

Fantasy-Times

"The World Of Tomorrow Today!"



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Second January 1956 Issue

Ten Cents

1955 IN SCIENCE FICTION

by Thomas S. Gardner

(In Two Parts - Part I)

THIS YEAR has been somewhat unusual. The best novel appeared in Imagination, being George O. Smith's "Highways In Hiding". A plateau has apparently been reached, at least temporarily, in the magazines being published the last six months of the year. The best magazine is still Astounding Science Fiction, with The Magazine Of Fantasy And Science Fiction running a close second. With the two mentioned magazines the best five of the year are Galaxy Science Fiction, IF, and Original Science Fiction Stories. The slump has apparently hit England also with Nebula dropping sharply in issues*, the quality of material in Nov Worlds Science Fiction taking quite a slump, and less frequent appearance of Science-Fantasy**. I admire the attitude of the editor of Science-Fantasy in refusing to issue a magazine unless he has at least readable stories, and certainly wish the same attitude persisted in this country. The terrific slump in quality in Authentic is very apparent. I am unfamiliar with the other magazines published in England and Scotland.

So let's see what the year brought up in the professional field.

● Astounding Science Fiction, 12 issues
A fairly good year with serious attempts on the editor's part to improve all the time. His efforts are very ap-

* In mid-1955, Nebula cut pages and has been appearing on regular bi-monthly schedule since.

** Only one issue of Science-Fantasy was delayed because the editor had trouble finding suitable material for publication.

ONCE AGAIN the first of the new year brings science-fiction author and fan, Thomas S. Gardner, with his famous annual report on the professional magazines. Mr. Gardner is still about the only guy we know that reads every story in every magazine that is published in the US. Mr. Gardner's opinions, tho we don't always agree with them, are highly regarded by the editors and readers of Fantasy-Times and form a good base on what happened professionally during the last year.

Your opinions on this report will be appreciated and all possible will be published in our "Notes To The Editor".
-The Editors

parent. E. F. Russell's "Call Him Dead" was the best novel. Cox's "The Guardians" is a powerful story. Anderson's novel "The Long Way Home" is good enough to deserve a sequel, if it can be written. The article "Design Flaw", October issue, is one of the most important articles to appear in Astound-

ing. All issues are recommended.

● The Magazine Of Fantasy & Science Fiction, 12 issues. The usual dilemma. So much smooth writing that it is difficult to pick out outstanding stories. The main failure of this magazine to top Astounding is not in writing quality or just good stories, but in conceptual inferiority to Astounding's plots. All issues are recommended.

● Galaxy Science Fiction, 11 issues. (Change of distributor & distribution date forced updating of issue No. 12 to 1956.) This magazine shows some improvement over 1954. McCann's "Preferred Risk" is mediocre in spite of winning a prize. Galaxy does one prime service this year, in printing a story which emphasizes the difference between a good story and a similar concept in a poor story. I refer to Bill Clothier's "The Semantic War" in the November issue, as the poor story, and the good story is Miles J. Breuer's "The Gostak And The Doshes", Amazing Stories, March 1950; reprinted, Avon Fantasy Reader, No. 10. The contrast is a lesson in writing and development. The trouble with Galaxy is that one gets some pleasure in reading it, but the stories slip away quickly and when I go back and examine them I find they fail to retain interest. Tenn's "The Servant Problem" is well developed. The humor in Leinster's "Sam, This Is You" will appeal to some, and ditto to Evelyn E. Smith, "The Princess And The Physicist". The best short story is Wallace's "End As A World". Packs a punch.

● Galaxy Novel, 3 issues. "The Last Spaceship" by Leinster, No. 25, is better than average story, but do I detect rewriting and cutting? I am not going to check on the original. De Camp's "Lest Darkness Fall" shows cutting to my memory*. Reprints do not strike me well. I prefer originals.

● Beyond Fiction, 1 issue. (Discontinued.) I regret this magazine being discontinued although it never came up to what I thought it should. Roy Hutchins' "Stream Of Consciousness" is a very good story in the old Unknown

tradition about a river that had "the stream of consciousness"! Cartmill's "Age Cannot Wither" is better than average. The other stories in quality justify continuance of Beyond -- but sales justify either dropping or continuing a magazine more than just quality.

● Universe Science Fiction, 2 issues. Name changed to Other Worlds. Frank Robinson's "The Santa Claus Planet" is worth reading. The quality of these two issues is slightly under average.

● Other Worlds, 3 digest-size issues, and 1 pulp-size issue. This magazine replaces Universe SF, and to my SURPRISE dropped in quality from Universe. In the three digest-size issues only one story is worth the effort of reading. D. C. Reese's "Gift Of Zor" which has a somewhat different slant on galactic roaming. The pulp size issue shows some sign of improving.

● Imagination, 9 issues. As noted above Imagination published the top novel of the year, Smith's "Highways In Hiding". Unfortunately nothing else came up to this level. Madge seems to be improved over the preceding year however. A very unusual story is Abernathy's "World Of The Drone", which in some vague way reminded me of Leinster's "Mad World" and "Red Dust" of ancient history fame. The covers of Imagination are very good in design and concept. The general run of the stories in Madge is far superior to the majority of the mags published, and come in class B, with the five noted earlier constituting class A. I have been expecting Madge to break into Class A every year, but the editor exhibits an unevenness of quality which, in my opinion, can only mean that he cannot get what he wants -- and accepts inferior stuff at times. I like clever little stories like Dunham's "Moonlight And Robots". What gets me is a fairly good story like Marlowe's "Es Percipi" followed by Galouye's "The Day The Sun Died" which is very poor in my opinion. In general one can afford to read most of Madge.

*It was, and mostly by de Camp.

conducted by J. Harry Vincent

THE SECON II

The Secon II will be held in Charlotte, North Carolina, Saturday and Sunday, March 3 and 4, 1956. It will be held in the Chelsea Room of the Charlotte Hotel, the city's leading convention hotel. Programming will be light, although there will be a sufficient amount to satisfy everyone. Don't know just who will be there as yet -- but one person who will be there will be Larry Shaw, editor of Infinity. All fans and writers are invited to attend this 2nd Southeastern S-F Conference. Registration is \$1, and should be sent to Robert A. Madle, Chairman, 1620 Anderson Street, Charlotte, N. C.

THE 1956 WESTERCON

Marilyn Tulley is the Chairman of the forthcoming 1956 Westercon, to be held in Oakland, California. Advance memberships are now being accepted, which is still \$1.00. All fans are invited to participate in the program of events being planned for their enjoyment. Convention Headquarters will be at the Lake Merritt Hotel, dates set for June 30 and July 1st, 1956. All memberships should be made payable to Marilyn R. Tulley, 432 23rd Avenue, Oakland 5, California.

MORE ON THE 30th ANNIVERSARY "AMAZING"

Sam Moskowitz will have a long article, well illustrated and in special format in the coming 30th Anniversary, April 1956, issue of Amazing Stories. It will be titled: "What Man Can Imagine..." and will tell of all the predictions made in Amazing since 1926 to date that have come true.

Also planned for the issue are articles on the future by well-known persons in the s-f field and others well-known thruout the world.

Ziff-Davis' new western magazine, not yet named, will feature a cover by the popular Valigursky, and the lead novel will be by Ted Sturgeon and Don (concluded on page 4, column 1)

by Roger Dard

(Jan. 7, 1956) Science Fiction Monthly, #5, 98 pages, 2/- . Contents: "Bitter End" by Eric Frank Russell, "Shape Up" by Jack Vance, "Hot Squat" by A. Bertram Chandler, "The Guilty" by Alfred Coppel, "The Curse" by Arthur C. Clarke "Who You Calling A Monster?" by Tom Beach, and "The Troublemakers" by Poul Anderson. The cover is not signed, and may be original. This is the first issue to use a poorer quality of paper in its make-up, and the colored interiors have been replaced by black-and-whites, though color is still used for some of the title headings inside.

ROGER DARD appears regularly in Fantasy Times. Look for another column in the next issue.

NEW YORK CONVENTION NOTES

by Ken Beale

More than 18 years ago, as most Fantasy Times readers know, the First World Science Fiction Convention, "The Mycon", was held in New York City. Now with the fourteenth, the World Con has returned to the big town at last: the culmination of much careful planning, organizing, and activity.

In these columns, I'll try to give you the latest word on how the affair is shaping up. This early, of course, there isn't much that can definitely be said. The hotel, after a good deal of discussion and investigation, has been selected: The Biltmore. It is a modern, air-conditioned establishment, conveniently located next to Grand Central Station at 44th St. Although many other hotels were considered, including the swank Waldorf-Astoria, this one was finally selected for economic reasons. Rooms, banquet price, bar rates, etc., are as reasonable as could be found anywhere in a hotel of the size needed. If you can find 3 other fans willing to share a room with you, you can stay there for \$4 a night apiece. Triple rooms are \$13.50 for 3, doubles \$11.50, singles from \$7 to \$10. We have been promised a large bloc of several hund-

red rooms located together.

The Con proper will occupy the hotel's spacious 19th floor-- all of it. Ballrooms, bar, lounge, etc., are located here. The banquet? Well, it will be higher than last year. And, we hope, better. As usual, attendees will be able to hear the speeches whether they buy banquet tickets or not.

We are proud to have Arthur C. Clarke as our guest of honor. We don't think a better choice could have been made. Besides Mr. Clarke, a wealth of other professional talent will be on hand. As you know, much of the SF world is centered here, and a great many professionals live in or near New York.

On the committee, we have both fans and professionals. David A. Kyle is Chairman, Jean Carroll Assistant Chairman, Dick Ellington and Art Saha Secretaries, and George Raybin Treasurer. In charge of publications will be none other than Larry T. Shaw of Infinity. Working under him will be Ron and Cindy Smith on the Progress Reports (first due this month) and Lin Carter on the Program Book.

To handle publicity, we have Richard Wilson, who is both a SF writer and a professional Newsmen. And Sam Moskowitz, who was on the first Con committee, will be on hand in his customary auctioneer's role, with Harlan Ellison assisting.

Membership cards, insignia, etc., are now in preparation, and the plans are to have them designed by top pro artists. Appropriately enough, Frank R. Paul, the guest of honor at the first Con, is now working on the insignia for this one.

One thing puzzled up - what to call the Con. Present plans are to have a contest to select the best name.

Yes, the "Hugo" SF Achievement Awards will be continued.

The registration fee is \$2, and the place to send it is P.O. Box 272, Radio City Station, New York 19, N.Y.

See you September first!

SCIENCE FICTION NEWSSCOPE

(concluded from page 3, column 1)

Ward, titled: "No Ballads For The Book-keeper". The cover will illustrate the novel.

BESTER NOVEL FOR "FANTASY & SF"

Bester's new novel, the first since the successful "The Demolished Man" has been snapped up by Fantasy And Science Fiction. Managing editor Bob Mills states: "We think it's even better, and a top contender for the best of the year' award". They plan to begin it in the June issue (out early in May. It is called "The Burning Spear".

THE CAROLINA SCIENCE FICTION SOCIETY

The Carolina Science Fiction Society recently elected officers for the 1956 term. Robert A. Madle was returned as President for his 3rd consecutive term; Randy Warman became Vice - President; George L. Cole was elected Secretary; and Robert Schrader became Treasurer. The CSFS is now heading into its 3rd year and is sponsoring the 2nd Southeastern Science Fiction Conference (see above). Also, it publishes a bi-weekly newspaper, Transuranic. Any fan mag editors interested are invited to send copies of their publications for exchange. Editor is Al Alexander, 2216 Croydon Road, Apt. 8, Charlotte 7, N.C. Price is 5¢ a copy.

By the way, Robert A. Madle's excellent column, "Inside Science Fiction" will also be appearing in Science Fiction Stories starting with the May, 1956 issue. Bob made a boo-boo in a recent "Inside" column. He referred to Howard Browne as "Howard V. Browne". Howard V. Brown was the famous cover artist for Astounding, Thrilling Wonder Stories, Startling and other pre-war s-f magazines, plus some non-s-f Gernsback magazines of the pre-World War I-days and the early 20s.

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1955 IN SCIENCE FICTION
(continued from page 2, column 2)

① Imaginative Tales, 6 issues. The quality of this magazine has been decreasing during the year, a new low being met in RAP's "The Metal Emperor". Fortunately the editor tries to get stories with humor, such as Bloch's "The Big Binge". I vote for Bloch to write a new novel each issue stressing humor in the fantasy Thorne Smith type. Anyone else interested? But not the Toffee

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stories, unless Meyers can improve an awful lot and connect them together more logically.

① Future Science Fiction, 1 issue. (No. 28, also labelled a "double-action" pocket-book. Probably an annual.) Issue better than average, and in class B. Best story in issue is Bade's "Decline". Incidentally I do not think City Of Glass, as it is neither numbered, nor dated as a magazine, should be included in this review.

(concluded in the next issue)

FANTASY COMICS

by Lane Stannard

EC has dropped all their comics, including the famous Panic. #12 Panic was the last one. Thier money-making MAD has gone quarterly. It is impossible, stated Bill Gaines, to stay bi-monthly and still maintain a high standard. That type of material is mighty hard to get. Gaines' four large-size photo-fiction, Grime Illustrated, Terror Illustrated, Cofessions Illustrated, and Shock Illustrated are still being published. As reported a few issues ago, Incredible Science Fiction, folded along with the rest of EC comics.

In our opinion, this and other comic mags folding recently are the direct result of the censoring layed down by the "Comic Code", and that comics will never make a comeback unless the code is done away with and common sense "censor" the few bad comics.



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THE CANDIDATES

Forrest J Ackerman 915 So. Sherbourne Drive,
Los Angeles 35, California

The man whom I am nominating for USA's guest to the London Conference of 1956 is a man extremely well known in all parts of the fan world. In reality, he is probably just as prominent in England, and other parts of Europe, as he is in the USA. He has been a loyal, conscientious and philanthropic S-F fan for 25 years and has done more for British fandom than any other individual. He co-operates in many foreign S-F ventures and personally advises S-F editors in England, Germany, Sweden and other countries. He is a man to whom Science Fiction, and Science Fiction Fandom, owe a great deal---for he has done so much for the field during his many years of activity. After all, the whole idea of "Big Pond Funds" was originally his. The man I am nominating is Mr. Science Fiction himself. Forrest J. Ackerman.

((Nominated by Robert A. Madle))

G.M. Carr, 5319 Ballard Ave., Seattle 7, Washington.

For the TAFF I wish to nominate G.M. Carr, a fan well known on both sides of the Atlantic, and even better known on this side of the Pacific. G.M. is one of the most dynamic fans on the West Coast, and is the publisher of GEMZINE and GEMTONES. An active fan for six years, she is a charter member of the Seattle fan club, THE NAMELESS ONES, and was first corresponding Secretary and Editor of the club publications, THE CRY OF THE NAMELESS and SINISTERRA. I believe that she would be an excellent representative of American fandom in London.

((Nominated by Elinor Busby))

POLLING

CLOSES

15TH FEB. 1956

Kent Corey, Box 64, Enid, Oklahoma

Why do I think I deserve to go to the Britishcon next Easter? My main reason is that I have tried to help promote fandom ever since I came into it in 1952. I founded the Oklahoma SF Club and launched my fanzine as official organ in 1953. By May 1953 I had decided to start a Southern Convention, so, in September 1953 the first Oklahoma convention in 20 years was held. Since then I have helped promote the OSFC into the most active club in the US and the Oklacon into a large annual regional convention.

((Nominated by Kent Corey))

Lee Hoffman, 101 Wagner St., Savannah, Ga.

Fabulous fannish character from 6th Fandom...the Southern Swamp Critter who tamed from a 15 year old boy into a beautiful young woman at the Nolacon; much to the astonishment of Bob Tucker and sundry other fan. Well known as the editor of QUILDRY, Leeh is a member of FAPA and is widely known in all of English-speaking fandom. Her participation was largely instrumental in bringing Walt Willis to the 10th Annual Science Fiction Convention in Chicago in 1952. The UK drooled over Bea Mahaffey.... let's give 'em another thrill with Leeh!

((Nominated by G.M. Carr, Bob Tucker & Larry Shaw)) OVE.

FORRY ACKERMAN

G. M. CARR

KENT COREY

LEE HOFFMAN

DAVE KYLE

HAL SHAPIRO

LOU TABAKOW

WALLY WEBER

David A. Kyle, 300 West 67th St., New York
23, New York

The .. stands for Ackerman! And he's been around fandom about as long as Forry. He was active at the time of the First World S.F. Con in '39, and has been present at practically every major event since. A hail fellow well met, you would have to look hard to find a more satisfactory choice. He knows his sf, both fan and pro, and is a mature individual with a delightful sense of humour. Would be a credit to Amerifandom and a delight, I am sure, to his English counterparts.

((Nominated by Forrest J. Ackerman))

Hal Shapiro, 965 Burton, Apt. 5, Cincinnati
29, Ohio

Active fan circa 1948 to present. Owner and operator of OUTHOUSE PUBLICATIONS. Edited and published ICE, HALLUCINATIONS, HALBERD, LJ1736. Extremely active in fan-pubbing circles, including FAPA and S&PS. One of the founders of the present MICHIGAN SCIENCE FANTASY SOCIETY. Acting trustee of the CINCINNATI FANTASY GROUP. Founder and Chairman of the Board of the BACHELOR'S SF ASSOCIATION OF THE WORLD (BSAW). Originator of the First World Invitational Convention (Invention), Minneapolis 1952. Partner in one of the most famous fan marriages of the century, being espoused of the beauteous Nancy Moore (now Shapiro).

((Nominated by Dale Tarr))

Lou Tabakow, 3953 St. John, Cincinnati 36,
Ohio

President of the CINCINNATI FANTASY GROUP, an active and long established club in the Midwest. Lou has had several stories published, the most famous of which probably is SVEN; as yet unpublished. Worked hard on the CONVENTION in 1949 and is one of the founders of the by now famous MIDWESTCOONS. Lou is a reader of science fiction for over 20 years and is a well known attendee at all Conventions; where he is particularly noted for his abilities as a speaker.

((Nominated by Mark Schulzinger))

Wally Weber, Box 267, 920 Third Ave.,
Seattle 4, Washington

Member of S&PS. Corresponding Secretary of the NAMELESS ONES of Washington State for many years; is well known for his subtle humor and numerous fanzines (of which CREEP is the current). Wally has attended Conventions at Portland, Cleveland and San Francisco (taking candid camera shots like mad...) and has been an actifan in a languid sort of way for the past 5 years. He has a likeable personality, an amusing writing style, and would be a credit to the United States as an example of US fandom. (Besides, he could write a very interesting report of his travels if he tried....)

((Nominated by G.M. Carr))

((The following were also nominated, but withdrew: Robert Bloch, Bob Tucker, Marion Mallinger, E.E. Smith, Eva Firestone, Robert A. Madle & Sam Moskowitz.))

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