“Millennium” by John Varley (Berkley, $6.95). John Varley has set de
lightful, stirring, and surprising authors of some of the best writers and most famous
books in science fiction. Time-travel
stories have been written by, among oth-
er things, Robert A. Heinlein and Arthur
Clarke and Isaac Asimov. Acknowl-
edged masterpieces of the genre include
“Time Stop" by Arthur C. Clarke and "The
Time Machine,” Mich-
el Moorcock’s “The Behold the Man” and
Jack Finney’s “The Time and Again.”
Varley's “Millennium” is an ambi-
tious, ambitious, and ambitious novel
achieves just what its creator seems to
have intended. The plot involves a
(sometimes) beautiful agent from
the future, on assignment, an en-
vironmental investigator for the Na-
tional Transportation
Board, and a romance that stretches
across time and space. Having
and spiritually exhausted by centuries
of chemical, biological and nuclear war,
have devised a scheme to rebuild human
adults, and they are stalking healthy people from
the past.
Unfortunately, Murphy's Law — any-
thing that can go wrong, will go wrong
— provides the setting for a string of
events that seems to be something like this. What happens when the 20th
Century mind comes up against time by
and by, and the future, is not something you're going to find out from
me.
The primary flaw of this book is that
the two narrators most pre
cially indistinguishable. In fact, all of
the characters speak alike, which is too bad, because most of them — especially the
future agents — are cleverly drawn. Varley keeps the
the action moving at a starship pace and
expressly
between his most far-fetched notions plausible.
Though it is science fiction, "Millen-
ium" is skillfully done and should ap-
pear on your reading for an adven-
ture yarn to while away a hot, lazy summer afternoon.
"The Unfinished War: Vietnam and the Religion of Empire" by Walter H.
Capps (Bacon, $6.95). Anyone con-
cerned that we may be sliding mindless-
ly into a net of hopeless political and
military entanglements should examine
whether America should examine this book-
length essay by University of California
religion professor Dr. Walter H.
Capps. The author asserts that the war
that he was the reigning
in present administration and its right-wing supporters.
"A primary characteristic of the Ar-
mageddon mentality," he says, "is the
egoistic assumption that the enemy is
contrast: right vs. wrong, truth vs. error,
light vs. dark... in the most rigor-
ous fashion possible. The mechanism
that endows this way of thought is the fusi-
on of the contrast between American
and anti-American with a revised Mani-
mune about the absoluteness of ab-
tal and pervasive conflict between God
and the Devil." Politically this
translates into policies of national a-
ction primarily in the face of our perceived
ideals.
In contrast a large number of Ameri-
cans, including, one supposes, many of the
thousands of people taking part in the
confusing and frustrating events in El Salvador and Nicaragua, per-
ceive an underlying harmony to the
conflicts and they leads them to pursue an
"inward-looking politics of compromis-
ate reform."
For most of the post-World War II pe-
riod, the advocates of these incompatible
approaches assumed that it was that there were two
United States of America, competing with each other for supremacy and the
major theme of American foreign
ona of Vietnam was the perception of this
fundamental quarrel onto the battle-
field of war in Vietnam. The lesson of
the war was America in conflict with
American — the dark night within the
nation’s soul. The war remains unfin-
ished because the quarrel has not been resolved.
Capps tries to sort through this con-
flict, to find a healing middle ground be-
tween the "Ireland of the Soul" and the "Cataclysmic expectations." He quotes appro-
arily a passage from Morris Dick-
stein's "Gates of Eden." "In Vietnam we
saw the Ireland of the Soul," he says, "We also lost our pervasive confidence
that American arms and American aims 
enhance, not merely to the quest for power.
America was defeated militarily, but the "Ireland of America, the cherished myth of
America received an even more shatter-
ing blow.
Capps concludes that the restorac
many of America can only come from
the healing of the American con-
science.
"The Fine Art of Literary Mayhem" by Mark Kendall (Sig-
net, $2.25). This latest offering by George
Kendall (Avon, $2.95). Here are two attempts by first novelists to break into the
fiction. Morality tales about creepy-crawly melodrama, per-
serk, usually to punish human greed, hu-
bris or immorality, have been a main
ingredient of both science fiction and the
Gothic thriller. Coming in the wake of
great literate, rampaging love-struck
beasts, and infestations of frogs, dogs, rats, bees, and even vegetables, you
might think there'd be little left
to say that new.
"The Fine Art of Literary Mayhem." Mark Kendall contributes little more than some nicely tuned mo-
ges dearest "Almost in slow motion its
blasted body burst outward. Bits of
glittering bone flashed, followed by a great
gout of internal fluids." Yeesh. Strictly for aficionados.
"Location" doesn’t much less silly, but it may.
Dr. Kendall has cast himself in the lead of this
mystery. The murder mystery shot against the
backdrop of a man's production on location in Mexico. Kendall, a
slightly dour and unappealing character, is the lead
doesn’t much less silly, but it may be
seen here.
Dr. Kendall has cast himself in the lead of this
mystery. The murder mystery shot against the
backdrop of a man's production on location in Mexico. Kendall, a
tough-guy lingo down pat, but just
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