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COMMENTS FROM 33 (OR LESS) IN THE SHADE

My Thank to those who sent me their FAPA, Shadow, or Gen zines in "exchange" for MOONSHADE. Somebody's getting gyped here, and I know it isn't me...

To Nicky Metcalf & Bill Evans: I could take the position that the old Wild West and Nick Carter type "dime novel" items were pulps, and that therefore segregated pulps did come first, followed by "genzins" pulps, followed by a "revival" of the specialized type pulpzine. But, to me, the term "pulp" has always meant the pulpiness of the 30's & 40's. GHOST STORY, WILD WEST WEEKLY, WESTERN STORY, and DOC SAVAGE are the first pulpzine I remember reading. I borrowed the first three from friends or relatives, but purchased DOC with my own saved-up pennies. I owe a lot to DOC--besides the fun and thrills of reading about his adventures--as regular trips to the newsstand to get the latest issue of DS resulted in my discovery of AMAZING in 1939. Soon I learned there was a magazine field devoted to fiction by writers who were following in the footsteps of three of my Favorite Authors: Wells, Verne, and Swift. And, gosh-wow, fellow-stfans all over the place...

To Harry Warner: My article was necessarily restricted to my own reading in the s-f magazine field, and to what I've heard from older s-f readers. My mention of "a story written in the thirties" wasn't a reference to a specific story, though I've heard fans older than me speak of stories wherein the "predictions" were 'way off, one way or the other.

I could obtain permission to do some research in Ferry's Collection of old sfmagz, but I'll take your word for it--which seems to be that the s-f writers of the 20's & 30's were more accurate prophets than the majority of same in the 40's & 50's. I don't know, but I suspect that Mr. Stine's findings were based on s-f published within the last 20 years. Not being a collector (we give our eyetracked mags to the Downey City Library) I don't have that issue of ANALOG around to re-check. James Blish, in the Jan 62 WARHOON, implies that Stine did make reference to the 20's. Blish also says, "it would seem that Mr. Stine hasn't read much s-f." I don't know how much is enough, but I've been reading the stuff in magazine form for nigh onto 23 years, and though I've found some writers to be generally prophetic, very few have been accurately prophetic.

Not that it really matters when the writer is telling a good, entertaining story, but when the story is weakened by poorly-researched extrapolations it can matter quite a bit. It would seem that Blish includes Stine's article in the latter category, especially regarding the "life expectancy curve". Perhaps Stine's tongue was in his cheek when he said that it was possible that anyone born after 2000 A.D. would live forever (barring accidents)--as was mine when I wrote the last paragraph of my article. But then he could be as dead-serious as Blish takes him to be. At any rate, I'll let those two gents fight it out on that curve if it takes all winter.... At the moment it looks as though Blish has more ammo on his side, as far as the life expectancy bit is concerned. But, again, the basis of Stine's idea is "the more we learn the faster we go"--or "grow". So, maybe by 1999 the secret of eternal life will be discovered & applied to all mankind, & all the charts, graphs, & insurance company predictions about the "average age" for death of men & women, will be so much wasted paper. If so, I hope mankind has also discovered a birth-control gimmick that's acceptable to all & sundry--or has developed the desire, as well as the means, to go out by the millions to populate a goodly number of planets other than this one.... It's pretty crowded around here now, without having eternal life to worry about!

--Len Moffatt (February 3, 1962)

ETHEL LINDSAY FOR TAFF! ELF TAFF ELF TAFF ELF TAFF ELF TAFF ELF TAFF ELF TAFF ELF TAFF

FROM: Len Moffatt
10262 Belcher
Downey, California
U. S. A.



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