

# Fantasy-Times

"The World Of Tomorrow Today!"

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SECOND JUNE 1955 ISSUE

Ten Cents

## NOTES TO THE EDITOR

by Our Readers

New York, New York  
May 25, 1955

Dear Jimmy:

I recently received a note from Bill Hamling of Imagination that clears up a good deal of the mystery behind Ray Palmer's outwardly authoritative statement on the respective circulations of science fiction magazines.

Mr. Hamling states that his being "quoted" (the quotation marks are his) by Mr. Palmer was as much a surprise to him as to everybody else involved.

Mr. Hamling goes on to speculate that his being used as a "source" is simply Mr. Palmer's way of having "fun" (again his quotation marks) in print, which Mr. Hamling notes he unfortunately has been prone to do quite frequently. Mr. Hamling is no doubt right; the only question that remains unanswered is just what that "fun" (all our quotations marks this time) consists of. As far as any of us can see — and our funnybones are at least as well developed as Mr. Palmer's — it served only to confuse readers who naturally have no way of checking on the alleged circulation figures. If anybody laughed, it was Mr. Palmer only.

Mr. Hamling states that Mr. Palmer apologized to him for the hoax.

I think you should do the same for not having checked with Mr. Hamling to see whether the quotation was legitimate or not. Certainly you owe Mr. Hamling that courtesy, and you owe your readers the assurance that you will henceforth investigate all such supposed information, especially from questionable sources.

(continued on page 3, column 1)

## WHY "IF" WENT BI-MONTHLY

by James L. Quinn

(When we learned that If had gone bi-monthly we asked publisher-editor James L. Quinn to give us a statement on Why he had to go bi-monthly. Mr. Quinn was very kind to give Fantasy-Times the following detailed statement, that we are sure you will find very interesting. —eds)

Kingston, NY, 31 May, (CNS) — I'm sorry too that we had to make it (If) a bi-monthly again, particularly when we were getting mail rating it '1-2-3. However, sales are the thing which counts most in any magazine and we just weren't getting enough. True, we were getting as many as some and probably more than others, but we were trying to put out a quality package as well as good fiction and there weren't enough of the audience we were trying to hit. So, rather than put cheaper paper or cheaper printing into If, the only thing to do was make it a bi-monthly.

We had an extensive nation-wide check-up made into science-fiction sales, particularly newsstand wise, and the prospect of it improving in the near future seemed nil. Frankly, there's not a single science-fiction publisher today who is making any money. True, the editors and authors and artists are being paid, but any publisher could discontinue his science-fiction magazine and not lose any money by doing so. I'm speaking of the newsstands, of course, where the bulk of sales exist. So — I'm NOT going to give that old dodge of not enough paper or not enough good stories or this or that — we're

(concluded on page 4, column 1)



# THE FANTASY RECORD

by Frank R. Prieto, Jr.

## SCIENCE/FANTASY MAGAZINES OUT IN THE UNITED STATES IN APRIL 1955:

NAME	DATE	PRICE	PAGES	SIZE	DATE ON STANDS	SCHEDULE
Galaxy Science Fiction	May	35¢	144	digest	April 4, 1955	Monthly
Fantastic Universe S F	June	35¢	128	digest	April 7, 1955	Monthly
Amazing Stories	July	35¢	130	digest	April 7, 1955	bimonthly
Imagination	June	35¢	130	digest	April 11, 1955	Monthly
If - Worlds Of S F*	June	35¢	120	digest	April 13, 1955	bimonthly
Astounding Science Fiction	May	35¢	162	digest	April 20, 1955	Monthly
Fantasy and Science Fiction	June	35¢	128	digest	April 22, 1955	Monthly
Spaceway Science Fiction	June	35¢	128	digest	April 22, 1955	bimonthly

During April, there appeared 8 s/f magazines. All 8 were digest-size costing \$2.80 and containing 1,070 pages. No pulps came out this month.

\* First bi-monthly issue and first issue with return of readers' column.

## NOT SCIENCE/FANTASY, BUT OF INTEREST

Mystic	June	35¢	130	digest	April 11, 1955	bimonthly
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## COLORED COVERS BACK ON "OTHER WORLDS"

Flushing, NY, 3 June, (CNS) - The current (July) issue of Other Worlds marks the return of full-colored covers to this magazine, plus the return of the back cover. Both covers are reprints. Both are reprinted from the April 1953 issue of Other Worlds. The front cover has been cut-down to fit the new format while the back cover is a full reprint. Both covers are by Robert Gibson Jones. A new "story behind the back cover" has been added. In his editorial Ray Palmer states that he might rerun some of the Finlay black & white covers he used recently in full colors in the future.

## FANTASY FORECASTS

Coming Up Next In The Pros

## IF - WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION

The August 1955 issue of If will contain: Short Stories: FRANCHISE by Isaac Asimov, THE ETHICATORS by Willard Marsh,

THE PATRIOT by Charles L. Fontenay, ECOLOGY ON ROLLINS ISLAND by Varley Long, Novelettes: BLEEDBACK by Winston Marks, THE MOLD OF YANCY by Philip K. Dick, Short Novel: BIRTHRIGHT by April Smith, Features: WORTH CITING, WHAT IS YOUR I.Q.?, SCIENCE BRIEFS. Cover by Kenneth Rossi, illustrating "Bleedback".

## THE SCIENCE FICTION NEWSSCOPE

conducted by J. Harry Vincent

The May, #57, issue of Britain's Authentic Science Fiction arrived with the announcement that with that issue 16 pages have been dropped. From 144 to 128. Once the magazine contained 160 pages. It will remain pocket-book size and 1/6 in price. Editor H. G. Campbell states that he hopes its only a temporary measure and that he had to choose between keeping the 16 pages and going up in price to 2/-, or as he did, drop the 16 pages and remain at 1/6.

Actually most of the British mags now sell for 2/- and contain 128 pages, the most of them are of a larger size. While in the US Reprint department, as (concluded on page 4, column 2)



NOTES TO THE EDITOR  
(continued from page 1, column 1)

I hate to see Mr. Palmer amuse himself this odd way, mostly because I like him a great deal as a person, as an editor and as a man who has made an important contribution to science fiction -- too important to be negated by meaningless hoaxes. If he wants to horse around, I suggest he do it with horses and not people. i h

cordially,  
H. L. Gold

Amherst, Wisc.  
May 27, 1955

Dear Jim,

I admit I am a silly ass, but I submit that I am a laughable one! Good for a chuckle once in awhile! So I'm not a total loss. But I'd like to answer Mr. H. L. Gold, editor of Galaxy. It won't take many words.

Gold says my figures are laughable. He's wrong, they're pitiful! He says his average circulation is a good 10,000 higher than Astounding's average (the one I gave, not their actual figure); if you exclude subs (and he has several times as many as our nearest competitor); and also, he has additional sales and foreign editions. Well, let's face it, H. L. Gold has at least 28,868 subscribers (if several means two) and more (if it means three). I don't know if this is his nearest competitor, because I'm only talking about my own magazine, Fate. Even if we take Mystic, my other magazine, he must have 12,620 subscribers. And if we take Other Worlds, he must have 3,764. These are exact figures. And if he has 10,000 more average newsstand (US) than Astounding, he has a mighty respectable figure! Add to that his (top-secret) additional outlets (he probably has an ANC "semi" contract), and his foreign sales, we can easily see why he had to drop to 128 pages. If he has what he claims, the savings effected by the 32-page drop would hardly make a dent in his monthly profits, which could not be less than \$4,000.00 net. All we ask H. L. Gold is why he dropped the 32 pages? Well, we'll tell you why, because he had to, to make a profit. And I know at what circulation figure you have to

drop 32 pages to make a profit. Bill Hamling knows. And we agree! And our costs are the cheapest in the business -- Bill puts his magazine out in his basement, and I put mine out in my attic! So, Mr. Gold, I'm afraid I even gave you a break on the figure I gave for Galaxy. If you had the sales figure you claim, you'd be listed by ABC, and dragging down some of that high-priced advertising. And the figures have changed since I wrote that piece. Right now, Horror, Amazing Stories is far ahead of you! And do you know, I think Other Worlds is fast getting there! Stick around, boy, and learn the ropes. After you've been in this game as long as I have, you'll know how to judge figures. Anyway, why must Galaxy have more readers than any s-f magazine in the world? Is it important? To whom? Other Worlds is far from any such goal, and I see no disgrace in admitting it. As for the pitiful condition of all s-f sales, including yours, the blame lies on about twelve gentlemen who don't know what good s-f is, and you lead the twelve. I think your stories aren't s-f, largely, and some of them are just no good. They are studies in psychoses. Mine aren't much good either, but they are just bad s-f, not something out of a nut-house (with ivory balconies). However, I challenge you to a race. I'm going to improve my magazine from month to month. You do the same, and the race to the best magazine. For a starter (since you are making a fortune right now!) you ought to put back that 32 pages you took out for some reason a silly ass like myself finds incomprehensible in the light of your leadership in the field! If you're a big leaguer, quit playing in the bush leagues! Me, I like the bush leagues, and I play to small crowds, but I play for fun. My magazine will try anything, once, even a Shaver Mystery. And when somebody criticizes my circulation figure, I get a big belly laugh -- because it's true! It's lousy. But if you wanna race -- okay, big boy. Let Jimmy Taurasi hold the stakes. I'll send him my official distributor reports on sales, and you send him yours. He can keep both secret if you wish, but he can say who's ahead, and by what percentage. Right now, you lead by a



wide margin, but I always give a sucker a break! You'll need the head start!

*Rep*  
Ray Palmer

(Fantasy-Times will be glad to act as the newspaper of record in such a tabulation as Mr. Palmer suggests, if Mr. Gold will accept the challenge. -eds)

WHY "IF" WENT BI-MONTHLY  
(concluded from page 1, column 2)

making If a bi-monthly again because there weren't enough sales. I hope we'll pick up a few more by doing so.

Personally, I think science-fiction is going too high-hat or intellectual. Fans know what they're reading, but to the convert it is stuff he can't comprehend. I sampled copies to a number of detective story readers and others, giving them free copies and getting them to read them. Results: too many terms and equations and extrapolations they didn't understand or care about. But I like intelligent science-fiction, maybe on the highbrow side, but -- "I paid my dime and seen the show". And you gotta get new readers all the time or else the medium or vehicle or whatever you want to call it is going to die out.

I've discontinued my "Chat With The Editor" in lieu of the new department, which I think will be more interesting to readers. HUE AND CRY, though out of the August issue\* will be continued henceforth.

\* see page 2 for Forecast of August If.

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SF NEWSSCOPE ---- concluded from page 2

mentioned last issue, Galaxy has gone up to 2/- per issue, while Astounding remains at 1/6, each is digest size and 128 pages, while the Lowndes reprints, Science Fiction Quarterly and Future Science Fiction, each being pulp size & 98 pages are still selling for 1/- a copy.

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# Fantasy-Times

## BOOK REVIEWS

SECTION

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Vol. 1 -- No. 4

INQUIRY INTO SCIENCE FICTION, by Basil Davenport, Longmans, Green & Co., 1955, 87 pages, \$2.50.

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This monstrously overpriced book is something the field has needed for a long time. Mr. Davenport (portrait on the back cover) has produced a quiet, succinct study of the nature and history of science-fiction in a short volume which neither deprecates nor grandiosely eulogizes the genre. He is factually accurate, cautious and unstartling in his judgements, and takes a fair and balanced view of nearly all aspects of his subject. The book is too short to need an index and has none, but Mr. Davenport has supplied a first-rate list of "Suggested Reading" as a bibliographic footnote to each chapter. The format and handling of the volume suggest that of a textbook, and it could easily be used for that purpose.

Some readers may disagree with Mr. Davenport's method of dividing science-fiction into categories ("Speculative science-fiction", "Scientific science-fiction", "Space operas"), but there will never be full agreement in this area, and Mr. Davenport's approach is one of the least eccentric and most logical I've seen.

A couple of disagreements: Mr. Davenport seems to feel that Williamson meant the conclusion of "...And Searching Mind" to be considered a "happy" one, although the author has stated (in The Rhodomagnetic Digest) that the opposite was intended, and that he considered the novel a tragedy. Mr. Davenport asks "Why anybody over the nursery level should read science-fiction in preference to the Oz books" in an attempt to get at the worth of science-fiction. To my mind, he picked an unfortunate "children's" work as a basis of comparison; most science-fiction, past and

contemporary, has never come up to the level of imagination, poetry, and fantasy of the Baum Oz books.

Inquiry Into Science-Fiction is a good book to have on your shelves to give to people curious or misinformed about science-fiction, and I recommend that you put it there, even if you have to wait for the book to be remaindered in order to afford a copy; it now costs slightly under three cents a page. (To my mind, it would have done better, and been more fairly priced, had it been published as a dollar paperback similar to the recent Vintage and Anchor books.) The jacket is dull and unimaginative, which is perhaps for the best; the binding, paper and printing is excellent.

-Bill Blackbeard

SPACE TUG, by Murray Leinster, Pocket Books (#1037), 1954, 154 pages, 25¢.

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This reprint of the 1953 Shasta juvenile by William F. Jenkins is apparently now aimed for adult readers. The novel is in the best Leinster space opera vein, and should prove enjoyable at least to those who have found a quarterly Planet Stories a heavy cross to bear. The novel is a sequel to Leinster's earlier Space Platform, which also appeared in pocket book edition and seems to me an improvement in suspense and atmosphere over the earlier book -- perhaps because much of the ground work (or spacework) has been gotten out of the way when this novel begins. The cover painting by Robert Schulz is an excellent piece of work, and reminiscent of the old Rogers covers for Astounding. -Bill Blackbeard

### A NOTE ON THE WINSTON BOOKS:

Fantasy-Times Book Reviews has received a copy of the new Winston juvenile, The



FANTASY-TIMES BOOK REVIEWS  
(Section 2 of Fantasy-Times)

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Ant Men, by "Eric North", for review:  
After having tried to read it, your reviewer feels that it would be a sorry novel with which to introduce the generally worthwhile series to readers of this paper. In the past, the John C. Winston Company has published a number of rather admirable teen-age science-fiction novels by such authors as Arthur C. Clarke, Alan E. Nourse, Lester del Rey, Jack Vance, Robert W. Lowndes, Donald A. Wollheim, Poul Anderson, Chad

Oliver, Philip Latham (R. S. Richardson) and even Evan Hunter (of The Blackboard Jungle). These have been decorated by frequently delightful jackets by Schomburg, Orban and others, and all retail at the sensible price of \$2.00. Editors Cecile Mutschat and Carl Corner have done a surprisingly good job with this series, and have had the help of some of the best writers in science-fiction. Perhaps the next Winston will reach the level of worthwhile science-fiction in which many of the series hitherto lie; if so it will receive the formal review it deserves in this column. (The cover of The Ant Men is by Paul Blaisdell and will have to be seen to be believed: it depicts a blond Nordic teenager striking with the butt of his rifle at a gigantic praying mantis which in turn is grappling with giant ants -- this in the name of science-fiction!)

-Bill Blackbeard

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