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Contents

Gibson Wins Philip K. Dick Award.....	p.1
1985 Hugo Nominations.....	1
Ace Announces Hardcovers, Promotions.1	
Tim Powers: Ten Years a Pro.....	1
Contents.....	3
Editorial Matters.....	3
Brian Aldiss: the Music of Writing...4	
Simon & Schuster Reorganized.....	4
Waldenbooks Expands Marketing.....	4
1984 Bestsellers.....	4
AussieCon Update.....	4
Market Notes.....	4
Longhorn Sinks.....	5
Asimov & EMPIRE.....	5
Electronic Disch Pays Off.....	5
Publishing Notes.....	5
Announcements.....	5
Book Notes.....	5
New Editor of <i>The Twilight Zone</i>	5
People & Publishing.....	7
Agent's Corner, Richard Curtis.....	9
Moons & Stars & Stuff, Fritz Leiber.11	
Locus Looks at Books, Faren Miller..13	
Locus Looks at More Books, Debbie Notkin.....	15
Locus Looks at French Books, Pascal J. Thomas.....	19
Report from France, Pascal Thomas...22	
SF in Poland, Piotr Kasprowski.....	24
Norwescon 8 Report, C.N. Brown & Dawn Atkins.....	28
Convention Listings.....	32
Books Received--March.....	36
Magazines Received--March.....	41
Classified Ads.....	44
Bestseller Lists.....	47
Locus Letters.....	48
Obituaries: Larry T. Shaw, Leo R. Summers, J.W. Schutz....48	
Ad Index.....	54

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Editorial Matters



Photo by Rick Hawes

The recent Association of American Publishers meeting in Palm Springs had some bad news for book people. The United States ranks 49th in world literacy; 20 to 27 million Americans are functionally illiterate, 45 to 49 marginally illiterate, and the rate grows at 2.25 million per year. By 1990, there will be 50 million VCRs out there and stores will push more tapes than books. Hang in there, guys! We need you.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICES

We've decided to bow to enormous pressure (at least three letters and an anonymous phone call) and put the first class and overseas copies in envelopes. It adds an ounce plus the envelope cost to first class, or \$3.00 per year. We will raise the rate \$2.00 next issue.

The recent changes in overseas postage have hit us extremely hard, and foreign air mail rates will have to go way up. We're proud of our foreign coverage and are even willing to subsidize foreign subscriptions somewhat, but an air mail copy to Australia now costs the same in postage as the subscription price! Starting next month, the air mail rate to Europe and South America will be \$45.00 per year or \$85.00 for two years. Australia, Asia, and Africa will be \$50.00 for one year or \$95.00 for two. Yes, I know these are prohibitive prices, but we're still subsidizing \$7.00 per year postage.

These new rates will be published in the next issue, but we'll accept renewals or new subs at the old rates up to June 1. After that, all subs will be prorated.

DONNING

Bob Friedman of Donning called last month and was upset over the story we ran about Donning returning purchased books to authors and remaindering others. He was particularly upset over the comment that Donning should not be considered a market. According to him, Donning is still actively looking for properties in the field, particularly in the graphics area. There's a book by Charles de Lint due in March (it apparently hasn't appeared yet) and a deluxe Harlan Ellison book due. It's quite true they returned older books bought by Hank Stine to the authors and remaindered others, but according to Friedman, other books will be reprinted and they hope to do more titles in the future.

PUBLISHING

The Ace story and the Simon & Schuster story have an important theme in common. In some types of trade publishing (and in science fiction in particular) there is no difference in the audience for hardcovers or paperbacks. The lines between trade and mass market publishing have blurred, and no mass market company can survive unless it can offer its own hardcover editions. The opposite is also true, and no hardcover trade house doing fiction can afford not to have a paperback outlet. McGraw-Hill recently announced its first mass market paperback, and Pinnacle has announced a hardcover line. Houghton-Mifflin has a new merchandising program which uses mass market techniques to sell hardcovers, and Bantam has had an incredible number of hardcover bestsellers by pushing them as if they were paperbacks.

CORRECTIONS

As usual, there were several errors in the last issue. On the **Locus** bestseller list, ENDER'S GAME by Orson Scott Card was credited to Bluejay instead of Tor; it's definitely a Tor book. Betsy Wollheim was typoed into Betsy Williams on page 54, and Lillian Stewart Carl had her middle name misspelled on page 4. The book with the favorable review on page 11 was FISKADQRO by Denis Johnson (Knopf). These are the only ones we caught so far. There are probably others -- especially in the Russian and Czechoslovakian sections. The Polish and French this issue was bad enough.

We have also been misspelling the name of Warner editor Brian Thom~~son~~ without even knowing it. Unlike authors, he was too polite to complain.

In the March issue's story on LAcon donations, we inco~~rrectly~~ stated that the committee gave \$10,000 to NESFA. The money was actually an investment in a NESFA real estate trust, which will earn LAcon interest and eventual repayment. LAcon did give a direct donation of \$2,000 to the NESFA building fund.

I don't think we're much worse off in the typo department than we used to be, except we're doing twice as much material. Tom Whitmore and Debbie Notkin have joined the staff as proofreaders, but they can't be blamed for missing items -- especially since we keep re-writing up to the last minute.

MAILING

Mailing help on the April issue was furnished by Pat Murphy, Mike Friedrich, Mikey Roessner-Herman, Lisa Goldstein, Carol Day, Aaron Buchanan, plus Donna and Dawn. Thank you all.

--C.N. Brown