

SUN SPOTS

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY SPRING, 1945

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Sun Spots is published and edited by Gerry de la Ree, 9 Bogert Place, Westwood, N. J. It will appear from time to time and is free to all who choose to write a few lines of comment on this issue. We accept exchanges with other fanzines. No advertisements. This is the Spring, 1945 issues; Volume 6, Number 5, Whole number 25.

FROM SCRATCH
An Editorial

If ever a fanzine started from scratch it was Sun Spots. Some may say we are still at scratch, but they would be the ones who never saw the "old" Sun Spots.

The first issue of Sun Spots was published in February, 1940. It was one page, typewritten, and designated as the official organ of the Solaroid Club. Under the combined editorship of Roddy Gaetz, Roy Plotkin, and Gerry de la Ree the second issue also appeared in a typewritten format, with carbon copies making its circulation about 10 or 12. Real collector's items, no doubt.

With the third issue we procured the use of a school hectograph, which proved the medium whereby the next few issues saw the light of day. This actually marked the beginning of the fanzine Sun Spots, for previously it had just been a club newspaper. Came June and school closed, leaving us devoid of any method of reproduction. We thought of printing, but found the costs too high. As an alternative we turned to mimeographing, but found the professional jobs too expensive. Instead, we pooled our resources and purchased a Sears-Roebuck mimeo, which set us back \$14.

The rest is history. We kept increasing in size, and slowly--very slowly--decreasing in mistakes. Finally Plotkin left us, and soon after we sold the mimeograph to Charles Beling. The late Summer of 1941 found Gaetz and de la Ree with the urge to publish again, so this time we did turn to printing. Five bi-monthly issues saw print before Gaetz moved from Westwood. Sun Spots remained in a state of suspended animation from May, 1942 until August of 1944, when de la Ree again brought the magazine back from its grave.

So here we are, celebrating five years. They have been five years we have enjoyed. Sun Spots has received more than its share of criticism--not that we didn't deserve it, however. If its errors you want Sun Spots has 'em -- but we have improved some.

The magazine is still being published on that same Sears-Roebuck machine, purchased from Beling after his induction into the air corps. This machine has published all the mimeoed issues of Sun Spots, Fan-Atic, Beowulf, and two issues of Hamel's Stellar. And during that five year period never once has the ink pad been changed, nor have any repairs been necessary. No other mimeograph machine can make this statement.

Guess we have been luck, for the 'zine is still readable. We hope our luck lasts another year!

THE TRASH BASKET

By and About
N. E. Body

FLASHES:

It has been reported to us that L. Sprague de Camp and L. Ron Hubbard--possibly other well known sf authors now in service -- are doing secret research work for the government somewhere in Pennsylvania...The subject of their research is believed to be jet or rocket propulsion.

Corp. Charles Beling, former associate editor of this magazine and editor of "Fan-Atic", recently received his aerial gunner wings in Texas and is now slated for overseas duty...J. Irving Crump, author of the famous "Og" caveman stories and editor of a well known boys magazine lives in Oradell, N.J., which is two miles from Westwood.

Roger Vreeland, whose stories appear in "Weird Tales" from time to time, works for the same Bergen County newspaper as Gerry de la Ree...T/3 Jerry Keeley, U.S. fan serving in Australia, recently married an Australian girl...Jerry reports that there is nothing new in science fiction on the newsstands down there except occasional 6D paper novels.

Pvt. Roderick Gaetz, former co-editor of "Sun Spots", is now taking a government sponsored engineering course at Stanford University, California... Our other co-editor, Roy Plotkin, is now in Medical School in Buffalo, N. Y...Hannes Bok has been so besieged by visitors that he threatens to see would-be sight-seers by appointment only.

The new Vanguard Amateur Press Association (Futurian controlled version of F.A.P.A.) is picking up members by invitation only...Failure to push through their amendments in FAPA evidently prompted the Futurians to start this organization...A complete list of VAPA's membership should prove interesting in more ways than one...The cover on Avon's edition of Merritt's "Face in the Abyss" is more striking than most pocketbook illustrations.

"The Trash Basket" is the only department to have appeared in every issue of "Sun Spots." Through this column have been released a number of news "scoops" in the past five years...It may be of interest to some fans to know that the following issues of "Sun Spots" are available at 15¢ a copy: December, 1941 (Vol. 6, No. 1); February, 1942 (Vol. 6, No. 2); and April-May, 1942 (Vol. 6, No. 3). All three issues were printed numbers. None of the mimeographed "Sun Spots" are available, so please refrain from requesting copies....

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WHAT BEING A MATURE FAN MEANS...

By Lionel Imman

The state of being a mature fan has numerous "advantages"; not the least of which is the superiority complex he has cultivated and developed over the years. He holds himself in extremely high esteem, in contrast to his younger associates. But first let us look into the nature of this newly matured citizen of fankind.

Around 19 or 20 is usually the age at which this new metamorphosis commences. He begins to become aware of his mental superiority over the 14-year-olds immediately, and wonders why he has never noticed it before. More than likely he publishes a fanzine of several year's standing of "unequaled excellence." His fanzine is lacking in several respects, among them duplication, but to him it is as perfect as a fan of only moderate means can publish. In his mind its degree of perfection leaves all others far in the rear.

Quite often he receives letters from new converts to the sacred "cause of fandom" (I sometimes wonder what cause) who are subscribing to a fanzine for the first time. More often than not they are around 13 and write in a meaningless scrawl that even a code expert couldn't decipher. A fair sample of the letters would run something like this:

Dere Sir:

I read in the last issue of "Starling Storys" where you run a magzine that you call "Cosmic Corner Commentator". Enclosed please find thirteen cents (13¢) in coin and stamps for which pleze send me a copy of your mag. I have never bought a fanzine before, so am anxious to see what one looks like. I hope it has 300 pages like "Star Studded Storys" has, and hope you use Bok and Finlay for art and Edgar Rice Burroughs for storys. I like his Tarzan storys, though sometimes I find them to fantastic. Let me hear from you reel soon.

G. McTarvish McGurk

PS:-I like to collect magzines, so could you send me a list of the storys that have appeared in all the magzines since they began?

The mature fans who are the recipients of such letters can be divided into three classes. 1. The fan who answers the letter in a patronizing tone, explaining kindly that the number of stories published runs into the thousands, and refers him to an index published for that purpose. He answers this mainly to enlarge the number of fans who are likely to vote for him in a future poll or election. 2. Then there is the extreme egotist who answers with a withering blast, asking who the hell does he think he is, asking for something like that. This type offers sarcastically to undertake the job, for say, ten dollars. In his anger he fails to mention the indexes. 3. Finally, there is the fan, who through

either rush of business, forgetfulness, or indifference, fails to answer at all.

To say which of these answers have the best influence on fans just entering the field is easy, but to decide which is the worst is a harder task. Around the nucleus of the patronizing fan, the fledgling fans become acquainted with fanzines and fellow fans. The fusillade of the Type Two fan reacts in different ways on various individuals. In some it instills a hatred of fandom and especially for fanzine editors, whom they now consider to be a newly discovered type of grouch. Some refuse to have anything to do with fandom. The hardier one blithely ignore their first unpleasant experience and write to others, whereupon they discover that fan personalities run on about the same plane as their non-fan acquaintances.

The lack of response from the Type Three fan may also effect the new fans in different ways. It may cause a suspicion that their parents or relatives are intercepting their correspondence and cause family disorder. The other possible effects I have not yet catalogued.

In closing let me entreat all newly matured fans to consider your past career in fandom, and conduct your relations as you would have wished to be treated yourself. "Do unto fans as you would have had them to unto you." Sort of a Golden Rule policy.

the end

Another Casulty.....By J. Edward Davis

Futility. War is futile. That is what they say in peacetime -- that no one wins a war, many suffer and few gain. Bloodshed, death, heartbreak and sorrow all walk hand in hand with Mars, the infamous God of War. But I am bewildered, for when the war is finally come -- when the cannons roar and the blood is spilt -- then they say that war is not futile, that we must win.

If you should ask -- win what? -- then you are a traitor. They say your task is to follow. Time enough to say that war is futile when peace again is with us.

Futility. Indeed, then, is life itself not futile?

The following story was written in March, 1941, and was originally scheduled to appear in Lew Martin's fan-magazine, Alchemist, which ceased publication before this item saw print.

LA TOMBE

By

J. Edward Davis

"Halt! Who goes there?" challenged the lone sentry. A dark figure, nearly invisible in the misty Parisian night, stopped short. He held out an arm clad in a light brown trench coat, clutching in his hand a slip of paper. The Nazi guard lowered his gun, and taking the paper stepped out of the enveloping darkness into the dull glow of a nearby street lamp. He silently read the contents of the slip and returned to where the vague figure of the stranger could be seen.

"You may enter," he acknowledged. "This pass is in order. Excuse the delay." The sentry opened the gate, which was tarnished with aged grandure, stepped aside, allowing the other to enter. The brusque stranger brushed past the guard without opening his mouth.

A moment later he stepped into the beautiful white marble interior of the building. A dull, eerie glow seemed to pervade over the palatial artistry which adorned the walls. No direct light could be seen--it was just there. He was standing on a circular balcony, hands resting on a marble railing, looking down -- down on a crypt some twenty feet deep and twice as wide.

There, on a pavement of mosaic in the form of a huge star could be seen names -- names such as Rivoli, Austerlitz, Merengo, Wagram. Rising like the peak of some majestic terrestrial mountain was a grand sarcophagus of porphyry, a single block of stone, magnificent in its vastness. The figure above seemed moved. This was no ordinary building -- this was a tomb. This was the tomb of Napoleon Bonaparte!

The silence that reigned over the vast domed building was ominous, especially in the weird blue light, which seemed to form a celestial halo about the crypt itself. The whole picture was unearthly and supernatural.

Suddenly the silence was broken by the faint, muffled tones of a human voice. Or was it human? It seemed to fit the picture perfectly--it was supernatural.

The figure above seemed startled, and nervously looked about the tomb, which certainly appeared barren of life, with the exception of himself.

"Someone in the street," he thought, turning back to the beautiful sight below. "You failed in your attempt," muttered the stranger, waving his arm in an all-enveloping gesture. "Your reward was banishment, exile, death."

"Yes!" boomed a voice, echoing from nowhere. The stranger's bloodshot eyes opened wide and his lower lip sagged in astonishment, for that voice had not come from outside. There was someone, something here aside from himself.

"Who -- who are you?" stammered the trembling figure on the balcony. For what seemed endless minutes he stood there -- waiting, waiting -- no answer. "My imagination is playing tricks on me," he decided in a security which even he knew was false. Wiping the perspiration from his forehead with the sleeve of his neat trenchcoat, the man turned to leave.

"Wait," came the voice again -- this time with more vigor. "I wish to talk with you." The stranger's knees began to buckle, but he gathered enough courage to whisper:

"Who -- what are you?"

"Who am I? You just said I failed," continued the mirthless voice. "Yes, you said I failed, and as I did so will you. It is impossible for you to win. In the end there will be no victory, only more dead, more hatred, and more wars. How can conquest succeed when people yearn for freedom, not slavery? Infamous shall be your name on the pages of history if you persist in your costly folly.

"I too was a fool, thinking I could conquer the world. How empty it all seems now. I had excluded one word from my vocabulary. One word -- defeat! Do you hear that word, Monsieur? Hear it now for you'll taste it soon!"

"Never!" stormed the one above, having regained all his lost courage. Never will Nazi Germany be defeated. No voice can frighten me. Here this, phantom, defeat is only for the weak, victory for the strong. Nazi Germany shall triumph!"

"I said words to that effect once," reminded the revibrating tones of the voice. "I tell you now as I shall tell all the fools who try what I did -- victory is for those in the right, defeat the reward for those in the wrong. The might of a country or the power of its self-appointed leader do not make it right. Go now, for I fear I am speaking on deaf ears."

You are the fool!" screamed the man on the balcony. "Your defeat does in no way mean my defeat. I am strong where you were weak. I have profited by your faults. Might is right! And Nazi Germany is might!"

(Concluded on page 10)

* * * * *
NOT ONLY NOVELS

By

Joe Kennedy

When fans start discussing old, half-forgotten classics, or well-known modern pieces of fantasy, the tendency is that novels and other tales of exceptional length invariably walk away with all the prizes.

I'd like to know why. To be sure, a novel affords the author a chance to develop the central theme to as great an extent as he may desire; but it is also true many of our better short stories and novelets have created, within two or three thousand words, an atmosphere of plausibility and genuine fantastic quality that easily equals or exceeds that of the typical scientifantasy novel.

The length of the short story is more often an advantage than a handicap. In a shorter tale, the writer is able to maintain, without great difficulty, the effect for which he strives, and frequently succeeds in creating a lasting impression on the reader. On the other hand, the author of a novel is confronted with the difficulty of carrying the mood of the story through fifty or seventy-five thousand words. Obviously the proper handling of a novel is vastly more complicated than that of a short story. Still, these less lengthy tales possess advantages in enabling the theme to be developed in a length exactly suited to the accurate unfolding of the idea alone. Briefly, the short story serves as an ideal foundation for the development of the motivating idea, unhampered by the necessity for a stream of action or events found in a more wordy yarn.

With little trouble, I can recall any number of excellent short stories and novelets that impress me as being on a level of quality with virtually any of the top-notch fanasty novels you may name.

Clark Ashton Smith's "The Light From Beyond", for instance. This tale concerns a mysterious chain of circumstances noted by a writer who happens to be spending some time in a secluded spot untouched by civilization. Evidence points to the conclusion that some alien creatures inhabit the vicinity. He investigates, sees strange beings at work, and is accidentally transported to the native planet of the aliens, a weird world of outre surroundings beneath a distant sun. The descriptive writing in this story is nothing less than superb, and the reader's interest is held until the very last paragraph.

"The Ship from Nowhere", by Sidney Patzer, is one of my especial favorites. It is necessary to actually read this tale in order to grasp the awesome vastness expounded in its few pages. "A story dealing in millions of years and billions and billions of miles", says Gernsback. Actually, this is an underestimation.

"Alas All Thinking", by Harry Bates appeared in Astounding quite a while back. A "twilight" story reminiscent in portions of "The Time Machine", its plot is neat, clean-cut, frequently amusing, and pointedly acute. If you haven't read it, it is obtainable in Phil Stong's anthology, "The Other Worlds". Bates' opus is one of the few bright spots in this book.

Stanley G. Weinbaum's "Martian Odyssey" underwent a revival of well-deserved interest after being reprinted in Donald Wollheim's "Pocketbook of Science Fiction". You've probably read it, so 'nuff said.

"The Derelict" by William Hope Hodgson; "Doorway Into Time" by C. L. Moore; "The Outsider" by H. P. Lovecraft; "Three Lines of Old French" by Abe Merritt...I could go on like this for page after page, but such wordage is hardly necessary.

The point remains that many of the shorter fantasies rightfully deserve a place among the greatest of imaginative classics

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LA TOMBE
(Concluded from page 8)

Outside in the misty night air, two young Frenchmen were conversing in hushed tones as they huddled in a dark doorway. A figure rapidly emerged from the towering gates across the street.

"Who is it that leaves the tomb of Napoleon at this late hour?" quired one. As the figure brushed past the lone sentry the fog-piercing glow of a nearby streetlamp fell upon his face.

"Is that not the devil himself?" spat the other.

"Yes!" exclaimed the first, "It is he--Adolf Hitler!"

The End

AA

Our thanks for letters of comment on the September, 1944 issue of Sun Spots go out to: Claude Held, Larry Shaw, Raymond Washington, Jr., Walt Dunkelberger, Calvin Jack Witt, Paul Miles, Ron Maddox, Henry Elsner, George Ebey, Charles Burbee, Fred Warth, John Schomburg, Austin Hamel, Lionel Innman, Bob Tucker, Darrel Burkhardt, Bill James, Al Weinstein, Joe Kennedy, Jerry Keeley, George Fox and several other faithfuls who dropped us postal cards. How about some comments on this issue?

FANTASY'S THIRD FORM

By

Gerry de la Ree

Fantasy is not limited to the written word or the artist's illustration. There is another form of fantasy which can be as stimulating as either of these two types. This third medium of fantasy is music. The number of compositions written by men with the weird or fantastic in mind are naturally limited.

Therefore, the fan who is in search of fantasy music must go beyond the intended fantastic pieces and find other musical compositions which, while not necessarily intended to be actually fantastic, can easily be constituted as such by the listener. Everyone forms a different picture in their minds when hearing music--that fact is well known. Thus, it is only natural that a person can derive from music something entirely different than the author had originally intended.

It is with this in mind that I attempt this brief article. There are many others more capable of doing an article of this type, but I feel that some may find among my favorites some pieces of music that they also would enjoy. I claim to know little of music, other than which types I like and which types I dislike.

From my record collection I have selected a number of items which I shall now list, commenting on some and not on others. I am not overlooking works by Shostakovich, Sibelius, or any other composer on purpose, but rather because I am not familiar with all their works.

* * *

- DEBUSSY, CLAUDE--La Mer (The Sea): A trio of symphonic sketches based on the author's interpretation sea under various conditions. Good, imaginative music.
- DUKAS, PAUL--The Sorcerer's Apprentice: A bit of fantasy which appeared in Walt Disney's "Fantasia".
- DVORAK, ANTONIN--Symphony No. 5 (From the New World): Momentous work, stirring in some spots, beautiful in others. If anything, a trifle over-long.
- GREIG, EDVARD--In The Hall of The Mountain King from Peer Gynt Suite No. One.
- GRIFFITHS, CHARLES T.--Pleasure Dome of Kubla Khan. Based on the poem by Fitzgerald, this piece of music is haunting beautiful, with an oriental background.
- HANSON, HOWARD--Lament for Beowulf: Largely a choral work, with the exception of the prelude. Very weird and moody music, describing the cremating of the mythical hero, Beowulf.
- Merry Mount Suite: An excellent offtrail item. If you want something different with plenty of noise, this is it.
- Symphony No. One (Nordic): Called the modern Sibelius, Hanson in this symphony fails to attain the peak he reached in later works. Still, however, it is a fine composition.

* * * * *

HANSON, HOWARD (Continued)--Symphony Number Two (Romantic): This is my favorite piece of music. It combines the typical Hanson redundancy with some of the most memorable music I've ever come across. Heartily recommended.

IPPOLITOW-IWANOW--March of the Caucasian Chief from "Caucasian Sketches". The only one of the "Sketches" worth purchasing.

MOUSSORGSKY--A Night on Bare (Bald) Mountain. This is another piece which appeared in "Fantasia", and is one of the better known fantasy compositions.

OFFENBACH,--Orpheus in Hades: Interesting piece, which also appears as part of the brilliant "Gaité Parisienne".

RACHMANINOFF, SERGEI--Prelude in C Sharp Minor: Perhaps the most famous of his works, and the one he most disliked playing. Dirge or funeral music.

Prelude in G Minor: Played at a faster tempo than the C Sharp Prelude, but also an interesting piece.

SAINT-SAENS--Danse Macabre: Probably the best known of all weird music.

Bacchanale from Samson and Delilah: Hauntingly captivating music with an oriental or Egyptian background.

SIBELIUS, JAN--Tapiola.

TAYLOR, DEEMS--Through the Looking Glass: Disappointing.

TSCHIAKOWSKI, PETER--Marche Slav.

WAGNER, RICHARD--Magic Fire Music and Ride of the Valkyries from Die Walkure. Both pieces are weird and stirring.

And then there are other items which I omitted from the above list, such as: BORODIN--Dances of the Polovetzki Maidens from Prince Igor; BIZET--Gypsy Dance from the Carmen Suite; DE FALLA--Ritual Dance of Fire; RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF--Le Coq D'Or Suite and Scheherazade; Tschiakowski--Nutcracker Suite.

There are countless other compositions which may also be listed as fantastic music. I would be interested in hearing from any fans interested in adding to the above list, or perhaps taking up where I left off and continuing this article as a regular feature in future issues of Sun Spots.

the end

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

A Quatrain From Nostradamus

When Saturn and Mars are (conjoined) in Leo, Spain will be captured,
 The African Leader will be trapped in the conflict.
 Near Malta there will be an engagement. Herod will be taken alive,
 The scepter of Rome will be struck down by the Cock.

1945 BEOWULF POLL

ALSO RANS

Authors: G.O. Smith 19, Manning 18, F. Brown 17, Bloch 16, Blackwood 16, Cummings 15, Simak 15, Leiber 15, Wilcox 14, Knight 13, Bedford-Jones 12, Bond 12, Howard 12, England 11, Jameson 11, Wilde (1) 10, Brand (1) 10, Dunsany 10, Bradbury 10, DelRay, Patzer, Wellman, Hall, Fischer, De Pina, W. Long, Tanner, Peacock, Barnes, Bok, Schachner, F.B. Long, F. Stevens, Serviss, Flagg, Brewer, Saroyan, Cabell, James, Machen, Eddison, Farley, MacArthur, Gilmore, Thayer, Wylie, Woodford, Balmer, Sloan, Price, Shaver, Wendrei, Browne, Benet, Nathan, Verne, Clements, Hearn, Leinster, Williams, Gaier, Seabrook, McClary, Sterling, and Verrill.

Fans: Oliver, Ashley, Koenig (1), Yerke (1), Sehnert (1), Saair, Wiedenbeck, Michel, Lowndes, Burbee, Emden (1), Kepner (1), Mason (1), Blish, Youd, Hunter, Hamel, Nitka, Innman, Splawn, Gale, Sykora, Bridges, Kessell, Perry, Brown, Wakefield, Daugherty, Yaeger, Greenleaf, Perdue, Wheeler, Rothman, Wilsey, Daniels, Russell, Saha, and Joquel.

Fanzines: Vulcan (1) 12, S'Inconnu (2) 10, Canadian Fandom (1) 8, Sun Spots 9, Centuri (1) 7, Rosebud (1) 7, Toward Tomorrow (1) 5, Arcana (1) 5, Felix 7, Vampire 6, Ctgni 6, Futurian War Digest, Fantasy News, Vertigo, Fantasy Mag, S.F. Digest, Fantasy Fan, Bizarre, Paradox, Phanny, Agenbite of Inwit, Stellar, Infinitum, Fantasite, Erebus, Mars, Thoth, Sappo, Cethe, Time Binder, Knave, and Iconoclast.

Artists: Orban (1), Jones (1), Lindsay (1), Tilburne, Donnelly, St. John, Williams, Smith, Magarian, Wiedenbeck (2), Bergey, Schneeman, Stevens, Brundage, Clark, Knight, Morey, Brown, McCaulay, Anderson, R. Isip, Parkhurst, Fox, Watson, Kramer, Timmins, Giunta, and Coye.

Pro-Magazines: Unknown (1), Super Science, Canadian Super Science, Blue Book, Wonder Stories.

Those who voted: Ashley, Warner, Stanley, Unger, Wollheim, Lowndes, Daugherty, Anderson, E.E. Evans, Thompson, W. Evans, Croutch, Chauvenet, Searles, Wiedenbeck, Swisher, Tucker, Ackerman, Russell, Douglas (Morojo), Laney, Kepner, Burkhardt, Karden, Fox, Perry, Splawn, Innman, Wegemer, Alnutt, Jalbert, J. Kennedy, Rockmore, Weinstein, Gale, Burbee, Roberts, Gardner, J.E. Kennedy, Elsner, Krueger, Maddox, Dunkelberger, Davis, Wheeler, Peterson, Moskowitz, Sykora, Mason, Honig, and de la Ree.

Those who didn't return cards: (To whom any complaints may be sent) Hamel, James, Warth, Kessell, Bassett, Whally, Wilsey, Watson, Bronson, Brown, Daniel, Fern, Jenkins, Koenig, Kuslan, Liebscher, Michel, Perdue, Rouze, Ryder, Shaw, Washington, Wilimczyk, Wright, Baker, B. Evans, Lesser, Ebey, Sehnert, Oliver, Schwartz, Pogo, and Widner.

(I wish to thank those of you who took the time to cast your votes and, with the exception of two people, the sincere manner in which you did so. Gerry de la Ree)

POLLS

By Gerry de la Ree

The history of polls in science fiction fandom dates back just ten years. In an article written for his fanzine "Fantasy Times", and published in the May and June, 1944 numbers, Sam Moskowitz covered quite thoroughly the various polls conducted in fandom from 1935 to date. For the benefit of those who perhaps did not have the opportunity to see Sam's article, I would like to summarize its more important points here, with a few additions and comments of my own.

The first serious polls were conducted by the Science Fiction League under the sponsorship of "Wonder Stories" magazine. These SFL polls took the form of contests in which fans were rated by their accuracy in answering the questions asked. The results were made public in the April, 1935 issue of "Wonder Stories". In a nutshell here are the results:

Most popular S-F author--1. David Keller; 2. A. Merritt; 3. John W. Campbell, Jr.; 4. Stanton A. Coblentz; 5. E.E. Smith; 6. Edgar Rice Burroughs; 7. H. G. Wells; 8. John Taine; 9. Jack Williamson; and 10. Eando Binder... "The Moon Pool" by Merritt was rated as the top story, while "Wonder Stories" was voted the favorite pro-magazine. Forrest J. Ackerman ranked first in fan circles... "Fantasy Magazine" was a one-sided selection as the top fanmag.

In October, 1935 the results of the second SFL poll were published. A few changes were recorded, and some were most interesting. A. Merritt and Stanton Coblentz slipped considerably, while E.E. Smith gained in prominence, and a new-comer, Stanley G. Weinbaum jumped up among the top ten. Here again is a summary:

Most popular S-F author--1. David Keller; 2. E.E. Smith; 3. John W. Campbell, Jr.; 4. Edgar Rice Burroughs; 5. Tie between Stan Weinbaum, Laurence Manning, and Richard Vaughan; 8. A. Merritt; 9. Jack Williamson; 10. John R. Fern; 11. Stanton Coblentz... "Exciles of the Skies" took top honors as the favorite stf story. It was a novel written by Richard Vaughan, who attained a brief popularity mainly because of it... Ackerman was again top fan and "Fantasy Magazine" continued to lead the other fan publications.

Some two years later Jack Speer sponsored the Oklahoma Institute of Private Opinion Polls. They were a series of polls which ran over a span of several years and proved a popular feature of Olon F. Wiggins' fanmag, "Science Fiction Fan". The questions asked varied greatly, but here are the results which I deem are still of interest.

The favorite fan magazine (Dec. '37): "Science Fiction Fan", "Science Fiction Critic", and "Amatuer Correspondent." The top fans (Feb. '38): Don Wollheim, Forry Ackerman, John Baltadonis,

Olon Wiggins, Sam Moskowitz, Robert Madle, John Michel, and Jimmy Taurasi...Favorite fan magazine (Feb. '38) "Science Fiction Fan", "Science Fiction Collector"...Top pro-mag (May '38): "Astounding" in a landslide, with "Amazing" second and "Thrilling Wonder" third. Top pro-mag (Dec. '38): "Astounding", "Amazing", and "Startling". Top fans (March '39): Wollheim, Moskowitz, and Ackerman in that order...Favorite authors: 1. Campbell-Stuart; 2. L. Sprague de Camp; 3. Eando Binder; 4. David Keller; 5. Jack Williamson...Favorite fan magazine (April '39): "Science Fiction Fan", "Spaceways", and "New Fandom".

Robert W. Lowndes then conducted a poll in his small sheet, "Le Vombiteur". Lowndes asked the fans to vote for the ten most popular stf stories, and from the results the following authors ranked: 1. H.G. Wells; 2. Olaf Stapleton; 3. Stan Weinbaum; 4. Stanton Coblentz; 5. David Keller; 6. John Campbell; 7. A. Merritt; 8. E.E. Smith; 9. John Taine; 10. H.P. Lovecraft. The favorite stories were: Coblentz's "In Caverns Below", Stapleton's "Last and First Men", and Weinbaum's "Black Flame."

In the September 30, 1939 issue of "Le Zombie", Bob Tucker published the results of his three-question poll. He had asked for the one fan you'd rather correspond with, the one pro-mag you'd rather purchase, and the one fan mag you'd rather purchase. Ackerman won the nod for top fan, with Tucker second and Wollheim third. "Spaceways" was rated the most popular fanzine, while "Astounding" swamped its rivals in the pro-mag field.

Several months later Art Widner's first poll results began to see print. The complete tabulations of Widner's two polls can be found on the following page along with the results of last year's Beowulf Poll.

The main fault with Widner's polls was the fact that anyone was free to cast a vote, and as a result groups from all over the country flooded the ballot box with votes for the favorite fan and fanzine in that section. Thus, I believe, the final tabulations were distorted.

Two years after the second Winder poll came thr first Beowulf Poll. It was conducted on a much smaller scale, with cards being sent to approximately 50 fans. If nothing else, this system largely discouraged the ballotbox flooding which spoiled the Widner polls.

There is no need for me to enter into a discussion of trends from the first SFL poll to the second Beowulf Poll. By presenting these results I am giving the readers an opportunity to form their own opinions on the subject.

the end

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WIDNER'S FIRST POLL
1941

WIDNER'S SECOND POLL
1942

FIRST BEOWULF POLL
1944

Authors.....		
1. Campbell-Stuart(804)	Heinlein	Merritt (209)
2. Weinbaum (718)	E.E. Smith	Heinlein (166)
3. E.E. Smith (677)	Campbell-Stuart	Lovecraft (152)
4. De Camp (610)	De Camp	Weinbaum (139)
5. H.G. Wells (443)	Merritt	Van Vogt (123)
6. Williamson (405)	Van Vogt	E.E. Smith (106)
7. Merritt (400)	Hubbard	De Camp (94)
8. Lovecraft (381)	Williamson	Campbell-Stuart(89)
9. Faure (265)	Lovecraft	Kuttner-Padgett(84)
10. Keller (257)	Asimov	Binder (67)

Fans.....		
1. Ackerman (715)	Ackerman	*Tucker (127)
2. Tucker (620)	Tucker	Widner (38)
3. Moskowitz (482)	Warner	Unger (36)
4. Lowndes (428)	Lowndes	Warner (35)
5. Warner (415)	Gilbert	Laney (32)
6. Wollheim (333)	Rothman	Shaw (32)
7. Madle (276)	Bronson	Ashley (28)
8. Fortier (235)	Wollheim	Wollheim (18)
9. Sykora (228)	Unger	Robinson (11)
10. Widner (212)	Thompson	de la Ree (11)
		Speer (11)

Fanzines.....		
1. Spaceways (465)	Spaceways	LeZombie (95)
2. Le Zombie (324)	Fantasite	Acoltye (64)
3. Stardust (285)	V.O.M.	V.O.M. (54)
4. Alchemist (267)	Le Zombie	Fantasite (35)
5. V.O.M. (252)	Southern Star	Paradox (20)
6. Fantasy News (243)	Fantasia	F.F.F. (30)
7. Pluto (222)	F.F.F.	Fanewscard (28)
8. Guide (222)	Eclipse	Vulcan (20)
9. Comet (219)	Fan-Atic	Diablerie (19)
10. Fanfare (212)	Starlight	Nebula (18)

Artists.....		
1. Finlay (216)		Finlay (141)
2. Paul (202)	No Poll	Bok (106)
3. Weaso (141)		Paul (67)
4. Cartier (115)		Lawrence (50)
5. Bok (105)		Mergarian (23)

Pro-Magazines.....		
1.	Astounding	F.F.M. (148)
2. No Poll	Unknown Worlds	Astounding (139)
3.	F.F.M.	Weird Tales (70)
4.	Weird Tales	Planet (70)
5.	Super Science	Startling (44)

*--Civilian fan poll only.





