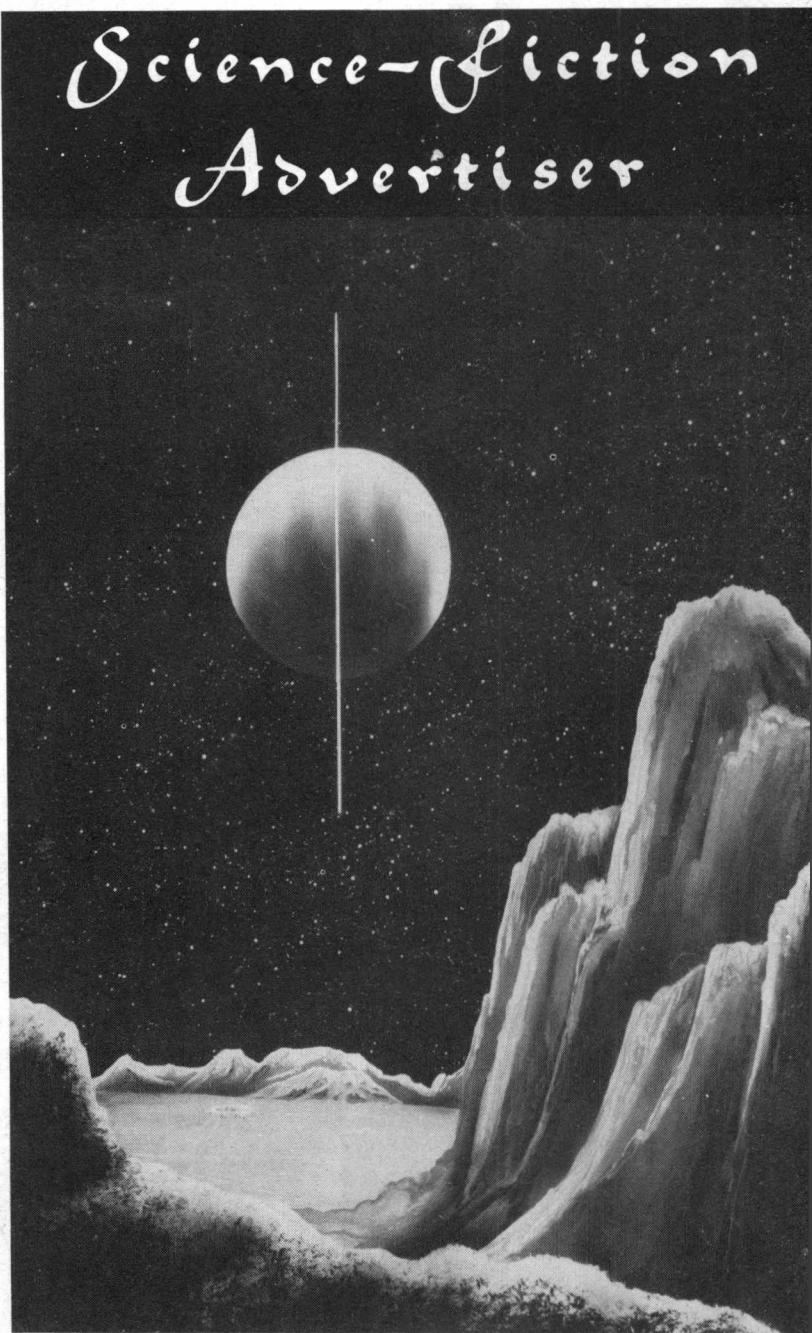


# INSIDE

25 cents

and

## *Science-Fiction Advertiser*



### TENTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

# The First Ten Years

bob silverberg

with special thanks to Edward Wood for his assistance



The magazine you are now holding has seen forty-eight previous issues. It has had three editors. And it has been published consecutively for ten years.

These are statistics worth considering—for the collective achievement of its former editors, Norman "Gus" Willmorth and Roy Squires, is an authentic phenomenon in the amateur publishing ranks.

There have been longer-lived amateur magazines, though not many. There have been better ones—but not many. No magazine, though, can match the cumulative record of quantity and quality amassed by Science Fiction Advertiser. It has changed considerably, both in intentions and in physical appearance, through the years, but the essence has remained constant. Certainly Science Fiction Advertiser, in any or all of its incarnations, must rank high on anyone's list of the all-time great fan magazines.

The first issue of what was then called Fantasy Advertiser was a slim affair, some fifteen standard-size mimeographed pages, produced in April 1946. Gus Willmorth, a bearded California fan, was the editor.

In this pioneer issue he declared, "It is our alleged purpose to propagate fantasy and science fiction fandom. It is hoped that Fantasy Advertiser will become an effective instrument in spreading the gospel of Fandomania through the medium of giving suitable publicity to our wares."

Suitable publicity. In 1946, that meant ungainly mimeographed pages listing second-hand books and magazines for sale; over the years, the phrase has acquired a different meaning. The Advertiser has spread the gospel of Fandomania not only by printing ads but by offering articles, book reviews, discussions, and high-quality artwork, in as tasteful and attractive a format as its editors could devise.

1946 was a long time ago, as the microcosm of fandom reckons. The leading fans of the day were people named Ackerman and Larry Shay, and someone called Tucker. Robert Lowndes and Donald Wollheim were among the active fanzine publishers, and the names on the letters published in the professional magazines of the day—all eight of them—were such as Chad Oliver, Milton Lesser, and Algis Budrys. Those were the fans.

Those eight professional magazines, that spring of 1946, were a motley crew. At the top there was Astounding—bulkier than it is today, but otherwise not very much different. Then there was Famous Fantastic Mysteries, devoted to reprinting old classics; Weird Tales, then busy printing peculiar vignettes by someone named Bradbury; Amazing Stories and Fantastic Adventures, which were printing even more peculiar stories by someone named Shaver. There were three magazines which catered to the younger set: Planet Stories, of fond memory, and a pair of slim quarterlies edited by Sam Merwin under the pseudonym of Sergeant Saturn—Startling Stories and Thrilling Wonder Stories. This was science fiction, in 1946. Fandom was a small, tight-knit unit, in which everyone knew everyone else.

With so few magazines being published—half as many as today—the urge to collect science fiction was strong. It was then, as no longer now, possible to have a complete collection of all the science fiction magazines ever published, and interest in collecting them ran high. Willmorth's Advertiser fulfilled a genuine need, and its popularity rose in almost geometrical progression.

A flood of ads caused it to double in size with the second issue, and the influx of circulation made the new fanzine the biggest seller the fan field had ever known. Still mimeo-

graphed, the magazine grew wildly. By the sixth issue—January 1947—it was a bulky sixty-four pages. By this time, Willmorth had also added a book review column, "Of Nova Tomes", conducted by Californian Walt Liebscher, and a fanzine department, "The Blatant Beast", operated by Art Widner.

This was the beginning: an ungainly, untidy, mimeographed magazine whose staples barely managed to hold it together. But from then on, the direction was upward—until now, beginning its eleventh year, the Advertiser can boast that it has, perhaps more than any other fanzine, brought fandom to the attention of the professional and mainstream world. It has attracted articles by professional editors and writers, while some of its writers and artists have graduated from the amateur to the professional rank. And some of its essays are among the treasured works of science fiction literary criticism. In its ten years, it became and has remained an active and important force in the field.

The problems of publishing a mimeographed fanzine with a circulation of many hundreds eventually grew too great for Willmorth to handle, and in June 1947 the Advertiser metamorphosed to the attractive half-size photo-offset format it still uses. That issue also ran the first of the many important articles that make a file of the magazine so desirable: Paul Skeeters' memorable "Supernatural Fantasy in Stevenson, Kipling, and Conrad", which set the pace for the sometimes brilliant, always valuable bibliographical essays and critiques that have since characterized the magazine.

The new method of reproduction allowed the use of high-quality artwork, and Willmorth began to bring together the fine group of artists whose work highlighted the pages of the magazine in succeeding years. And, for the first time, the Advertiser was getting advertisements from professional magazines and book publishing houses.

1948 and 1949 were distinguished by a period of excellent articles, usually erudite and sometimes quite scholarly—as, for example, Tom Carter's survey, "The Shaver Series as Literature", a pungent and objective consideration; Samuel Anthony Peeples' "The Technique of Fantasy Collecting", an admirably comprehensive job; Julian Parr's "Fantasy in Germany"; and Tom Carter's critique, "Seven Footnotes to Merritt".

By this time the magazine had firmly established its rank in the fanzine field. It had attracted the major critical writers of fandom, and all of the leading fan illustrators vied for the chance to appear in its pages. Among the artists whose work distinguished the Advertiser then were such people as John Cockcroft, William Rotsler, Joe Gibson (who has since turned to professional writing), Roy Hunt, Ralph Rayburn Phillips, and Bill Kroll.

During the year, fine literary articles continued to appear. Worth citing are such as Herman King's "Poe: Master of the Macabre"; Lin Carter's evocative appreciations of Clark Ashton Smith and Lord Dunsany; and Roy Squires' "Cabell as a Fantasiaste".

The seventeenth issue, November 1949, was the last to be edited by Willmorth. The job had become too much for him, and that month he turned the editorship over to Roy Squires, a veteran Californian whose acquaintance with science fiction went back to the Gernsback era.

Up until now, I've been speaking on the basis of a collection of second-hand Advertisers which I painstakingly accumulated some five years ago. The January 1950 issue, the first edited by Roy Squires, was also the first issue that came my

# Magnitude

Soon after the third issue of MAGNITUDE was recently released, the editors received a large number of letters of comment. Not a single one of the writers of these letters was not wholeheartedly enthusiastic over some feature of the issue, and the majority of them felt that the magazine as a whole was excellent. Among the letters received were very complimentary comments by both fans and professionals of stature.

In this much-sought-after third issue of MAGNITUDE is included:

HOW TO BECOME A SCIENCE FICTION WRITER--LIKE ME, an extremely humorous article, adapted from a speech, by Ed M. Clinton, Jr.

IS SCIENCE FICTION ESCAPE LITERATURE?, an excellent essay by Helen M. Urban

REMEMBER US, a poetic, moving play by Paul Arram and Tad Duke

FILMING "MAN AND THE MOON," a behind-the-scenes article by Ralph Stapenhorst

YE TRAVERSAL OF THE SKYES BY MISSLE UNTO THE SURFACE OF THE VEREE MOONE, a humorous pictorial feature by William Brownson

...and our regular features:

PLOTTING THE SF MAGNITUDES, a roundup of sf news by Forrest J. Ackerman

CD NEWS, a description of the activities of a very unusual science-fiction organization, the Chesley Donovan Foundation

An EDITORIAL, and other features by The Editor

...and:

A COVER by Walt Disney Productions

INTERIOR ARTWORK by Ron Cobb, Ralph Stapenhorst, Walt Disney Productions, etc.

MAGNITUDE is size 8½x5½, beautifully printed by photo offset, and #3 contains 20 pages. It is available for just 10¢ per copy, and a 6-issue subscription costs only 50¢.

----Ralph Stapenhorst Jr., Editor

## Magnitude Magazine

HORIZONS ENTERPRISES  
409 West Lexington Drive  
Glendale 3, California

R. COBB

way—for Squires, a dynamic editor who brought the magazine to an awesome peak of perfection, engaged immediately on a campaign to get the Advertiser into well-nigh universal circulation.


That first issue was enough to convince me, and no doubt hundreds of others. I recall the delight with which I anticipated the bi-monthly event that was the arrival of Squires' magazine, the disappointment I felt when he found it necessary to shift to a quarterly schedule in 1953, and the sharp sense of loss when Squires announced, in the summer of 1954, that he, like his predecessor, was no longer able to continue publication.

Under Squires, the magazine pioneered by Willmorth reached heights that the capable founder had probably never thought possible. Squires polished the physical appearance of the magazine (spending time over layouts and lettering that Willmorth had never deemed necessary) and engaged in a wholesale campaign to raise circulation. He advertised in Astounding, he solicited articles from professional writers and advertisements from publishers. And circulation soared.

Advertisements from firms such as Rinehart, Simon and Schuster, and the University of Illinois Press, began to appear. The contents page of the Advertiser gleamed: Arthur C. Clarke contributed a superb and lengthy book review, Chesley Bonestell did a cover; there was an article by Henry Kuttner, an essay by Stanton A. Coblentz, book reviews by Willy Ley and Bob Tucker.

The early work of new fan illustrators such as Jon Arfstrom, Neil Austin, Morris Scott Dollens, and Jack Gaughan (who later became the first fan artist to sell to Astounding) began

## DO YOU READ OR COLLECT MAGAZINES?



If you do, send us your want list. We specialize in furnishing magazines of all kinds, and may have the very issues you need. Our prices are reasonable, and we will promptly refund the purchase price of anything bought from us that is unsatisfactory for any reason. You will like dealing with us because you take no chances of loss or dissatisfaction. For more than 25 years we have been supplying book and magazine collectors by mail.

Although we specialize in weird and fantastic publications, we also carry stocks of and can supply adventure, western, detective and other types of magazines, dating back to 1915 and before.

Do you have a collection of books or magazines you wish to sell? If so, send us a full description of what you have, its condition, price, etc. We buy thousands of items every year in this manner. We prefer to buy entire collections or very large lots, but will be glad to discuss the sale of your items with you, no matter how few. Let us hear from you.

All correspondence promptly answered.

## BOOKLOVERS' BARGAIN HOUSE

P.O. Box 214, Little Rock, Arkansas

to appear. The magazine was a joy to behold, and even the advertisements were worth reading.

1951 was an even bigger year for the Advertiser. It became the first—and probably the only—fanzine to advertise in major mainstream publications like The New York Times, The Antiquarian Bookman, and The Saturday Review of Literature. Arthur C. Clarke's two-part essay, "Space Travel in Fact and Fiction" was published; Arthur Jean Cox, an important figure in the later years of the Squires Advertiser, evaluated Frank Belknap Long in "A Short Essay on Long". The first of an extended series of remarkable photo-montage covers by Morris Scott Dollens appeared.

But the peak had not yet been reached. With each issue a little thicker and a bit more exciting than the last, the Advertiser swung into 1952, its seventh year of publication. To symbolize the wider range of public interest in science fiction as opposed to the older genre, fantasy, the title was changed to Science Fiction Advertiser.

It was a notable year. Arthur Jean Cox, whose second article in the September 1951 issue, "Astounding's Science Fiction: Some Changes in Form", had revealed him as a penetrating analyst of John W. Campbell's philosophy of science fiction, contributed a vast and impressive two-part essay on one of Campbell's most typical products, A. E. van Vogt, entitled "Deus Ex Machina". This article, which ran to novelette length, is probably the most valuable single work in any of the Advertiser's forty-nine issues.

There were others, though; Anthony More offered "Hal Clement: A Science Fiction Style", later in the year, and Dar-

advent

3508 North Sheffield Avenue Chicago, Illinois

To Bradbury, as to most people, radar and rocket ships and atomic power are big, frightening, meaningless names: a fact which, no doubt, has something to do with his popular success—but which does not touch the root of the matter. Bradbury's strength lies in the fact that he writes about the things that are really important to us ... not the things we pretend we are interested in—science, marriage, sports, politics, crime—but the fundamental pre-rational fears and longings and desires: the rage at being born; the will to be loved; the longing to communicate; the hatred of parents and siblings; the fear of things that are not self ...

Damen Knight

In Search Of Wonder



the brilliant new book  
about modern science-fiction  
and the people who write it



COLLECTION OF 1800 MAGAZINES FOR SALE, BY LOTS, TO HIGHEST BIDDER. BIDS TO CLOSE 20 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION. SEND 10% DEPOSIT WITH BID, WHICH WILL BE REFUNDED PROMPTLY IF YOUR BID NOT SUCCESSFUL. PURCHASER PAYS SHIPPING COST. Condition varies from GOOD to MINT with very few exceptions. Mags are complete, with both covers except as noted. A few have the spines repaired. If not satisfied, return in 48 hrs. for a full refund. (San Francisco Bay Area bidders can phone for an appointment to examine the mags.) MORE LOTS IN NEXT ISSUE... (F-no front cover)(B-no back cover)(C-no covers)(R-rebound)  
MAX L. SONSTEIN 1517 HARBOR BLVD., BELMONT, CALIF. Ph LY 32601

LOT 1 AMAZING GROUP. 244 issues

AMAZING STORIES. 213 issues. 1926-55. (F-6)(B-6)(C-5)

Complete years: 1927-1937-1939-1940-1944 thru 1949

Others: 1926(6) '28(3) '29(7) '30(2) '31(7) '32(4) '33(6) '34(7) '35(4) '36(5) '38(6) '41(7) '42(11) '43(9) '50(11) '51(9) '52(7) '53(3) '54(1) '55(2)

AMAZING QUARTERLY REBINDS. 9 issues. (F-1)(C-1)

41 Win 42 Spg-Sum 43 Fall 44 Win 50 Spg-Fal-Win 51 Spg

AMAZING QUARTERLY. 19 issues, complete exc 3. (F-3)(B-1)

All issues EXCEPT Spng 1929--Sumr 1931--Spng 1932

AMAZING STORIES ANNUAL. 1 issue, complete. 1927. (F-R)

SCIENTIFIC DETECTIVE. 1 issue, May 1930. (C)

AMAZING DETECTIVE. 1 issue, Aug 1930. (C)

LOT 2 ASTOUNDING. 277 issues. 1930-55. (F-8)(B-9)(C-2)

Complete years: 1931-32 1939 thru May 1955

Others: 1930(11) '33(2) '34(8) '35(9) '36(3) '37(10) '38(10)

LOT 3 WONDER GROUP. 205 issues, complete. 1929-52

AIR WONDER. 1929-30. 11 issues, complete. (B-1)

SCIENCE WONDER. 1929-30. 12 issues, complete. (B-6-R)(C-2-R)

WONDER. 165 issues, compl thru Aug 52. (B-4-R)(B-8)(F-3)(C-3)

SCI. WONDER/WOND. QRTRLY. 14 issues complete. (B-3-R)(C-4-R)

WONDER ANNUAL. 1st 3 issues complete. Vol 1 #1-2-3

LOT 4 FANTASTIC ADVENTURES 101 issues & FA QRTRLY REBIND 7

FA: Complete yrs: 1944 thru 51 except Jan 45. (B-1)

Others: '39(11) '40(4) '41(5) '42(9) '43(9) '52(5)

QRTRLY: '42 Win '43 Fall '49 Fall-Win '50 Spr-Sum '51 Spr

LOT 5 FAMOUS FANT MYST-FANT NOVELS-MERRITT MAG-ARGOSY. 136 .

FFM-Complete thru 1951(Exc 5/51) plus Apr & Jun 52. 73 issues

FN -Complete thru June 1951. 25 issues.

A. MERRITT MAGAZINE- First 4 issues complete.

ARGOSY-32 issues, 1934-40 with some fine SF & Fantasy tales.

Plus serial "Minions of the Moon" excerpt in orig Arg. cover

LOT 6 WIERD TALES. 81 issues, 1926-52 (B-1)(C-2)

Complete years: 1941 thru 1950

Others: 1926-Mar '27-Jan '33-Jun '34-Feb-Sep '36-May '37-Jan

'39-Mar-Apr-Oct-Nov-Dec '40-Jan-May-Sep-Nov '51-3-5-7 '52-1-7

LOT 7 STARTLING STORIES. 77 issues. (F-1)

Complete thru Aug 1952 exc Sep '51 & Feb '52

LOT 8 PLANET STORIES 45 issues

Complete yrs: 1939-41-42-44-45-46-47-49-50 --'40 compl exc Wnter

Other: '43-Mar-Wnt '48-Spg-Smr '51-Jan-Mar-May-Jul '52-Mar

30+6.

17



If you read or collect Science-fantasy it will be to your advantage to give us an opportunity to find those scarce and out of print items that you've been looking for.

Give us a chance-- if we can't find what you want, you're out nothing. If we do find them, you pay only cost plus a small commission. (Naturally it is your right to refuse purchase for personal reasons) What could be more fair?

Send us your items wanted and for sale list (& we'll send you our catalogs)

RED'S BOOK SERVICE 123 West Fifth Street Dayton 2, Ohio

rel C. Richardson and Frederick Shroyer contributed important articles.

In 1953 there was "Fantastic Fiction" by Arthur J. Cox, "Science in Fiction", a deft and inquisitive article by Henry Kuttner, and much more. The mere listing of names and titles doesn't convey adequately the sort of writing that was commonplace in each issue of the Squires Advertiser, and it's unfortunate that many of those fine articles will never be reprinted.

The magazine continued to expand. Squires offered a dollar a page for material. The book review column expanded—though it had not yet reached the level of coverage it has in recent issues—and reviews by Kuttner, Tucker and Ley appeared. And, significantly, the advertisements, whose quantity had been on the wane all through the Squires era, dwindled almost to the vanishing point.

The conclusion was clear: the collecting urge, which had inspired the founding of the magazine in 1946, had succumbed to the great and now lamented boom. Fans confronted with more new magazines and books than they could possibly read had little interest in obtaining older ones of little quality, and gradually the Advertiser moved toward the point where its title had become a misnomer. Instead of—as in the Willmoth era—being a magazine of ads which ran occasional articles virtually as fillers, it had become, under Squires and continued under Smith, a magazine of literary value which included advertisements.

The cycle repeated itself in the summer of 1954. The fortieth issue, in the summer of 1954—the second issue to include as a department Bob Tucker's Science Fiction Newsletter—announced that Ron Smith would edit the magazine thenceforth, combining it with his own magazine, Inside. The job had grown too much for Squires, and for the third time the magazine was passing to more eager hands.

There's little need in describing in detail the ten issues of the combined magazine that have appeared so far, inasmuch as most of these issues are still fresh in memory.

But there has been a change in tone. The calm maturity of the Squires magazine has been replaced by a more self-asserting, provocative, controversial atmosphere. The combined In side and SFA is perhaps most notable for the series of running debates in which major problems of science fiction and literature in general have been threshed out.

The other features of Inside and SFA need little description; they speak for themselves. The lengthy book review section, the attractive layouts by Cindy Smith, the occasional appearances of Tucker's Newsletter and Randall Garrett's witty verse, the noteworthy fiction pieces by professionals and talented amateurs (to date, three stories and one poem have been picked up for professional reprint) have all contributed to the ease with which Inside and SFA has—to my mind,

at least—maintained the spot at the top of the fanzine heap which Willmorth and Squires occupied for so long.

This is the record to date: ten years of accomplishment. The catalogue of contributors to the Advertiser sounds like a roll call of celebrities at a World Convention; the nearly two thousand pages of the Advertiser's complete file contains an almost illegal percentage of the worthwhile writing done in fandom during the last decade.

Each of its editors has left his distinctive mark on the magazine as an organic whole, and it's possible to tell at a glance where one left off and the other took up the burden. The collective achievement has moved towards an intangible goal: that everlasting search for the best possible fan magazine, combining art, poetry, fiction, essays, and reviews by the best obtainable fan and professional writers, edited with care, taste, and discrimination and presented in a decent and honorable manner.

There may be a better fan magazine than the Advertiser some day. But for the time being, I think it's safe to assume that these forty-nine issues represent abstractly a certain level of perfection that will require some doing to equal.

TURN TO BACK COVER FOR INDEX



# SCIENCE FICTION ADVERTISER

(back issues)

Issues of the magazine which has been combined with INSIDE, dating from January 1950 to Summer 1954, are still cluttering up my store room in quantities varying from 5 to 100 or so. Being yet unwilling to write off as waste paper a product which (however illadvisedly) cost me great gobs of time and (sob!) money, I am now offering at a moderately low price copies of those issues which are in greatest supply.

The Advertiser never achieved the overall quality of INSIDE, or its diversity of contents, and seldom the quantity of pages that Ron amazingly presents with regularity. As far as I remember, it never placed in any of the "Top Ten" fanzine polls, and did come in for a fair amount of downright disapproving criticism in the fan press. And certainly it always fell far short of what I (I was the publisher, by the way) desired for it.

Nevertheless, 'most every issue contained one article that I still consider to have been a wise editorial choice, and a fine cover and sometimes other paintings or photographs by Morrie Dollens, and every now and then a phrase or, sometimes, even a whole sentence by myself (hiding behind one or another pseudonymous disguises) that gave me a chuckle or a leer when I typed it.

Well. For better or worse, you may have a dozen of those issues, postpaid, for a dollar. Or, if unfamiliar with any of my issues, you may be cagy and try 3 for 25¢. (No need to hurry-- the city dump won't get them for a while yet; and my silverfish and mice seem to prefer my early Amazings and wonders.)

R. A. Squires, 1745 Kenneth Road, Glendale 1, California

## AN HISTORICAL CHART OF THE ADVERTISER

Editor: Norman E. Willmorth. Title: Fantasy Advertiser.

No. 1, April 1946	No. 7, June 1947	No. 13, May 1948
No. 2, May 1946	No. 8, Aug. 1947	No. 14, July 1948
No. 3, July 1946	No. 9, Oct. 1947	No. 15, Dec. 1948
No. 4, Sept. 1946	No. 10, Nov. 1947	No. 16, Feb. 1949
No. 5, Nov. 1946	No. 11, Jan. 1948	No. 17, Nov. 1949
No. 6, Jan. 1947	No. 12, Mar. 1948	

Editor: Roy Squires. Title: Fantasy Advertiser.

No. 18, Jan. 1950	No. 22, Sept. 1950	No. 26, June 1951
No. 19, Mar. 1950	No. 23, Nov. 1950	No. 27, Sept. 1951
No. 20, May 1950	No. 24, Feb. 1951	No. 28, Nov. 1951
No. 21, July 1950	No. 25, April 1951	

Editor: Roy Squires. Title: Science Fiction Advertiser.

No. 29, Jan. 1952	No. 33, Nov. 1952	No. 37, Win. 1954
No. 30, Mar. 1952	No. 34, Jan. 1953	No. 38, Sp. 1954
No. 31, July 1952	No. 35, May 1953	No. 39, Sum. 1954
No. 32, Sept. 1952	No. 36, Fall 1953	

Editor: Ron Smith. Title: Inside and Science Fiction Advertiser.

No. 40, Nov. 1954	No. 44, July 1955	No. 47, Jan. 1956
No. 41, Jan. 1955	No. 45, Sept. 1955	No. 48, Mar. 1956
No. 42, Mar. 1955	No. 46, Nov. 1955	No. 49, May 1956
No. 43, May 1955		

This ad is a fright reaction to the thought of the whelming (an advertiser more given to use of superlatives might have said "overwhelming") task of moving that faces me. I have chosen prices that I think will sell everything that's being offered. Because I suspect that there may be many offers for some items, I am requesting that each order be accompanied by an addressed, stamped envelope (it need not be "self-addressed"-- few envelopes are so talented).

Where condition is not described, items are "as new", "mint", "perfect"-- pick your own term and return for refund if dissatisfied.

Note that there are no book club editions among these-- the Doubledays, etc., are authentic publishers' first editions. Prices given in parentheses are publishers' prices.

8 Ace Double Novels-- fine condition or better. The lot, \$1

6 1954-55 paperback novels, Ace, First Ed., And PB-- good to fine, Asimov, Finney, etc. 50¢

Lovecraft, WEIRD SHADOW OVER INNSMOUTH, paperback-- as new, pages white and crisp, \$1.50

AVON FANTASY READER, Nos. 1 & 2 -- very slightly yellowed at edges, otherwise as new, both \$1

Merritt, Murder Mystery Monthly editions: THE MOON POOL, THE FACE IN THE ABYSS, THE METAL MONSTER, condition as the above Avon FRs, each 50¢

#### NOVELS, HARDBOUND

Bell, IN REALMS UNKNOWN, 1954 (3.00) .75

Dye, PRISONER IN THE SKULL, fine, 1952 (2.50) .50

Gatch, KING JULIAN, fine, 1954 (2.75) .75

E. Mayne Hull, PLANETS FOR SALE, 1954 (2.75) \$1.0

Sam Merwin, THE WHITE WIDOWS, fine, (1st ed, remember) 1.00

Maine, TIMELINER, 1955 1.00

MacDonald, WINE OF THE DREAMERS, 1951, fine .75

MacDonald, BALLROOM OF THE SKIES 1952, fine .75

Sohl, THE ALTERED EGO, 1954 .75

Wells (Basil) DOORWAYS TO SPACE, (short stories) 1951, 1.00

S. Fowler Wright, SPIDERS' WAR, 1954 (2.75), fine .75

Wilding, SPACEFLIGHT-VENUS, 1955 jacket frayed, o'wise fine .50

NON-FICTION, Astronautics and allied subjects

Caidin, WORLDS IN SPACE, 64 illustrations by Fred Wolff, Holt, 1954, (4.95) \$1.50

Duke and Lanchbery, SOUND BARRIER 2nd ed., 1955, photos of supersonic aircraft (4.95) \$1

MacIherson, GUIDE TO THE STARS, observational astronomy, with plates and maps, 1955, (2.75) \$1

Parson, GUIDED MISSILES IN WAR AND PEACE. Many photos, pub'd by Harvard (3.50) 1.50

Gatland, DEVELOPMENT OF THE GUIDED MISSILE, revised ed., 1954. Fairly technical, with many tables of data (4.75). 2.00

Heinz Haber, MAN IN SPACE, fine. 1st ed., 1953 (3.75) 1.50

John W. Campbell, THE ATOMIC STORY fine (3.00) \$1

#### ROCKET SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH INTERPLANETARY SOCIETY:- June '47; Sept '48; May, July, Sept, Nov '49; Jan, March '50. Also BULLETIN of the BIS:- Nov '46 & Feb '47. As new copies of very well-printed and edited magazines, per copy 25¢

Leinster, SPACE PLATFORM, fine Morrison, MEL OLIVER AND SPACE ROVER ON MARS

Nourse, TROUBLE ON TITAN

Norton, THE STARS ARE OURS!

Schachner, SPACE LAWYER, fine Williamson and Pohl, UNDERSEA QUEST, fine

Wollheim, THE SECRET OF SATURN'S Rings

JUVENILES, each 75¢

Capon, THE WORLD AT BAY

# H.P. LOVECRAFT- THE BOOKS-II- LIN CARTER.



THIS ESSAY WAS ORIGINALLY INTENDED TO RUN IN TWO PARTS, BUT DUE TO CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND OUR CONTROL (LIN CARTER) IT WILL NOT BE COMPLETED UNTIL NEXT ISSUE.

## 21. THE ELTDOWN SHARDS (Lovecraft).

To my knowledge there is only one reference to the Shards in the Mythos, and that is in The Shadow Out of Time. We learn that "the disturbing and debatable Eltdown Shards" give the name of the planet from which the Great Race made their mental migration to Earth as Yith. The implication is that the Shards, which may be carven tablets in fragmentary form, are in the city described in the story, that is, the Central Archives of the Great Race, later uncovered in the deserts of Australia.

## 22. IMAGE DU MOND, Gauthier de Metz (Lovecraft).

The "delirious Image du Mond" is mentioned in The Nameless City, but no where else in the Mythos. I am unable to state whether or not the author or the work exists, but several friends of mine acquainted with French literature recognize neither it nor its author. The title may be translated as "Picture of the World".

## 23. INVOCATIONS TO DAGON (Derleth).

In The Black Island, a short story by August Derleth, this manuscript is mentioned, and apparently consists of prayers and ritual verses in the worship of Dagon. This sea-deity, actually worshipped by the Philistines, was incorporated into the Mythos by HPL, who had his degenerate inhabitants of Arkham, Innsmouth, etc., belong to a cult known as The Esoteric Order of Dagon. The followers of the Order worshipped "Father Dagon and Mother Hydra", two minor members of the Great Old Ones, subservient to Cthulhu, and both drawn from actual myth.

We have one quotation from the Invocations, given in the above-mentioned Derleth story:

"By all the depths of Y'ha-nthlei—and the dwellers thereof, for the One Over All;

By the Sign of Kish—and all who obey it, for its Author;

By the Door to Yhe—and all who use it, who have gone before and who shall come after, for Him to Whom It Leadeth;

By Him Who Is To Come.

Ph'nglui mglw-nafl Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah-nagl fhtagh."

Of the symbols here given, Y'ha-nthlei is the "many-columned" sunken city off Innsmouth, inhabited by the sub-human Deep Ones who serve Cthulhu; Yhe is a submerged continent in the Pacific; and one of the titles of Cthulhu is "Him Who Is To Come". The last line is from the R'lyeh Text, and is slightly inaccurate: the hyphens in the second and second-to-last words should be apostrophes. This line has been translated as "In his house at R'lyeh dead Cthulhu waits dreaming." (See 40. THE R'LYEH TEXT)

24. THE KEY OF WISDOM, Artephous.

In The Case of Charles Dexter Ward, this book is listed as being among the collection of Joseph Curwen of Providence. Beyond author and title, no data was given, nor was the book mentioned elsewhere in the Mythos. Now, if by "Artephous" Lovecraft meant "Artephius", then the book may exist. Artephius was a real alchemist (see Waite's Lives of the Alchemical Philosophers) and, although I do not have available a list of his extant works, I think it probable that the book exists.

25. KRYPTOGRAPHIK, Thicnesse (Lovecraft-Derleth).

In the posthumous collaboration, The Survivor, this book is referred to as being in the library of Dr. Jean-Francois Charriere. No further data is available, and I doubt if the book exists, as it is listed side-by-side with the more notoriously imaginary books of the Mythos.

26. THE LIBER-DAMNATUS (Lovecraft).

This book is only mentioned in Charles Dexter Ward, and we are given little information about it. In a letter quoted in the novel, the phrase "ye III Psalm in ye Liber-Damnatus holdes ye Clavicle. With Sunne in V House, Saturne in Trine, drawe ye Pentagram of Fire, and saye ye ninth Verse thrice. This Verse repeate eache Roodemas and Hallow's Eve, and ye thing will brede in ye Outside Spheres." Whether this astrological instruction is an English rendering of Psalm III or not is never clearly explained.

Elsewhere in the novel a Latin passage is quoted which, from the texture of the story, would seem to be the ninth Verse alluded to:

"Per Adonai Eloim, Adonai Jehova, Adonai Sabaoth, Metraton Ou Agla Methon, verbum pythonicum, mysterium salamandrae, conventus sylvorum, antra, gnomorum, daemonia Coeli God, Almonsin, Gibor, Jehosua, Evam, Zarlatnatmik, veni, veni, veni."

This is said in the story to be closely similar to a passage in Eliphas Levi. My copy of Levi is in English, so I cannot be sure. The passage above is a jumble of bad Latin and Hebrew Names of Power from the Kabballah.

27. LIBER INVESTIGATIONIS, Geber.

This is also mentioned in Charles Dexter Ward. Geber, as he was called by Latin commentators on him, was Abu Musa Jabir ibn Hayyan, an Arab alchemist called "the most celebrated chemist of medieval times" by the Encyclopedia Britannica. He was born around AD 721 or 722 at Tus near present-day Meshed. Banished from Baghdad in 803, he set up his laboratory in Kufa near the Damascus Gate, and is believed to have lived at least until 813. Of his many works, about one hundred treatises are extant, but not all have been translated. The Liber Investigationis is not listed among his works. It may be a combination of

two books incorrectly attributed to him, De Investigatione Perfectionis and Liber Fornacum.

28. LIBER IVONIS. (see 9. THE BOOK OF EIBON)

29. MAGYAR FOLKLORE, Dornly.

This book, mentioned briefly in Robert E. Howard's The Black Stone, probably does not exist. At least the book and its author have thus far resisted my attempts to find them.

30. MARVELLS OF SCIENCE, Morryster.

Mentioned only once or twice (as in The Festival) this book is probably an invention of Lovecraft's.

31. THE MYSTERIES OF THE WORM. (see 20. DE VERMIS MYSTERIIS)

32. THE NECRONOMICON, Abdul Alhazred; translated from Arabic into Greek by Theodorus Philetas AD 950; translated from Greek into Latin by Olaus Wormius AD 1228; Black Letter Edition published in Germany c. 1400; Greek Text Edition published in Italy c. 1500-1550; Spanish Edition of Latin Text published 1622; translated into English by Dr. John Dee, 17th Century (Lovecraft).

This is the most famous single book in the Mythos, and there exist more data and quotations concerning it than almost all of the other books in this essay. Not only book, but author and the various translators (except Dee) are imaginary.

Abdul Alhazred of Sanaa (in Yemen), called "the Mad Poet" or "the Mad Arab", is said to have lived during the era of the Omniade Caliphs, c. AD 700. Like many poets, he was not very orthodox in his professed religion. An indifferent Moslem, he secretly worshipped dark gods and demons like Yog-Sothoth and Cthulhu. Seeking lost lore of black magic and demonology, he visited ruined Babylon and sought through the subterranean caverns under Memphis. Then he sought a city older than Memphis or Babylon—the Nameless City in Turkistan which the Arabs have called Beled-el-Djinn ("the City of Devils"), the Turks know as Kara-Shehr ("the Black City"), and which he, himself, later names in The Necronomicon as "the City of Evil".

For ten years he dwelt alone in this silent city of black stone in the southern desert the ancients knew as Roba El Khaliyeh ("the Empty Space") and modern Arabs know as the Dahna, or "Crimson Desert". Here, in this desert believed haunted by evil spirits and monsters, he found the annals and terrible secrets of a race older than mankind. After his return to civilization, he said he had been in Irem, the City of Pillars, a city of Arabic myth as legendary as Camelot or El Dorado.

He dwelt in Damascus during his last years, and there, about AD 730, composed his famous book, which he called Al Azif—a word used by Arabs to denote the nocturnal sounds of insects, which they believe to be the howling of demons. He died (or disappeared) in 738, and, according to his 12th Century biographer, Ibn Khalikan, he was seized in broad daylight by invisible monsters and devoured horribly in front of many witnesses.

The Azif gained a considerable reputation among wizards and philosophers during the next two centuries, and was copied and circulated in manuscript secretly. In 950 Theodorus Philetas of Constantinople made a secret Greek translation from the original Arabic and retitled the



book The Necronomicon, a title whose meaning has been widely disputed. The Lovecraftian critic and scholar, George Wetzel, has translated the name as "the Book of the Names of the Dead"; Manly Bannister translates it as "the Book of the Laws of the Dead", but as to which version is the more correct I can give no opinion, as I do not know the language. (Incidentally, according to Charles Tanner, the Greeks often gave a new title to a translated work, taking it from the first few words of the text. If this is correct, then we may assume the first line of The Necronomicon is "The book of the names ((or laws)) of the dead...")

By the time the Patriarch Michael had all known copies of the Greek translation burned, in 1050, the Arabic text was supposed lost. However, a copy of it is believed to have been in San Francisco and to have perished there in the Great Fire.

After the Greek translation was banned, it is heard of only furtively. Olaus Wormius made his famed Latin version, which was printed only twice—first in Germany during the 15th Century, secondly in Spain during the 17th Century—from a rare copy of it in 1228. In 1232 the Greek translation and the Latin version were banned by Pope Gregory IX. The last copy of the Greek translation was destroyed in the burning of a certain home in Salem, in 1692, unless we credit the vague rumor that a copy was in the possession of the Boston family of Richard Upton Pickman, the artist, which was lost when he vanished in 1926.

In the early 17th Century The Necronomicon was translated into English by Dr. John Dee. The Dee translation was never published, but circulated in manuscript, copies of which are now believed incomplete and fragmentary. (This, by the way, is the only place where any truth enters into the history of The Necronomicon and its author. Dr. John Dee actually lived; he was born in London on 13 July 1527 and studied at Cambridge, from which he received the degree of Bachelor of Arts, and Louvain. While a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, he began reading occult literature—probably including Cornelius Agrippa, whom his contemporary, Marlowe, put into Doctor Faustus—and later studied astrology, mathematics, philosophy, alchemy and divination. He left college at the age of 23 and was offered posts at Oxford and elsewhere, which implies he was something of a prodigy in scholastic circles. Accused of magical practises in 1555, he was later acquitted and befriended by Elizabeth I, who occasionally consulted him for horoscopes and such matters. He is said to have selected the date of the Queen's coronation, and is credited with being the inventor of the crystal ball as used for divination. Among his extant works are the Monas Hieroglyphica ((which is still in print)) and other titles on magical subjects. If such a book as The Necronomicon had actually existed, he would have been the obvious person to have translated it.)

Despite statements throughout the Mythos that only five or six complete copies exist, there appears to be about eleven extant. Perhaps some of them are incomplete. We know one complete copy of the 15th Century German edition is in the "restricted" archives of the British Museum, and another copy (perhaps incomplete) is rumored in the collection of a celebrated American millionaire. Of the 17th Century Spanish edition, one is preserved in the Bibliotheque Nationale at Paris, another known complete

copy is in the library of the Miskatonic University of Buenos Aires, a fourth in the Widener Library at Harvard. That makes six in all. Other copies are extant, but in which edition we do not know: one in the library of the University of Lima, Peru, a second in the Kester Library, Salem, Mass., and a third was preserved in the ruined church on Federal Hill, Providence. Still other copies in various editions are rumored to exist—one secretly in Cairo (probably a private collection), and another is said to be in the Vatican Library at Rome. Eleven in all.

The book is so rare because, unlike many other volumes of demonology and necromancy, it is rigidly suppressed by the authorities of most countries and by all branches of the organized religions.

We have many quotations from the book, some long and some very brief, which I shall now give in full, exactly as they were originally published, without any commentary except for a line of information on the story in which the quotation appeared. Where possible, I have indicated the position of the quotation in The Necronomicon.

(1) From The Dunwich Horror, H.P. Lovecraft.

"Nor is it to be thought that man is either the oldest or the last of earth's masters, or that the common bulk of life and substance walks alone. The Old Ones were, the Old Ones are, and the Old Ones shall be. Not in the spaces we know, but between them, They walk serene and primal, undimensioned and to us unseen. Yog-Sothoth knows the gate. Yog-Sothoth is the gate. Yog-Sothoth is the key and guardian of the gate. Past, present, future, all are one in Yog-Sothoth. He knows where the Old Ones broke through of old, and where They shall break through again. He knows where They have trod earth's fields, and where They still tread them, and why no one can behold Them as They tread. By Their smell can men sometimes know Them near, but of Their semblance can no man know, saving only in the features of those They have begotten on mankind; and of those are there many sorts, differing in likeness from man's truest eidolon to that shape without sight or substance which is Them. They walk unseen and foul in lonely places where the Words have been spoken and the Rites howled through at their Seasons. The wind gibbers with Their voices, and the earth mutters with Their consciousness. They bend the forest and crush the city, yet may not forest or city behold the hand that smites. Kadath in the cold waste hath known Them, and what man knows Kadath? The ice desert of the South and the sunken isles of Ocean hold stones whereon Their seal is engraven, but who hath seen the deep frozen city or the sealed tower long garlanded with seaweed and barnacles? Great Cthulhu is Their cousin, yet can he spy Them only dimly. Ia! Shub-Niggurath! As a foulness shall ye know Them. Their hand is at your throats, yet ye see Them not; and Their habitation is even one with your guarded threshold. Yog-Sothoth is the key to the gate, whereby the spheres meet. Man rules now where They ruled once; They shall soon rule where man rules now. After summer is winter, and after winter summer. They wait patient and potent, for there shall They reign again."

The above is a text from the



17th Century Spanish edition of the Latin version, as translated by Dr. Henry Armitage of the Miskatonic University. The following quotation duplicates the above, with certain changes, and may be the same passage as given in the Dee translation.

(2) From The Lurker at the Threshold. H. P. Lovecraft and August Derleth.

"Never is it to be thought that man is either oldest or last of the Masters of Earth; nay, nor that the great'r part of life and substance walks alone. The Old Ones were, the Old Ones are, and the Old Ones shall be. Not in the spaces known to us, but between them, They walk calm and primal, of no dimensions, and to us unseen. Yog-Sothoth knows the gate, for Yog-Sothoth is the gate. Yog-Sothoth is the key and the guardian of the gate. Past, present, future—what has been, what is, what will be, all are one in Yog-Sothoth. He knows where the Old Ones broke through of old, and where They shall break through in time to come until the Cycle is complete. He knows why no one can behold Them as They walk. Sometimes men can know Them near by Their smell, which is strange to the nostrills, and like unto a creature of great age; but of Their semblance no man can know, save seldom in features of those They have begotten on mankind, which are awful to behold, and thrice awful are Those who sired them; yet of those Offspring there are divers kinds, in likeness greatly differing from man's truest image and fairest eidolon to that shape without sight or substance which is Them. They walk unseen, They walk foul in lonely places where the Words have been spoken and the Rites howled through at Their Seasons, which are in the blood and differ from the seasons of man. The winds gibber with Their voices; the Earth mutters with Their consciousness. They bend the forest. They raise up the waves, They crush the city—yet not forest or ocean or city beholds the hand that smites. Kadath in the cold waste knows them, and what man knows Kadath? The ice desert of the South and the sunken isles of Ocean hold stones whereon Their seal is engraven, but who has seen the deep frozen city or the sealed tower long garlanded with seaweed and barnacles? Great Cthulhu is Their cousin, yet can he spy Them only dimly. As a foulness shall They be known to the race of man. Their hands are at the throats of men forever, from beginning of known time to end of time known, yet none sees Them; and Their habitation is even one with your guarded threshold. Yog-Sothoth is the key to the gate whereby the spheres meet. Man rules now where once They ruled; soon They shall rule again where man rules now. After summer is winter, and after winter summer. They wait patient and potent, for here shall They reign again, and at Their coming again none shall dispute Them and all shall be subject to Them. Those who know of the gates shall be impelled to open the way for Them and shall serve Them as They desire, but those who open the way unwittingly shall know but a brief while thereafter."

The following, from the same source, comes after a brief hiatus in this copy of The Necronomicon and may not come right after the passage above.

(3) "'Twas done then as it had been promis'd aforetime, that He was tak'n by Those Whom He Defy'd, and thrust into ye Neth'rmost Deeps und'r ye Sea, and placed within ye barnacl'd Tower that is said to rise amidst ye great ruin

that is ye Sunken City (R'lyeh), and seal'd within by ye Elder Sign, and, rag'g at Those who had imprison'd Him, He furth'r incurr'd Their anger, and They, descend'g upon him for ye second time, did impose upon Him ye semblance of Death, but left Him dream'g in that place under ye great waters, and return'd to that place from whence they had come, Namely, Glyu-Vho, which is among ye stars, and looketh upon Earth from ye time when ye leaves fall to that time when ye ploughman becomes habit'd once again to his fields. And there shall He lie dream'g forever, in His House at R'lyeh, toward which at once all His minions swam and strove against all manner of obstacles, and arrang'd themselves to wait for His awaken'g powerless to touch ye Elder Sign and fearful of its great pow'r know'g that ye Cycle returneth, and He shall be freed to embrace ye Earth again and make of it His Kingdom and defy ye Elder Gods anew. And to His brothers it happen'd likewise, that They were tak'n by Those Whom They Defy'd and hurl'd into banishment, Him Who Is Not to Be Nam'd be'g sent into Outermost space, beyond ye Stars, and with ye others likewise, until ye Earth was free of Them, and Those Who Came in ye shape of Towers of Fire, return'd whence They had come, and were seen no more, and on all Earth then peace came and was unbrok'n while Their minions gather'd and sought means and ways with which to free ye Old Ones, and waited while man came to pry into secret, forbidd'n places and open ye gate."

The following, also from The Lurker at the Threshold, supposedly follows on the next page of The Necronomicon. The writer seems to have been copying hurriedly (perhaps under the eye of some watcher), for which reason he uses all manner of abbreviations. (It is also quoted, almost exactly the same, in The Whippoorwills in the Hills by Derleth.)

(4) "Concern'g ye Old Ones, 'tis writ, they wait ev'r at ye Gate & ye Gate is all places at all times, for They know noth'g of time or place but are in all time & in all place togeth'r without appear'g to be, & there are those amongst Them which can assume divers Shapes & Features & any Giv'n Shape & any giv'n Face & ye Gates are for Them ev'rywhere, but ye 1st. was that which I caus'd to be op'd, Namely, in Irem, ye City of Pillars, ye city under ye desert, but wher men sett up ye Stones and sayeth thrice ye forbidd'n Words, they shall cause there a Gate to be establish'd & shall wait upon Them Who Come through ye gate, ev'n as Dhols, & ye Abomin. Mi-Go, & ye Tcho-Tcho peop., & ye Deep Ones, & ye Gugs, & ye Gaunts of ye Night & ye Shoggoths, & ye Voormis, & ye Shantaks which guard Kadath in ye Colde Waste & ye Plateau Leng. All are alike ye Children of ye Elder Gods, but ye Great Race of Yith & ye Gr. Old Ones fail'g to agree, one with another, & boath with ye Elder Gods, separat'd, leav'g ye Gr. Old Ones in possession of ye Earth, while ye Great Race, return'g from Yith took up Their Abode forward in Time in Earth-Land not yet known to those who walk ye Earth to-day, & there wait till there shall come again ye winds & ye Voices which drove Them forth before & That which Walketh on ye Winds over ye Earth & in ye spaces that are among ye Stars for'r."

Here occurs a break of some length, "as if what had been written there had been carefully expunged", and the quotation continues.

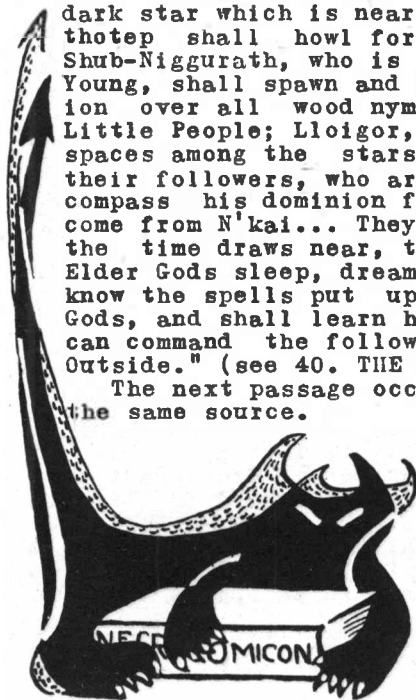
(5) "Then shal They return & on this great Return'g shal ye Great Cthulhu be fre'd from R'lyeh beneath ye Sea & Him Who Is Not To Be Nam'd shal come from His City which is Carcosa near ye Lake of Halli, & Shub-Niggurath shal come forth & multiply in his Hideousness, & Nyarlathotep shal carry ye word to all the Gr. Old Ones & their Minions, & Cthugha shal lay His Hand upon all that oppose Him & Destroy, & ye blind idiot, ye noxious Azathoth shal arise from ye middle of ye World where all is Chaos & Destruction where He hath bubbli'd & blasphem'd at Ye centre which is of All Things, which is to say Infinity, & Yog-Sothoth, who is ye All-in-One & One-in-All, shal bring his globes, & Ithaqua shal walk again, & from ye black-litt'n caverns within ye Earth shal come Tsathoggua, & togeth'r shal take possession of Earth and all things that live upon it, & shal prepare to do battle with ye Elder Gods when ye Lord of ye Great Abyss is apprised of their return'g & shal come with His Brothers to disperse ye Evil."

Also from the same book is this following paragraph, "in the midst of the first passage" of The Necronomicon.

(6) "Ubbo-Sathla is that unforgotten source whence came those daring to oppose the Elder Gods who ruled from Betelgeuze, the Great Old Ones who fought against the Elder Gods; and these Old Ones were instructed by Azathoth, who is the blind, idiot god, and by Yog-Sothoth, who is the All-in-One and One-in-All, and upon whom are no strictures of time or space, and whose aspects on earth are 'Umr At-Tawil and the Ancient Ones. The Great Old Ones dream forever of that coming time when they shall once more rule Earth and all that Universe of which it is part ...Great Cthulhu shall rise from R'lyeh; Hastur, who is Him Who Is Not To Be Named, shall come again from the dark star which is near Aldebaran in the Hyades; Nyarlathotep shall howl forever in darkness where he abideth; Shub-Niggurath, who is the Black Goat With a Thousand Young, shall spawn and spawn again, and shall have dominion over all wood nymphs, satyrs, leprechauns, and the Little People; Lloigor, Zhar, and Ithaqua shall ride the spaces among the stars and shall ennoble those who are their followers, who are the Tcho-Tcho; Cthugha shall encompass his dominion from Fomalhaut; Tsathoggua shall come from N'kai... They wait forever at the Gates, for the time draws near, the hour is soon at hand, while the Elder Gods sleep, dreaming, unknowing there are those who know the spells put upon the Great Old Ones by the Elder Gods, and shall learn how to break them, as already they can command the followers waiting beyond the doors from Outside." (see 40. THE R'LYEH TEXT for parallel passage)

The next passage occurs "somewhat later", and is from the same source.

(7) "Armor against witches and daemons, against the Deep Ones, the Dholes, the Voormis, the Tcho-Tcho, the Abominable Mi-Go, the Shoggoths, the Ghosts, the Valusians and all such peoples and beings who serve the Great Old Ones and their Spawn lies within the five-pointed star carved of grey stone from ancient Mnar, which is less strong against the Great Old



Ones themselves. The possessor of the stone shall find himself able to command all beings which creep, swim, crawl, walk, or fly even to the source from which there is no returning. In Yhe as in great R'lyeh, in Y'ha-nthlei as in Yoth, in Yuggoth as in Zothique, in N'kai as in K'n-yan, in Kadath in the Cold Waste as at the Lake of Hali, in Carcosa as in Ib, it shall have power; yet, even as stars wane and grow cold, even as suns die and the spaces between stars grow more wide, so wanes the power of all things—of the five pointed star-stone as of the spells put upon the Great Old Ones by the benign Elder Gods, and there cometh a time as once was a time, when it shall be shown that

That is not dead which can eternal lie.

And with strange eons even death may die."

The following is also from The Lurker at the Threshold.

(8) "...be they visible or invisible, to them it maketh no difference, for they feel them, & give voice..."

Another version of quotation (7) is given below, in a fragmentary English translation by Andrew Phelan. We are told it is from page 177 of the Olaus Wormius Latin version (edition is not mentioned).

(9) From The Trail of Cthulhu, August Derleth.

"For within the five-pointed star carved of grey stone from ancient Mnarlies armour against witches and daemons, against the Deep Ones, the Dholes, the Voormis, the Tcho-Tcho, the Abominable Mi-Go, the Shoggoths, the Valusians and all such peoples and beings who serve the Great Old Ones and their Spawn, but it is less potent against the Great Old Ones themselves. He who hath the five-pointed stone shall find himself able to command all beings who creep, swim, crawl, walk, or fly even to the source from which there is no returning.

"In the land of Yhe as in great R'lyeh, in Y'ha-nthlei as in Yoth, in Yuggoth as in Zothique, in N'kai as in K'n-yan, in Kadath-in-the-Cold-Waste, as in the Lake of Hali, in Carcosa as in Ib, it shall have power; but even as the stars wane and grow cold, as the suns die, and the spaces between the stars grow more great, so wanes the power of all things—of the five-pointed star-stone as of the spells put upon the Great Old Ones by the benign Elder Gods, and there shall come a time as once there was a time, and it shall be shown that

That is not dead which can eternal lie,

And with strange eons even death may die."

(10) From The Keeper of the Key, August Derleth.

"Whosoever speaketh of Cthulhu shall remember that he but seemeth dead; he sleeps, and yet he does not sleep; he has died, and yet he is not dead; asleep and dead though he is, he shall rise again. Again it should be shown that

That is not dead which can eternal lie,

And with strange eons even death may die."

(11) From The Salem Horror, Henry Kuttner.

"Men know him as the Dweller in Darkness, that brother of the Old Ones called Nyogtha, the Thing that should not be. He can be summoned to Earth's surface through certain secret caverns and fissures, and sorcerers have seen him in Syria and below the black tower of Leng; from the Thang Grotto of Tartary he has come ravening to bring terror and destruction among the pavilions of the Great Khan.

Only by the looped cross, by the Vach-Viraj incantation and by the Tikkoun elixer may he be driven back to the nighted caverns of hidden foulness where he dwelleth."

(12) From The Nameless Offspring. Clark Ashton Smith.  
"Many and multiform are the dim horrors of Earth, infesting her ways from the prime. They sleep beneath the unturned stone; they rise with the tree from its root; they move beneath the sea and in subterranean places; they dwell in the inmost adyta; they emerge betimes from the shuttered sepulchre of haughty bronze and the low grave that is sealed with clay. There be some that are long known to man, and others as yet unknown that abide the terrible latter days of their revealing. Those which are the most dreadful and the loathliest of all are haply still to be declared. But among those that have revealed themselves aforetime and have made manifest their veritable presence, there is one that may not openly be named for its exceeding foulness. It is that spawn which the hidden dweller in the vaults has begotten upon mortality."

(13) From Fane of the Black Pharaoh. Robert Bloch.  
"...the Place of the Blind Apes where Nephren-Ka bindeth up the threads of truth..."

(14) From Through the Gates of the Silver Key. H.P. Lovecraft and E. Hoffman Price.  
"And while there are those who have dared to seek glimpses beyond the Veil, and to accept HIM as guide, they would have been more prudent had they avoided commerce with HIM; for it is written in The Book of Thoth how terrific is the price of a single glimpse. Nor may those who pass ever return, for in the vastnesses transcending our world are shapes of darkness that seize and bind. The Affair that shambleth about in the night, the evil that defieth the Elder Sign, the Herd that stand watch at the secret portal each tomb is known to have, and that thrive on that which groweth out of the tenants thereof—all these Blacknesses are lesser than HE WHO guardeth the Gateway: HE WHO will guide the rash one beyond all the worlds into the Abyss of unnameable devourers. For He is 'UMR AT-TAWIL, the Most Ancient One, which the scribe rendereth as THE PROLONGED OF LIFE."

(15) From The Space Eaters. Frank Belknap Long.  
"The cross is not a passive agent. It protects the pure of heart, and it has often appeared in the air above our sabbats, confusing and dispersing the powers of Darkness."

(16) From The Festival. H.P. Lovecraft.  
"The nethermost caverns are not for the fathoming of eyes that see; for their marvels are strange and terrific. Cursed the ground where dead thoughts live new and oddly bodied, and evil the mind that is held by no head. Wisely did Ibn Schacabao say, that happy is the tomb where no wizard hath lain, and happy is the town at night whose wizards are all ashes. For it is of old rumour that the soul of the devil-bought hastes not from this charnel clay, but fats and instructs the very worm that gnaws; till out of corruption horrid life springs, and the dull scavengers of earth wax crafty to vex it and swell monstrous to plague it. Great holes secretly are digged where earth's pores ought to suffice, and things have learnt to walk that ought to crawl."



The following passage is from a private, partial translation from the original Arabic text "bound with ebony covers arabasqued with silver and set with darkly-glowing garnets", which occurs "near the middle" of the book. Mr. Smith informs us this passage was wholly emitted in the Latin translation.

(17) From The Return of the Sorcerer, Clark Ashton Smith. "It is verily known by few, but it is nevertheless an attestable fact, that the will of a dead sorcerer hath power upon his own body and can raise it up from the tomb and perform therewith whatever action was unfulfilled in life. And such resurrections are invariably for the doing of malevolent deeds and for the detriment of others. Most readily can the corpse be animated if all its members have remained intact; yet there are cases in which the excelling will of the wizard hath reared up from death the sundered pieces of a body hewn in many fragments, and hath caused them to serve his end, either separately or in a temporary reunion. But in every instance, after the action hath been completed, the body lapseth into its former state."

Further on in the same story, we learn of another passage also excludend from the Dlaus Wormius translation, "a singular incantatory formula for the exorcism of the dead, with a ritual that involves the use of rare Arabian spices and the proper intoning of at least a hundred names of ghouls and demons", or so the narrator insists.

That is all of the data on, or quotations from, The Necronomicon in the Mythos. As my space is limited due to the extreme length of the above quotations, I shall confine my comments to the more important details. First, the origin of the idea behind this most fabulous of all fabled books. Lovecraft left no clue as to where the idea came from (unless, perhaps, in the long-awaited Selected Letters). But commentators on Lovecraftiana have been quick to offer their own interpretations. In an article in The Arkham Sampler, George Wetzel tells us that HPL had traced his ancestry back to one Thomas Hazard, a colonist in early New England, and conjectures that "Alhazred" and "Hazard" may be a self-imposed pun, as the "d'Erlette-Derleth" one. He also conjectures that The Book of Thoth was the original for Alhazred's book. Those familiar with Egyptian folk-lore will recall this legendary tome was reputedly discovered by an Egyptian scribe in the necropolis at Thebes; also that a warning existed saying all who beheld the book would come "to a ghastly end". My own feeling is that, since HPL incorporated The Book of Thoth into the Mythos wholesale, he would not base another mythical book on it. The most likely candidate is, for my money, The King in Yellow, the non-existent play which figures in the Carcosa Mythos of Bierce and Chambers. Like The Necronomicon, this book contained wisdom so deadly and evil that it inspired revulsion in all readers; also Chambers, like HPL, studded his stories with quotations from it. Since Lovecraft lifted most of the symbols from the Carcosa Mythos and incorporated them in the Cthulhu Mythos—Hastur, Lake Hali, The Hyades, even Carcosa itself—but did not touch the play at all, I believe he derived the germ of the idea behind The Necronomicon there.

TO BE CONTINUED

## AUTHOR'S NOTE:

Edward Wood, commenting on INSIDE (in the September issue), says that he "had to laugh in Cleveland when talking to a few professionals who claimed they had seen the crash ahead of time but didn't say anything about it."

I find this interesting, because I'm one of the professionals who talked with friend Wood in Cleveland. Speaking of the science fiction boom and bust, I mentioned my own reaction. I said I hadn't anticipated the crash, but that when it came I did formulate a theory as to the reasons why. And I told him, and the others, about writing this article, way back in March 1954. I showed it privately to Wilson Tucker and Dean A. Grennell, but begged off allowing it to be published at that time.

It was my feeling, right or wrong, that publication would not bring about any positive benefits—I couldn't see that it would cause a wave of reformation to sweep through the ranks of those I held responsible for science fiction's plight. On the other hand, I thought it might have a negative effect on the fortunes of a few of my colleagues who had managed to at least garner a few crumbs of profit. I didn't want to do this, nor create the erroneous impression that perhaps I was brave enough to sound off only because I myself wasn't profiting from the situation and thus had nothing to lose. In other words, I didn't see that the article could do any actual good, and it might unwittingly do a bit of harm.

Today I think the danger is past. The phenomena I criticize have been criticized generally by people who weren't held suspect because they might have any personal axe to grind. Consequently, I need no longer hold back because of a feeling that my opinion endangers anyone else.

On the contrary, it is probably time to speak up, for two reasons: first of all, to contribute my mite to this general effort of evaluating the problems of the science fiction field, and secondly, to help correct the notion—which some of the critics seem to hold—that science fiction operates in a sort of private universe inhabited only by publishers, editors, writers and readers and is unaffected by the world beyond. At any rate, here's what I had to say about it two years ago, and in all the realms of comment and discussion I've read since that time, I've come across nothing that would cause me to revoke or reverse my opinions.

—Robert Bloch

# Worst Foot Forward

by

**ROBERT  
BLOCH**



editor

PATTERSON

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 wonderful 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 one, 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 going 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 phoney.

Oh, I won't deny the facts. They're 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 a book is ultimately at the mercy of its distributing agent; 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, factual digests, "slick" magazine fiction and "serious" novels or non-fiction.

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

Faces it, and (by and large) survives. The hard-cover mystery finds its home in the rental library; 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 answer 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 such a boom anyway, if it's not indication of general public interest?

The answer to this one, from friend flannel-mouth, 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 Reader's Digest could have been called a "craze". The fact remains that Life and Reader's Digest endured, and so did a host of imitators. 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 magazine 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 Super-Markets but now generally sold 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 whole trouble."

Tempting proposition, but it ain'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% of all the published science fiction of the past five or six years is crud. But of that 70%, I'd venture to say that only 20% is unadulterated slop without any element of interest, ingenuity or intellectualization. And above the 70% is a good solid 30% of really fine writing, superior writing.

30%, by the way, is a high average in any field. I don't think even the confirmed mystery-story addict can truthfully maintain that 30% of all whodunnits published contain original material, literately presented. Nor are 30% of all westerns outstanding, nor 30% of the overall contents of our "slick" magazines, nor—believe me!—30% of the annual output of 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? That's 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 mistakes. Science fiction has had its share of knowing 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 who used to play with Erector sets when they were kids, and who are still engaged in such symbolic auto-eroticism today) generally come up with this answer. The readers are the villains. They killed 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, Bradbury, Sturgeon, Kuttner, Leiber, Matheson, Boucher, Russell, Kornbluth, Clarke, Moore, Pohl, van Vogt, Asimov, Merril, Tenn, Gold, Simak, Bester, Farmer, Brown, Knight, Tucker, Robinson, Wilson, Wyndham, del Rey, Bixby, Leinster, Blish, Sheckley, Anderson, Dick, Reynolds, Bretnor, M'Intosh, Pratt, de Camp, MacClean, Williamson, Clement, Smith, Cartmill, Neville and a dozen others.

I do not like all of 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% 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 measurably 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 here 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 exactly the place wherein to end this article. Just recast the whole thing in the form of a "serious inquiry" and allow the poor audience to figure out the answer. But I'm not going to play such a scurvy trick. I leave such cowardly devices to scoundrels like Walter Willis or Chuck Harris and—like the damned fool that I am—plunge recklessly 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 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 advisors", 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 advisors" who instruct actors on how to get fifty shots out of a six-shooter before reloading.)

Along came the Lipperts and the Obolers and the Schtunke Brothers and a flock of shoestring independents with a half-dozen followup films which not even the most fervid apologist 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 Sixth 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 could 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 could 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? Magnifique. Another radio series? Bravo. Also ole, banzai, skoal, and cheers. So the new TV show consisted of a dramatized comic-strip deliberately aimed at the 10-year-old level. Who cares? Wasn't it proof that science fiction was coming into the big time? So the radio program was Captain Star or some other such idiocy. The important thing to remember was that science fiction was on the air. So the movie was Invaders from Mars or (yikes!) Abbott 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 obscure actor like Richard Carlson would have reason to turn handsprings over this development, and why a girl like Barbara 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 Twenty Thousand Fathoms—cheered because it meant one of "our boys" 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 screenwriter 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, they 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 radio—the essence of science fiction. Cater to the sadists—the potential; and actual pyromaniacs, paranoids and psychopaths 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 a 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 that 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 when 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 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 monsters 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 let us borrow 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 a 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 nasty spiders or insects or horrid icky bugs; ugh 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 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 shows 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 went 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-defense they started to kid the genre with their Abbot and Costello Meet series, and put Boris Karloff into burlesques.

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 here: when today I find it almost impossible to get a fantasy piece published and learn that book firms are afraid to issue a fantasy novel 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 The War of the Worlds and mumble under their breaths, "Good Lord! How do they get away with it? Why, I couldn't sell that guff about the handsome young scientist and the beautiful gal and the wise old priest



and the saved-by-the-hand-of-God ending to a half-cent-a-word 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 effort."

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 that, 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 "downbeat 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 editors and publishers.

None of them, to my knowledge, have been listening to the Boom—or recognizing it it 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 BEM 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 of non-readers are, potentially, perhaps another quarter or half or even a million future regular readers.

But all they see now 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 science fiction 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 they have 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 television 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 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 of 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, radio and TV stunts like Dragnet, well-concocted shockers such as Night Must Fall, etc. The westerns have lured a more intelligent audience with items like Stage-coach, 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 hammerheaded 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 audiences into reading 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's not an instantaneous reaction, remember—it's something that occurs to certain segments over a period of many months or several years; a "sampling" process. That's what happened. During the past three years, inspired, incited and inflamed by what they saw and heard, the louts bought magazines. They bought one, maybe switched to a second or a third. And quit. Quit cold, because the magazines didn't 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. nor their adapters 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 black 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 (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 ecstasy 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 destroyed!" and another ham on a regular mike answers, in an imitation Peter Lorre voice, "Yes, Master!" It's about time they realized 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 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 of interest in "raising the level" and deliberately went after the swag.

And let me emphasize 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. 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 who will 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 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



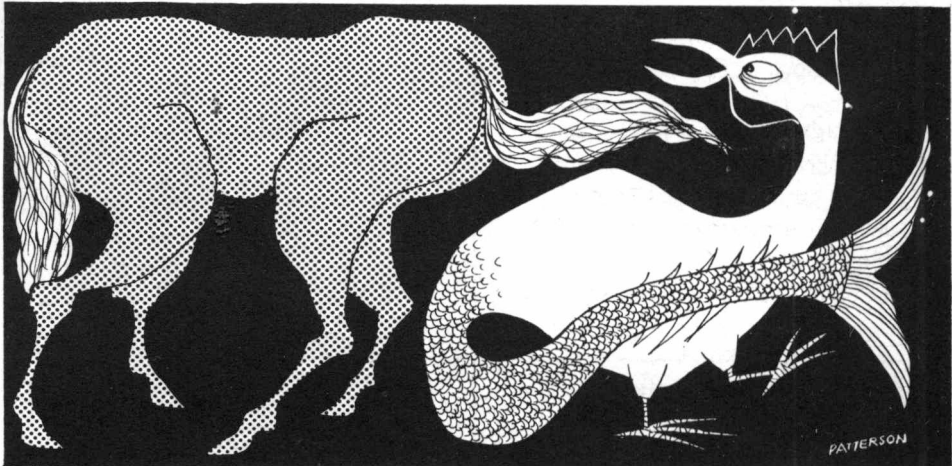
then, a trickle of books and anthologies, and an occasional crumb from a critic who's hard up for a topic or wants to attract attention by his iconoclasm.

There'll still be publishers, editors, writers, and fans—but not so many as the enthusiastic would wish. There'll still be 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 which, 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 realize that we'll never make money unless we attract a permanent audience for this sort of material—and 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 standards" kick and get down there in the arena and fight with the same weapons and the same tactics—using all 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 with their material in an attempt to 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 no one, including themselves.

Blame? No one'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...

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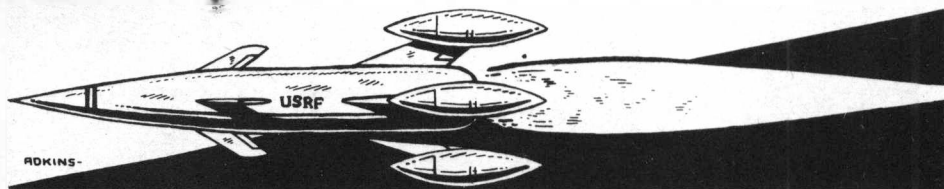
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EDITOR'S NOTE: First of all, we feel we should refer you to page eleven, paragraph two. We assure you that the character of the person writing this is very much suspect, and that his statements should be taken with so much salt. In fact, to qualify them accurately: They're so much nonsense.

We honestly think that Roy Squires' Science Fiction Advertiser was one of the finest—if not the finest—amateur s. f. magazines ever published, and our having equaled his accomplishments is something that is very much in doubt. We are proud of our past, and of the people—Gus and Roy—who are responsible for making it such a fine one.

We are grateful that Mr. Silverberg, in his article, has had some fine things to say about us, too. But in fairness we think it should be pointed out that he failed to mention our faults, which are numerous...RS

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It is to be noted that only articles, stories, poetry and art portfolios are included in this index, which covers the first forty-nine issues of Science Fiction Advertiser. Neither columns, book reviews, nor the occasional filler-articles in the early issues are included in

this index. The first five issues of INSIDE are also omitted. Abbreviations: s—short story, a—article, p—poem, and pf—portfolio. The numbers following each listing refer to the whole number of the issue. See issue listing on page 11 for appropriate date.

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