



"TIME TO SPARE" by Robert J. Silburn.

Referring to your assertion [mine--Ed.] that time travel is impossible.... To quote Joad, it all depends what you mean by time travel. The old-style travel, where one went backwards, "killed his grandfather", and returned to an unchanged present is certainly illogical, because his very presence in a past era would start a chain of events that would materially affect the present, which would in this sense be the future. Even the slightest action would affect the future. It might not have a very far-reaching effect, yet again, it might transform the whole scene. Take this imaginary chain for example. A time traveller steps out on to a lawn. A dog barks. The house cat, who is nervous, scoots away into the garage, spilling a jar of acid there over delicate equipment. The owner, who is in the garage, removes the acid, but is surprised to find that the mechanism works better. He patents this device, becomes a rich man, enters politics, is made Ambassador to a foreign country and by his clumsy handling of the situation there, fosters anti-British sentiment. Enemy propagandists pour oil on the flames and there is a declaration of war by the country. We thus lose an important Naval Base, and so on. Rather a clumsy chain, I admit, but you get the idea.

Any person going to the past would inevitably return to a changed present. As it was so simply put in Alfred Bester's "The Probable Man", if a, b and c are events now, and A, B and C are events brought about in the future by a, b and c respectively and a time traveller inserts another event, d, in the present, then a plus b plus c plus d can never produce the same future of A plus B plus C.

But I can see no logical reason against time travel myself, provided the person is prepared to say good-bye to his own time forever. It may be found absolutely impossible when we know what time really is, when we can work with it as we do now with space; but, at the moment, there seems no logical reason preventing time travel.

Finally, one more point. Future travel is presumably impossible, as there is no fixed future, but only infinite possibilities.

Having had complaints from Ron Holmes about no help forthcoming with his sheet, we present this issue:-

A R E V I E W.

ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION, November 1942.... Lead novel is "Overthrow" by Cleve Cartmill. A three-star (maximum possible is five) tale about a man who set out to regain his lost position and to prove that he was no traitor. But things went wrong, and he did exactly the opposite. This story is set in a future where cities are States named after their chief industries, such as: Food Centre, Power Centre, Plastic Centre &c. -- The other novel is "Minus Sign" by Will Stewart, being a continuation of his "Collision Orbit" in the July issue. The experiences of the firm Drake, McGee and Drake in their experiments with contraterrene, or "inside-out" matter. Four stars for this. Van Vogt has the lead in the shorts with "Not Only Dead Men", telling us of another way, apart from death, which makes sure no tales will be told. Four Plus. "Four Little Ships" is an ingenious tale from Murray Leinster, and I rate it at four merely because of its cleverness. However, it is not s-f, and does not belong in an s-f magazine. "The Gentle Pirates" by John Berryman is about a hackish incident in space. Score one. Finally, "Sand" by Colin Keith, also hack, but it scores two plus for good style. Two articles this issue: "Vulcan: Ice King" by Malcolm Jameson, and "It's A Tough Life" by F.B.Long. Usual departments, plus a book review. Cover fair. Interior drawings poor.