

THE SCIENCE FICTION NEWSPAPER

Science Fiction Times

"The World Of Tomorrow Today!"

16th YEAR - Vol. 12, #277

SECOND AUGUST 1957 ISSUE

STILL ONLY 10 CENTS

"Infinity" & "S-F Adventures"

Have NOT Gone
Monthly Yet

New York, 2 August, (CNS) - The October 1957 issue of Infinity Science Fiction, and the October 1957 issue of Science Fiction Adventures both bear loud and clear markings on their covers that they are monthly. T'ain't so, tho both magazines are still on a six-week schedule.

Magazine covers are made up well in advance, and at the time the covers of these magazines were made up, monthly schedule had been planned. But then the American News Company gave up the national distribution of magazines and the Independents were swamped under taking on the extra load. So the publisher decided to hold off making the two magazines monthly until things had settled down more or less to the new normal. Both covers had already been printed by this time & had to be used. But the magazines are still six-weekly, and present plans call for them to go Monthly later in the year.

Both magazines changed logos with the October issues. While S-F Adventures proved OK, Infinity proved a dud, so

"STAR S-F" DELAYED BY A.N.C. BREAK-UP

Paterson, 3 August, (CNS) - Star Science Fiction Magazine has become another victim of American News Company, and has been delayed for a few months, while a new distributor is being lined up.

Fred Pohl informs us that the magazine will still begin life as a digest size mag, 128 pages and 35¢. The first three issues will be on a quarterly schedule, with the hope of monthly publication after that. When it becomes a monthly, it will run serials.

Mr. Pohl has promised full details on this new mag as soon as final plans are completed.

with the November issue, it will have another new logo.

Art editor Robert Engle has left the magazines and Richard Kluga has replaced him.

A Fandom House Publication

THE MOST ASTOUNDING ARTICLE ABOUT THE SCIENCE FICTION INDUSTRY EVER WRITTEN !

SCIENCE FICTION MARKET SURVEY 1956

by Sam Moskowitz

AND WE MEAN EXACTLY THAT! "Science Fiction Market Survey 1956" is the first and only survey of the science fiction field as an industry. It is the first and only major piece of writing which goes so deeply into the business aspects of science fiction. And it is the first and only attempt, by a man thoroughly familiar with every facet of the field, to answer, with FACTS and FIGURES, such questions as:

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- 2: What differences are there between the fan and the general reader, in the matter of science fiction tastes and buying habits?
- 3: What has been the most damaging competition the science fiction magazines have had to face in the field?
- 4: Just what is the actual figure on the largest and steadiest circulation of any mag in the s-f field, and how do the circulations of the other mags compare with it?

THE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS, and many more, are all in "Science Fiction Market Survey 1956" by Sam Moskowitz. Fifteen large-size pages, with sixteen tables of figures, reveal secrets of the science fiction business which have never been published before! You can read it all, COMPLETE, in

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"SCIENCE FICTION: 1956", a history of the year 1956 in s-f by James V. Taurasi & Ray Van Houten, editors and publishers of SCIENCE FICTION TIMES;

"ANNUAL REPORT: 1956", by Frank R. Prieto, Jr., the complete listing of s-f magazines on the stands during 1956, plus other info;

"1956 IN SCIENCE FICTION", Tom Gardner's famous yearly report reprinted complete in this volume;

"SCIENCE FICTION MARQUEE" by Forrest J Ackerman, being a survey of the s-f screen for the year 1956;

"1956 IN BOOKS" by Stephen J. Takacs, which lists practically all of the s-f books, hard and soft covers, published during 1956;

"AS OF NOW" by J. Harry Vincent, a complete directory of the science fiction periodical publishing field, giving publishers, editors, magazine names, addresses, etc., etc.

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STATE OF FANDOM

The WESTERCON X Saga:

\$5,000 SPENT AT THE BAR; CON WINDS
UP OVER \$200 IN THE RED!

by Forrest J Ackerman

Approximately \$5000.00 was spent on liquor during the 4-day California-wide conference of sci-fi fans and pros 4-7 July, 1957.

The auction of artwork, first edition books, autographed mass., etc, garnered about \$250.00.

Statistics can be deceptive, but the way I see it -- thru my glasses, darkly -- is that the participants were something on the order of 20 times more interesting in drinking than thinking.

Ironically, the theme of the Conference was: "It is not morally wrong to think".

I am suspect, of course, because I am a notorious teetotaler.

I had no official connection with the Westercon, being too busy professionally to lend the fannish aid of yesteryears. But I shed public tears for the quintet of hard, labor-of-love workers -- Ted Duke, Chris Robinson, Lew Kovner, Larry Ware and Ed Clinton -- who devoted so many midnite fan hours to produce a conference on the scale -- of a world convention, only to wake up the day after Armageddon to \$200.00 plus worth of bills due.

This is not, incidentally, a drunken conclave. No furniture or noses were broken, nobody dropped a lit firecracker or fan off the hotel roof to celebrate the 4th of July, no boisterous teenager packs roaming the halls in the wee smalls, there were no run-ins with the house richard. The management invited us back! (If fans spent \$5,000 at my bar, I'd invite them back too! -eds)

Altogether, about 500 people attended.

There were lots of well-known names. Hugo-winner Mark Clifton was Guest of Honor; Tony Boucher, Toast Master; myself principal speaker at the head-off luncheon. My topic, "The State of the Science Fiction Union": slightly stronger than last year.

Attendees included Kris Neville; Mildred Clingerman, A E van Vogt, E. Mayne Hull, Ross Rocklynne, Stuart Palmer, Henry Kuttner, CL Moore, Arthur K. Barnes, FL Wallace, Mel Sturgis, E. Everett Evans, TD Hamm, Garen Drussai, Chas Beaumont, Richard Matheson, Bill Nolan, Rick Sneary, Len Moffatt, Chas Burbee, Walt Daugherty, Robert Moore Williams, Geo Wittington, Ray Banks Budd Bankson, Martin Varne, Sherwood Springer, Sylvia Jacobs, Alex Apostolides, Roy Squires, Chas Fritch, Larry Maddock, Winnna McClintic, Ned Mann, Sam Merwin, Evelyn Paige, Jerry Bixby, Frank Quattrocchi and Mari Wolf.

And VIKKI DOUGAN. Vikki, in case you don't mix playboyism with sci-fi; is the girl who, if she were a boy, would be the famous one with cheeks of tan. She is the dorsal morsel who appears in public with a dress cut in back to the blush line. I opposed her being crowned Queen of the Conference or anything like that arguing that to connect her with s-f would be to make s-f the butt of many jokes, but promotion won and it would be a lie to deny that I enjoyed painting dimples on Dougan's posterier for pictorial posterity. She called her dress she barely wore the 2000 A D Gown, a real gone lowdown creation with the A.D. standing for Axcented Derriere. Bloch would have been in his element (Bottomium).

Westercon X got an excellent press. Aside from the fact that they called me Walter rather than Forrest, I was in

the main correctly quoted. Three radio interviews and five video appearances--were arranged to plug the conference.

Mark Clifton, Helen Urban and Ray Banks trio'ed a treatment of "The Philosophical Basis of Science". A quartet consisting of Roy Squires, Alex Apostolides, Eph Konigsberg and Ed Clinton discussed the menace of "Creeping Meatballism". Project engineers talked on the Vanguard Project. I turned back the clock to the time DESTINATION MOON was being shot, and anecdoted its filming.

Arthur C. Clarke's Breaking Strain as adapted, produced and directed by Ed "ORson" Clinton (who also essayed the stellar role); played to an appreciative audience.

Fans had a first class film fest, with revivals of THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL, LOST HORIZON, DESTINATION MOON and METROPOLIS! -- all for the same single lousy buck (now worth about thirty-three and a third cents) t h a t was paid to see METROPOLIS alone at the Nycon in '39*. In retrospect, it seems regrettable to me that attendees were not charged a dollar a day for each day attended; f o r one less drink at the bar, the Con could have been financially stable rather than an under-the-table bloodymary burden to its sponsors.

Mark Clifton's banquet speech was a standout. It was taped, and I believe is scheduled to be fanzined.

An actress, Julie Ross, who has just become director of the LASFS for ist mid-year 6-mos term, in conjunction with Bjo Wells costumed and made-up with bizaare beauty a bevy of sci-fi femmes who prettified and futuristicked the proceedings during the 4 days by circulating as photographic focalpoints.

There was a splendid Art Exhibit of originals by Chesley Bonestell, Paul Blaisdell, Albert Nubtzell, Ron Cobb and Bert Shonberg.

As I say, my main personal regret is that the aficionados didn't act less like fish and contribute more cash to sci-fi than getting high. My reaction to the matter is that it is not morally wrong to remain sober.

*Wrong Forry, the Nycon was FREE to all you didn't have to pay the \$1 membership fee to get in. -eds

(More info on WESTERCON X in "The Cosmic Reporter" in the next issue. -eds)

SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES' BOOK REVIEWS

by James Blish

CONQUEST OF EARTH, by Manly Banister. Avalon Books, 1957. 224 pp., hardbound, \$2.75.

Even an extremely bad book often proves stimulating to a reviewer, because it gives him a chance to demonstrate, by negative example, what qualities he thinks a good book ought to have. Every now and then, however, a novel comes along which is so unrelievedly mediocre that he is denied even this stimulus. CONQUEST OF EARTH is such a book.

Its trouble, insofar as my numbed and despairing brain can fathom it, is probably to be found in the fact that Mr. Banister has no imagination. In s-f we are used to forgiving writers all kinds of failures in technique, in style, even in accuracy, if they at the least do not fail to provide a few new and interesting ideas. Banister has none; every idea in his novel is borrowed, down to the smallest detail, and the patches are then put together in the dullest possible way.

But it would be difficult to make a good case for any one fault as being more important than any other. Name your own; this novel has them all. The whole is a bore, the parts are a bore, and reviewing it is a bore.

Paying \$2.75 for it, however, would be more than a bore. It would be a crime.

FROM OUTER SPACE, by Hal Clement. Avon, 1957. 188 pp., paperbound, 35¢.

The Buck Rogers title conceals Clement's 1949 Doubleday novel NEEDLE, previously published as a serial by aSF. As everyone should know by now, Clement is a master at conceiving new and unique kinds of alien creatures, and at working their problems out down to the last minutiae of technicality; he then proceeds to enliven what might otherwise be no more than an extraordinary piece of speculation by providing his alien with a detective-story puzzle and a cops-and-robbers plot. The mixture would doubtless be disqui-

"SATURN" DELAYED ONE MONTH

S-F T BOOK REVIEWS (cont. from Page 4)

eting o r even unattractive in anyone else's hands, but Clement is so thorough and takes his constructs with such perfect seriousness that he is almost always convincing, and sometimes even exciting.

This novel is surely his best work thus far. Once you have made up your mind to accomodate yourself to the very slow pace at which Clement tells t h e story, you discover that the sluggishness is to the story's advantage, for Clement is planting clues and red herrings everywhere, and gives you ample opportunity t o play the game of out-guessing him (though I 'doubt that you will; I certainly didn't, anyhow).

The novel lacks power, because it is weak o n the subject of human emotion -- a characteristic of all Clement's work. I n addition, the author has no great ear for human speech, so that sometimes you cannot differentiate between the alien Hunter and the 15-year-old boy who is the novel's human hero except by noting that the Hunter never uses contractions, the boy almost never does. But there is plenty of intellectual excitement of you like fine inventions, close reasoning and handsomely detailed settings.

The book, in fact, has something far more important a n d more lasting than the much-touted "sense of wonder"; it has the sense o f conviction. The author took the job seriously, and it shows. Buy it, by all means.

OUR NEXT ISSUE O F SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES WILL BE THE GALA 16th ANNIVER- SARY ISSUE!

Look for a n extra large section of James Blish book reviews, a lar g e "International Section", a long readers' section, Arthur Jean Cox's "The Cosmic Reporter", 4sJ Ackerman's famous columns, J. Harry Vincent's fabulous "Time Stream" and many others.

New York, 5 August, (CNS) - Saturn's issue #4 has been delayed one month, and should be on the newsstands as you read this. It has been redated October 1957 from September 1957 to make up for the delay. Publisher Robert C. Sproul stated that t h e delay was caused by production trouble at the printers, and that the magazine is still a bi-monthly 35¢, 112 pages and digest-size.

B. G. Davis Buys Mercury Pubs

FERMAN STILL OWNES "F&SF" & "VENTURE"

New York, 7 August, (CNS) - B. G. Davis former President of the Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, h a s bought Mercury Publications from Joseph W. Ferman. But the only Mercury Publications he wanted was Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine. The other (former Mercury Publications) Fantasy And Science Fiction, Venture Science Fiction, Mercury Mystery Book Magazine, Jonathan Press Mystery and Bestseller Mystery, the last two actually paperback detective reprints, are still owned and published by Mr. Ferman. The twb s-f magazines will continue to be published under the company name o f Fantasy House, Inc.

Robert P. Mills, editor of Venture and Managing Editor of Fantasy & S-F, will also still continue as Managing Editor of Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine. Both Mr. Davis and Mr. Ferman's two sepearte publishing houses will use the same offices and address: 527 Madison Avenue, New York 22, New York.

ADVERTISE IN "SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES"!

STATE OF FANDOM

South Gate In '58 Plan

"Poor Fan's Convention"

Bell Gardens, Calif., 8 July, (CNS)-
 "...We want to put on an inexpensive Con. We think we can do this and still put on a good show, and have plenty of time for people to get together and have a wonderful, relaxing time."

So said Len J. Moffatt, chief publicizer of the "South Gate in '58" campaign which has been raging in s-f fandom for many months.

In line with this laudable ambition, the planning Committee for South Gate in '58, led by Anna Sinclair, held a meeting during the recent Westercon X and chose a hotel site for the projected World Con in 1958. After investigating every possible hotel in the Los Angeles-Hollywood area, including the one where the Westercon was held, they decided to give the nod to the "Alexandria", which is in downtown LA.

"It isn't pretty on the outside", said Mr. Moffatt, "But the interior isn't bad and it is clean. The location is okay, too....close to bus depots, streetcar lines, etc. The prices are reasonable, cheapest room is around \$4 or \$5, which is average unless you go to a flea-bag type. Banquet prices start at \$2.50.....and we do not intend to charge seven bucks for a banquet.... The "Alexandria" is a 'convention hotel'.....they can handle from 50 to 2200 and have plenty of meeting room space, two P.A. systems, and if we can fill up to 150 sleeping rooms for any one night of the Con, the meeting rooms are free for our use during the entire Con..... We have all of their promises in writing."

South Gate's bid will be put in at London by Forrest J Ackerman; and will be seconded by Rory Faulkner, Walt Willis, Arthur (Atom) Thomson and John Derry.

Pending official confirmation of the South Gate bid for the World S-F Con in 1958, at which time an official address will no doubt be published, further information may be had from Len J. Moffatt, 5969 Lanto St., Bell Gardens, Calif.

REPORT ON THE 1957 MIDWESCON

by Donald E. Ford

JUNE 27: About 35 people showed up on this Thursday night & they made use of the pool, lounge & the poker table. Later on the bottles were uncorked & a joke & gossip session lasted until the wee small hours.

JUNE 28: The fans arrived in heavy numbers all day & night Friday. It rained steady all day, due to the tail end of Hurricane Audrey, which swept through Louisiana. By late afternoon the sun was out & a few hardy swimmers were out as well.

JUNE 29: Saturday was a warm day & the pool saw considerable usage. "Around The World In Eighty Days" was playing at a nearby theatre & many attended this during the week-end. A tape from Ted Carnell was played in the afternoon & convention news was given out on it.

7:30: started the smorgasbord dinner & following this, Robert Bloch introduced: Doc Smith; Asimov, who read quotes from one of Bloch's stories; Frank Dietz who talked about London

Con; his wife Belle Dietz who talked about the London Plane; Marty Greenberg; E. E. Evans; P. Schuyler Miller heading the Pittsburgh group; Jim Harmon; Tom Scortia; Mrs. G. M. Carr who flew in from Seattle for the Con; Tucker; Lbu Tabakow who presented Don Ford with 2 apple boxes for his collection; Leigh Brackett & Edmond Hamilton; Nick & Norreen Falasca from the Cleveland contingent; Earl Kemp who announced that they now had gotten into the black on Damon Knight & are issuing a Kelly Freas art folio; Bob Silverberg; Bill Grant; L. Sprague de Camp; Doc Barrett; Stuart Hoffman; Boyd Raeburn; Bob Madle & George Raybin all 4 of whom were candidates in the TAFF election. Doc Barrett read off the proposed voting methods for TAFF, de Camp acted as parliamentarian & Bloch counted the hands. 126 attended the banquet.

Following this a short recess was had & then Ford, Skirvin, Tarr & Tabakow as narrator presented a slide show that surveyed the magazine artists & covers of the s-f mags. It went from the early days of Amazing to present day covers. It gave a logical reason for the boom of the Fifties in Science Fiction & portrayed the trend of decline today. It opened the "Foot Award" for nominations & Dave Kyle was voted the person the fans would most like to put the foot to. All of this in a humorous vein that the crowd seemed to enjoy.

Next came a 21 minute color reel of movies made by the Liverpool group. This is available for loan to various groups. They can get it by contacting Don Ford. It's 8 mm on a 400' reel. It was well done & ends up with a pitch to join & attend the World Con in London.

An 8 minute reel from Cheltenham was shown next. Both of these were enjoyed by the fans. Later slides & movies of previous Midwestcons & World Cons were shown by: Raybin, Grant, and Ray Beam. Bill Grant later showed old silent movies which he collects as a hobby.

JUNE 30: Sunday was a beautiful day & the pool again saw heavy usage. Most fans left on Sunday, of course, but approximately 35 or 40 stayed over until Monday morning. From what reports I've

heard I think everyone had a good time. I know I did. I've been all week trying to get caught up on my sleep.

NOTE: Starting with the next issue of Science-Fiction Times, we are happy to report that Dick Ellington, well-known NY fan, will author "State Of Fandom" as one of our regular columns. Items for publication in this column (which will cover all sorts of fan doings) should be sent direct to Dick at 98 Suffolk St., Apt 3-A, New York 2, NY.

SCIENCE-FICTION FORECASTS

Coming Up Next In The Pros

● VENTURE SCIENCE FICTION, Nov., '57:
 IT OPENS THE SKY (novelet) by Theodore Sturgeon, JURY-RIG by Avram Davidson, FEATHERBED ON CHLYNTHA by Miram Allen Deford, I'M IN MARSPORT WITHOUT HILDA by Issac Asimov, ON HAND....OFF HAND: BOOKS (a dept.) by Theodore Sturgeon, NO EARTHMAN I (short novelet) by Edmond Hamilton, ALL THE COLORS OF THE RAINBOW (short novelet) by Leigh Brackett, VENTURINGS by the editor, and the index to Volume 1. Cover by Emsh, illustrating "It Opens The Sky". Interior illos by John Giunta and Schoenherr.

NOTES TO THE EDITOR

by Our Readers

187 North Union Street
 Rochester, New York
 May 11, 1957

Dear Ed:

I'm completely amazed at James Blish's foolish remarks concerning Merritt's THE MOON POOL..."stage Irishman, tinkling recenants and wooden images". As my wife Duverne remarked, "Strange how the obscure criticize the famous."

Certainly the least of Merritt's is more memorable than anything Blish ever wrote. He speaks of lack of characterization. Where then are the "live" characters in his own stories, such as "The Solar Comedy" and "The Topaz Gate", which I could only unearth with the indispensable aid of Donald Day's "Index"? They are fan-mag fic-

SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES

"The World Of Tomorrow Today!"

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

A FANDOM HOUSE PUBLICATION

tion in comparison, comparable to the stories we are constantly sending back. If his idea of a beautiful line of characterization is this, "I was the heir of a line of royalty that ran back into prehistory," (from Topaz Gate), then his resentment with Merritt in making resplendent characters really live with only half trying, is obvious.

Compare such lines as, "Lane's new screens ought to protect us right down to the bottom of the photosphere...When two or three planetary space - strains interlock with the sun's..the phenomenon really becomes impressive.....That's the cause of sunspots," (from Blish's "The Solar Comedy"), which I suppose is

his attempt at real, down-to-earth fantasy, with almost any lines of Merritt; such as. "What do you want with me, Yolara?" Larry asked hoarsely. 'Nay,' came the mocking voice. 'Not Yolara to you, Larrec---call me by those sweet names you taught me---Honey of the Wild Bee-e-s, Net of Hearts---' Again her laughter tinkled. The friendliness died from the eyes; they grew blue, wondrous; the veil of invisibility slipped down from the neck, the shoulders, half revealing the gleaming breasts. And weird, weird beyond all telling was that exquisite head and bust floating there in air--and beautiful, sinisterly beautiful all telling, too. So even might Lilith, the serpent woman, have shown herself tempting Adam!" Why, even the Shining one is more vivid and real than Blish's humans, which remarkably fit his own words, what did he say, wooden images?

Sincerely,

Larry Farsace

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