

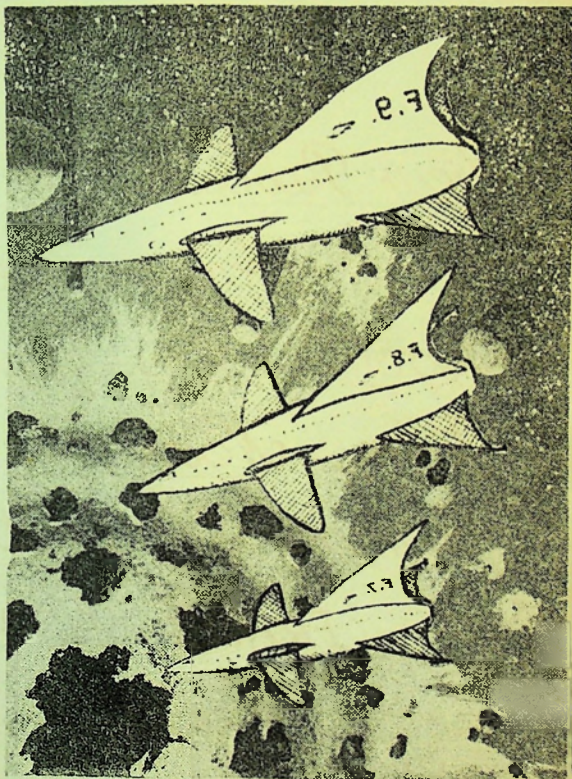
Etherline.

Science Fiction Journal.

FEATURING...

FRANK K. REYNOLDS

CONVENTION
ISSUE
1956



Published by AFPA

ISSUE No. 79

ARTHUR C. CLARKE.

FORREST J. ACKERMAN.

ROBERT BLOCH.

New Publisher's

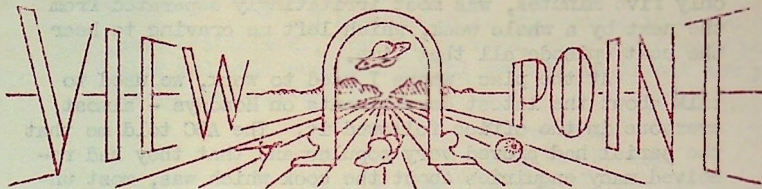
Announcements.

Book & Magazine Reviews.

Film News.

Author Story Listing.

FRANK B. BRYNING.



We have done many things in this journal but to date we have not yet run any letters. However, receipt of the following missive in the mail recently, forced us in self defence to answer it.

The letter is as follows:

115 Bellevue
Parade,
Hurstville,
28/10/56

Mr. Bob McCubbin,
c/- ETHERLINE,

Dear Sir,

A friend recently handed me a copy of issue No. 77 of ETHERLINE, which I have never read before. He gave me the journal to read because a few weeks before I had lent him my copy of Charles Chilton's JOURNEY INTO SPACE, and because he realised that I would be interested to know that Chilton's THE RED PLANET is now available; you gave a review of it in the journal.

I was surprised and angered to read your closing comment after the review, quote....."My only comment is, if the broadcast had no more sparkle than the book, I'm glad I didn't listen to it.....A 'B' class juvenile....."

It is indeed unfortunate, Mr. McCubbin, that you did not listen to the broadcasts. I tuned in to the serial a few weeks after it started, just by chance, and never missed an episode after that. The only thing I could complain about is that each half hour episode, seemingly

only five minutes, was most irritatingly separated from the next by a whole week, which left me craving to hear the next episode all that time.

At the place where I used to work, we used to talk about the latest developments on Mondays - almost everyone in the office followed it. The ABC told me that the serial had proved very popular and that they had received many enquiries about the book which was, most unfortunately, not available at the time; I'm sure it would have sold a good few copies if it had been. I am disappointed that the earlier serial (also by the BBC) was not broadcast in Australia, as the second one carries on from it's ending, while a third is expected to be broadcast in Sydney shortly, called 'The World in Peril', the last of the 'Journey into Space' series, and I intend making sure of hearing it and reading the book when it becomes available.

I now have my copy of THE RED PLANET on order and expect it by post shortly, and am looking forward to reading it very much. I will be very surprised if it is not as excellent reading as the serial was to hear. I object most strongly to your criticism of the book of the serial which was so popular here ! If that was a sample of your reviewing, I could never go by your criticism or take to your recommendations, I would reverse your ideas.

I wish to point out to the editor of ETHERLINE that the advertisement for McGills Book Store wrongly describes the book as 'the story of the ABC serial' when this serial was by the BBC, of which Charles Chilton is a producer and at the London Studios of which he produced JOURNEY INTO SPACE serials. The publication of this error is either a bad reflection on the bookshop, the editor or the printer and displays ignorance in a Science Fiction Journal even of its standard. However, I realise that this is most unlikely anything to do with yourself, but would appreciate your passing on this message to those concerned.

I hope you will appreciate that you have criticised, for all to read, what was a very popular and well produced serial even if it is not how you would have written it.

Yours truly
(Mr) Ian J. Hay.

Phew ! After ploughing through that, at a late hour one morning, you could have knocked me over with the proverbial feather. Now, to take Mr. Hay's criticisms one by one, I'd just like to clear up a few points. First off, how old are you, Mr. Hay ? Secondly, I'd be interested to know the name of your friend. This letter seems to have a certain touch.

You, and everyone else, must realise, I hope, that a review must necessarily be the opinion of the reviewer, and his only. I feel sure that if you read the previous 76 issues, you would probably find one or two reviews by Mr. McCubbin which agreed with your views. Regarding the particular bleat, I myself thoroughly enjoyed the serial in question, so much so that I obtained a complete tape of it. But, having read the book, THE RED PLANET, I must agree with the reviewer. It was badly written, juvenile in approach, and not a patch on the serial, nor his earlier book, JOURNEY INTO SPACE.

If you remember, Mr. Hay, Mr. McCubbin said.....'if the broadcast had no more sparkle than the book'. I suggest you should have read the book before rushed to defend a volume you have never even seen. By the tone of your letter, you seemed more concerned about defending the serial, so please take another look at the review, and note that it is the book which is being reviewed.

You 'object most strongly to your criticism of the book of the serial which was so popular here'. Is it a natural law that a book of a serial, or vice versa, has to be as good as the original ? Did you ever see THE WAR OF THE WORLDS, THE THING, or any of the other fine books which were mutilated by Hollywood ?

Regarding the matter of reviews in general, all which appear in these pages are solely the opinions of the reviewer, many of which I personally don't agree with, but since this is not yet a police state, we are all entitled to our opinions, and I would be a poor editor if I threw out all reviews which didn't suit me.

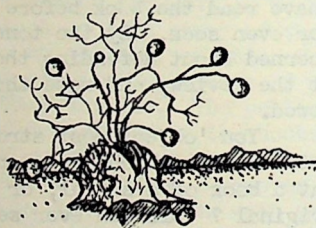
Now to your second bleat, addressed to me. First off, the ad is paid for, and therefore the advertiser is entitled to put whatever he likes in it, short of treason, libel or pornography. Secondly, the public and readers of ETHERLINE, heard the serial over the ABC, not the BBC. Read the ABC ads, around that time, and see if there is any mention of BBC for it, and the other shows purchased from the BBC. Thirdly, I suggest you obtain a copy of ETHERLINE 59, page 23, in which Charles Chilton and the BBC were given full credit for emanating the show.

No. Mr. Hay. I suggest you sit down and calmly rationalize for 10 minutes before you start writing letters like that one again.

We appreciate it was only a criticism, and we hope you will appreciate that this is only intended to set you on the right track. If you intend to enter fandom, especially in Sydney, then you'll need a different attitude completely.

Ian J. Crozier.

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SCIENCE FICTION

Arthur C. Clarke

Science fiction is not, as many people seem to think, a recent and somewhat deplorable American invention. Its origins go back almost three thousand years, for there are episodes in Homer that, with a slight change in vocabulary, would not be out of place in one of the current 'magazines of the future'. But it is only in recent years that it has become self-conscious, has acquired a name, and has gained prestige and popularity, until it is now the most rapidly expanding branch of modern fiction.

The name 'science fiction' is unfortunate and undoubtedly repels many people, but there's nothing that can be done about it, for no one has been able to think of a suitable alternative. Nor has anyone been able to provide a definition of the genre that is more than the roughest of working guides. Fiction about science? Then one would have to include THE SMALL BACK ROOM. Stories of the future? That would exclude countless romances about ancient civilizations, Atlantis, and so on. Adventures in space? Certainly not: only a minority of science fiction stories is concerned with travel beyond the Earth.

Never mind; we may not be able to define science-fiction, but we can recognise it when we see it. Most of it, heaven knows, is plainly enough labelled these days, as more and more publishers try and climb aboard the bandwagon, not a few with some very peculiar offerings indeed.

The man who first made science fiction popular

was undoubtedly Jules Verne. Verne - like his readers - was stimulated by the great technical advances of the advances of the Victorian Age, which opened up a new world to the imaginative mind. But we can see now that this was a false dawn; the explosive sweep forward of the frontier of science did not occur until our own generation, and it was inevitable that it should create its own literature. In the forty years after the death of Verne; science-fiction was popular enough, but usually at the adolescent level - despite the fact that in this period it was dominated by the genius of H. G. Wells. Even Wells' prestige and the success of many of his prophecies was not enough to get science fiction taken very seriously; the adjective 'Wellsian' always had a faintly derogatory flavour.

Two things changed this situation almost overnight. The first was the V.2 rocket; the second was the atomic bomb. With practically no notice, two of the main themes of science fiction became science fact. The public realised, often with a cold feeling in the pit of the stomach, that the most outrageous fantasies of fiction might soon be eclipsed by reality - that the sky was no longer the limit, and that no one could ever again say with confidence 'This is impossible !'

In the years between the wars, a handful of American magazines specialised in science fiction, and had fostered many writers who combined imagination and sound scientific knowledge. These magazines were widely, if surreptitiously read on both sides of the Atlantic; their importance is out of all proportion to their literary quality - which was negligible - for they inspired or trained many of the best writers of today.

Until 1946, the magazines were almost the only market for science fiction, though once or twice a year some enterprising publisher might sally in this direction. After the end of the war, however, the new prestige of these stories resulted in a spectacular upsurge of book production in the United States, first by specialised houses, and later by the great established firms. Today, there is at least one new science fiction book a

week - and I refer to serious hard-cover productions, not the lurid paperbacks which litter the bookstalls and which are no more representative of science fiction than Mucky Spleen belongs to the Doyle and Chesterton. Most of the post war books were anthologies of the best from the magazines, but this source is now running dry, and the majority of recent books contain brand new material.

One of the most interesting features of science fiction publishing is that, at least until recently, the sale of such books continues indefinitely and does not fade away to nothing a few months after publication. The explanation of this may lie in the fact that many readers when they discover the medium for the first time, immediately set out to obtain all the medio - cre novels, therefore, have remained steadily in print. It seems likely that the current flood will result in a more discriminat - ing outlook, which will be all to the good.

This country, the home of Wells and Stapledon, has lagged perhaps five years behind the United States in its discovery of science fiction - but that discovery is now proceeding apace. Though it began with the importation of some American classics, British publishers are now beginning to realise that there is no need to cross the Atlantic to fill their lists. However, the number of authors who can write good science fiction is still limited, and some established writers have made ill-advised ventures into this field with horrid results. One need not have a Ph.D to be able to write science fiction, but one must have some scientific knowledge and a 'feel' for the subject. Success as a writer of conventional novels is no guarantee at all of good results in this newer field.....

Nevertheless, it is interesting to note how many great writers in the past have produced stories which, for their time were excellent science fiction. A short search reveals the names Lytton, Richard Jefferies, Jack London, Rider Haggard, Rudyard Kipling, R. L. Stevenson, Conan Doyle, Karel Capek, E. M. Forster, Andre Maurois, Aldous Huxley, Michael Arlen - and Edgar Wallace ! Even the most conservative reader, therefore, need

have no hesitation in following where so many distinguished feet have trodden....

There is little doubt that science fiction has now 'arrived' though whether - as some enthusiasts claim - it will displace the detective story remains to be seen. Personally, I think such a comparison is unfortunate. The best science fiction is worthy of consideration as a new form of literature, and there are very few detective stories which can be placed in this category, or attempt to be placed in this category, or attempt to be anything more than good entertainment.

This may be a suitable place to refute one common misconception. Science fiction is often called escapist; this is true only in so far as all fiction is escapist. While not claiming that the authors of SLAVES OF THE SLUG MEN or PIRATES OF PLUTO had any higher aims than the amusement of their somewhat juvenile audiences, much of the best contemporary science fiction is the very reverse of escapist.

It concerns some of the problems of the present and the immediate future; it deals with situations which have a high probability of becoming facts. It is far more realistic, far more concerned with the world-as-it-is, than - for example - tales of Restoration wenches or satyriastic Private Eyes.

Perhaps that is one reason for its increasing popularity. Science - which is merely common-sense applied with uncommon persistence - is the most important single factor in our modern age; without it we can achieve nothing, either for good or evil. It would only be natural, therefore, if the force which now shapes our literature and gives it a new meaning - even a new hope. For though prophetic fiction has often been concerned with cataclysm and disaster, it can also provide inspiration by showing us the future which lies within our grasp.

It is the true literature of the Second Elizabethan Age, the age which is already waiting for a new Columbus to take his rocket-driven caravel across the deeps of space.

-Arthur C. Clarke-

SCI FI FLASHES

from ... Forrest J. Ackerman ...

Hollywood seems to be going stark staring wild on monsters, according to the latest titles being optioned by the movie makers. Titles such as ATTACK OF THE CRAB MONSTERS, The Uranium Monsters, HOUSE OF MONSTERS, The Giant Ymir, MARK OF THE CLAW, The Man Who Turned To Stone, THE MAN WHO DESTROYED THE EARTH, The Night The World Exploded, THE KRAKEN, Queen of the Universe, THEY LIVED A MILLION YEARS, and one of mine, THE NIGHT BEFORE THE DAY SCIENCE FICTION FANS BLEW THEIR TOP.

Germany has caught the Convention bug, and will stage the BIGGERCON, the Big German Convention, sponsored by the Science Fiction Club Deutschland, led by Walter Ernsting, editor of UTOPIA. BiggerCon will follow the LonCon by one week, and I, as Honorary President of the SFCDDeutschland, will be the Guest of Honor.

Science Fiction seems to be making inroads on the mens magazines, with Ib Melchior cracking in ESCAPADE with 'The Racer', Spencer Strong and Morgan Ives making CAPER with 'The Naughty Venusienne', while Ray Russell makes PLAYBOY with a little item called 'Put Them All Together They Spell Monster'.

The Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society recently had a star studded meeting, with guest Sam Merwin mixing with members Mark Clifton and Frank Quattrocchi, Frank Riley and Helen Urban, James Causey and Lon Moffatt, Kris Neville and Gene Hunter. A large turnout heard Merwin reminisce about the demise of Sgt. Saturn, and answer questions about the publishing busi -

ness. Lou Norheim has been signed to script THE NIGHT THE WORLD EXPLODED, on Columbia's production schedule.

The Jules Verne novel, JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH has been placed on RKO's 1957 production slate, announced by Bill Dozier. Stanley Rubin to produce, Eugene Lourie to direct.

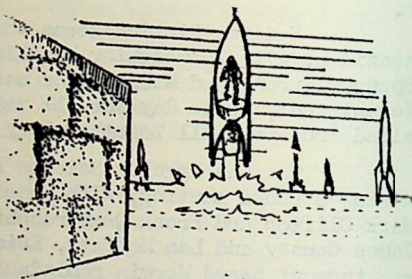
Two of Walt Disney's yet-to-be-released films, MAN IN SPACE and MAN IN THE MOON were shown at the recently held International Interplanetary Society congress held in Rome.

George Pal Productions will produce HG Wells' THE TIME MACHINE in UK early in 1957.....John Wyndham's novel, THE KRACKEN WAKES (or OUT OF THE DEEPS) has been bought by Philip Waxman Productions, and shooting has commenced under the producers, Jules Levey and Arthur Gardner, with Arnold Laver directing, and starring Tim Holt, Audrey Dalton, Hans Conried and Barbara Darrow, to be released thru UA..... Paul Blaisdell has just completed the role of Marla English's prehistoric octoplasm in THE SHE CREATURE.....

Lester del Rey has sold his recent book, NERVES to the filmogills, and is will be released by Paramount.

Forrest J. Ackerman

.....



WORST FOOT FORWARD

Robert BLOCH

I am writing this article in March 1954, and it's hard to concentrate amidst the din.

That noise you hear in the background is the sound of magazines crashing, publishing houses going bust, markets exploding throughout the science fiction field.

If you listen closely, beneath the fortissimo thunder you can hear the weak, wailing counterpoint of fans and pros alike, joined in a thin chorus of bewildered amazement.

"How can this happen? Only a year ago things were wonderful; had been ever since DESTINATION MOON, and getting better right along. And now, suddenly, the roof caves in. Why?

Here's one man's answer.

It's not a pretty picture, I'm afraid. It's not going to win friends and influence people. It lacks the glib references to 'economic forces' and 'saturation' and 'distribution problems' and 'publishing costs' which characterize all of the previous explanations I've heard and read.

I'm sure you're familiar with that gambit. It runs something like this:

"Well, you see, science fiction is a sort of limited appeal proposition. Basically, it managed to struggle along for about twenty years and support three or four regular magazines and a couple of in-and-outers. And there are enough confirmed addicts to keep one or two small publishing houses in the book market, too.

But the minute a boom started, everybody had to get into the act. Too many magazines came out at once - too

many books." And then the explanation goes into the technical pitch about 'newsstand display' and 'poor distribution'. And it turns out that science fiction is the victim of Mr. Printer and Mr. Engraver and Mr. Paper Manufacturer and Mr. Distributor.

As I say, you've heard this song before.

Well, I'm not here to write any new lyrics. Nor does the song itself find a place on my personal Hit Parade. I think it's a phony.

Oh, I won't deny the facts. They are obvious enough. It's the conclusions I quarrel with.

It's true that the cost of publishing anything today is inordinately high. It's true that competition is keen; that a magazine or book is ultimately at the mercy of its distributors; that unless it is placed before the consumer, the sales will suffer.

But these facts are not germane to science fiction alone. They apply equally to all forms of contemporary publication - mysteries, westerns, love-stories, confessions, the factual digests, 'slick' magazine fiction, and 'serious' novels or non-fiction.

All of this material, in magazines or hard covers, faces the same situation.

Faces it, and (by and large) survives. The hard cover mystery finds it's home in the libraries, its mass sales in a pocket book reprint. If love stories (sic) are no longer published plentifully in pulp form, they have made a graceful or disgraceful transition to paperbacks. So have the westerns. The digest sized magazines are everywhere upon the newsstands.

There have been failures, yes; the publishing field has left a trail of corpses through the years. Anyone who is rabid to refute my conclusions will undoubtedly seek to cite examples of general magazines that started out booming and ended up busting.

But generally speaking, the overall picture is this: there are still half a hundred regular digest sized magazines published and displayed and sold monthly on newsstands all over the country, and they enjoy a big sale. There are still scores of mysteries, suspense novels, westerns and general fiction books published for every one science fiction effort. Despite television, motion pictures, radio, and the delights of drug addiction, these other

literary forms continue to flourish and return a profit.

Why ?

At this point, the flannel-mouths will rush in again with their previously mentioned battle cry. 'But I already told ya - science fiction is different, see ? It's like I said, a limited appeal proposition: there ain't enough people interested to support a lot of books and magazines.'

To which I repeat my previous question. Why ?

Why aren't there enough people interested ? If that's the case - if there is some mysterious limiting factor in our civilization which keeps the number of science fiction readers constant at 150,000 or 200,000 maximum - then how did the boom begin in the first place ? There must have been more readers during the boom - and what starts a boom, anyway, if it's not an indication of general public interest ?

The answer to this one, from friend flannelmouth, is likely to be a vague reference to 'fad' and 'craze' and 'Well, you know how it is - these things get started for a while and then they die down again; it was just a temporary thing, on account of the movies they made and everybody talking about the atomic bomb.'

(Reader, forgive me if I tend to oversimplify or vulgarize the answers I am putting into flannel-mouth's flannel mouth. I am well aware that his arguments are often couched in a much more scholarly and abstruse verbiage. I am also well aware that if I use such verbiage, it will only make me sick to my stomach. Because, basically, the answers, stripped of polysyllables, boil down to just such simple replies. Simple . And senseless.)

But let's consider that 'fad' or 'craze' argument for a moment. It sounds good, until you consider it. Then it falls apart. Every new appeal can be initially labelled as a 'fad' or a 'craze'. The advent of LIFE as a picture magazine could have been regarded as a fad; interest in the first READERS DIGEST could have been called a craze. The fact remains that

LIFE and READER'S DIGEST endured, and so did a lot of imitations. The public bought and continued to buy - and the newsstand distributors found room aplenty for such magazines for this reason.

Here in the United States, during the past five or six years, another magazines form has risen paralleling the science fiction boom. I refer to the sudden appearance of a score of small women's magazines initially put out by the SuperMarkets, but now on general sale, and widely duplicated by independent publishers. During the same span encompassed by science fiction's rise and fall, these magazines have grown steadily in number, readership and appeal. They are not only surviving, but thriving. And yet they too were initially regarded as a 'fad'.

Nope, flannel-mouth is begging the question, and it's about time I stopped the practise myself and got on to answers.

For some while, I've been considering those answers. As a writer, my first impulse, naturally, is to throw the blame on the editors. 'The damned fools haven't bought enough of my stories, maybe that's the trouble'.

Tempting proposition, but tain't so. I believe, by and large, that the editors in the science fiction field know a good deal about editing, about science fiction and about the 'field' per se, and that they have admirably demonstrated that knowledge through the years.

The second impulse is to invert the proposition in masochistic self-abnegation and throw the blame on the writers.

Bunch of lousy hacks, grinding out stale crud month after month. Well, yes, to a degree. Perhaps 70 per cent of all the published science fiction of the past five or six years is crud. But of that 70 per cent, I'd venture to say that only 20 per cent of it is unadulterated slop without any element of interest, ingenuity or intellectualization. And above the 70 per cent is a good solid 30 per cent of really fine, superior writing.

30 per cent, by the way, is a high average in any field. I don't think even the confirmed mystery-story addict can truthfully say that 30 percent of all whodunits published contain

original material, literately presented. Nor are 30 percent of all westerns outstanding, nor 30 percent of the overall contents of our 'slick' magazines, nor - believe me - 30 percent of the annual output of the so-called 'serious' novels.

And the percentage of abysmal swill spewed out in these fields is markedly greater than in science fiction, which, by the way, has consistently shown an increasing improvement year after year.

Yet these other types of fiction survive and prosper despite (by and large) much poorer writing and editing.

So I can't conscientiously blame editors or writers for the fate of science fiction today.

Well, who else is there left to crucify?

How about taking a crack at the publishers which is a popular gambit. Everybody hates those fatheads - sitting back and taking their profit simply because they have a lot of dough to put up for backing; bunch of stupid jackasses who interfere with editors and louse up the ideas of artists and writers..

Granted. But they do in every field, and prosper despite their mistake. Science fiction has had its share of know-nothing publishers, of greedy publishers, of dictatorial and opinionated publishers. But no more so than the other genres. So, regretfully, as the sun sinks in the west, we must take our leave of publisher-land without depositing the burden of guilt.

This leaves another large group: the readers.

Serious Constructive Fans (the kind that used to play with Erector sets when they were kids, and who still engage in such symbolic auto-eroticism today) generally come up with this answer. The readers are the villains. They rejected science fiction because they didn't insist on the right kind of stories. (Viz: the kind the Serious Constructive Fans enjoy).

This is nonsense and I have some valid arguments to prove it. These arguments are named Heinlein, Leiber,

Bradbury, Sturgeon, Kuttner, Matheson, Boucher Russell, Robinson , Wyndham et al.

I do not like all these authors, myself. I do not necessarily like all of the writing of the authors whose work , by and large, I do enjoy.

Neither, I suspect, does any reader.

But there are, in the above list, enough good writers who produce, consistently or inconsistently, enough good stories to constitute an enviable record for the past half-dozen years. The 30 percent of superior writing previously alluded to.

And the regular readers know it, and laud the writers, their editors and their magazines. Reading tastes in science fiction have measurably improved, and thus helped to improve the quality of the writing.

I'm afraid the Serious Constructive Fans will have to go back to their erector sets. We can't blame the readers, either.

So there we are. Typical whodunnit situation.

Who killed science fiction ? Publisher isn't guilty. Editor isn't guilty. Author isn't guilty. Reader isn't guilty.

Can it be....the butler ?

(NOTE TO THE PATIENT READER: If you are a smart guy, you will realize that this is just the place to end this article. Just recast the whole thing in the form of a 'serious enquiry' and allow the poor audience to figure it out. But I'm not going to play such a scurvey trick. I leave such cowardly devices to scoundrels like Wlater Willis and ~~Chuck~~ Harris and - like the damned fool that I am - plunge red~~lessly~~ ahead to stick my own tender neck out for the chopper)

So I'll tell you who killed the science fiction boom.

George Pal and his pals.

THE POPULARITY OF SCIENCE FICTION WAS KILLED BY ITS POPULARITY.

And we're all equally guilty , because we all thought it was such a wonderful thing.

We cheered when Campbell's WHO GOES THERE ? was filmed as THE THING, and we gloated because it was a 'success' i.e made money for its producer - . We glossed over the first danger-signal -- the very change in the title itself. We excused what they did to the story. We extenuated the treatment , the corn. We said - God pity us all ! - 'Maybe they had to ham it up for a wider audience'. The important thing is, it's science fiction on the screen and that's going to be a boost for the field . Others will come along and do better, wait and see.'

In fact, we had already seen something that might partially justify our predictions - DESTINATION MOON. Science fiction was now in technicolor, yet . Dignified with an 'original musical score' yet graced by the presence of 'technical advisers' yet. Oh, granted, there were a few flaws and they really didn't need that formula approach to the story, but they'll improve, wait and see.

(We were willing to forget, in our naive rapture with the wonder-of-it-all, that some of the most unChristly westerns are in technicolor, have their 'original' musical score, are blessed with 'technical advisers' who instruct actors on how to get 50 shots out of a six-shooter before reloading.)

Along came the Lipperts and the Obelers and Schutnke Brothers, and a flock of shoestring independents with a half dozen follow up films which not even the most fervid apolo - gists could disguise - horrible travesties. But we kept saying, "Good publicity. Good for the field. Start a boom."

.. And the barracuda began to swarm around the radio and TV studios - nibbling. Toss them a couple of good yarns and watch them tear hunks out of them and float the dismembered corpses onto the air. Sure, a lot of it was admittedly junk, but " Good publicity. Science fiction on radio and TV now. We can't miss."

I thought the same way, as late as 1951, in New Orleans. There, as ancient withered members of 6th Fandom can attest, the Convention of that year was given preview showings of THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL, and WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE.

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL pleased me immensely. Although the satraps had faithfully followed their policy of buying a story (Bates' 'Return of the Master') and then changing it into something else, I felt they had effected an intelligent, adult transformation. No conventional love story, no phoney adulation of present day society as contrasted to monstrous invaders; and a generally adult treatment was manifest in the presentation. This kind of science fiction I personally understand and enjoy and endorse as contributing to the stature of the field.

WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE, however, was a horse of a different technicolor. Or part of a horse, anyway.

The scientist was back. The old scientist and the young scientist. And the beautiful girl in the sweater. The one from THE THING, and the half dozen other horrors. And we were off on that 'end of the world' kick, with a vengeance. Technicolor was just ginger peachy to show fires, explosions, floods, and red corpuscles.

The writing, the characterization, the dialogue were on the comic book level. There was another 'original musical score' and another group of credits to the technical experts, but this sop would fool nobody. It was obvious that Mr. Pal (and his imitators) had found the formula. Make a picture or two and pick the brains of the Schmoes (Hollywoodese for authors, artists, pedagogues, technicians and theorists who originate an idea) and then kick them aside while you go after the loot. Give 'em the old one two. Play it for tits and titters.

And so it went, through '52 and '53. While the science fiction fans, the science fiction editors and writers for the most part (God pity them!) howled in blind approval of their own disembowelment. Another TV show? Wonderschoen! Another

movie ? Manifique ! Another radio series ? Bravo ! Also Ole , banzai, skoal, cheers. So the new TV show consisted of a dramitised comic strip deliberately aimed at the 10 year old level. Who cares ? Wasn't it proof that science fiction was coming in to the big time ? So the radio programme was CAPTAIN STAR or some other such idiocy. The important thing to remember was science fiction was on the air. So the movie was INVADER FROM MARS or (yikes !) ABBOT AND COSTELLO GO TO MARS - what the hell, it must be good for business.

Actually, it was good for Hollywood's business, and TV's business, and radio's business. For science fiction, it was terrible..

It's easy to see why an actor like Richard Carlson would have reason to turn handsprings over this development, and why a girl like Patricia Rush would rush out and buy half a dozen new black sweaters in anticipation of her development. But why anyone in the science fiction field could rejoice in the face of what was happening is beyond comprehension.

Yet they cheered when Bradbury's POST yarn was filmed as THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS.- cheered because it meant one of 'our boy's' was making a sale. Again, good for Ray: if the ghouls are scrabbling for bodies, it's at least nice to know they'll occasionally pay the owner for use of his cadaver. Good for Ray because he got paid - but bad for science fiction.

Bradbury's own career went up a notch because of this, and more power to him now that he's a screen writer, and in the dough. But Bradbury the writer, Bradbury the sincere artist certainly suffered when his story emerged as a vehicle whose plot and treatment can be capsulized in one line - and one of the hoariest lines ever exhumed - viz, ' Look out, boys, the monster is loose !'

And that's all the 'popularity' of science fiction in mass media has been able to produce so far: one-line plots for one cylinder brains.

If it isn't 'Here comes the monster' it's 'The World is being destroyed'. If it isn't Captain Fatso and his Blaster, it's Brilliant Young Nuclear Physicist to the Rescue. Nothing else. But nothing.

Probably the whole grisly business reached its apotheosis in 1953 with the production (sic) of THE WAR OF THE WORLDS. This was another Pal-sied effort, based on the novel by H. G. Wells ('Based on' is another Hollywood euphemism, meaning 'What the hell, the guy's dead, let's boot it around for laughs and see if we can come up with a real hot story line.')

Well, they came up with a real hot story line. To begin with, it had Technicolor. That meant plenty of opportunity for more fires, more bombs, more explosions, more blood, more guts. Which, after all, is - according to Hollywood and TV and the radio - the essence of science fiction. Cater to the sadists - the potential and actual pyromaniacs, paranoids and psycopaths in the audience who revel in fantasies of mass violence and destruction. That's the sweet mystery of life, the secret of it all; when you make QUO VADIS? you're under no illusions that your audience will attend because they're hot to see the story of a Roman's conversion to Christianity - you know damned well that they're paying their dough to see the Mass Orgy, the Burning of Rome, and the Bloody Arena with the Christians Thrown to the Lions.

So there's the formula, and Pal used it. Of course: he's about as much interested in advancing science fiction as you are in early Sumerian artifacts, but he is interested in the ever-loving buck, and so are all the mass-media impresarios.

As a result, he came up with a polychromatic abortion which to my mind represents the ultimate low in so-called science fiction films. It had everything. The Brilliant Young Scientist was there, wearing horn-rims in a few daring scenes where he talked Big Thoughts and (of course) abandoning them the moment he had a chance to get heroic. Within just a few moments after the film's opening, in walked Our Sweater Girl, Miss Milky Way herself. We also had a Wise Old Reverend in this one - and just to keep all

denominations happy, a whole slew of ministers, priests and assorted dervishes thrown in at the finale when God triumphed over those Nasty Bug-Eyed Monsters who tried to invade our sacred Earth.

And we had the Army, too. Leave us not forget the Army. They're in most of the science fiction pictures. They come up with their tanks and their guns to cope with the hellish invaders, and the tanks and the guns are never any good, but somehow this young jag scientist, see, he gets in with the top brass and helps them figure out a method at the end, or tells them that God will help. And by cracky, it works! Sure, there's a lot of other scientists around, too, but they aren't important. The reason you can tell they aren't is because they're all old, or funny-looking, and only the handsome hero and heroine are really hep to the nuclear jive.

The Army, though, is always worth watching. Their antics in this film were almost terrifyingly typical. First there's the Tough Guy, see? A sort of bushy browed black Fighting Irish type who just figures on blasting the monster to hell; no imagination, get me? Swell soldier, just the one you'd pick if you were in a tight corner on Iwo Jima or wherever, but he ain't got the vision for this kind of a struggle, see? So he gets smeared.

Now don't get me wrong - we're not saying anything against the Army, we're not offending anybody. (If we did, they wouldn't lend us their tanks and stuff to use in our pictures) Even when this Tough Guy gets smeared, he's still showing how brave he is, and at the last, when he can see things are hopeless (which is about 15 minutes after the dumbest three year old child in the audience can see it) he yells for his men to run, and gets killed.

But let's give Pal his due. He wouldn't let the Army down this way, not our science fiction loving, patriotic producer! He's also got a Smart Guy. Real top brass, a general no less, and a Brain. A sort of Heinlein-type military man; the kind of a guy who can act casual even in the face of the

unknown, and rip out a word like 'parapsychology' without goofing it, just to show that Military Intelligence is prepared for Any Emergency. True, he can't figure out the invaders, and after he drops an atomic bomb on them (just so the audience gets its full measure of science fiction's significance) he's a little puzzled - but not licked. Nosiree! He keeps right on fighting, and works out a plan to evacuate whole cities in less time than it would take for the average man to evacuate his bowels.

Meanwhile, hero and heroine tangle with the monsters (which, incidentally, operate a bunch of 1927 Paul-designed machines come to life and who themselves resemble some sort of nest spiders or insects or horrid icky bugs; ughh it gives you the creeps just to look at the filthy things!) and the priests pray for deliverance, and the common people (Hollywoodese for extras, bit-players and stunt men) run around screaming and burning and getting run over and crushed under walls.

Finally, God comes along and saves Los Angeles.
(And about time, too!)

This, then, is Big Time Stuff - science fiction,

1953.

And from advance reports, it is science fiction, 1954, and perhaps 1955, if the films and the TV and the radio show continue to find an audience.

There is no reason why they won't, in my opinion, the comic book readers and the kiddies are always with us. They were for Superman, so why won't they go for this?

But this is precisely what is killing science fiction in the legitimate sense of the word, and in the legitimate literary markets.

It's happened before. Let's consider SUPERMAN, for example. The rise of the cartoon strip, along with BUCK ROGERS and FLASH GORDON in the mid-thirties, set science fiction back ten years. Right after Weinbaum and Campbell and a few others started to produce literate stories, stories which fans could reasonably introduce to their friends as evidence of the good reading to be found in the magazines, along came SUPERMAN and his imitators - and immediately

science fiction per se was identified in the mind of the general public with the hogwash of the comics.

Adult and adult-minded readers protested in vain to their friends that this wasn't what they meant by science fiction, but the friends jeered. And so did the editors and critics in the mainstream of contemporary letters. Science fiction had to spend the next ten years under the crippling label of 'comic book trash'.

Fantasy fiction suffered a similar blow. WEIRD TALES and UNKNOWN WORLDS purveyed what is today conceded to be some pretty good yarns - again, the statement is relative, but quality-wise the average was high. Then the movies (and the radio) got off into a 'horror kick' - studios like Universal began to grind out quickie bilge to a point where it became ridiculous even to them, and in self-defence they started to kid the genre with their Abbot and Costello Meet series, and put Boris Karloff into burlesque.

About this time, fantasy fiction went into a decline and virtually died - killed by corn in the mass markets.

I personally have an axe to grind in this respect: when today I find it almost impossible to get a fantasy piece published and learn that book firms are afraid to issue fantasy novels any more.

And I wonder how many science fiction writers are beginning to learn, in the face of present market decline, that they have an axe to grind too? I wonder how many of them see vulgar, imbecilic efforts like WAR OF THE WORLDS and go off and mumble under their breaths, 'Good Lord! How do they get away with it?' Why, I couldn't sell that guff to a half-cent market today, and yet some screen writer got more for turning out that bilge than I can hope to make, myself, with a full year of decent, honest work.'

And I wonder, how many of these writers are beginning to see, as I see, that it isn't a matter of personal jealousy, or a matter of wondering how somebody else

'gets away' with it, but a more vital matter of what's going to happen to the field itself if this continues.

Because that's the big problem. The more popular so-called science fiction becomes in the major media, the less chance there is for survival of the actual genre.

I'm no spokesman.

I know that, and because I know it, I've waited patiently for some Big Name Author or some recognized publisher or some established editor to step forward and point out these few simple truths for the consideration of all who have a stake in science fiction.

But I've waited, so far, in vain. Editors seem content to castigate authors, the trouble is, authors write 'down-beat' stories or they don't come up with 'new ideas', so magazines aren't selling. And publishers keep moaning about 'costs' and 'distribution'. And the Big Name Authors privately blame both publishers and editors.

None of them, to my knowledge, have been listening to the Boom - or recognizing it as the sound of their own empire collapsing.

But it's there.

Back in the '20s and '30s and early '40s, the big gripe was the Lurid Cover, the BEI and the Beautiful Heroine coming to grips month after month.

Most writers and most confirmed readers were unanimous in their opinion - these covers were a detriment to science fiction. They kept thousands of potential readers from ever buying a copy of a science fiction magazine and discovering that the contents were often way above the illustrations.

Editors and publishers patiently explained that the covers 'sold' the magazines, and that, by inference, the authors were allowed a place in the pages only by sufferance.

Until finally a few daring souls actually started to produce science fiction magazines with conventional, or at least sensibly conceived covers - and the sales went up! And up. And up.

Today we're in exactly the same situation. Our science fiction movies and TV and radio shows are our 'covers'. They are the gaudy exterior which represents science fiction to the millions of non-readers.

Amongst those millions are, potentially perhaps another quarter or half or even a million future regular readers.

But all they see are the 'covers'. The sickeningly trite and lurid movies, the juvenile TV and radio operas.

There is nothing here to ever attract them to the magazines. There is nothing here to suggest that SF today can offer a DEMOLISHED MAN, a WILD TALENT, a MORE THAN HUMAN. The mere fact that some of the Big Name Authors have lent their names to the mass media does not mean that they been allowed, as yet, to lend their creative ability.

And the result is woefully apparent.

Once more science fiction is being equated with BEMs, bras and bushwah; the mills of the gods are grinding corn.

Certain of my fellow science fiction writers have at times pointed out a hideous irony: actual scientists achieved the techniques of nuclear fission and then turned them over to the military; perfected innovations like radio and TV and turned them over to the dollar-hungry horde of commercial advertisers for their profit.

Well, here's another irony: my fellow science fiction writers have created a literary medium and turned it over to the Big Wheels without a whimper - and are being themselves victimized thereby.

Oh, like all generalizations, there will be a few exceptions. A lot of them, I hope - albeit wistfully. Maybe we'll have a few more pictures like THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL, or better. Maybe a lot like them. Heaven knows, we need them, badly.

Certainly, the other fields have a glut of poor material which has won them condemnation from many quarters. But the mystery and detective market, despite the damage wrought by poor material, has also profited from certain outstanding efforts - THE MALTESE FALCON, THE ASPHALT JUNGLE, the earlier THIN MAN series plus radio and TV stints like DRAGNET, well-contrived shockers like NIGHT MUST FALL, etc. The westerns have lured a more intelligent audience with items like STAGECOACH, THE OXBOW INCIDENT, HIGH NOON and SHANE.

This means, in terms of fiction, that there is a dual market in these other fields; a group of fairly discriminating readers for the well-written items, and a large army of hammer-headed Hammerites and hopped-up Hopalongers for the corn.

But science fiction has, thus far, been unable to achieve a working dichotomy in this manner. What we have, instead, is a sort of schizophrenia: on one hand a literature which is consciously striving to improve in content and presentation, and on the other, a 'cover' in the form of lurid and moronic movies, TV and radio which caters only to the oafish and the perverted.

As previously stated, there is nothing in the 'cover' material which could possibly lure intelligent readers to the magazines. Conversely, the magazines can't hold the audience types who enjoy the crude world-ropes and monster-baiting of the mass media.

Hence the phenomenon of science fiction's brief boom and subsequent collapse. The first films, the first programs naturally stirred up a dither in the bosoms of the besotted: they went galloping down to the newsstands and picked up magazines. It was not an instantaneous reaction, remember - it's something that occurred to certain segments over a period of many months or several years; a sampling process. That's what happened. During the past three or so years, inspired, incited and influenced by what they saw and heard in the lousy bought magazines. They bought one, maybe switched to a second or a third. And quit. Quit cold, because the magazines did not offer the same sort of bilge. And as they forsook their sampling and returned to the comic books, the market fizzled.

This is my opinion, yes, and ONLY MY opinion. In support of it, however, I can offer some years of experience in the field of retail advertising where consumer wants and consumer reaction is studied in gruesome and repulsive detail.

Remedies ?

Obviously, it's an either/or proposition. Either science fiction as a literary form must prostitute itself completely and shamelessly to the 1930-vintage space opera, or it must somewhere find a spokesman in high places who will improve the 'covers'.

I'm not condemning the present producers: it is not my purpose to excoriate Messrs. Pal, Lippert, Lopert, et al, not their adaptors and rewrite crews who translate story material in terms of hoke, ham, gimmick and gizmo. Nor would I even imply criticism of the few fortunate freres in the field who have managed to profit by selling to the mass media. They are not responsible for what happens to their work in the translation to coprolalia.

But the fact remains; science fiction writing in the magazines suffers for want of the proper audience because science fiction has been given a lack eye in the mass media. It has fallen into the hands of commercializers who don't give a solitary damn about the material they are dealing with - they're 'in business to make money' and that's the nature of the beast (whether from twenty thousand fathoms, or anywhere else). These tycoons have discovered a low-budget gold mine and a simple formula - slap out some 'technical' effects and hire a bunch of nonentities as performers and you're off to make a fortune.

It's about time that people who profess to have the welfare of the field at heart took a good hard look at this situation. It's about time they overcame their naive delight in the marvels of trick photography and smothered their ecstasies at being allowed to rub elbows with real live producers and actors. It's about time they stopped exulting whenever a ham uses an echo chamber to intone 'The Earthmen must be des-

troyed'. and another ham on a regular mike answers, in an imitation Peter Lorre voice, 'Yes, Master'. It's about time they realised the simple semantic fact that science fiction as they know it and enjoy it has nothing to do with science fiction as it is presented to the mass audiences; that the success of the latter in its present guise can only continue to injure the progress of the former.

Either that, or it's about time they abandoned any pretense on interest in 'raising the level' and deliberately went after the swag.

And let me emphasise one thing clearly. In my opinion you cannot do both. There is no successful aesthetic or commercial compromise: the movies and TV and radio know it, but apparently some of the editors and publishers don't know it. They have, consciously or unconsciously, taken to experimenting on the sly; trying to run lurid covers and keeping the story content inside on a high plane or, conversely, presenting an intellectual front, while they subtly slant their material along the same happy-ending and god-bless-democracy-and-technology lines as the movies. This fools nobody more than once. More important; it pleases nobody.

The droolers aren't content with just covers. They want to slobber over contents as well. The more literate and discriminating reader soon tires of the sweetness-and-light pap, no matter how sophisticated the presentation. This is a hard truth, and it is being learned the hard way. But if science fiction wants to attract the same readership as THE CAINE MUTINY and FROM HERE TO ETERNITY, it had better learn that these books never achieved popularity by presenting the Navy and the Army in Rotarian ideology (don't knock, boost, etc.) and that the readers of those books are not necessarily all of a breed who can be lulled to sleep over and over again with the same old lullaby about how wonderful Science (sic) will be in the future.

I am not arguing a point here. I am merely citing an observable phenomenon. It's happening, and the results are apparent.

The book and magazine field will have to

choose. Art-for-art's-sake or dough-for-dough's-sake. Both courses are equally honorable and understandable, according to contemporary values. But the choice must be made in order to survive.

If it's literature, science fiction will have to find a few John Hustons and Stanley Kramers and John Fords to film some first rate material and thus attract sufficient readers to the first rate magazines. As it is, Campbell's THE THING certainly won't attract permanent fans for Campbell's ASTOUNDING.

On the other level, it's up to the magazines themselves - those who see no hope of better circulation through running better stories would do well to cease the mental strip-tease with their artistic conscience and go all out for sex, sadism and Little Ronnie, the Boy Who Wants With All His Heart To See Mars, in the hopes of picking up and holding the mass audience.

If not, the slump will continue. Continue until science fiction takes its former place as a very minor writing form, with half a dozen magazines, a couple of 'Flyers' now and then, a trickle of books and anthologies, and an occasional crumb from a critic who's hard up for a topic, or wants to attract attention by his iconoclasm.

There'll be still be publishers, editors, writers and fans - but not so many as the enthusiastic would wish. There'll be still some money to be made and some satisfaction in doing a good job - but not as much as is desirable.

I'm no prophet of doom. I'm not even a qualified commentator. I merely seek to explain something as it appears to me, should be fairly obvious - and which, for some reason, everybody tries to avoid seeing or admitting. I say again everyone makes his own choice. But it must, or should be, a sane choice, based on existing facts. If some of us want to be successful aesthetes and make money publishing, editing or writing 'good, sound science fiction' we'd better realise that we'll ne-

ver make money unless we attract a permanent audience for this sort of material - and that the only way to do that is to have this sort of material presented via TV, radio and motion pictures. If some of us merely want to make money, period, we'd better come off this 'raise the standard' kick and get down there in the arena and battle with the same weapons and the same tactics - using all of the blood, guts and busts in our arsenal.

But heaven deliver me - and heaven deliver the field - from the schizos who try to do both; who think they can compromise the customers. As it is, the better magazines must go on suffering a minimal circulation because they have no spokesmen in high places: the poorer magazines are half-fish and half-fowl, and satisfy nobody, including themselves.

Blame? Nobody's to blame. It's a situation which has arisen - and fallen - because of individual circumstances because we all work at cross-purposes, and seldom stop to analyse consequences. And as I say, we're not heading for actual extinction, just a mild decimation. A remnant will survive: the minimal market remains and will even enjoy a small resurgence. And let's not rule out the possibility of fluke or fortuity which can catapult us into another temporary boom. Let's not even rule out the possibility that the good material I spoke of will actually appear and save the day.

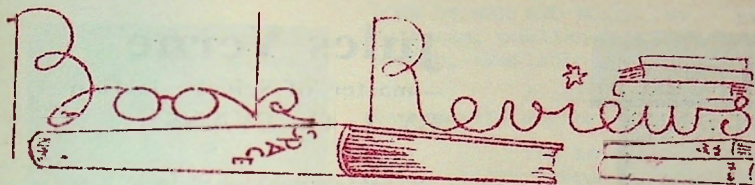
As it was, we had our boom, such as it was.

But it could have been, conceivably, so much better, if we hadn't let the Big Money take over and put our worst foot forward.....

Robert Bloch.....

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Copyright, 1956, by Ronald L. Smith.
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WILL IT BE SYDNEY IN '57?



THE TREMBLING TOWER by Claude Yelnick, published by Museum Press London, at 13/3. Available from McGills.

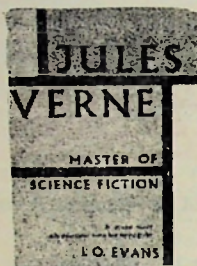
The story is placed in a lighthouse, two keepers are stationed. On the 13th December, the lighthouse commences to vibrate from an unknown cause, and the vibration period steadily shortens, until, in 5 days, it reaches the supersonic, affecting the health of the men, then stops.

The sea behaves in a peculiar fashion, and finally wrecks a tanker with a pyramidal wave. One man survives and reaches the lighthouse with seven dead men as company. The vibrations build up, through heat and the visible spectrum, but oddly enough, seem to cease there, as there are no burn effects.

The sailor uses a watch and a lead box to contact the OTHERS - a parallel world of vibrations (we are matter), who are being poisoned by our radio, radar etc. The OTHERS present an impossible ultimatum - then transfer the narrator and the seaman to their world. The other man has an accident - or suicides. The story ceases at this point - rather up in the air. The semi-diary method of writing leaves the characters very flat. A readable story, with a novel idea, but it could have been turned into a near classic with a different approach to the presentation.

Bob McCubbin

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Jules Verne

—master of Science Fiction

BY I. O. EVANS

A Selection published by
Sidgwick & Jackson,
London.

Review copy from publishers.
Available from McGills. 15/6

As explained in the preface, this is not an attempt to publish Verne's work in full, but to select parts outstanding because of their writing, idea content or prophecy. The introduction, 25 pages of it, is alone worth most of the price of the book, as it consists of a critical study of the influence of Poe and Wells on Verne, and concludes that Verne was greater than either, because he combined the best attributes of each.

His prophecies included large guns, speleology space conditions, submarines, uses of electricity, community projects, helicopters, bonded plastics and guided missiles. True, his concepts were rather laughable in execution, viewed in the light of modern research, but at least he was not afraid to venture beyond the confines of everyday thought - and after all, what is SF but mental adventuring beyond everyday thought. The older generation will be nostalgic, the younger may be amused, but all will get something from this volume. Highly Recommended.

Bob McCubbin

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WHO'LL GET THE NEXT ONE ??

THE LEADING SCIENCE FICTION JOURNAL



BORN OF MAN AND WOMAN, by Richard Matheson, published by Max Reinhardt London, available from McGills. 13/3

A collection of 13 stories, mostly macabre and gruesome.

The lead story is a real spine chiller about a mutant child, in a cellar (A); THIRD FROM THE SUN, deals with the evacuation of a doomed world, with Earth as the evacuee's proposed new home (A); THROUGH CHANNELS, a boy comes home from the movies, to find that Something has come through the TV screen to feed (A).

LOVER, WHEN YOU'RE NEAR ME - Trader driven mad by the attentions of an amorous, teleporting native female, and what a female! (A) SRL. AD. lonesome Earthman answers

ad from lonely Venus girl - and she calls for him (A); MAD HOUSE what would happen if hates piled up and animated the inanimate? (A). F... In the future, food is an obscenity. This one is really funny. (A); DEAR DIARY - women are the same, the Universe over. (B); TO FIT THE CRIME - what would be the most fitting punishment for a man who loathed cliches? Yes, you guessed it! (A); WITCH WAR - adolescent girls with odd mental powers fight a war. (A); RETURN - a time traveller could be a mine of information, couldn't he? (A); DRESS OF WHITE SILK - a study of an insane killer - and ghoul! (A); SHIPSHAPE HOME - a three eyed alien collects a whole city block as a specimen. (A).

As you can see, there is only one weak story in this collection, and its weakness lies only in the strength of the rest of them..

Highly recommended for those who like to be shocked.

Bob McCubbin

Best SF Two

edited by EDMUND CRISPIN

Published by Faber & Faber, London, available from McGills

Edmund Crispin has selected a second generous bookful of SF stories, and has garnished it with another stimulating and provocative preface.

I myself like, *PLACET IS A CRAZY PLACE* because it offers the first comic planet in our history; *ZERO HOUR* for its admirable new treatment of the horrific ruthlessness of children; *THE NINE BILLION NAMES OF GOD* because it is a dream revenge on materialistic smugness; *WORRYWART* for its ending; *LITTLE LOST ROBOT* because it represents a fresh approach to the detective story and *UNA* because its delightful nonsense is simple, slightly old fashioned, and expertly presented.

BLOWUPS HAPPEN is an admirable example of the rather rare type of SF which really has something to do with science. *ANGEL'S EGG* absolves the genre from the accusation that it must inherently be lacking in warmth, clean sentiment and ordinary humanity. *WHEN YOU'RE SHILLING*, though SF in its culmination is for the greater part of its length a brilliant study and depiction of two special, opposed types of human beings.

Among the other stories are gems from most of the better known authors. *BEST SF TWO* is a worthy successor to his earlier selection, *BEST SF*.

Bob McCubbin

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ARE

YOU

ENJOYING

YOURSELF

????????????

IF NOT, WHY NOT ???????

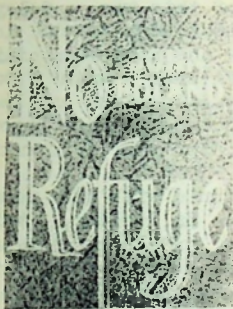
JOHN BOLAND

No Return

Published by Michael Joseph in the
'NOVELS OF TOMORROW' series,
edited by Clemence Dane.

Review copy from publishers.

Available at McGills, priced at 15/6.



This is an unusual mixture of detective, adventure and Utopian fantasy. Robert Claymore, a bank manager plans to rob his own bank and enlists the aid of a drunken Canadian pilot, one Geoff Leary. After carefully planning a hideout in Canada, the robbery committed, and the pair run into a freak storm and crash land in a strange land in the North of Greenland.

It is called 'Yademos' (any relation to Clark Ashton Smith's Ydmos?). This is a Utopian country with three classes, Masters, Servants and Workers. There is much heavy handed sociological discussion - a gruesome exposition of Justice - and mounting distrust between Claymore and Leary. It ends in murder and flight - with Yademosian justice being dealt out again.

This, like DEATH OF GRASS, is not for the delicate stomach. Personally, I cannot agree with Boland's idea of the future - and I certainly cannot believe his school children. This one is readable, but not particularly enjoyable, and below the high standard expected in this series.

Bob McCubbin

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They Shall Have Stars

JAMES BLISH

a science fiction novel

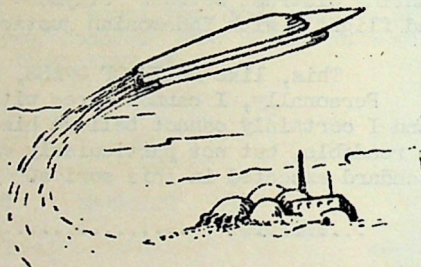
Published by Faber & Faber, London, available from McGills at 15/6

It's a pity that publication of this was delayed until EARTHEAN COME HOME appeared, as it is the leadup to the latter. It explains the basic ideas of E.C.H. - the anti -- agathics and the spindizzy. Paige Russell goes into Pfitzner's with soil samples from the planets (for anti-biotics investigation) and hears babies crying. This excites his curiosity and leads to his absorption in the 'anti-agathic' investigation team. For your information agathics cause death by old age.

In addition, he has been concerned with the remote controlled building of a bridge of pressure ice on Jupiter, which has been used to investigate gravity and other problems. We have politics and the FBI trying to foil our gallant heroes, but with the spindizzy anti-gravity, and immortality, progressive men leave for the stars, leaving Russia in sole control of poor old Earth.

Highly recommended.

Bob McCubbin



JOHN WYNDHAM *The Seeds of Time*



Published by Michael Joseph, London,
in the 'NOVELS OF TOMORROW' series
edited by Clemence Dane.

Review copy from publishers.

Available from McGills at 15/6.

This is a collection of ten stories by well known English author, John Wyndham, and could be called 'off trail' science fiction. Wyndham himself, calls attention to the experimental nature of the tales in his foreward, and justly so.

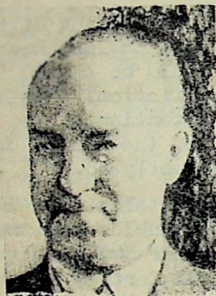
CHRONOCLASH tells of a beautiful wench who has troubles when she returns from her own century to marry her own ancestor. TIME TO REST - one of Earth's few survivors finally goes native on Mars. METEOR - a basket ball sized spaceship lands on Earth, the aliens inside are flitted away. SURVIVAL - baby must be fed, even on a wrecked spaceship. - a bit of glue, instead of gruel. PAWLEY'S PEEPHOLES - how to get rid of peeping toms and thomasinas from the future. OPPOSITE NUMBER - parallel time tracks meet, and Peter finds Peter's wife, and loses his own. PILLAR TO POST - personality exchange and a duel of wits across the millenia. DUMB MARTIAN - the worm turns, and got the widow's mite, less £2360. COMPASSION CIRCUIT - a real heads and bodies job, compered by Hester the Housemaid. WILD FLOWER - a plane crash causes a mutation amongst the flowers, but the farmer couldn't see the beauty.

One or two of the stories have been anthologised before, but I can still recommend it highly.

Bob McCubbin



AUTHOR STORY LISTING



Number Thirty Nine

FRANK B. BRYNING

Compiled by Donald H. Tuck

Next Author:

Mack Reynolds

With the gracious help of the author, I am pleased to be able to present the story listing of Australia's present most foremost science-fiction writer. After experience as free-lance journalist and associate editor of 'Rydge's Business Journal', Sydney, Frank has been Editor of 'Architecture, Building Engineering' - the Building Industry Journal of Queensland - since 1950.

STORIES

Abbreviations: AM Australian Monthly
AustJ Australian Journal

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. | Action.....Reaction.s | AM Jun'52, FU Mar'55 |
| 2. |And a Hank of Hair.s | AustJ May'56 |

THE LEADING SCIENCE FICTION JOURNAL

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------|---|
| | Coming Generation | retitling of 7 |
| 3. | Consultant Diagnostician.s | FU Dec'55 |
| 4. | Daughter of Tomorrow.s | AM Feb'55 |
| 5. | Episode - 4954 AD.s | Etherline 54. Revised version
Poor Hungry People to appear
in SATELLITE 2 |
| 6. | For Men Must Work.s | AustJ Aug'55, FU Feb'56 |
| 7. | Gambler, The.s | AM Oct'54, 'Coming Generation
FU Jul'55 |
| 8. | Infant Prodigy.s | FU Nov'55 |
| 9. | Jettison or Die ! s | AM Aug'53, FU Jan'55 |
| 10. | Miracle in the Moluccas.s | Pocket Book Wkly. 8/4/50 (as
Frank Cornish), FU Apr'55 |
| 11. | On the Average.s | Forerunner 2 Apr'53, FU April
'56 |
| 12. | Operation in Free Flight.s) | AM. Mar'52 |
| | Operation in Free Orbit.s) | FU Feb'55 |
| 13. | Pass the Oxygen.s | PSF(Aust) # 5, FU Jun'55
Also in future NEW WORLDS |
| 14. | Place of the Throwing Stick.s | NW Mar'56 |
| 15. | Robot Carpenter, The.s | AustJ. Jul'56, FU Aug'56 |
| 16. | Space Doctor's Orders.s | AM Jan'53, FU Apr'55 |

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Connected Stories:

Vivienne Gale - blonde girl doctor on Satellite Space Stations:
12, 1, 16, 2

Telepathic daughter of Dr. Elizabeth Buckley:
7, 4, 8, 3.

Article.

What Has Science Fiction To Say - Meanjin, Melbourne; Win'54

Donald H. Tuck

POCKET

Book Reviews

ONE OF OUR H-BOMBS IS MISSING (Frederick H. Brennan)

A Gold Medal publication from McGills at 3/-

The story is placed on an US Air base in Alaska where a stock of H-bombs is kept. A report reaches Washington that one bomb has disappeared. For the sake of the honour of the Air Force, the theft is kept secret, and an investigator is sent to the base. (This aspect is ludicrously improbable !). The investigating colonel is a buddy of the Camp Commandant, and, of course, is determined to (a) find the bomb and (b) whitewash his friend.

Everyone on the station seems psychotic, due to the 'cold-war' niggling of the Russians, and the fact that casualties must be concealed because of the danger of causing a global war. Many of the staff are believers in the 'hit 'em first' theory and they are held to be responsible for the theft.

Finally, the Russians raid the base with guided missiles, (abortively, of course, the Russians have no technical skill to compare with the US !!) and a Lieutenant Colonel takes off with the bomb to retaliate. The ending is the weakest part of the book, spoiling a reasonable good suspense tale.

Readable, though too heavily laden with propaganda.

Bob McCubbin

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ALL THE ZOMBIES YOU SEE STAGGERING AROUND ARE THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE

THE LEADING SCIENCE FICTION JOURNAL

MAGAZINE

Reviews

Galaxy

BRE No. 43

SCIENCE FICTION

Virgil Finlay's cover is most amusing - but it can't be Finlay - no bubbles. In William Tenn's story, you can serve your sentence for ~~murder~~ - and obtain a 50% discount if you do our TIME IN ADVANCE. HONOURABLE OPPONENT by Clifford D Simak tells of the defeat of Earth's generals by a race who treat the war as a game.

Damon Knight reverses his usual trend in THIS WAY TO THE REGRESS. EARLY MODEL by Robert Sheckley has a protective device which works, too well for comfort. James Elish in GENIUS HEAP points out that confining genius can be almost as dangerous as confining U235. Both result in an explosion.

The CLAUSTROPHILE by Theodore Sturgeon is a smooth story of a man with a talent for thinking.

Tony Santos.

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Authentic

No. 73

They have finally made up their minds. The

cover is by Blandford, and is not bad. PROBLEM IN MURDER by H. L. Gold is hardly SF, except for some synthetic bodies. Poor.

HATAHUT SAID NO by J. T. McIntosh is either a reprint or a plot pinch, and is just fair. About a town that doesn't want to be evacuated. PRODUCTION JOB by Duncan Lamont - he finally became the consciousness of the computer. Fair.

NO WAY BACK by Margaret St. Clair has space pioneers finding a space bug they can't kill, so they suicide in the sun. So so. WE ARE ONE by John Kippax - the natives were too pleased with their efforts. Fair. OF THE FITTEST by Betsy Curtis - a new light on insanity. So so.

The two articles are better than most of the stories. The mag has not yet recovered from the slump it suffered just before the change in editors. Maybe it's financial.

Jack Keating.

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Astounding SCIENCE FICTION

BRE October 1956.

An interesting Emsh cover illustrates the lead story THE MISSIONARIES by Everett B. Cole. This is another of his 'Philosophical Corps' stories and as usual is well done.

John A Sentry follows up his 'Aspirin Won't Help' with PSIOD CHARLEY which proves that almost anything can be contagious. ACA DELLY FOR PIONEERS by Raymond F. Jones is well written, but the creaking of the plot is too clearly audible.

Varley Lang's THEREBY HANGS is an amusing tale of a tail. Isaac Asimov contributes an article - not on Thiometra line - THE ABNORMALITY OF BEING NORMAL.

Tony Santos.

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SCIENCE FICTION Monthly No. 15.

Cover is another PLANET reproduction. THE CONJURER OF VENUS by Conan Troy - our hero gets the secret of interstellar travel and the girl. So so. THE RHEXGOLD KILL by J. Bradley - space bum finds greed doesn't pay. Blimey!

AS IT WAS by Paul K. Payne - bring them back alive space style. So so. A PLANET NAMED JOE by S. A. Lombino - call out 'Hey, Joe, and the whole planet answered, and the culprit was named, yeah, that's right...!. So so.

OPERATION SWITCH by Arkaway and Heric. When the hunter became the hunted. Fair.

Graham Stone is still nostalgic for the good old days in SCIENCE FICTION SCENE.

What a horrible issue! Strictly juvenile.
Jack Keating.

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November 1956.

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This issue features the Duke of Edinburgh forecasting that he will attempt to modernise Royalty. I suggest, he's already commenced, and succeeded to some extent. Also in the issue are ghost wolves, dowsing, yoga and many types of psychic experiences. At McGills for 2/-.

Bob McCubbin

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NEW WORLDS
SCIENCE FICTION

No. 52

Cover by Terry is a continuation of the 'INTO SPACE' series and is quite a good job. Lead story is the first part of a three part serial, TOURIST PLANET by James White. Earth is the tourist planet named, to which people apparently come visiting from all up and down time. So far, not bad.

PRESS CONFERENCE by Richard Wilson - a little man who wasn't there. Fair. George Longdon has a new type of radio that looks two hours into the future in PERIOD OF ERROR. So so.

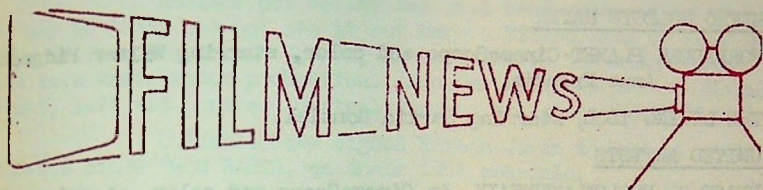
We have archaeology on Mars in Ken Bulmer's THE CITY CALLS. Poor. THREE DAY TIDAL by Francis G. Rayer shows what happens when you have 9 moons on an Earth type world. 300 foot tides. Blimey! Fair.

Editor Carnell writes his editorial from New York, where he attended the World Con, the next one of which is to be held in London - the first outside the States. Go to it, London.

Interiors by Quinn, Hutchings and Taylor are in the main, well done. Altogether, a fairly good issue.

Jack Keating.





We have pleasure in enumerating hereunder the forthcoming science fiction films for the next six months from the film distributors.

ALLIED ARTISTS

WORLD WITHOUT END, technicolor and CinemaScope, starring Nancy Gates and Hugh Marlowe.

INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS, superscope, starring Dana Wynter and Kevin McCarthy.

ASTRA FILMS

THE CREEPING UNKNOWN (Quatermass Experiment), starring Brian Donlevy and Jack Warner.

COLUMBIA FILMS

EARTH Vs FLYING SAUCERS starring Hugh Marlowe and Joan Taylor.

1984, starring Edmundo O'Brien, Michael Redgrave and Jan Sterling

THE GAMMA PEOPLE, starring Paul Douglas and Eva Bartok.

INDEPENDENT FILM DISTRIBUTORS

FOUR SIDED TRIANGLE starring Barbara Peyton and James Hayter.

(This I don't believe until I see it. It has been in the past two lists)

over the page for

METRO GOLDWYN MAYER

FORBIDDEN PLANET CinemaScope and color, starring Walter Pidgeon & Anne Francis.

THE LIVING IDOL, starring Sarita Montiel.

UNITED ARTISTS

BEAST OF HOLLOW MOUNTAIN, in CinemaScope and color, starring Guy Madison and Patricia Medina.

THE PHAROAH'S CURSE starring Mark Dana and Ziza Shapir.

UFO. A documentary on Flying Saucers.

UNIVERSAL INTERNATIONAL

THE DEADLY MANTIS starring Craig Stevens and Alix Talton.

THE MOLE PEOPLE starring John Agar and Cynthia Patrick.

THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN starring Grant Williams and Randy Stuart

WARNER BROTHERS

THE ANIMAL WORLD . Excellent Documentary

TOWARD THE UNKNOWN in CinemaScope and color, starring William Holden, Lloyd Nolan and Virginia Leith.
Fringe sf interest.

Missing from the list is SATELLITE IN THE SKY, a British made film for Warner Bros, but it may be that it was just omitted from the schedule. While it received bad reviews, the screenplay was shared by J. T. McIntosh, along with John Mather and Edith Dell.. Starring Lois Maxwell and Keiron Moore, it is a Harry Lee and Edward J. Danziger production. Trite dialogue and situation abound, and is ludicrous without intent.

THE LEADING SCIENCE FICTION JOURNAL

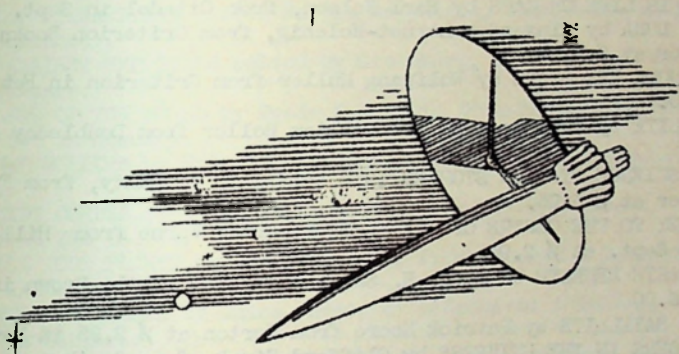
Another pot boiler has just been released in US, & we may be lucky and not see it out here. Titled MESA OF LOST WOMEN, it features Jackie Coogan, Richard Travis and Allan Nixon, and is a White-Houck production. Apparently ideas are hooked right, left and centre. Central figures are giant TARANTULAS!

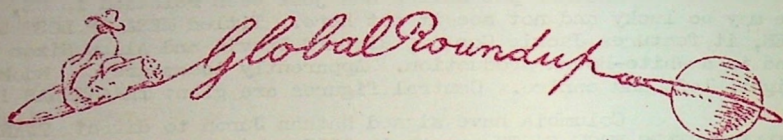
Columbia have signed Nathan Juran to direct TWENTY MILLION MILES FROM EARTH, on their 1957 schedule.

Along with their British made X THE UNKNOWN, starring Dean Jagger, RKO will issue THE CYCLOPS, starring James Craig, made by the one man film company, Bert I. Gordon.

Production of John Mantley's THE 27th DAY started at Columbia on September 10th, starring Gene Barry and Valerie French. directed by William Asher and Produced by Helen Ainsworth with the script by Mantley himself.

IJC
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Books out, or scheduled, from US publishers include the following:

TO LIVE FOREVER, by Jack Vance, from Ballantine at 35c and \$ 2.75, in September.

THE BIG BALL OF WAX by Shepard Mead, from Ballantine at 35c in Oct. SLAVE SHIP by Frederick Pohl, from Ballantine at 35c and \$ 2.75 in November.

STALEMATE by Lester del Rey from Ballantine at 35c and \$ 2.75, in December.

THERE IS LIFE ON MARS by Earl Nelson, from Citadel in Sept. at \$3. COUNT LUNA by Alexander Lernet-Holenig, from Criterion Books, in October at \$ 4.00

MAN AMONG THE STARS by Wolfgang Iuller from Criterion in Feb. at \$ 4.50.

SATELLITE by Erik Begaust and William Beller from Doubleday ay \$ 3 95c.

BEST SCIENCE FICTION STORIES 1956 edited T. E. Dikty, from Fell in October at \$ 3.95.

JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH by Jules Verne from Hill & Wang in Sept. at \$ 2.95.

THE EARTH BENEATH US by H. H. Swinnerton from Little Brown in Sep. at \$ 5.00

EARTH SATELLITE by Patrick Moore from Norton at \$ 2.95 in November STRANGERS IN THE UNIVERSE by Clifford Simak, from Scribners, a collection of shorts at \$ 3.50, in November

THE END OF THE WORLD, shorts edited by Donald Wollheim, from Ace,

at 25c, in October.

THE CIRCUS OF DR. LAO, shorts edited by Ray Bradbury, from Bantam in October at 35c.

THE PAWNS OF NULL A by A. E. Van Vogt, a new novel, from Ace, at 35c in November.

THE RULE OF THE PAGBEAST (The Fittest) by J. T. McIntosh, from Crest at 25c in Nov.

21st CENTURY SUB. (Dragon in the Sea) by Frank Herbert, from Avon in Dec. at 35c.

MARTIANS GO HOME by Frederic Brown, from Bantam at 35c in Dec.

AGE OF THE TAIL by H. Allen Smith, from Bantam at 25c in Dec.

ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION edited by J. WL Campbell, from Berkeley at 35c in Dec.

LOST: A MOON by Paul Capon, from Bobbs Merrill at \$ 2.75 in Sep.

TOMORROWS WORLD by Hunt Collins, from Bourgey & Curl, at \$ 2.50 in Sep.

THE MARTIAN WAY by Isaac Asimov, from Signet in Jan. at 35c.

SEEDLING STARS by James Blish, from Gnome at \$ 3.00 in Nov.

TOMORROW AND TOMORROW by Hunt Collins from Pyramid at 35c in Sep

COMING ATTRACTIONS edited Martin Greenberg, from Gnome at \$ 3.50 in September.

MEN AGAINST THE STARS edited by Greenberg, from Pyramid at 35c , in January.

SELLERS OF THE WORLD by Frederick Pohl, from Ballantine at \$ 2.00 and 35c in January.

PLANET HOPPERS by Eric Frank Russell, from Gnome in Dec. at \$ 3. 50c.

UNQUIET CORPSE (Edge of Running Water) by William Sloane, from Dell at 25c in Dec.

POLICE YOUR PLANET by Erik van Lhin, from Bourgey & Curl at \$ 2. 50c in November.

MYSTERIOUS ISLAND by Jules Verne, from Grossett & Dunlap, at \$1. 95c in October.

TIME FOR THE STARS by Robert Heinlein, from Scribners in October at \$ 2.75. Juvenile.

THE MOON PODL, by Abe Merritt, from Avon at 35c in Aug.

MEN, MARTIANS AND MACHINES by Eric Frank Russell, from Roy at \$ 3.00 in August.

THREE TO CONQUER by Eric Frank Russell, from Bourgey & Curl at \$ 2.50 in August.

SCIENCE FICTION OMNIBUS edited by Groff Conklin, from Berkeley, at 35c in August.

THE HUMAN ANGLE, shorts by William Tenn, from Ballantine at 35c & \$ 2.00 in August.

ONE AGAINST THE MOON edited by Donald Wollheim, from World at \$2.75 in September. Juvenile

New magazines out in the States include :
SUPER-SCIENCE FICTION, edited by W. W. Scott, published by Head - line Publications, 35c, bimonthly.

SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES, edited by Larry Shaw, 35c, bimonthly.

Hear tell that Ed Wood will unleash his own report on the recent NYCon in IMAGINATIVE TALES January issue. And it's entirely the opposite some recent reports would have us believe. It appears that the Con wasn't as successful as the reporters would have us think.

VENTURE science fiction magazine, from the F&SF crowd, has been issued, with Robert Mills as editor. Will be on a bimonthly schedule. Priced at 35c.

Sam Merwin Jnr, who started the new SATELLITE SCIENCE FICTION as editor, has left for Hollywood and a nice, juicy job as a scenario writer. New editor of SATELLITE is Frank Belknap Long, surely one of the oldest names in SF circles, yet it is his first editorial job !

A regular feature in future ETHERLINES will be AMERICAN SCENE, bylined by Caedmon V. Bradford. Watch for it. A sample will be found in the current issue, and we hope the readers from the States don't take umbrage !

IJC

American Scene

By Caddmon V. Bradford

For the first time in its history, the 1957 World Convention will be truly a 'world' convention, when the venue is moved to London. At last the thing is beginning to live up to its name. I say this gladly, since those who've sponsored American conventions (almost since these things started) have been from slightly to terribly negligent in their tasks. That's one reason why at least half of all the major American conventions have been bungled miserably.

The recent NYC world con was perhaps the worst bungle ever.

And the saddening part of it all is that SF and fandom per se were just about born wholly in the USA, although this doesn't necessarily always determine compatibility. Probably also one other reason for USA fandom being so backward, even though it has more potentialities than anywhere else, is maybe due to the fact that most of the time SFannish affairs have been controlled usually by one or two cliques.

And I don't think it's so terrible that only two or three groups have monopolised every major SF activity, as is so much the fact that once they got into power, they never exercised the minimum intelligence and logic to be expected of anyone having (for the moment anyway) the whole SF field's attention focused on them. That is to say, it's like giving tons of gold and prestige to people who only waste it all. So in turn, this reflects terribly upon the entire field as a whole; and aside of giving it a black eye, it only serves to weaken it all the more.

Therefore, that in itself is the reason why it's about time SF activities, minor as well as major, were in the hands of the fans in other parts of the world. Not that there's anything wrong with North American fandom. But as you know now, it has always been two or three cliques at the most who have tried to dominate activities much to the detriment of the entire field.

A perfect example is that those who were in control of the NYork convention had an excellent chance to get the Convention some advance television publicity, as well as having a part of the Con ON TV, but this didn't occur for a number of reasons that would take too much time to outline here. However, the whole enormity of such stupidity rests bitterly in the fact that it would have meant a nice pile of money that could have been turned over to the London committee to help them defray many expenses; or it could have been put into a sort of International Convention Pool which would aid various national Convention groups.

The only happy thought is that now London has it, the World Con may remain in other countries for a few years to come, so by the time it returns to US, the atmosphere will be a little more clearer, and a bit more mature, we hope.

Not so long ago, and even to some extent now (although much lesser), the hottest fight in US fan circles was owing to a matter of ethics mixed with two camps of fans (and even a number of pros!) taking pro- and anti-communist sides in order to make their points. This battle royal, of course, centered mostly among fans in the Eastern parts of the US, with only a few on-lookers and chortlers from 'fringe' areas. Undoubtedly the reason for so many so-called 'misunderstandings' and revolutionary emotions within an unfortunately high percentage of fans rests primarily on several inescapable facts:

1. Because it is so highly unconventional compared to other forms of printed matter, SF fantasy fiction has a tendency of attracting a lot more chaff than wheat among its readers; and there is a high percentage among such a following that have mild to grave degrees of mental instability (or psychotics, or at the

very least, psychotic prone). That's just for those who read SF.

2. The percentage of psychotic prone to full scale psycho's now jumps up damnably high once you get among the type that desire to become an 'active fan'

3. Such mental instability coupled together with the fact that the majority of fans are juveniles, naturally accents any social and personality abnormalities to a much higher degree. But all mental aberrations etc. aside, the fact that SFandom has nearly an overwhelming juvenile influence (sometimes some adults themselves being perennial infants) keeps the whole field highly immature in too many respects.

This, to which I'm referring, is called 'cultism', hero worshiping, etc., found mostly prevalent in cinema stars, baseball/football athletes and other like that. So highly prized is it, however, among 'name fans and pros' that they try retaining their little spot on the pedestal even to the extent of often saying '1 plus 1 is 3; white is black; I saw a parade of a thousand albino and pink elephants, with a dozen chimpanzees marching behind and rewriting Shaw's plays'....

And that's why the most disappointing perhaps worst, SF convention ever to take place, was praised to the skies by some people.

Caedmon V. Bradford.





ARTHUR C. CLARKE, a personable young Englishman, is one of the foremost science fiction authors of today, with 2 technical books plus six or so fiction titles to his credit to date.

At present on a lecture tour in US, he was in Australia for nearly a year in 1954/55 compiling data and films for his recently published COAST OF CORRAL. We trust he will honor us with his presence sometime in the future, for a longer period.

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FORREST J. ACKERMAN, an 'Angelino', as he would put it, lives in Los Angeles with a charming wife and a hot typewriter, surrounded by a vast quantity of science fiction items.

Possibly the best known name in SF circles outside of authors today, 4sj is perhaps the widest syndicated columnist in the world -- even including the New York pundits. Anyway I'm sure he's in many more nations.

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Our reviewers, Bob McCubbin, Jack Keating and Tony Santos are old stalwarts of ETHERLINE and AFPA, and we can not thank them enough for the support given us over the past years.

Bob, I'm sure, is well known to almost everyone here in Australia, but for the information of the overseas readers, He's about fifty, married with 2 children, and one of the busiest men I know. Tony Santos is married, with two charming young daughters while Jack Keating is fancy free, and hopes to stay that way.



DONALD H. TUCK, the most famous Taswegian SF-wise, that we know is the compiler of the redoubted HANDBOOK OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY

As Don himself once remarked, 'it's no use asking me to write stories, but I'll do anything along the lines of the CHECKLIST'

I'm sure you will agree that he has done wonders, first with his CHECKLIST, plus the AUTHOR STORY LISTING, plus the many projects mulling around in his mind, which you may see in ETHERLINE before long.

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ROBERT BLOCH, the author of WORST FOOT FORWARD, is one of the notable authors of US fantasy fiction. Since the demise of the better fantasy magazines, we don't see as much of Bob's work as we would like to, but I think it only shows that he is determined not to spew out trash just for the sake of it.

At present, Bob is holding down the fan reviewing department of IMAGINATION, a job he is doing very well (Thanks for the fine review, Bob !) indeed.

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CAEDMON V. BRADFORD is an unknown quantity, as far as I'm concerned. I think it may be a pseudonym, but for who, I don't know. Maybe another Kuttner android. Anyway, he does a very good job on the vitriol.

IJC

EDITOR: Ian J. Crozier
PRODUCTION: Mervyn F. Binns
ART EDITOR: Keith McLelland
REVIEWS: Jack Keating
Bob McCubbin
Tony Santos

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SCIENCE FICTION by Arthur C. Clarke.
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WORST FOOT FORWARD by Robert Bloch
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holder

All other material, copyright 1956 by AFPA.

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ILLUSTRATIONS:

Cover: Mervyn Binns

Interiors : Keith McLelland, Dick Jenssen

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The next issue of ETHERLINE will be issued before
Christmas, being the CONVENTION REPORT NUMBER.

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Ian J. Crozier.

McGill's Authorised Newsagency

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 BOOKSELLERS, STATIONERS, ADVERTISERS and
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McGills have always had a large range of Science Fiction and Fantasy books and magazines. Today we have a wider range and of a higher standard than ever before. Please call and inspect our stocks while in Melbourne for the Convention.

Meanwhile here is a list of the latest Books, Pocket Books and Magazines available.

FICTION:

a	Ahead of Time	Henry Kuther	6/3
	Another Tree in Eden	David Duncan	15/6
a	Alien Landscapes	Jonathan Burke	10/9
j	Atom Chasers	Angus MacVicar	11/3
a	Best SF No 2	Edmund Crispin	18/9
a	Beyond the Barriers of Space and Time	Judith Merrill	15/6
	Body Snatchers	Jack Finney	13/3
a	Born of Man and Woman	Richard Matheson	13/3
	Bring the Jubilee	Ward Moore	13/3
	Brain Wave	Poul Anderson	15/6n
	Caves of Steel	Isaac Asimov	11/6
	City and the Stars	Arthur C. Clarke	17/-
*j	Clouds Rings and Crocodiles	H.P. Wilkins	9/6
	Crossroads to Nowhere	Raymond Stark	13/3
	Dawn in Andromeda	E.C. Large	17/-
*	Day of Misjudgement	B. McLaren	-
	Death of Grass	John Christopher	13/3
a	Deep Space	E.F. Russell	15/6
j	Dome of Mars	Patrick Moore	11/3
	Double in Space	Fletcher Pratt	11/6
	Galaxy SF Omnibus	H.L. Gold	17/-

a-anthology j-juvenile *-not yet published

	Heros Walk	Robert Crane	13/3
a	Jules Verne(-lections and Comments)	I.O.Evans	15/6
	Lost Darkness Fall	L.Sprague de Camp	15/6
	Lords of the Ring	J.R.R.Tolkien	
	Vols I II III @		34/9ea
a	Mindworm	C.M.Kornbluth	15/6
	Ninya	Henry A.Fagan	17/-
	No Refuge	John Boland	15/6
*	Of All Possible Worlds	William Tenn	-
	One in Three Hundred	J.T.McIntosh	13/3
*a	Operation Outer Space	Murray Leinster	-
a	The Other Side of the Moon	August Derleth	13/3
a	The October Country	Ray Bradbury	18/9
	Pursuit Through Time	Jonathan Burke	13/3
j	Quest of the Spaceways	Patrick Moore	9/6
	Red Planet Mars	Charles Chilton	13/3
	Satellite in Space	A.M.Low	13/3
*	Science & Fiction (About SF)	Pat.Moore	-
a	Seeds of Time	John Wyndham	15/6
	Seeds of Life	John Taine	12/-
	Sky Block	Steve Frazee	12/-
*a	Sometime, Never	Wyndham, Golding & Peake	-
a	Stories for Tomorrow	William Sloane	22/6
	Sword of Rhiannon	Leigh Brackett	12/-
a	Star S F	Fred Pohl	11/6
	They Shall Have Stars	James Blish	15/6
	Tiger! Tiger!	Alfred Bester	15/6
a	Time Transfer	Arthur Sellings	15/6
	The Trembling Tower	Claude Yelnick	13/3
	Twenty Seventh Day	John Mantley	15/6
j	Trouble on Titan	Allan E.Nurse	13/3
	Up Jenkins	Robert Hingley	15/6
	Weapon Makers	A.E.van Vogt	6/3
	World of Chance	P.K.Dick	13/3
	A World of Difference	Robert Conquest	13/3
	Wrath of Grapes	Leonard Wibberly	12/-

FACTUAL BOOKS

Flight into Space	J.N. Leonard	12/6
	P.B. ed	3/-
* Exploration of Mars	Willy Ley,	
Wernher von Braun and Chesley Bonestell	approx.	40/-
Frontier to Space	E. Burges	34/9
Into Space	P.E. Cleator	25/-
V 2 Major Gen. Walter Dornberger		20/-
The Viking Rocket Story	Milton W. Rosen	34/9
Rockets and Guided Missiles	J. Humphries	49/9
Guide to the Planets	Patrick Moore	31/6
Guide to the Moon	Patrick Moore	24/-
The Moon	Wilkins & Moore	90/9
Frontiers of Astronomy	Fred Hoyle	31/-
Secrets of Space Flight	L. Mallan	8/6
Mysteries of Other Worlds Revealed		8/6
Complete Book of Outer Space	HC	8/6
Exploration of Space	A.C. Clarke PB	4/9
The True Book of Space Travel	H.L. Goodwin PB	4/9
Scientific Wonders of the Atomic Age		
	J.W.R. Taylor	18/9
A Treasury of Science	Harlow Sharples	25/-
An Experiment With Time	J.W. Dunne	17/6
Worlds in Collision	Immanuel Velikovsky	25/-
Earth in Upheaval	..	26/-
Ages in Chaos	..	26/-
* Other Worlds in Space	T. Maloney	13/3
* Men Rockets and Space	Lloyd Mallan	-
The World We Live In		56/6
(From the LIFE series.		
Illustrated by Chesley Bonestell)		

FLYING SAUCERS:

Inside the Space Ships	George Adamski	24/-
Flying Saucers & Common Sense	W. Girvan	13/3
Report on U.F.O.s	E.J. Ruppelt	25/-
Behind the Flying Saucers	Frank Scully	18/9
Flying Saucers From Outer Space	D. Keyhoe	3/9

POCKET BOOKS:

Earth Abides	G.R.Stewart	5/-
Forbidden Planet	J.W.Stuart	3/-
* I Am Legend	Richard Matheson	3/-
Golden Apples of the Sun	Ray Bradbury	3/-
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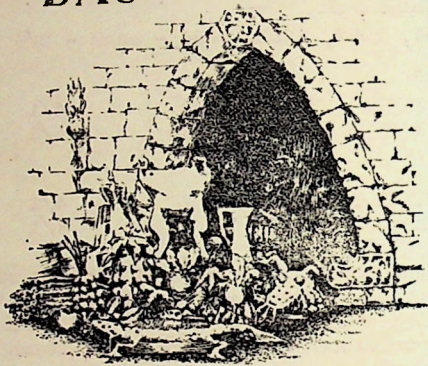
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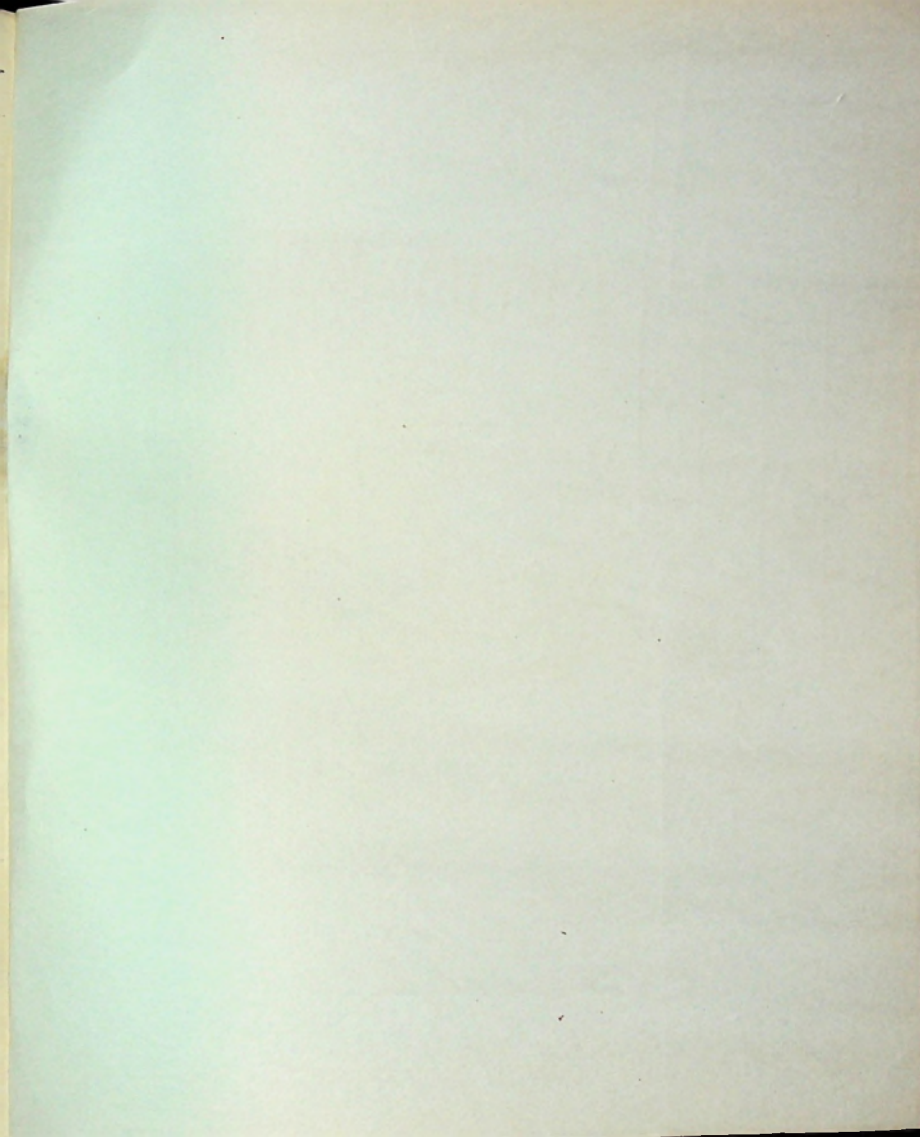
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