



-NELSON-

#24 EMBER published weekly by Donn Brazier at 1329 N. 33rd St., Milw. \$5 per copy.... subscription and contribution contest leaders are now Bob Stein with 3 points, Norm Stanley with 2½, Nic Carr with 1½ tied with Ackerman.

This week's arrivals: Science Fiction World, from Dale Tarr, rates B in content and D in mechanics. VAPA #10 mailing, mostly incomprehensible. The Alchemist, vol 2 no 1, appears again from Denver, and rates a good B all the way around; Charles Ford Hansen edits this. The Grotesque from Ron Christensen is good for an A in mechanics but only C in content. Stefnews #68 and Rusty threatens to quit publication if more news doesn't reach him. The Fanews tells us Otis Adelbert Kline died October 21st. BSFS Bulletin is of local Philly interest only. #9 Kay-Lar Trader arrived from Carls with two pages of mag & news and wants. Doubt #16 from the Fortean Society. (By the way, please note that the name is Fort, not Forte, as I've seen it used twice in the last two weeks.)

Rothman writes: "Hey, Brazier, our man Ehrenhaft turns up again. He is lecturing, a paper at a meeting of the American Physical Society at Ann Arbor Nov. 29. The title is 'Single Magnetic Poles and Cosmic Radiation'. It concerns the helical movement of iron particles moving in magnetic fields, which he claims can be explained only by the presence of single magnetic charges - magnetic currents."

Robinson sheds more light on the Al Ashley walk-out. He says: "During the Convention some of the members called up Al Ashley long distance and urged him to come back here for a visit. Al did. He can be reached at 59 Riverside Dr., Battle Creek, Michigan."

Robert Edward Jones, writing in the program for 'Lute Song', advances the idea that color should be used to advance drama, paralleling emotion with color, violent scenes in violent color, etc. "Hollywood color movies today have fine nature shots, western landscapes, South Seas lushness -- all travelogue stuff. They're not making color films they're making non-black-and-white films. I'm afraid that to Hollywood art is still a portrait of a nude girl in a coy position."

Paul Klingbiel writes: "In regard to this semantics business. We now have a local chapter here in Chicago of the Society of General Semantics. We get together every Saturday in a discussion group. A smaller, much more informal group meets on Thursday evening for a half hour to an hour to discuss plans. This is the so-called steering committee of which I am a member. We have had one outside speaker address us to date, and we are hoping we can get a program of speakers worked out for the future. In addition we are planning on carrying out definite practical applications of G.S., or projects. Should these projects materialize you will be notified. I have discovered two rabid s-f fans in the semantics group who are unknown to the fan world. Maria, a colored U of Chicago student, and Lehlenbacher. I'm not sure of the spelling of the last. Poor boys, neither Tucker nor Ackerman means a thing to them!" Along with this I might mention that Rothman, back in May, said in a letter to me that he was going to put Korzybski's teachings into practice. He said: "I'm not going overboard in this, because I realize that there is a certain amount of doubt as to whether Korzybski is a genius or a crackpot, but his ideas are extensions of things toward which I have been groping myself, and so it will be an interesting experiment to see if his method of semantic training will really produce results in myself."

So to expect a chemist to be a better statesman than Henry Wallace is sheer whimsical thinking. The fact of the matter is that quite a few scientists are jerks.

I bet you didn't know that chemistry is an antisemitic profession. That's one of the reasons I switched to physics. If the physicists became antisemitic they'd have to get rid of Einstein, Lise Meitner, Michelson, and Niels Bohr. Sigma Xi, the national science fraternity, is antisemitic, and of course many of the universities, those seats of learning, culture, and progress, are notorious for their quota systems.

Suppose you were to appoint a scientist to an important post? Vannevar Bush is one of the first in line for any big job to be handed out now. But he is a spokesman for the National Association of Manufacturers, that organization which has opposed every liberal piece of legislation in recent years. Bush is primarily an engineer, and engineers in general are reactionary. Read their professional journals and get an eye-opener.

The moral of the story is: Don't be naive. Don't make abstract statements about science and scientists. Keep in mind that scientists are human beings with all their faults and limitations, and that outside their laboratories they have all the prejudices that normal man is heir to.

Of course, with me it's different.....

Dave Raberanda from here and there

Dr. W. Baade resolved nucleus of Andromeda nebula into individual stars with 100" telescope. This was made possible during war years by red sensitive emulsions plus red filter to help decrease scattered light, but greatest help was the wartime dim-out of Los Angeles which made longer exposures possible. -SM, Apr. 1945 and Astrophysical Jr. Sept. 1944.

Rothman writes that, because of the activity of Tigrina in publicizing the LASFS, one might think the LASFS devoid of activity. But not so. Since getting their clubroom the meetings have been of highest quality; L. Sprague de Camp gave talk on 4th dimension and time-traveling, debunking most of the popular delusions on the subject; A.M. Phillips spoke on Anthropology and SF, mostly about origin of man and how sf plots could be obtained from the mysteries. Moskowitz and Sykora, down from NY, proposed a federation of eastern sf clubs, which idea is still pending.

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George Tullis, back from an extended leave spent traveling about the country, writes that he visited LASFS and most of the fans who meet there. Evans gave him a stack of old fanzines as big as 'Eureka, Illinois watermelon', so George could get back into the fold. The wife carrying George and his wife Helen off a phutt before it could get to Chicago and Milwaukee.

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Al Lopez sends paradox: a fly moving west meets a train moving east, with collision being fatal to the fly. However, before the fly can begin moving east (plastered against the train) his velocity westward must drop to zero. Since the train is in contact with the fly at that instant its velocity with respect to the ground must also be zero! And you have a little fly stopping a great big train dead in its tracks!

Jack Speer corrects Rothman's report of the Pacificon. He says that the resolution against 'fan' and 'fandom' passed. What is to take its place, Jack? Raberanda will continue to use the terms as descriptive of those who read sf & fantasy.

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Forrest Ackerman sends a tear-sheet from New Worlds telling the story of the Pacificon, as Forry sent it to them. Because of Rothman's article in Ember, the facts are well known. New Worlds, English sf magazine, looks pretty good.

PANAMA DIARY would be worth your time to read, advises Paul Klingbiel. The following pages are especially recommended: 137-147, 172-176, 198-202, and 220. Here's a quote from 'Ruth Harkness' book, p.171:

"There is in the far, far western part of China, where the mountains rise back on back, to the high altiplanes of Tibet, which are so like those of Andes, a holy mountain which the Chinese call Omei. It is a great mountain, and you can be carried to the top of it in a palanquin by coolies along a heavily overgrown path with bamboo, and bordered by innumerable shrines and Buddhas. The whole mountain is honeycombed with shrines to Buddha.

"It must be very beautiful," murmured Sandoval.

"So they say. And travelers also say that, from the ten weary and narrow paths, the coolies look out over precipices to the valleys far below. And every night in these valleys, which are wild and uninhabited, and in which there are no trails for man or beast, you can see processions of lights."

"Impossible! How can that be, if there are no trails?" inquired Sandoval. "It is a strange mixture of scientist and mystic."

"I don't know. I have never seen them," I replied. "But the Chinese say that in very ancient days this was the way over which Buddhism was brought to China, and therefore it is guarded by good spirits."

"But you have never seen them?"

"Not there exactly, but in the mountains to the north. One autumn I was making a journey, and my coolies and I had occasion to spend the night in a tiny hut on the edge of a precipice that overlooked a narrow barren valley through which rushed a torrent, and on the other side of which loomed a rocky cliff. Just before the owner of the little inn put up the wooden plate over the door, I went out into the night which was blacker than any I have seen. And across the valley, halfway up the cliff, where no man or animal could pass, and a moonlight, were many, to my mind, lights, equally triangular and of a soft blue."



SCIENTISTS ARE PEOPLE by Wilton A. Rothman

A little while back I was scared to death of the idea of studying physics. It seemed that to go along the same paths as Einstein, Eddington, or Oppenheimer one had to be a little more than a man. So I took a battery of aptitude tests given by the Veterans Administration, and the guy said to me "Rothman, you have nothing to worry about. You're right up there."

I mention this in view of the notion which some people have that scientists are superior beings of some sort, and that if scientists were put in charge of the government, rather than the filthy politicians whom we now have, things would be much better. This idea is as old as Plato, of course, except that we used philosophers as rulers instead of scientists. And the Technocrats call them technicians.

You'd think, offhand, that men trained in realistic thinking and in scientific method would be better equipped to handle the complexities of modern civilization than any horse-thief who managed to wangle a majority of votes from the deluded citizenry. The trouble is that scientists are not trained in scientific method. Chemists are trained in chemistry, physicists are trained in physics, and engineers are trained in engineering. If they manage to get a bit of the basic philosophy of science on the side, it is pure accident.