

Read Blish's Reviews of 3 Merritt Books

SEE PAGE TWO

THE SCIENCE-FICTION NEWSPAPER

Science-Fiction Times

"The World of Tomorrow Today!"

16th YEAR - Vol. 12 - #272

FIRST JUNE 1957 ISSUE

STILL ONLY 10 CENTS

FRED POHL TO EDIT NEW S-F MAG

TO BE TITLED:

"STAR SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE"

Red Bank, NJ, 29 May, (CNS) - Fred Pohl is now at work putting together the first issue of his new science-fiction magazine, STAR SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE which should be on the stands late in August 1957. The cover date of the first issue will be either October or November 1957. It will be published quarterly at first with the hope of a jump to monthly as soon as possible.

Powers who has done so many covers for the BALLANTINE S-F books and the cover of the 1957 WONDER STORIES will probably do the cover on the first STAR S-F. He is at the present time working with Fred Pohl on the general format of the magazine. It has not (concluded on page 4, column 1)

American News Co. Reported Abandoning Mag Distribution

New York, 28 May, (CNS) - From a usually well informed source comes in the report that very soon the AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY will leave the field of national magazine distributing, but will continue with its other many businesses. This is unconfirmed, as a phone call to the ANC brought forth the usual "no comment" from a gentleman who would not give his name. But, our investigation proves that all the s-f magazines we (concluded on page 4, column 2)

A Fandom House Publication

SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES BOOK REVIEWS

by James Blish

SPECIAL ALL MERRITT REVIEWS:

THE METAL MONSTER, by A. Merritt.
Avon, 1957. 222 pp., paperback, 35¢.

FACE IN THE ABYSS, by A. Merritt.
Avon, 1957. 253 pp., paperback, 35¢.

THE METAL MONSTER, first published in 1920 (Avon continues to hide these dates in Roman numerals), is apparently the immediate successor to the two Moon Pool novels, whose protagonist is also the protagonist of this one. In the interim, Merritt had made some gains as a craftsman, particularly in characterization. His witch-women, of course, are all alike, no matter in what novel you find them; but at least he gave up his earlier typing of his merely human characters with regional funny hats, and they begin to talk like vaguely human beings too. The idea of the Metal Monster itself -- a hive-creature -- is miles above the intellectual level of the Moon Pool novels, and Merritt does some spectacular things with it (most of them expectable to a modern reader, but that is not a fair complaint). Up to this point, however, Merritt's plotting was still crude and rambling; the journey which gets the characters onto the scene of the action takes 72 whole pages, most of them dull, and the action itself is wholly arbitrary.

The other novel (1931) gets down to business a little faster (52 pages), after introducing three wholly unnecessary characters who are eliminated a few pages later. Nobody who has read the book is ever likely to forget the confrontation with the Face of the title, a vast, satanic stone mask which constantly sweats, weeps and drools molten gold. Merritt promptly proceeds to destroy this brooding, frightening symbol by making a man-sized parody of it the villain of the novel; the plot disintegrates into the usual welter of sword-play and palace intrigue. To realize that vision of evil would have taken a poet, and Merritt was only intermittently a poet; mostly he was just

a writer of flowery, unselective prose.

I cannot regard this stuff as viable any more. Its scientific underpinning, only fair even in its day, has been rendered ridiculous by the intervening years. The language in which it is told is lavishly colorful but so imprecise that the reader often finds it impossible to visualize what Merritt thinks he is describing; and the author's fondness for rare or obsolete words like "cadent" and "squattering" makes his purple passages even more mannered and stagy.

And above all, what is it all about? Each of the two novels here, unlike the Moon Pool novels, has a possible central subject, of which the objects named in the titles are potent and striking symbols -- yet Merritt apparently never suspected this, throws away his opportunity at once, and instead writes just another empty romance. I for one find this maddening. Mr. McGuire at Avon may as well give up on me -- evidently I am never going to be a Merritt fan.

THE SHIP OF ISHTAR, by A. Merritt.
Avon Books, 1957. 220 pp., paperback, 35¢.

This 1924 Merritt novel (Yep, Avon is still hiding these dates in roman numerals) is the mixture as before: evil priests, beautiful temptresses, occult powers, swordplay, and overloaded purple prose. I didn't like it. Since I have now read (or re-read) four Merritt novels in as many months, it is possible that the jaundice this stuff inspires in me is simply the result of an overdose, but I don't think so. The books were trash to begin with; good fiction simply never produces that sensation of having eaten too much cotton candy, no matter how many times you re-read it.

I am told (how reliably is another matter) that this is the third go-around for Avon on the Merritt titles, and that they have sold more than a million of each of his books on their two previous reprinting. If this is so, I am appalled.

Come to think of it, I am appalled anyhow, at the discovery (not new with

me, I am sure) that a novelist with this enormous a reputation among fantasy fans should have so few discoverable shreds of merit.

SCIENCE-FICTION BOOKS

by Stephen J. Takacs

NEW S/F HARDCOVER BOOKS RECEIVED:

THE SURVIVOR by H. P. Lovecraft and August W. Derleth, Arkham House, Sauk City, Wisc., \$3.00. April 5, 1957.

IN THE REALM OF TERROR by Algernon Blackwood, Pantheon Books, NY, \$3.95. April 11, 1957.

COLONIAL SURVEY by Murray Leinster, Gnome Press, NY, \$3.00. April 19, 1957.

THE HUNGER & OTHERS by Charles Beaumont, Putnam, NY, \$3.50. April 26, 1957

MAN IN SPACE by Herman Oberth (non-fiction) Harper & Bros, NY, \$4.50. April 26, 1957.

BIG PLANET by Jack Vance, Bouregy & Curl, NY, \$2.75. April 26, 1957.

NEW S/F PAPER-BACK BOOKS RECEIVED:

OPERATION: OUTER SPACE by Murray Leinster, Signet Books, NY, 35¢. April 8, 1957.

TOMORROW PLUS X by Wilson Tucker, (book was titled: "Time Bomb"), Avon Books, NY, 35¢. April 8, 1957.

THE BIG BOOK OF SCIENCE FICTION, ed. by Groff Conklin, Berkley Books, NY, 35¢. April 24, 1957.

THIS FORTRESS WORLD by James E. Gunn plus THE 13th IMMORTAL by Robert Silverberg, Ace Books, NY, 35¢. April 26, 1957.

THE CASE AGAINST TOMORROW by Frederick Pohl, Ballantine Books, NY, 35¢. April 29, 1957.

THE METAL MONSTER by A. Merritt, Avon Books, NY, 35¢. May 9, 1957.

SLICK SCIENCE FICTION

by Donald E. Ford

● POPULAR PHOTOGRAPHY, May 1957:

At the recent Photographic Exposition in Wash., D.C. new equipment, etc. is shown & previews of future develop-

WIFE OF SFT EDITOR SUDDEN VICTIM OF HEART AILMENT

Paterson, NJ, 16 May, (CNS) - Betty Van Houten, wife of SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES editor Ray Van Houten, died here suddenly today as the result of a heart attack.

Besides her husband, she is survived by a daughter, Stephanie, 13 years of age.

She was married to Ray in 1946 and came to the US in 1947 as a "G.I. Bride". She was a native of Great Britain.

Although she was not directly interested in science-fiction, and was never listed on the staff of THE TIMES, she often helped produce issues of this newspaper, typing stickers, collating and stapling pages.

She attended many science-fiction gatherings in the NY area with her husband, and was known to most of the fans in the NY Metropolitan area.

Avon Will Reprint Blish's 4th Novel

New York, 16 May, (CNS) -- James Blish's THEY SHALL HAVE STARS, a prelude or "prequel" to his Okie novel EARTHPAN, COME HOME, will be published in paperback in the United States this November by Avon Books. The novel, Blish's fourth, is at present available only in the British hard cover edition published by Faber & Faber.

ments were given. Motion pictures of magnetic tape & playable thru your TV set are predicted for the future. Electronics to adjust the lens, cock the shutter & wind the film will be available in the 1960's.

● LIFE, May 6, 1957:

"The Epic Of Man": Part X -- "Forsbearers Of The West". Another in LIFE's

series. This one is about the Celts, their Druid rites, etc. I think most of you would like this article.

● LIFE, May 13, 1957:

"Seeking The Magic Mushroom" by R. Gordon Wasson. Author is V.P. of J.P. Morgan & Co. He details his experiences in going to Mexico & chewing these certain mushrooms & the visions they cause one to see. Sounds something like the Peyote buttons the Indians chew on.

STAR SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE

(concluded from page 1, column 1)

been decided at this time whether the mag will have interior illustrations or not.

The regular edition of the new magazine will be the regular digest-size, 35¢ and 128 pages. But what will make this magazine the most unusual ever published is that it will have a pocket book-size edition also. This pocket book-size to be distributed in England, Australia, New Zealand and other English speaking nations thruout the world. BUT, it will not appear in the United States.

A new company is being formed to publish the magazine and its name and address will be published as soon as that information is available.

The magazine pays 1¢ and up for its material, but Fred tells us that at the present time he has enough 1¢ material and is looking for super-fine material for which he'll pay 3¢ a word. For the time being all material should be sent direct to Fred Pohl, 386 W. Front Street, Red Bank, New Jersey.

This will be Fred's first magazine editorial job since 1943. During that first boom Fred was editor of Popular's SUPER SCIENCE STORIES and ASTONISHING STORIES.

If our information is correct, the name STAR S-F was planned for two magazines. One, years ago, was to have been published by Gnome Press, but never appeared, the other finally came out as COSMOS S-F. Fred has edited a number of pocket book collections for Ballantine using the name STAR SCIENCE FICTION.

AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY

(concluded from page 1, column 2)

were able to contact that are (or were) being distributed by AMERICAN NEWS have made arrangements to have other distributing companies handle their mags in the future.

Our reporter states that Dell magazines left ANC with their huge number of comic mags etc, and that that was the last straw and decided ANC to give up their once large national magazine distributing.

Remember this item has not been confirmed. We print it for what it's worth, tho our investigation point to the possibility of it being a fact.

SCIENCE FICTION FORECASTS

Coming Up Next In The Pros

● GALAXY SCIENCE FICTION, Sept. '57:

(novella) THE POD IN THE BARRIER by Theodore Sturgeon, (novelets) THE SLY BUNGERHOP by William Morrison, and SHADOW WORLD by Clifford D. Simak. (short stories) DOAT AGE by John Boland, and THE DARK STAR by William Tenn. (science Department) FOR YOUR INFORMATION; "The Earliest Robot" by Willy Ley; (features) EDITOR'S PAGE by H. L. Gold, and GALAXY'S FIVE STAR SHELF by Floyd C. Gale. Cover by Virgil Finlay showing CAPT. AHAB OF SPACE.

● FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION, Aug. '57:

(EVERY STORY IN THIS ISSUE --- NEW!) THE LINEMAN (short novel) by Walter M. Miller, Jr., DREAM STUFF by Stuart Palmer, A DAY FOR WAVING by Mildred Clinger, HOMESTEAD by Rog Phillips, THE SCIENCE STAGE (a dept.) by William Morrison, TRIPOD by Les Cole, THE DAY EVERYTHING FELL DOWN by Damon Knight & H. Ken Bulmer, SPANISH SPOKEN by Doris P. Buck, RECOMMENDED READING (a dept.) by Anthony Boucher, THE MENACE FROM THE EARTH (short novelet) by Robert A. Heinlein, AND A LOINT OF PAW by Isaac Asimov. Cover painting by Barry Waldman, ROCKET SPOTTER, 1992.

● FANTASTIC UNIVERSE, August 1957:

(On sale in June). Cover by Finlay.

Features: Three articles on Flying Saucers: Lester del Rey's THE SAUCER MYTH (based on his talk at the ESFA meeting) Ivan T. Sanderson's UFO - FRIEND OR FOE and John Nicholson's THE CONTACT CASES (questions raised by alleged meeting with extra-terrestrials); a novelet by Lee Chaytor, THE TREASURE OF MARS; and stories by Nelson Bond, Evelyn E. Smith and Thomas N. Scortia.

FANTASTIC UNIVERSE, September 1957: (On sale in July). Cover by Finlay. CONAN THE VICTORIOUS, a 22,000 word novel by Bjorn Nyberg and L. Sprague de Camp; and articles and stories by Isaac Asimov, Fredric Brown & Mack Reynolds, Basil Wells and others, including Allan Howard's short-story, IT'S A SMALL SOLAR SYSTEM.

THE SCIENCE FICTION RECORD

by Frank R. Prieto, Jr.

(Warners, NY) SCIENCE/FANTASY MAGAZINES ON THE NEWSSTANDS IN THE US FOR APRIL:

NAME	DATE	PRICE	PAGES	SIZE	DATE ON STAND	SCHEDULE
Other Worlds Science Stories	*May	35¢	99	Pulp	April 1, 1957	Bi-Monthly
Galaxy Novel	#28	35¢	128	Digest	April 8, 1957	Irregularly
Astounding Science Fiction	May	35¢	162	Digest	April 8, 1957	Monthly
Fantastic Universe S F	June	35¢	128	Digest	April 8, 1957	Monthly
IF - Worlds of Science Fic.	June	35¢	120	Digest	April 11, 1957	Bi-Monthly
Satellite Science Fiction	June	35¢	128	Digest	April 11, 1957	Bi-Monthly
Amazing Stories	May	35¢	130	Digest	April 11, 1957	Monthly
Fantastic Science Fiction	May	35¢	130	Digest	April 11, 1957	Monthly
Galaxy Science Fiction	June	35¢	144	Digest	April 16, 1957	Monthly
Imaginative Tales	July	35¢	130	Digest	April 16, 1957	Bi-Monthly
Fantasy & Science Fiction	June	35¢	128	Digest	April 30, 1957	Monthly

*Is going "Monthly", see SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES #264

During April 1957, 11 science/fantasy magazines came out. 10 were digests, costing \$3.50 and 1 was pulp costing 35¢, making a total of \$3.85. The 10 digests contained 1,328 pages and the 1 pulp 99 pages making a total of 1,427 pages.

NOT SCIENCE/FANTASY, BUT OF INTEREST:

Search	June	35¢	130	Digest	April 25, 1957	Bi-Monthly
True Strange	June	35¢	82	Slick	April 21, 1957	Bi-Monthly

SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES CLASSIFIED ADS

2¢ per word including name, address and zone number. 25 words minimum, remittance with copy. NO STAMPS PLEASE!

PERSONALS

International Correspondence Clubs (four clubs): Writers, Artists, Hobbyists, Science-Fiction Fan. Reply stamp (your country) requested. Chanel Monaghan, 236 Columbia Place, Los Angeles 26, California, USA.

SFT-7

All personal mail (magazines, books and letters) to James V. Taurasi, Sr., must be sent to his new address: 18-36 129th Street, College Point 56, New York.

SFT2

ADVERTISE IN "SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES"!

WANTED

WANTED: the address of Wm Schmidt, formerly of 628 W. 20th St., NY 9, NY. FANDOM HOUSE, P.O. Box #2331, Paterson 23, New Jersey.

SFT-1

WANTED: Strange Tales for June 1932, and Weird Tales for June 1934, fair to good condition with all pages legible. State price and condition. SPITHRIDATES, c/o FANDOM HOUSE, P. O. Box #2331, Paterson 23, New Jersey.

SFT-1

WANTED: "Hear - The Talking Magazine". All issues in good condition required. Will pay cover price on all issues, and offer \$1 for issue No. 1, containing recorded interview with Marilyn Monroe.

Records must be in playable condition; of course. R. DARD, Box S1387, G.P.O., Perth, Western Australia. SFT-1

FOR SALE

"End of Eternity", Asimov; "The 27th Day", Mantley. Both science-fiction, condition: new. Also, "Tarzan, Lord of the Jungle", Burroughs, condition: good. \$2.30 each. Write immediately as there is only one copy of each. SAM YANISHEFSKY, 108-36 63rd DRIVE, FOREST HILLS, NEW YORK. SFT-1

NOW AVAILABLE: Gerry de la Ree's Summer 1957 catalog; 600 science-fiction, fantasy, and weird books and pocketbooks, and thousands of magazines. Plenty of book bargains at 75¢ and \$1, plus some choice collector's items. Write for free copy: Gerry de la Ree, 277 Howland Ave., River Edge, N.J. SFT-1

FANTASTIC NOVELS: A CHECKLIST, compiled by Roger Dard, foreword by August Derleth. Cover by Lawrence. A professionally printed checklist of FANTASTIC NOVELS MAGAZINE. 12 pages, price 35¢. In USA from James V. Taurasi, Sr.; 18-36 129th Street, College Point 56, NY. In England 2/- from E. J. Carnell, 17 Burwash Rd., Plumstead, S. E. 18, London. The Dragon Press, Perth, Western Australia. SFT-1

SCIENCE FICTION FILMS, RADIO & TV

by Forrest J Ackerman

Hollywood, 9 May 57 -- It really came from out of space last nite, from 20 MILLION MILES TO EARTH. In the company of Ray Harryhausen, its technical effects star, and Ray Bradbury and Chas Hornig, I saw the preview of the shot-in-Scicily scientifilm previously known as The Giant Ymir. The ymir, unnamed in the picture, is an inhabitant (non-human) of the planet Venus. It is brought back as a zoological specimen from the first USAF expedition to Venus. Something about Earth's atmosphere phenomenally increases its rate of growth till it has reached Kong-like stature and wreaks the expected ruination. Whether these creatures come from beneath the sea, out of the sky or space or the prehistoric past, they have their work blueprinted for them: insen-

SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES

"The World Of Tomorrow Today!"

16th YEAR #272

1st June 1957

Published twice-a-month by FANDOM HOUSE

U.S. & CANADA: 10¢ a copy, 12 issues \$1 or \$2.00 per year (24 issues). PERMANENT SUBSCRIPTION: \$10.00, from FANDOM HOUSE, P.O. Box #2331, Paterson 23, NJ. BRITISH: 9d per copy, 15s0d per year; from H. M. JOHNSON, 16 Rockville Road, Broad Green, LIVERPOOL 16, ENGLAND. AUSTRALIA: One Shilling per copy, Ten Shillings for 12 issues, One Pound for 24 issues. PERMANENT SUBSCRIPTION: 5 Pounds, from ROGER DARD, Box S1387, GPO PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

James V. Taurasi, Sr., Ray Van Houten, and Frank R. Prieto, Jr., Editors.

ADVERTISEMENTS: \$10 a full page, \$6 a half page, and \$3 a quarter page.

A FANDOM HOUSE PUBLICATION
(serving science-fiction for 20 years)

sate destruction, and the ymir from Venus does not depart from tradition. But I thot this was excellent of its genre, only a shade removed from KONG for its scope and thrills. The animation is great, and almost indetectably integrated, models with reality. The battle between the ymir and the elephant is Harryhausen's masterpiece to date. The creature from Venus itself has somewhat the appearance of an upright alligator, with elongated tail and jowled reptilian head with cock's comb. After the preview, in Bradbury's home, we were excited to learn that Sir Carol Reed is enroute from London to negotiate with Ray for the film production of his Mexican bitterdrama (that's the opposite of mellowdrama) of 1963, And The Rock Cried Out... the closing story in the FAHRENHEIT volume.

GET YOUR MONEY'S WORTH:

ADVERTISE IN "THE TIMES"

Science-Fiction Times

MAGAZINE

Volume 2 - Number 2

June 1957

(Whole No. 8)

Fandom House Marks 20th Anniversary

by Lane Stannard

FANDOM HOUSE is, this month, twenty years old, the oldest fan publishing house in the history of science-fiction. Twenty years is a long enough time for a professional house to still be publishing. In fact there are only two, still publishing, who have been publishing for 20 years or more. First is Street and Smith that started publishing science-fiction in 1933 and of course is still at it today with the same magazine, ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION. Next in line, and with a big doubt if its official is Standard Magazines with (THRILLING) WONDER STORIES. Tho it has a blank space of over a year of not publishing any s-f; its revival of WONDER STORIES still, I suppose, makes it second. It started publishing science-fiction in 1936 when they took over WONDER STORIES. FANDOM HOUSE comes third. It began in 1937, twenty years ago.

James V. Taurasi actually began late in 1936 with a hectographed magazine called JUNIOR SCIENCE FICTION. Tho this magazine never came out in complete form. It was only after a visit of Robert A. Madle and Robert G. Thompson early in 1937 that plans were made to publish the first magazine that started what was to become FANDOM HOUSE. In June 1937 the first magazine, COSM-

IC TALES QUARTERLY, a fiction magazine, came out under the Taurasi Publication house name. At this time the Philly group of fans started Comet Publications with a group of magazines. This idea struck Taurasi well, and with issue No. 2 of COSMIC TALES QUARTERLY, the house name was changed to COSMIC PUBLICATIONS. Since then there have been numerous changes to the house name such as Allied Publications, Fantasy-News Publishing Company, Fantasy-Times Publishing Company, Flushing-Taurasi Publishing Company, etc., but in 1945, while in Le Havre, France, COSMIC PUBLICATIONS was restored for the upteen time and held until 1948, when FANDOM HOUSE was chosen, and it's been FANDOM HOUSE ever since.

Few persons today know the reason why COSMIC PUBLICATIONS was changed to FANDOM HOUSE in 1948, after it had been established and well-known for so many years. At that time FANTASY-TIMES was a monthly. A meeting was called at the home of Taurasi between Taurasi, Ray Van Houten and the publisher of FANTASY-NEWS, William Sykora. The idea was to combine these two publications into a complete news service. Will Sykora was to publish a weekly FANTASY-NEWS, while Taurasi and Van Houten were to handle a monthly recap of the news in FANTASY-

TIMES. The name COSMIC PUBLICATIONS just didn't seem right for this combination and a new name was sort: FANDOM HOUSE was the result. But, the deal just didn't go thru. Sykora published only one issue of FANTASY-NEWS under the set-up and that ended it. FANTASY-TIMES went on publishing and later that year set up it's present twice-a-month schedule. Later in 1949, for a time, Sykora did publish a weekly FANTASY-NEWS, but under his own company set-up.

During 1938-39 COSMIC PUBLICATIONS formed the largest linked-up publishing company in s-f fandom. With numerous fan publishers linked-up under the COSMIC banner. Sam Moskowitz and his HELIOS and other publications, Bob Tucker and his D'JOURNAL, Lou Kuslan and his COSMIC TALES and other publications, Olon Wiggins and his SCIENCE FICTION FAN, and Taurasi and his FANTASY-NEWS, plus other fan publishers and magazines. As a combined mutual advertising set-up and mutual aid to each other it was a grand tie-up of independent publishers. It lasted until after the First World Science Fiction Convention and then broke up with Taurasi retaining the house name.

While NEW FANDOM was not a COSMIC PUBLICATION all those who did the actual editing and publishing of that grand old club organ were members of COSMIC PUBLICATIONS. After the club fizzed out in 1940, Taurasi took it over and it was COSMIC PUBLICATIONS that paid off what ever money the members

ADVERTISE IN "SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES"!

SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES MAGAZINE

No. 8

June, 1957

Published by FANDOM HOUSE, P. O. Box #2331, Paterson 23, New Jersey.

James V. Taurasi, Sr., Ray Van Houten, and Frank R. Prieto, Jr., editor.

A FANDOM HOUSE PUBLICATION
(serving science-fiction for 20 years)

had coming with subscriptions to FANTASY-TIMES. Later NEW FANDOM was combined with FANTASY-TIMES, as were other magazines once published by COSMIC PUBLICATIONS.

It was FANDOM HOUSE that put out the first all photo - offset fan mag: FANTASY-TIMES late in 1941. The first to use two color photo-offset, with FANTASY-TIMES in 1942 with the whole issue published in Black and Red photo-offset.

Today FANDOM HOUSE publishes two regular publications: SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES twice-a-month, and THE TINPLATE MAGAZINE quarterly; two secondary publications: "International Edition" of SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES monthly, and SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES MAGAZINE irregularly. In the works is the first issue of THE SCIENCE FICTION YEAR BOOK.

TWENTY YEARS of amateur science-fiction publishing! What will the next twenty years bring?

FANDOM HOUSE

Publishers of "Science-Fiction Times"
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