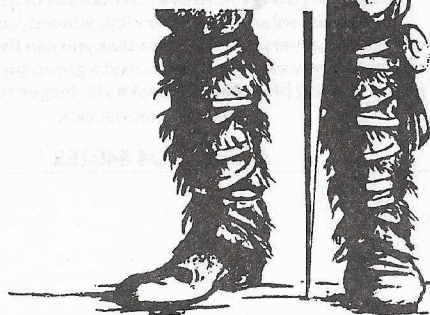


chron+clasm



-- "Excuse me,
could you tell me the time,
please?"



by Frank R.

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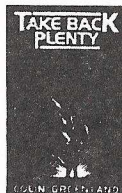


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COLIN GREENLAND

TAKE BACK PLENTY

A Space Extravaganza



Tabitha Jute was in trouble on Mars. Up against the law,
penniless and about to lose her livelihood and best friend, the
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Welcome to Chronoclasm

"...so it was clear that some people had been careless and had been causing chronoclasm."

"Causing - what?"

"Chronoclasm - that's when a thing goes and happens at the wrong time because somebody was careless, or talked rashly..."

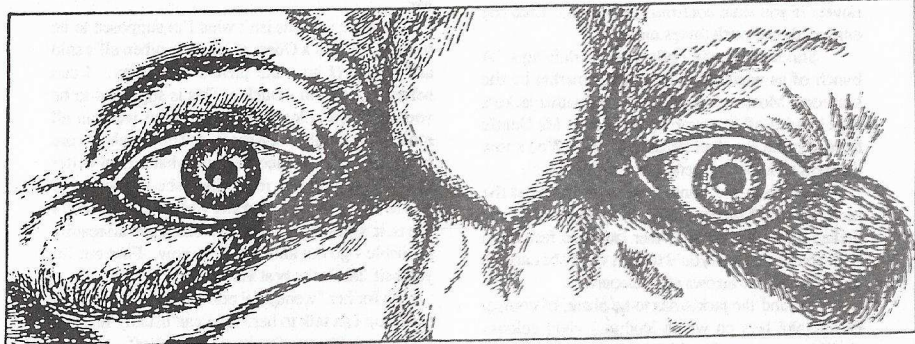
John Wyndham, "Chronoclasm", *The Seeds Of Time*

The rash talk was more than a year ago now. As I recall, someone said just before Iconoclasm that if it went well we should announce that we were running another a year later. I suppose this must have had something to do with "forward momentum", but we made the decision to go ahead during the last few minutes before the closing ceremony. Then we had the fun of finding a guest and a suitably-sized hotel, before settling down to a routine of late-night phonecalls, committee meetings scattered over most of England, attending as many fan group meetings and conventions as possible to sell memberships, writing for the committee newsletter, the odd crisis and (recently) more deadlines than you could shake a stick at.

Still, all that's in the past now (except, as I write, one of the deadlines -- I hope!) and we're currently comfortably ensconced somewhere in the Pennine

getting on with the convention (unless, of course, you are reading this in the train on the way home from the con -- in which case we're probably asleep somewhere). Assuming you're still at the con, the important thing is for you to get as much enjoyment out of the weekend as possible. If you've never been to a con before, you may like to know that the name badges are at least as much an automatic introduction service as an admission ticket; there's no need to feel diffident about engaging anyone in conversation. If you've any problems at all during the con, feel free to consult a committee member (we'll be recognisable by the green Chronoclasm t-shirts). Another point is that the Guests of Honour are people too. Should you happen to see one in the bar (Heaven forbid!), talk to them, tell them what you think of their work and buy them a drink.

Well, you've probably read enough for now. Flick through the rest of the programme book, familiarising yourself with where the interesting articles are and skim the bits on the con programme. Then carefully tuck the programme book away and join the fun.



MARY GENTLE - A Warning to the curious

by Paul Kincaid.

Don't be misled by the name.

In "Beggars in Satin", the story which leads off her collection *Scholars and Soldiers*, Mary Gentle describes a character with cinnamon hair who looks no more than 30. A character who carries a sword, but who is extraordinarily well educated. This character, we are led to believe, is Valentine, the heroine not only of two stories in this collection, but also of Mary Gentle's forthcoming novels. Nonsense. Just look at the author. How would you describe her? Cinnamon hair? Thirty-ish? She's also extraordinarily knowledgeable in all sorts of esoteric areas: don't start debating things like hermetic philosophy or Revenge Tragedy with her unless you're absolutely sure of your facts, she'll wipe the floor with you.

As for carrying a sword: she does, you know. And uses it. She goes around the country reconstructing battles. I can't help feeling if she'd allied herself with Richard III before Bosworth Field things might have turned out a little different. I think she'd like that idea, Ms Gentle enjoys playing around with history. (Check out the next couple of novels if you want confirmation of that). Like she enjoys playing with things military.

She was visiting Folkestone a while ago. A bunch of us went round the Sunday market by the sea front. Most of us drooled over the leather jackets then headed off in search of the books. Ms Gentle headed off in search of the army surplus. You know the stuff: combat trousers, urban camouflage..

The thing she wants most in the world at the moment is a chain mail shirt. In the meanwhile she makes do with a black leather jacket so festooned with chains and zips you'd think it would be enough to deflect all the arrows at Agincourt.

Oh, and the jacket has to be black, of course. Don't take bets on which loud and vivid colours she'll be wearing. You'd lose. Except for the pattern on her black t-shirts. You don't want to know

about the designs on Mary Gentle's t-shirts. You'll never be able to face another eyeball again.

Some of these unnerving designs may spring from the more graphic pages of recent graphic novels. It would be appropriate. Comics is one of the areas she's turning her multifarious (not to mention nefarious) talents to at the moment, working with Fox in particular. Fox rather likes to subvert our expectations of heroic fantasy in comics. It's easy to see why that would appeal to Ms Gentle. She likes anything that's subversive.

I've long since got used to the idea that you don't settle down with Mary Gentle for a polite exchange of platitudes and clichés. She is rarely polite, and as for the other two words I think she'd have to go check a dictionary she's so unfamiliar with them. Exchanges, rather, tend to be crisp, to the point, sometimes bruising, always invigorating.

I first encountered her at the Milford SF Writers' Conference. We were both newcomers. Since then we've established a somewhat acerbic relationship. She snaps at me. I snap back. She thinks for a while, then retorts: "I'll get you for that, Kincaid." She has a way of saying it which makes you believe her.

I realise that this isn't what I'm supposed to be writing. This is a Guest of Honour, when all's said and done. (I hear she prefers Dishonour. I can believe it. Uh-oh - Duck!) This is supposed to be your standard eulogy, isn't it? About what an all round wonderful person she is, and how luck you are to get the chance to meet her, and what a great writer long overdue for this recognition she is. Sod it. If you haven't already found out what sort of a writer she is, it's your own fault. The books are all readily available - go out and buy them now. Find out for yourself, that's the best introduction.

As for her "wonderful personality" - look, she's here, you can talk to her. You can usually find her in the bar. She won't bite your head off - at least, not until she knows you better.

No, I reckon the best thing I can do for you is to pass on a few friendly words of advice. Dont play her at pool, especially not if Paul Barnett is anywhere about. And don't mention the war - she'll only ask you which war, then give you a blow by blow account of every battle, complete with actions. The body count at the end is likely to be not far short of the original. Do be careful if she's looking bright and lively first thing in the morning, it can only mean shes been up all night and her wits are honed to a cutting edge.

And listen out for her dulcet tones yelling: "I'll get you for this, Kincaid." I'll need help. A timely offer of a drink should deflect her.

RATS & GARGOYLES - MARY GENTLE (Bantam Press, 400pp, £12.95)

In a huge, and sprawling city where gods live just along the street, where man-sized, anthropomorphized rats comprise the aristocracy, and where secret societies are the norm, something rotten lurks. Amongst the people, which includes rats, of this city are those who are attempting to change things; Lucas, prince of a far-flung land and student at The University of Crime; Zari, the Kings Memory in love with her landlady; Baltazar Casaubon, the Master Architect; Valentine, the Scholar-Soldier(ret'd) and crazy old mage also known as The White Crow; the out-of-favour Bishop of the Trees; and a dozen others.

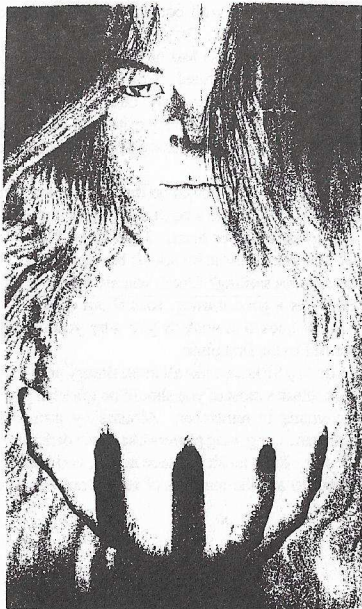
Rats & Gargoyles is a massive, Daedalian novel to match her Daedalian city. It is a novel that is as tightly structured as the buildings whose form Casaubon uses to control the daemons of the city, and a novel as powerful as the omnipotent Cthulhuesque deities that are the 36 Decans of the city. Mary Gentle's previous novels have been marked by solid characterisation of males and females alike, by political complexity, and vivid scenarisation, but now she has taken all of this one step further. Not only are there multiple plots and conspiracies, but at every turn new motives are unveiled; the reader cares not only about the protagonist, as if there were but one, but about half-a-dozen real people who are fighting to cause and prevent the end of the world simultaneously.

Like the related stories "Beggars in Satin" and the BSFA- Award nominated "The Knot Garden" this novel is based upon Renaissance philosophy and particularly the Hermetic traditions and magia. It is marked by wit, adventure and romance. *Rats & Gargoyles* will leave the reader desperately seeking more. Certainly the knowledge isn't necessary to enjoy the novel, in her acknowledgements Mary claims to be using it merely as the basis of a huge adventure playground, but I for one am reluctant to leave this world at the close of the novel.

In the past new women writers have been acclaimed as being in "the tradition of Ursula K LeGuin," in the future writers of such glorious, complex, wholeheartedly fun yet serious, novels about real people, will be described as being "in the tradition of Mary Gentle." *Sword & Sorcery* has been taken to the highest plane at last, and *Rats & Gargoyles* sits proudly beside M John Harrison's *Viconium* and Samuel R Delany's *Neveryon* at the very peak of the genre's achievements. You may write it into all those award ballots now.

Reviewed by Kev P McVeigh

(*Rats and Gargoyles* is published by Bantam Press in hardcover on 19 July 1990, price £12.95)



COLIN GREENLAND

by Geoff Hyman

It is the highest possible compliment that when I first met Colin Greenland, I thought he was gay -- small, sweet, pretty, with a rather cuddly air of mingled innocence and erudition.

I also thought he was a bit of a hippie. It was about 1979, and he had long, long hair. I was transfixed by his earrings. They were little ceramic arrows. He may even have had a Rupert the Bear pinned to his duffel coat.

He had just emerged, blinking, it seemed, from an academic cocoon. Almost at once he was thrown into the whirlwind of SF industry politics that might have damaged him, if he had not been one hell of a lot tougher than he looked.

As it was he became a free-lance journalist and writer. Something happens to people who free-lance. They get honed. They have to learn to hustle; they have to learn how to take occasional poverty and helplessness with equanimity. They have to learn how to please. They get sharper.

Over the years, the hair has been cut, the cuddly air somewhat dissipated. Colin produced fantasy novels that were curiously under-received. He wrote film criticism, literary criticism, and seemed to find time to read everything from Barthes to Peter Straub.

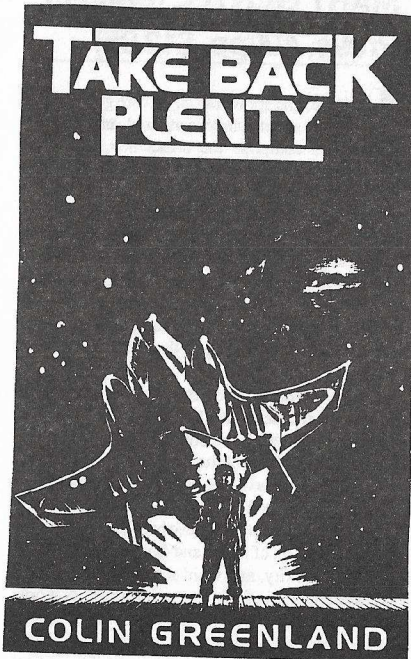
I think he is now poised on the brink of very great success. Sometimes a book or a play will capture a change of mood or heart. *Take Back Plenty* may well be one of those books. It has space pirates in it. Are you smiling? Good, you are meant to smile. *Plenty* is a good rousing, roustabout romance, the kind of book that reminds you why you started to read SF in the first place.

Literary SF is a bit like all those dreary progressive rock albums most of you should be grateful you are too young to remember. Albums by groups like Caravan. Long, long players like triple disk live Yes albums. Rock music is dance music, and was never meant to ape the manners of its betters. Trying to

force SF to be Henry James was a very ambitious but possibly deluded thing to do.

Books like *Neverness* were there sooner, but I think that *Plenty* may be the one to harvest a massive reaction against SF worthiness. We want wit, we want fun, we want wonder and we want ideas, lightly thrown into the air. The last thing an SF novel is ever going to be is important. It can, however, be witty, abundant, and startling. *Plenty* is.

Things have reached a kind of terminus when there has to be a separate award for the SF books people actually enjoyed. Say hello to Colin and say hello to the future.





ConCert II The Second Movement 26th - 28th October 1990

Back by popular demand, Edinburgh's SF/Fantasy/Comics convention. This year's GoHs include Diana Wynne Jones, Fox and Michael Mackenzie (of TV's 'Ace of Wands').

Full Membership £17.00

Supporting £9.00

Theme this year is 'Traditional Halloween'
Details and registration from Ms Jette Goldie
97 Harrison Road, Edinburgh, EH11 1LT
(tel 031 337 2052)

A WEREWOLF, A SUITCASE, AND A BLUSH

An Introduction to the Secret Life of
Neil Gaiman by Mary Gentle

Neil Gaiman: what can I tell you? *Vocation: being cool. Aptitude: writing. Ambition: to be immortal.*

I seem to have been friends with Neil for several centuries but that can't be so. One of us is not that old, and I have a nasty feeling that it's him.

This is the man who proclaimed to me, in the middle of a very crowded Wellington, "Of course, at adolescence I grew a hairy penis." Give him his due, it was in context of a hypothetical discussion about when one got to be a werewolf...

But there was one time when I, honest to God, saw Neil Gaiman blush.

This was at Milford, a seaside village for which the word backwater was coined. It has one main road with shops, down which time came to a halt in 1953. One of my abiding memories of the SF writers conference there is Neil walking back down the road to the hotel on a sunny morning, in black jeans, black leather jacket, and shades. An image in total contradiction to its surroundings. Milford's consensus-reality veritably creaked as it failed to accept this...

But I digress. Blip to another Milford morning: we are all umpteen of us strolling down the High Street. I think Maureen Porter was there for

this one, or she may not have been. It may have been another Milford with Neil and Maureen and the suitcase. So anyway ---

The suitcase?

It's like this. Paul Kincaid is attending, and Maureen Porter has turned up for the end-of-Milford bash, and is having a preparatory lie-down before facing the assembled populace. Neil is sent upstairs to get something from Paul's bedroom. On returning he is asked *How is Maureen?*

Was that Maureen on the bed? he says. *Oh. I thought that was a suitcase.*

It was a perfectly natural mistake, and anyone could have made it (he protested), ad anyway this resulted in Neil returning upstairs, bringing Maureen down, and introducing her around to everyone she didn't know. Neil introduces people very well, and upon very little provocation.

But back to the blush.

It should be explained first that Neil is not a morning person -- a statement equivalent to remarking that a vampire is not a vegetarian. Ask any Milfordian. There we would be, over the hotel breakfast (well into the week and the late night-games of pool and philosophical drinking) and all a little conscious of the clatter of forks on china. Somewhat late in the proceedings a figure dressed in black would appear, silent and with a sheet-white face. It would sit down. someone

There are those bits
of one's memory
that simply do not
work -

or do not work in
relationship to the
rest of it, anyway.



would pour a cup of very black coffee. Someone else would sugar it. Another person would prise Neil's fingers apart, wrap both hands around the cup, and steer it towards his lips.

Only then would his eyes open. Speech would not be restored for some time afterwards.

Now, under these circumstances there are people who are sympathetic, and people who have hearts of flint. Towards the end of the week, I sat beside Neil, surveying my plate of bacon, runny eggs, fried bread, and baked beans. Somehow I wasn't hungry. I cast a glance to one side. Neil was plodding through the last morsels of his own breakfast...

I waited for the appropriate moment when coffee distracted him and, the quickness of my two hands deceiving his admittedly not-open eyes, I swapped the plates over. The assembled Milfordians watched as Neil obliviously continued to eat breakfast. Finally he reached the baked beans. He pushed the plate a few centimetres away from him and looked at it in puzzlement. I've eaten this breakfast before, he announced, and I didn't like the beans the first time I ate them.

Neil Gaiman: what can I tell you? I love the man he gave me a copy of *Gallantry*: he persuaded me that my penchant for black was an acceptable perversion; he is as evangelical about *Lud-in-the-*

Mist as I am. He writes. One Milford night we talked and never did get to sleep, and it was worth it to see the rest of their faces when Neil was bright and sparkling and alert at eight in the morning.

Which was not the morning of the blush.

We were all wandering down Milford High Street. I was describing to Neil the book I was beginning to write. In it, I said, is a pig-hanging, and the University of Crime; an architect of indescribable personal habits, a dyke with a tail... And Neil said *That isn't like anything else you've written, that sounds good.*

He spent the next ten minutes protesting that they were actually two separate sentences, and in the wrong order anyway, and, and... And growing red. Bright scarlet. And trying to work out whether I was devastated, or was merely speechless and leaking tears because I was laughing so hard.

It was the latter.

The book was *Rats and Gargoyles*, and I still want that quote for the jacket...

Terry Pratchett & Neil Gaiman

The Antichrist is alive, the Four Motorcyclists
of the Apocalypse are riding out and the world
is going to end just after tea on Saturday...
Armageddon was never meant to be this funny...

GOOD OMENS

The Nice and Accurate Prophecies
of Agnes Nutter, Witch

GOLLANCZ

\$12.95

GOOD OMENS

*The Nice and Accurate Prophecies of
Agnes Nutter, Witch.*

**Terry Pratchett and Neil
Gaiman (Victor Gollancz
Ltd, £12.95)**

Oh dear, where to start? If I were easily embarrassed about public displays of mild emotions like hysterical laughter, I would have committed *Seppuku* over this book. As it is, I've sent one bus driver and two people whose only mistake in life was to sit beside me in the pub down to the local SF bookshop to buy it.

The undisguised aim of this review is to do the same to you, Gentle Reader, preferably without giving away the plot or ALL the best jokes.¹

In a nutshell, the plot could be described as a combination of *The Omen* or one of those *Rosemary's Baby* rip-offs and Richmal Crompton's "William" books. I don't think it's giving anything away to say that the original working title of this book was "William the Antichrist". Unfortunately trying to cram the plot of *Good Omens* into a nutshell is likely to lead to a cracking sound and lots of little brown bits trying to make your carpet look like very early on November 1st.

It's traditional when a book has been written by two authors for the poor reviewer to make a fool of himself by declaring which bits were written by which. I'm not sure that works here, if only because I can just see Messrs. Gaiman and Pratchett in a bar somewhere bouncing ideas back and forth so fast that by the time they're typed into the pocket computer, the serial marks are QUITE filed off. Still, I'll take a stab at suggesting that the (Outlaws) Them and at least one of the Four (Horsemen) Bikers of the Apocalypse (yes, THAT ONE) are Terry's and the Demon, Crowley with a penchant for snakeskin shoes (or are they?) has got to be Neil's. Incidentally, I wonder whose idea it was to use a back cover picture that suggests that Crowley and Aziraphale

are alive, well and have just finished writing a comic novel together.

Oh, silly me, I haven't told you who all these people are. Well, as is now traditional in co-written books (cf. Langford & Grant's *Earthdoom!* and almost any Niven & Pournelle) there is a *Dramatis Personae* at the front. Whereas the aforementioned colonials use this list to remind the authors of which cardboard congressman character is which, Gaiman & Pratchett use the character list to set the scene for the entire novel. The cast is divided into "Supernatural Beings", in which class come Aziraphale (Angel and part-time rare book dealer) and Crowley (An Angel who did not so much Fall, as Saunter Vaguely Downwards); "Apocalyptic Horseper sons"; "Humans" and "Them". Then there's the full range of Tibetans, Aliens, Atlanteans, Americans and other rare and strange Creatures of the Last Days. Oh, and I almost forgot; a Satanical hellhound which goes a long way to show that environment and nurture will win out over mere heredity any day.

After a rather muted start which we can tell isn't really the start because the page number is *vii*, the book takes off on page one. By the end of the page we've had one Felicitous Incongruity (the idea that God likes an early start while He's still fresh), an hilariously Over-extended Metaphor, and TWO Anticlimactic, or perhaps "Antiphonic", One-liners (An error of 15 minutes in the age of the Universe, and the Earth's Star sign)³

To avoid saying too much while still conveying its flavour, I'll just mention a few points: hidden somewhere in the book is the sort of thing a Nuclear Power spokesman would LOVE to say to a Radio 4 radio car at some ungodly hour of the morning; a lovely running gag involving cassettes left in cars metamorphosing into *Best of Queen* albums; neat Cold War references (one from the viewpoint of the ducks in St James' Park); and at allusions to 1984.

One of the nicest bits in the book (and please don't misinterpret this) is the way the opportunity for a sequel is deliberately thrown away. Some books are designed for sequels, some are actually enhanced by them, but this is one of a kind, perfectly formed, thanks very much. To have a sequel thrust upon it would not be conducive to a post-eschatological enhanced-readability scenario.

Reviewed by Steve Glover.

¹ Or Footnotes. One thing that carries over from the discworld books is the humorous footnote. In *Good Omens* most of these are directed at Americans, which is why so many Brits find them so amusing².

² Incidentally, why is it that EVERY SINGLE REVIEWER of a book with funny footnotes feels obliged to add their own?

³ And a Footnote.

On The Feeding Of The Fannish Masses...

by Jon Brewis (Our Man In Derby)

Sometime during the con, some of you may want to eat. If so, here are a few places you may want to consider...

Restaurants

Macklin Street

Excelsior

Very near the hotel, this is a slightly pricey but very good Chinese restaurant. The committee certainly enjoyed it.

Generic Chippie

Whose name I can't remember, left out of the hotel and just over the paved section on the left. Fish and Chips and kebabs.

Cornmarket

Pizza Hut

Need I say more?

New Italian Restaurant

So new that I can't find out the name. Recommended by someone at work, come see me if you're adventurous.

Adam's Rib

American style restaurant, a bit on the pricey side, but a change from the usual.

Irongate

Irongate Tavern

Good Berni Inn, dependable fare.

Friargate

Cromwell's Restaurant

Smallish 'theme' restaurant, English cuisine.

Kam Hon

Cantonese food, a good reasonable restaurant, good if the Excelsior is packed or not your idea of a Chinese restaurant.

Sadlergate

Stelianas Greek Taverna

Average Greek establishment, with lots of weird and wonderful food, not to mention the plate breaking.

The Sport

Deep Pan Pizza Co

Another chain pizza outlet.

Nicky's Fish Bar

Good Fish 'n' Chips

There are various other establishments around, but Derby is not exactly a metropolis. If you want to know about anything else, the hotel will know about it if it exists, as well as all important maps.

Pubs

A few watering holes you may like to consider, with possible bar food to.

Brunswick Inn

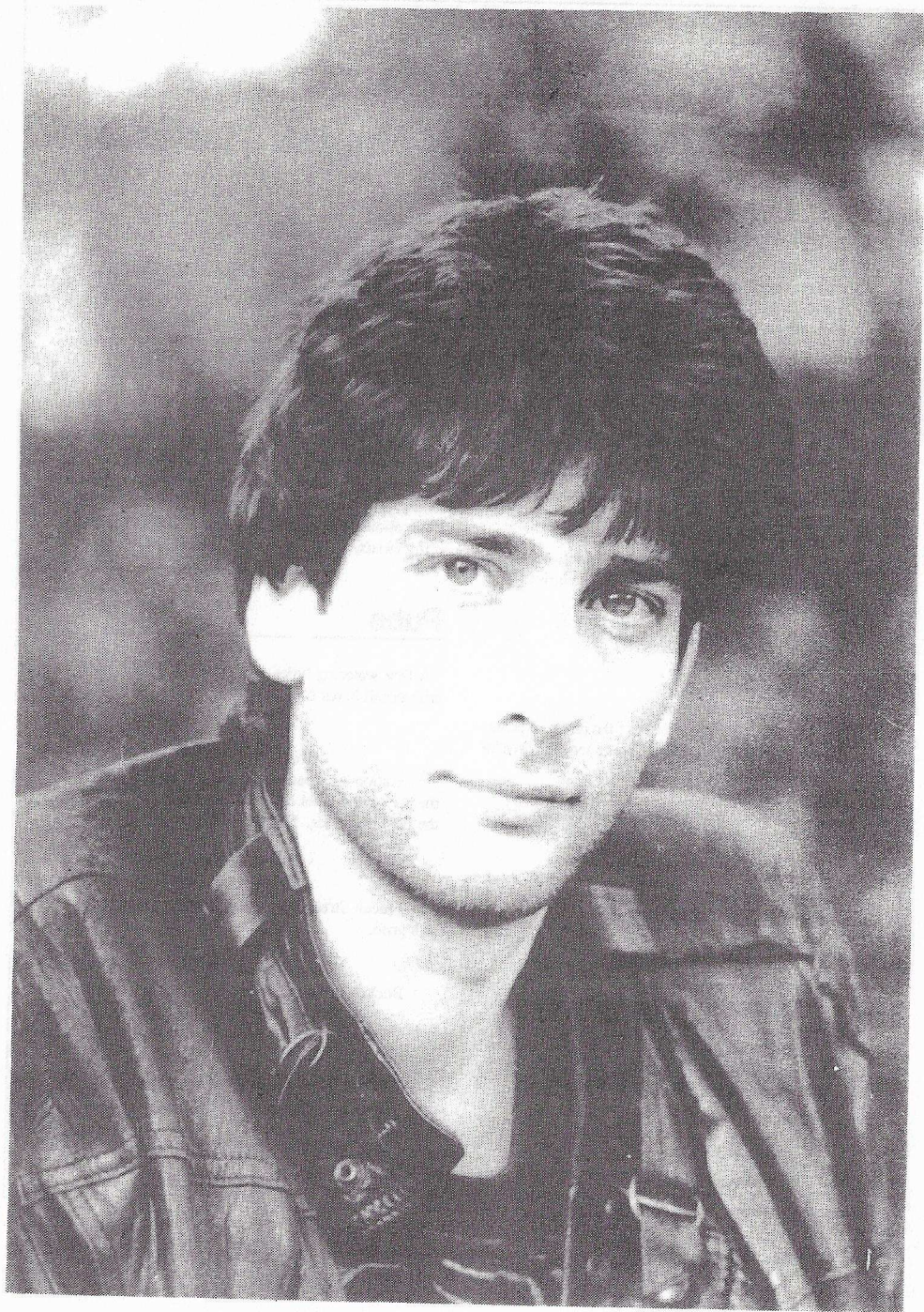
Station Approach. You may well pass this on the way to the hotel. It is THE best Real Ale pub in the East Midlands. Don't miss out.

Dolphin Inn

Queen Street. Good real ale pub, with varied pub grub.

Flamingo and Firkin

Beckett Street. Chain pub, but not bad.





BATTLEGROUP

Battlegroup is an independent amateur live roleplay and tabletop games club. Established in 1981, it Draws its membership from all over Britain, including Beginners and old hands.

It offers players a wide range of wargames, board games and role-playing games; both historical and speculative, in-house developed and commercially-bought.

As a logical extension of our tabletop gaming activities, we have experimented avidly with live roleplaying games: A form of costumed outdoor wargames.

For the past three years our latest LRPG, an SF game using state-of-the-art Laser weaponry, has dominated our LRP activities; but, due to the drying-up of supplies of hardware has now reached capacity. Consequently, our "Alternative History" LRPG (formerly called "Fantasy") is now enjoying a renaissance.

Players of the alternative history LRP game equip themselves with authentic costume, arms and armour of their favoured culture and period, so as to make credible the illusion of another place in another time.

One of the arts available to players is that of war. The principle means of conflict resolution is single or melee combat, using weapons such as the sword.

To use such weapons players must undergo thorough training to ensure safety and weed out the careless. **Battlegroup** uses a unique fighting system developed specifically for this kind of activity, which has resulted in no weapons related accidents in all of its nine years of play. The system was developed by Dean wayland over a period of years to provide players with an essentially safe, competitive, freestyle combat system. It is totally unlike the traditional fighting systems of the many historical re-enactment societies, and as little in common with fencing or the other martial arts. It is a new art.

It is this system which we will be demonstrating to you this weekend... and giving you a chance to handle the weapons and discuss the system.

For further information contact:

DEAN WAYLAND,
BATTLEGROUP,
4 YARMOUTH ROAD,
STEVENAGE
HERTS SG1 2LW.

Tel: 0438 368177

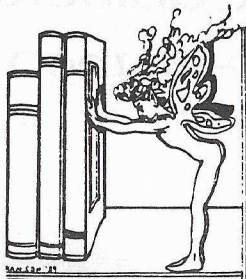
For Details of Training Courses.



TAKE BACK PLENTY - Colin Greenland (Unwin Hyman Ltd. £6.99)

Hallelujah! Space opera lives! Tabitha Jute arrives on Mars during the carnival. Needless to say, she isn't there for a good time. Tabitha (No one calls her Tabby!) needs parts for her ship, has no money, and ends up in jail. So far so good, it gets worse. In a nightclub on the Möbius Strip Tabitha meets a customer, the curious gloveman Marco Metz. He hires her to take him to Plenty to rejoin his cabaret troupe. Plenty is dodgy, but Tabitha needs the money. She soon wonders whether starvation would have been wiser. The troupe turn out to be criminals, but even then they might be lying, the case full of gold actually contains an alien corpse, and then the alien runs off into the savage jungles of Venus! The details of this future society, of Tabitha's past, and of her character are filled in during the interstitial dialogues Tabitha shares with her ship, Alice (as in Alice Liddell, as in Wonderland, which is appropriate.)

In a dramatic change from his previous novels, three beautifully realised fantasies occasionally let-down by their plots, Colin Greenland has written a fabulous tale of the spaceways. *Take Back Plenty* is gripping, lively, fun, and his most

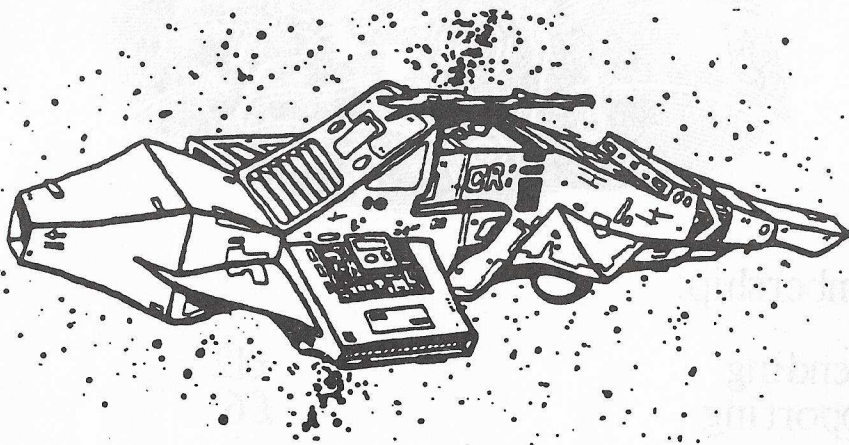


successful novel to date. The detailed characterisation remains, but things move so much faster here than before. Above all, this book is non-stop high adventure, sheer fun from page one onwards. Classic SF traditions are subverted, but this is don't care carefully, there are no weights to slow the reader down, no dragging exposition.

Quite simply, and at the risk of repeating myself, this is the most enjoyably, riotous fun novel I've read in a long time. Read it and weep, with joy.

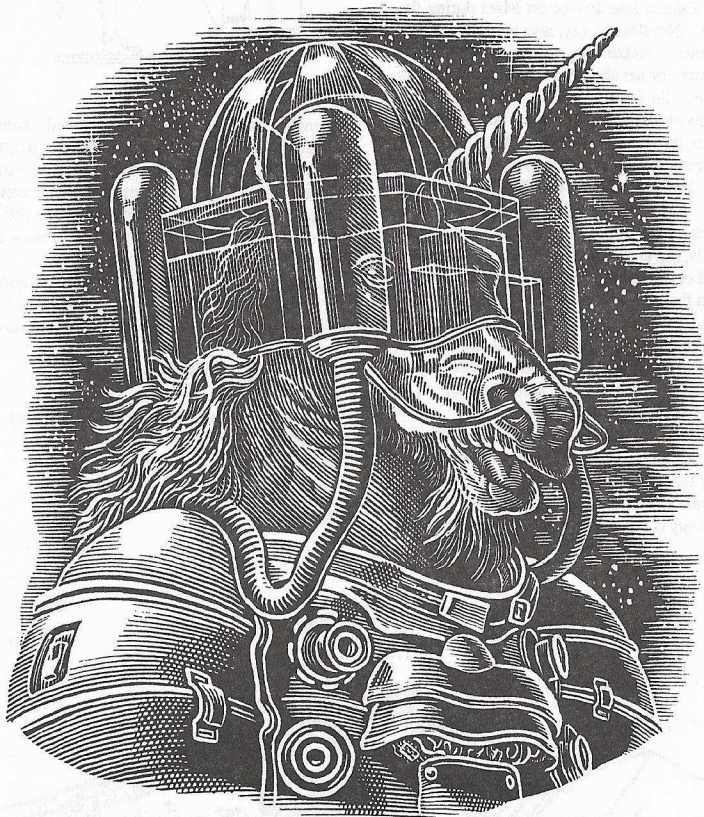
Reviewed by Key McVeigh

Take Back Plenty is published in Paperback on June 28th 1990



uniconze

11th u.k. universities s.f. convention
july 6—8, 1990 new hall cambridge



Membership:

Attending
Supporting

£12
£6

Contact: Uniconze, Clare College, Cambridge

MAKE YOUR OWN SF ORGANISATION

1. Spot a vacant niche in the structure of fandom, one for which there is no current organisation, but a large number of fans as potential members (eg Octarine fills the need for a club all humorous SF & F). Alternatively, start yet another Star Trek group.

2. Get yourself an honorary member. You can't have Terry Pratchett, 'cause we've got him already. Ha!

3. Form a committee. Previous experience of club-running is a great help. (At least we assume it must be. It would certainly have helped us.)

4. Start advertising in 'zines, shop windows, telephone boxes, etc. Reciprocal advertising between groups is a good idea. ("Reciprocals for sale! Get 'em while they're hot! They're lovely!")

5. NEVER EVER allow Bob Summons to join your club.

6. People will not join until the club is running. To get the club running you need money. You will have no money until people start joining. People will not join until... Solution: either lend the club some of your own dosh, until such time as it can afford to repay or file a paternity suit against George Lucas and hope the bulge looks convincing.

7. Produce issue one of your quarterly fanzine. If it took longer than three months to put together, worry.

8. Try a little merchandise. (NB T-shirts are a good idea, 'leaping salmon' ashtrays inscribed "Frae Bonnie Scotland" are not.)

9. Hassle people to join, show them your 'zine, sell them a T-shirt, make yourself known to the SF world in general. Remember all publicity is good publicity (apart from Shake'n'Vac adverts, which are crap).

10. Learn from other people's mistakes. a good way to do this is to join Octarine by speaking to us at our sales table or one of our program items, or by writing to: 46 Arnside Road, Bestwood Estate, Nottingham NG5 5HE.

MJ Simpson.

Acknowledgements:

The editor wishes to thank all the contributors, most notably Mary, Paul and Geoff for their profiles; Simo and Dean for articles; the committee for their part; Fiona McIntosh and Jane Johnson at Unwin Hyman for arranging Colin Greenland's attendance; Unwin Hyman, Bantam Press and Victor Gollancz for review copies; Cyd Licence for typing; Peter Horton for DTP advice; all the artists; and Colin the printer for obvious reasons.

ART Credits:

The guy on the cover with the sundial on his wrist is by Frank Maple; the logo is Dave Mooring's.

Iain Thomas - p3

Ian Brooks - p5

Steve Crisp - p6 (Cover for Take Back Plenty courtesy Unwin Hyman Ltd.)

Dave McKean - p8 (From Violent Cases)

Ian Gunn - pp18, 21, 23, 24

Pete Crump - p19

Peggy Ranson - p19

Pavel Gregoric - p26

Photo Credits:

Neil Gaiman by Miriam Berkley courtesy Victor Gollancz Ltd
Mary Gentle/Colin Greenland by Kev P McVeigh.

The Committee wish to extend their gratitude to all our guests for agreeing to fill that role, and being so wonderful in it; and particular thanks to Unwin Hyman Ltd for supporting Colin Greenland's attendance.

MI-BALLS

'MJ-Balls' is a defence fund launched in April 1990 by the writers John Grant and David Langford, in response to what we see as an attempted use of our beloved legal system to suppress dissenting opinion in a purported scientific debate.

In plainer words, a British author is being sued for a lot of money after disparaging a theory so bizarre that the only interested newspaper was the Sunday Sport. The suit is based on a newspaper article which drew immediate complaint from the author as misrepresenting her words. That the person misquoted should in such a case be sued at all is odd. She is being sued for twenty times the amount asked from the publishers of the alleged defamation. Something is surely wrong here.

The author is Jenny Randles, whose books are chiefly concerned with UFO investigation. This is for obvious reasons a diabolically difficult field in which to work, thanks to a vast lunatic fringe and to the best-selling sensationalism of such writers as Whitley Strieber. For what it's worth, we ourselves think that Jenny Randles is a sane and responsible researcher.

The Story Behind The Case

There are two schools of UFOlogical thought. One, which on the whole predominates in Britain, suspects that 'encounter' and 'abduction' experiences involve abnormal mental states, akin to lucid dreaming or 'out of the body experience's. The other school, more popular in America, prefers to assume decades of literal and physical flying-saucer visits, and has a weakness for global conspiracy theories about a 'cover-up'.

One subset of what we're calling the 'American' school of UFOlogy puts its faith in a mass of supposedly leaked US government documents, called the MJ-12 or 'Majestic-12' papers. These claim to be the proceedings of a super-secret governmental committee which is presumed to

have investigated a crashed flying saucer (New Mexico, 1947).

We happen to be sceptical of this; indeed, the whole MJ-12 business is disputed by investigators who have pointed out many internal anomalies suggesting that the papers are simple forgeries.

Unfortunately, the wild and woolly material which has spun off from the MJ-12 story (aliens in a freezer in Virginia...US autopsies on little green bodies... aliens love strawberry ice-cream...US government deals with alien hordes, setting quotas for future abductions...) has provided hilarious opportunities for the media, making it hard for 'British-school' researchers like Randles to have their own, less exciting, speculations taken seriously. So much for the background.

One leading American promoter of the basic MJ-12 story is Stanton Friedman ('Nuclear physicist-ufologist', as he signs himself). In October 1989 he was scheduled to push his views at a public meeting in Manchester - an event uncritically announced by the Manchester Evening News. Jenny Randles, who lives nearby in Stockport, contacted the newspaper and vigorously disputed the MJ-12 issues.

The resulting article, somewhat jazzed up to present the debate as a sort of personal vendetta, provoked her to complain. For example, we believe she'd happily stand by the statement that the MJ-12 papers are (to quote) 'about as factual as a Steven Spielberg movie' - but the write-up applies this phrase to the coming meeting. Comments about the wilder MJ-12 'spin-off' material mentioned above are reported as though perhaps aimed at Friedman alone rather than the weirder US eccentrics.

Despite Randle's complaint about the article, Friedman and the British meeting organiser Harry Harris issued writs soon after, asking the newspaper for £500 and Randles for £10,000. Among the grounds for the latter suit are supposed to be damage to Friedman's scientific

reputation (words fail us), and sabotage of the public meeting by timing a printed attack for the same day (actually the Randles interview had taken place days earlier; the paper itself chose the publication date).

Since scientific debates are not supposed to be settled by lawsuit, we feel that this suit damages Friedman's 'scientific reputation' far more than could any newspaper article (except perhaps his splash in the Sunday Sport, to which he apparently does not object). We are also perturbed that the action should be brought on a basis of a newspaper piece which Randles had immediately disputed as having distorted her comments.

The Bottom Line

Jenny Randles has little money and faces a long nightmare of legal fees. Irrespective of the truth or falsity of the MJ-12 farrago, the issue strikes us as one of freedom of speech. We launched this appeal not as UFOlogists but as writers with an interest in both mainstream and fringe science, and in the right to disagree and publish one's dissent. We ask for your support: money, publicity, personal endorsements, signed books from authors ('for sale' list out soon).

Payments can be made to MJ-Balls at either address below, or at any branch of the Britannia Building Society: Account 0 5970 510 6.

All donations and support will be acknowledged as swiftly as possible

David Langford, 94 London Rd, Reading.

John Grant, 17 Poldsloe Rod, Exeter, Devon.



The 2001 Overture

In this the centenary of the birth of Wolfgang Reischenschein (1890 - 1942), a major international retrospective of his work is being undertaken. Chronoclasm is playing a part in this by the performance, during the opening ceremony, of his 2001 Overture; its first public performance for many years. Perhaps the most accessible of Reischenschein's pieces, the overture pays homage to Tchaikowsky whilst in its opening many have detected a foreshadowing of Richard Strauss' "Eine Heldenleiben".

We hope that in 1990 Reischenschein might at last gain the public recognition he has so long deserved.

PHONOCCLASM

PhonoClasm 1: The Iconoclasm Cabaret Tape

90 minutes of Linda-Claire Toal on beards, Simo on Alien, the Slave Auction, lots of filking, and more.

Price £3.00

PhonoClasm 2: The Chronoclasm Cabaret Tape

This 90 minute tape will be on sale early on Sunday morning to advance orders, and after the con..

Price £5.00 (includes £1 Protoclasm voucher)

Contact the Ops HQ, or write to:
Nick Atty, Garden Flat, 11 Lypiatt Lane,
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire

PROTOPLASM

A Science Fiction Convention

Protoplasm will be held during late June 1991.
For further details/memberships/etc. contact:

PROTOPLASM
c/o Neil Curry
24 Peartree Road
Enfield
Middx
EN1 3DF

The Committed

Neil CURRY (secretary, memberships, finances)

I really hate writing profiles of myself. Do you remember my effort in PR1? Well, that's the best I've ever been able to produce (try reading it in the first person - it sounds a bit better) but I've had orders not to use the same one again. OK, then, what shall I say about myself? Oh, yeah, remember my comment that I was the only one on the concom to drink lager? Well, I've been cured - that's what comes from being too lazy to say "no" when a round of Original was bought. Whitter, whitter, whitter.

So who am I, how did I get into fandom, etc. Whilst at Leeds for 3 years, I went to my first con - Conception (appropriately enough) and my first reaction was "where is the SF?" This wasn't what my preConceptions had led me to expect. I was ready for everyone in the hotel to be spouting SF talk continuously. So, thinking "it's no use complaining", I immediately started the preparations for LUCon - the first SF con to be held at Leeds University. It more-or-less went okay (everyone was so gentle on us!) and so the embryo concom was formed for Iconoclasm. This went... ah, a pattern seems to be forming. Anyway, in full confidence that Chronoclasm is going to be GREAT (no more-or-less talk for me anymore), I already find myself busy with the initial preparation for Protoplasm - son of Chronoclasm - for which I will be the chair.

Apart from my con-running, my other fan activities include writing for fanzines (not too often recently) and writing for an apa (The Organisation). Having originally been disappointed with the lack of SF in fandom, I seem to have veered in that direction myself now. Oh well, c'est la vie.

Kev P McVEIGH: (Guest Liaison, Publications)

The good looking one on the committee, Kev is also the reigning British Champion Name Dropper. After a misguided period trying to be a scientist or something, he is now unemployed but hoping to develop his interests in publishing and marketing through an Employment Training course. Job offers via Con address, please.

As editor of VECTOR, the critical journal of the BSFA, his interests are inevitably towards the serious side of things, and he can always be relied upon for an obscure name. This is his first full concom post and may well be his last, if he has any say in the matter.

Likes: Music (Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen, loud rock); SF (Ryman, Murphy, Shiner, Waldrop, KS Robinson, Cadigan, Gentle, Powers, Banks, McDonald, Delany, Kennedy, Ellison. Plus others you won't have heard of!); Travel; Football; weird artists (Ferre, McKean, Sinkiewicz); other things.

Dislikes: Filk; Poll Tax; Conservatives; TV and Film SF.

CONFUSION: The Fannish RPG Character sheet

Character Name: Jon BREWIS
Profession: Hotel Liaison

Attributes:

SIZ: 0.25 CON: This one
STR: 0.0001 APP: Harassed
INT: [CLASSIFIED] DEX: 12

Distinguishing marks: wears Jeans, T-shirt, glasses, worried expression. NO BEARD.

Skills:

Diplomacy : 01% Find Bar : 80%
Reach Tall Object : 05% Argue : 65%
Panic : 75% Organise : 05%
Spend Too Much : 73%

Objects in Possession:

- 1 Strange sense of humour
- 1 Octarine membership
- 1 Enthusiasm for Science & Technology
- 2 Little money

Notes:

Character spends too much time going to conventions and mixing with disreputable individuals. he is too ready to help out at such events, and has recently become a novice in the Circle of Conrunners, a masochistic cult. Also spends too much time in pursuit of Potion of Real Ale.

OMEGA (Gophers)

One 1/2 page blurb on me for the programme book as requested. As you can see I bottled out and

got Jette to write it. At least it's a different set of lies.

Omega hates this bit. After all, how do you describe her? (and not die messily afterwards.) [Jette here]

She says her physique was designed for pioneering and she was born in the wrong century, either too late for the American west or too early for the new planets.

A dedicated Wolfette she will never leave a fellow pack member to howl alone. If you hear something odd, either a good-looking man just walked past (preferably stark naked) or somebody just mentioned Harrison Ford/Vincent/any one of a hundred or so others.

Buy her a beer, or offer her mead and she'll go 'cheers mate' and be your friend for life (or the duration of the con.) But for your health's sake don't let her cook for you -- all she's learnt so far is a killer chilli!

Omega has made the major move of relocating to live in Edinburgh, after 22 years in London.

Steve GLOVER: (Chair, phonecalls)

In real life employed by the University of Leeds in the field of Computational Chemistry, Steve discovered conventions five years ago, closely followed by discovering the local SF grup. Used to go to cons to listen to programme items, and stay up all night in the film programme or filk room. Started a fanzine, OUTSIDER, in Summer 86 and kept up quarterly production until Spring 88. The next issue (No.8) is due out for the Worldcon, honest. Somehow managed to get roped in at a fairly early stage for LUCON, which was followed last year by ICONOCLASM. As well as conrunning, which has led to him now attending cons to talk to people, steal programme ideas and spent lots of time discussing the next con (believe me, you don't want to know how many future ones he's involved in), Steve contributes fairly irregularly to two apas and attends the Wellington in London quite frequently for someone who lives 200 miles away. He used to attend the London filk meeting until recently, but lack of travel time as caused him to try to set up a Northern group in Leeds. Steve is married to the rather better known Jenny Glover, with who he has produced HALADIE, an occasional one-shot fanzine; DINOSAURS & DISKETTE FAILURES, a monthly 2

person perzine and TARA & ROBERT, a pair of almost-delightful children with a marked propensity for jumping on sleeping houseguests.

Steve ATTY: Tech-Ops

Stevens first venture into conrunning was at Iconoclasm where he was volunteered to play a major role as a pool of sweat behind the tech desk. From this prestigious position he learnt two things about tech:

- 1) You get a good seat at all main programme events;
- 2) Somebody else always buys the drinks.

Despite being a victim of Linda-Claire Toal during the Iconoclasm Cabaret Steve managed to go unnoticed by most people by partially hiding behind a large stack of tape decks and amplifiers. This year it is his intention to go one step further and remain totally hidden by an even larger stack of tech equipment.

If you want to find him at the con he'll either be chasing reels of audio tape, or performing delicate surgery with his soldering iron on the mixer units.

Nick ATTY: Tech-Ops

Nick is one of the few conrunners who will never be seen at an Eastercon as he is always canal boating. He spent much of 1988 telling the LUCON people how their con should be done, so they called his bluff and enlisted him to run Iconoclasm. Despite his best endeavours in this he was still asked to help with Chronoclasm and Protoplasm and...

The rest of his spare time is spent building tech equipment and he is the co-designer and builder of the mixer used at the con; if you have a few hours to spare he will gladly give you the technoporn for the price of a pint or four.



NOTES/AUTOGRAPHS

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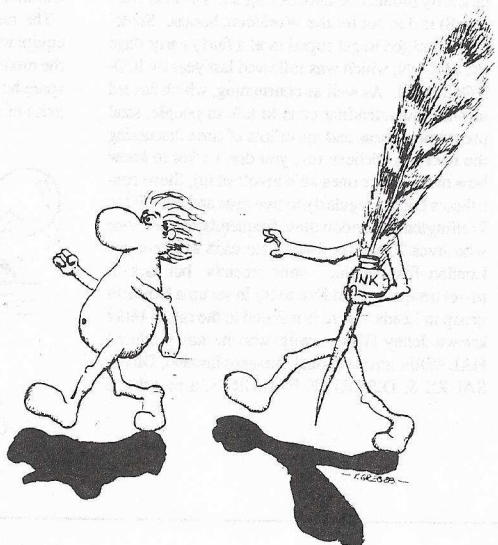
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Membership list

85A Andy Adams
 38A Phil Alcock
 3A Nick Atty
 5A Steve Atty
 15A Mary Beard
 78S Dave Bell
 128A Meike Benzler
 133A Peter SN Bibby
 67A Pete Binfield
 101A Mike Birchell
 71A Paul Blair
 99A Jill Bradley
 98A Phil Bradley
 6A Jon Brewis
 122A Ian Brooks
 36A Ben Brown
 72A David Bruce
 124A Ian Cairns
 131A Stuart Capewell
 18S Mike Cheater
 23A Fiona Clark
 16S Vinc Clarke
 47A Paul Clough
 26A David Cochrane
 28A David Cordery
 12S Del Cotter
 109A Chris Cowan
 25S Ian Creasey
 37A Rafe Culpin
 2A Neil Curry
 132A Michael Day
 42A Lawrence Dean
 13S Chad Dixon
 138A Lilian Edwards
 89A Sue Edwards
 135A Michelle Engel
 139A Nic Farey
 140A Louise (Nic's friend)
 123A Jim Fleming
 96A Mike Ford
 92A Estelle Forman
 134A David Forsyth
 103A Jonathan Foster
 114A Richard Fox
 G Neil Gaiman
 G Mary Gentle

82A Alan Gilbert
 10A Jenny Glover
 30K Robert Glover
 1A Steve Glover
 29K Tara Glover
 83A Tim Goodrick
 105A Mark Gradie
 G Colin Greenland
 94S James Hamilton
 63A Paul Hamilton
 68A Bridget Hardcastle
 113A Jeff Haughton
 95S GFJC Hedger
 76A Richard Hemison
 136A Paul Hiley
 27A Valerie Housden
 17A Terry Hunt
 57A Tim Illingworth
 55A Rodri James
 60A Richard James
 21A Wilf James
 70A Stuart Johnson
 62A Diana Wynne Jones
 111A Dilys Jones
 126A Jenny Jones
 119A Gary Josham
 118A Tracey Josham
 31A Kevin R Joyce
 116A Paul Kincaid
 80A Christina Lake
 39A Adrian Last
 121A Gary Legg
 20A The Off White Lensman
 100S Phil Lloyd
 22A Bill Longley
 50A Judith Looker
 61A Chris Malmé
 59A Chris Marriott
 86A Keith Martin
 40A Hugh Mascetti
 129A Richard Mason
 51A Sue Mason
 7A Kev McVeigh
 8A Yoma Megarry
 56A Robert Miller
 19A Nick Mills
 93S Michelle Minett
 108A Helen Morgan
 107A Michael Morgan

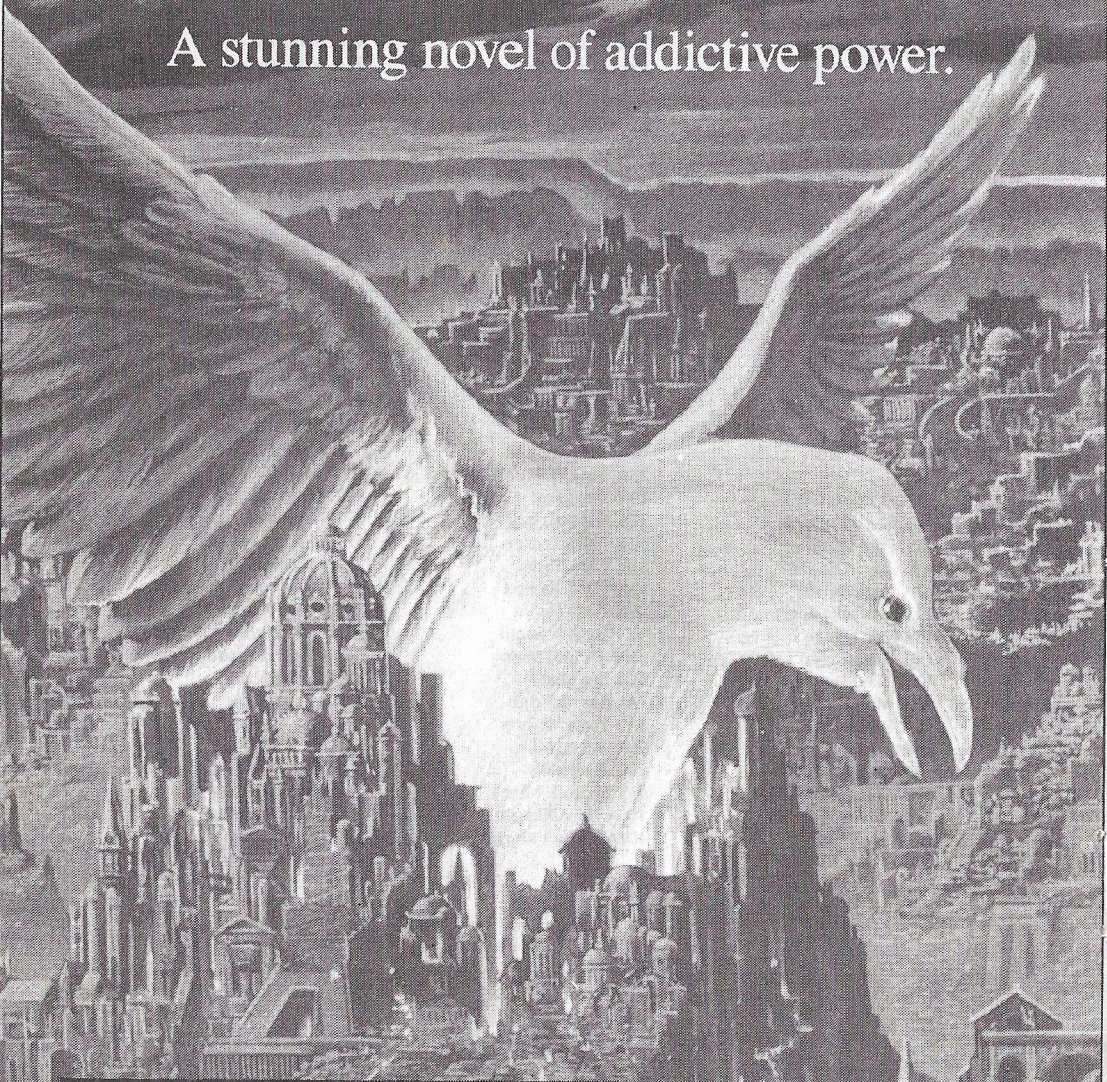
24A Simon Morris
 48A Paul Mosely
 90A Steve Mowbray
 66A Sue Mowbray
 69A Alison Murphy
 117A Andrew Norcross
 4A Omega
 9A Chris O'Shea
 84A Mike Parson
 34A Mukesh Patel
 45A Alison Pentland
 49A Lidia Plintschev
 115A Maureen Porter
 87A Phil Race
 54A Jo Raine
 102A Adrian Rankin
 65A Janet P Reedman
 11A Alastair Reid
 91A Dave M Roberts
 141A Geoff Ryman
 58A Antony John Shepherd
 53A Kurt Sidaway
 81A Nathan Sidwell
 44A MJ Simpson
 52A Peter Simpson
 137A Darran Simms
 127A Ivan Sinha
 74A Joyce Slater
 73A Ken Slater
 75A Roger Smith
 120A Robert Sneddon
 43A Kate Soley
 46A Garry Starr
 88A Marcus Streets
 130A Alan Sullivan
 125A Andrea Swinsco
 112A Michael Talks
 35A Iain Thomas
 79A Peter Thompson
 97A Ivan Towlson
 64A Chris Tregenza
 110A Kevin Vale
 106A Chris Varian
 14A Ian Vincent
 41A Nina Watson
 77A Dean Wayland
 104A Mandy Whitaker
 33A Alan Woodford
 32A Anne Woodford

Once in its labyrinth, will you ever want to leave?

MARY GENTLE

RATS AND GARGOYLES

A stunning novel of addictive power.



COMING IN JULY FROM BANTAM PRESS

