

# The Book of Philip José Farmer

## NEWS BULLETIN

● **CONVENTIONS:** Yorcon, the 30th British Easter Science Fiction Convention, was held in Leeds from April 13-16th. It was an enjoyable affair and Richard Cowper proved an entertaining Guest of Honour, fulfilling his role with zest and enthusiasm. Another highlight was the presence of Douglas Adams, author of the extremely popular *The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. There seemed to be very little talk about Science Fiction, however, and the convention was more fannish than the predominantly fannish Novacon. Whilst fandom is central to conventions, the seeming eclipse of science fiction does make the event seem rather pointless and as Robert Holdstock said in his report of Novacon 8 (SFBC News, March), the increasingly lightweight tone is largely due to the poor support by professionals. A number of writers, agents and publishers do regularly attend conventions of course, but their familiarity cannot help but lend a certain sense of fatigue, even *deja vu*, to programme items. Yorcon was probably affected by the Worldcon, to be held in Brighton this August, so it would be wrong to criticise it, but I hope that future convention organisers will apply some thought to ways of attracting more people professionally involved with science fiction and thus give fans and readers of SF a greater insight into the joys and agonies of being a writer, publisher or agent.

● **LETTERS:** Now that Hollywood has got its gold plated teeth into SF it looks like gloomy times ahead. I hope someone out there will start producing good work by Haldeman, Ellison, and other notables. The thing is that when a company does buy a good concept, eg Ellison's *Starlost*, they invariably muck it up.

— Alan Marshall, West Yorkshire.  
Hope for good sf on film comes from *Limelight* (SFBC News, May), but Mr Marshall made some very valid points in a long letter from which I am only able to publish a brief extract. I would like to make the letters column fairly regular, so if you have any views about sf, please write.

● **AWARDS:** As I write this the Nebula Awards have just been announced in the United States. Many thanks to Donald A Wollheim and Gerald Bishop for getting the information for me.

**BEST NOVEL:** 'DREAMSNAKE' by Vonda McIntyre

**BEST NOVELLA:** 'THE PERSISTENCE OF VISION' by John Varley

**BEST NOVELLETTE:** 'A GLOW OF CANDLES, A UNICORN'S EYE' by Charles L Grant

**BEST SHORT STORY:** 'STONE' by Edward Bryant

There was also a Nebula special award for Joe Siegal and Joe Schuster, the creators of Superman.

This collection covers the spectrum of Philip José Farmer's work. Stories like *My Sister's Brother*, about a man stranded on Mars and his strange attraction to an alien woman. *Towards the Beloved City*, the chronicle of a pilgrimage in a world slowly recovering from nuclear disaster. And the intriguingly titled *Father's in the Basement*, a horror, or rather terror story. There is also a selection of what Farmer calls his Polytropical Paramyths: an interview with Lord Greystoke (Tarzan), a treatise on the *Sexual Implications of the Charge of the Light Brigade*, and an essay on the life and times of Kilgore Trout.

Philip José Farmer, who has the rather dubious honour of being hailed as the man who brought real sex to science fiction, was born in Indiana in 1918. He was awarded a Hugo in 1953 as the best new writer in the field, and has subsequently won two further Hugos for his story 'Riders of the Purple Wage' and the novel *To Your Scattered Bodies Go*. 239pp

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