

# Science-Fiction Times

"THE WORLD OF TOMORROW TODAY!"

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## "SCIENCE FICTION STORIES" SKIPS ISSUES

by James V. Taurasi

NEW YORK, 26 December, (CNS) - Science Fiction Stories that went 10 times a year from Monthly last Fall skipping the October and December 1958 issues, and which was suppose to go monthly with the February 1959 issue just didn't. Actually it maintained its ten a year program hoping that by the time the October 1959 issue came around things would be improved such as to remain monthly. Apparently things are much worse now than at the end of 1958. Because, Lowndes has brought up the two months (Oct. and Dec. '59) and has made them April and June 1959. Thus for actual purposes the magazine is a bi-monthly, but still keeping its 10 times a year status. What will happen when the July issue comes around is anyone's guess. Rumor has it that if conditions are not improved the mag will remain a bi-monthly. Adding fuel to the rumor is the fact that Lowndes has dropped colored covers and substituted black and white, plus yellow, line drawings. His editorial on lurid covers is a neat cover-up that will fool few readers. In the old days it was not the fact that the covers were in color that they objected to, but the way the colors were used. Of course there are many who love the so called "lurid" covers. Rumor has it that with Science Fiction Stories "skipping" issues and dropping the colored covers means only one thing; Science Fiction Stories is in trouble and that there'll probably never be any monthly issues.

## SOLACON MAKES MONEY

SOUTH GATE, 31 October; (CNS) - For the first time in three years a World S-F Convention has made money. The 1956 Con "made money" by passing the hat and other means, the 1957 Con lost \$250.00. In a report by Treasurer Rick Sneary in the last "Progress Report" of the Solacon, the Final Financial Statement reads as follows: REVENUES: Membership dues: \$601.00, Registration Fees: \$370.00, Auctions: \$471.31, Advertising: \$358.85, Donations: \$75.26, Display Space Rental: \$53.25, Banquet Ticket Sales: \$756.25, making a total of \$2,685.92. EXPENSES: Publicity Expenses: Advertisements \$7.80, Materials \$5.90, and Printing \$3.00 for a total of \$16.70; Convention Expenses: Rent \$207.48, Decorating \$41.89, Program \$75.35, Transportation \$32.25, Entertainment\* \$117.41, Printing \$328.88, Postage \$23.11, Trophies & Awards\*\* \$421.99, Banquet \$746.75, Losses\*\*\* \$15.85, Misc. \$7.25 for a total of \$2,018.25; General Expenses: Transportation \$74.70, Postage \$188.98, Supplies \$57.56, Entertainment\*\*\*\* \$27.38, Printing \$225.15, Legal Fees \$16.50, Telephone \$25.39, Bad Debts\*\*\*\*\* \$32.00, and misc. \$3.31 for a total of \$650.97. This makes the Grand Total of Expenses: \$2,685.92. Mr. Sneary explains some of the expenses as follows: \* & \*\*\*\*Covers drinks and meals for VIP's and persons appearing on the program, as well as the Committee's Open House; \*\*Includes the \$95.73 from Auction Bloch to Ron Bennett on behalf of TAFF, \$90.50 plus \$15.85 worth of beach-

ies to Detroit for the next convention, and \$60.00 to the Nameless Ones for the next Westercon; \*\*\*misc. funds and items that became lost during the convention; and \*\*\*\*Balance of Accounts Receivable written off as bad debts to allow closing of the books. To sum up the report Mr. Sneary states: "As a non-profit organization we could not make a profit but, after the Convention there was enough money on hand to pay all the bills--even those personal expenditures for the Convention that one never expects to get back--and still have money to the next World Convention, TAFF, and the next Westercon, and hold an Open House."

The Solacon has been the first convention to file a "final statement" within months after the holding of the Convention for quite a few years. Both the 1956 and 1957 Cons didn't give a final statement until almost a year after. Also commendable is the quarterly statements the Solacon gave out before the Con was held.

## SCIENCE - FICTION BOOK REVIEWS

by Gerry de la Ree

THE MAN WHO COULDN'T SLEEP, by Charles Eric Maine. Lippincott, 1958, 224 pp., #3.

This is the third fine novel by this British author to be published in the United States in the last 10 months or so. The others were High Vacuum (Ballantine) and World Without Men (Ace).

Mr. Maine would appear to be a far more capable science-fiction craftsman than some of his earlier works tended to indicate. Jim Blish, for instance, had this to say of Mr. Maine when reviewing his Timeliner for Science-Fiction Times in July, 1956: "The writer, an Englishman, apparently is neither talented nor very intelligent."

Despite its rather misleading title, The Man Who Couldn't Sleep rates in our book as one of the more entertaining science-fiction volumes of the year. And bright spots in the midst of the large volume of crud and juveniles being foisted off on the science-fiction audience are indeed most welcome.

Mr. Maine's book originally appeared in England in 1956 under the more appropriate title of Escapement.

In the year 1962 an inventor, Philip Maxwell, discovers psychotape, which can reproduce the emotions of whoever makes the original recording. Maxwell, a rather naive chap, becomes involved with some odd characters, including Zakon, a Hollywood cinemogul who sees great commercial value in the invention; Miss Sharn, cold, calculating, and sexy; Matthew, her henchman; Verna Graham, Hollywood glamour girl; and Laura, a girl he hopes to marry.

Mr. Maine blends them all together effectively and winds up with a yarn that has ample helpings of science-fiction, sex, violence, and mystery.

## THE SCIENCE FICTION BOOK CLUB - - - - - The Next Selections

The March 1959 selection for The Science Fiction Book Club members will be "The Best From Fantasy And Science Fiction" (Eighth Series), edited by Anthony Boucher; Regular edition sells for \$3.75, Club edition \$1.00 to members.

For April the Science Fiction Book Club will present "The Star Of Life" by Edmond Hamilton; Regular edition sells for \$2.95, club members get it for \$1.00.

The alternate selection for the two months is "A Treasury Of Great Mysteries" edited by Howard Haycraft and John Beecroft. (This is not a science-fiction book, but a 'detective-mystery' book.) Regular edition sells for \$5.95, club members get it for \$1.98. This is a two-volume edition.

## THE TIME STREAM - - - - - by J. Harry Vincent

## THE SOLACON

The Solacon sell-out of the World Science Fiction Society, Inc., is still rankling

in many a fannish heart, and publication of the financial report of the 1958 con (see page 1) is liable to bring the question out of the rankling stage and into the field of action.

What's really bothering these people, in a legal way, is the fact that the Solacon people collected all their money, and incidentally auction material, etc., under the auspices of the WSFS, Inc., through the U. S. Mail, and then turned over the surplus, however small it is, to other outfits.

Is this "obtaining money under false pretenses"? Does this constitute "using the U. S. Mails to defraud"?

Some fans think so.

I don't pretend to fathom the legality of what happened at the Solacon, but in my opinion the ethics involved were pretty revolting.

And I never could understand why a science-fiction fan should be considered by his fellow fans any less responsible for money he handles --- other people's money - than a "mundane" person. If it happened to be the desire of fandom to disband the WSFS, Inc., why shouldn't it be done in a legal, business-like manner, instead of "by decree of the dictator". And who says that the assets of the WSFS, Inc., can be divvied up and passed out to persons not legally entitled to receive same?

I wonder what Anna Sinclair Moffatt would think if all the members of the WSFS, Inc. started asking for their 1958 dues back? Or if some day a brace of Postal Inspectors should call and begin asking embarrassing questions?

#### CHRISTMAS COVERS

We like the way the British editors of Astounding take care of their edition. They used the January 1958 cover of the U.S. edition for their December 1958 issue. Meanwhile, back at home, we certainly appreciated the January 1959 (Christmas cover) of the U. S. edition. Real cute.

We missed that lovable four-armed Santa usually on Galaxy's cover at around Christmas time. Bring him back, Horace.

#### IN GENERAL

There will be no Book Review column in the March issue of Fantasy & Science Fiction. The column didn't turn up in time to make the issue. Fantasy & Science Fiction will have an All-Star Anniversary issue in October 1959. It will be priced at 50¢ and have extra pages. How many extra pages is not certain at this time.

Astounding does not plan to increase its price or decrease pages at this time. Naturally with other s-f mags increasing their prices, discussion on this, are being held. The possibility of bringing back slick paper for a special section of the magazine is being talked over. Mr. Campbell stated that his mag, Astounding did not lose circulation in the recent and present recession of s-f mags.

Amazing also does not plan to increase price nor decrease pages at this time. While the same goes for Fantastic, there will be a change in contents. While s-f will be retained, the weird and fantasy will be featured. Amazing will remain at 144 pages and Fantastic at 128.

You may be wondering at the underlining that Amazing will remain at 144 pages in a recent issue. What you didn't know is that behind the scenes was an idea that when complete novels were not used in an issue, that issue would be cut to 128 pages. Wisely this idea never got off the drawing boards. Regardless of type of contents, Amazing remains at 144.

Fantastic Universe also, for the time being, will remain at 35¢ and the same number of pages. FU is still on a bi-monthly schedule.

#### GERNSBACK AND HIS CHRISTMAS CARD

Gernsback, as usual, brought out his special "Christmas Card" booklet. Called 1959 Forecast, it's a 30 page, digest-size, slick papered booklet containing as usual, high quality science-fiction type articles. This issue contains "Television Space

Observatory", "Stored T.V. Reception", "Illuminated Satellite", "Your Electric Life", "Space Sickness", "Coming Developments", and editorial. All written by Hugo Gernsback and illustrated by the famous Frank R. Paul. Gernsback shows once again his fine understanding of what s-f should be. Mr. Gernsback, by the way, celebrated his 70th anniversary of publishing with his April 1953 issue of Radio-Electronics. A delayed congratulatory, Mr. Gernsback.

## NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

by The Editors

First our thanks to the numerous Christmas Cards received. They came from all over the World this year and we appreciate every one of them. They are all hanging on the Science-Fiction Times Christmas Tree at the College Point editorial office. Second you'll note NO MORE continued on page so-and-so in Science-Fiction Times. Next step to get rid of this yellow paper and mimeo on 20lb white/colored paper. Third we're still working on the Yearbook, and have added additional features to it. We'll let you know when it's finished. Meanwhile, no orders please, we have more than we counted on already in.

## SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES

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