





# LUNA

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# STATION LUNA SPEAKING

I think it's perhaps appropriate at this time to discuss a couple of thoughts suggested by several readers in response to the first issue. While opinion was almost unanimously in favor of the magazine, a couple of readers did not see any value in the publication of speeches from conventions and conferences.

Let's look at the comment of one well-known fan: "Often delivered from hasty notes, relatively few speeches are sufficiently well organized to make readable articles, and even fewer are on very exciting topics." And, from another well-known fan: ".....if a thing's worth saying in the first place it should be said in print in the first place."

These two comments overlook the entire concept of speechmaking, not only as it applies in particular to fandom, but also as it applies to the world in general. Speechmaking is in effect the combination of written article together with the presence of the writer, the article being delivered orally by the writer, rather than in printed form. Its interest lies in the pleasure of the writer's presence, which is not possible when you read their work at home.

Speechmaking, particularly in fandom, has other advantages over the printed article. It's doubtful that 99% of the speeches given at conventions and conferences would ever have been composed were it not for the opportunity the speaker has to deliver it in person to an audience. Most of these speeches are directed to the fans, thus without the opportunity to give them at the cons, they could find presentation only in the fanzines. And the reasons why the fanzines aren't full of articles by these speakers are numerous and well-known.

Also, unless the speaker is reading from a prepared text, the result is quite different from what it would have been if written - more informal and candid. The presence of the speaker allows the members of the audience to discuss, take issue with, or express agreement with the topic(s) raised by the speaker with him at that time, something seldom done when sitting home reading a magazine.

Speakers who are invited to participate in the program of a con sufficiently early, do, almost always, prepare their speech, whether it be completely writing the text word for word, and then reading it from the podium, or merely selecting a title and subject, and just thinking about it until making notes from which to speak during the last week before the affair. Either way, this is preparation, and the results illustrate this. An example? How about Ted Sturgeon, and his 1961 Philcon speech published in the last issue? This was presented completely extemporaneously, without notes or other aids, yet showed all the care and craftsmanship of a speech read from a prepared text.

It has generally been proven that any con which waits until almost the last week to invite speakers for their program usually doesn't come off too well - because the speakers have not had sufficient time to prepare a speech worth presenting. And the speakers you don't find listed at all on the program are usually last minute fill-in guests, completely unprepared, and with few exceptions prove to be vastly inferior to the well-prepared speaker.

Historically speaking, any speech could be considered worthwhile for publication, whether good or bad, topical or timeless. However this frame of reference is subordinate to the primary considerations of topic, quality, or enjoyment, or combinations of the three. And while I'd like to satisfy everybody, every issue, I know you are not going to agree with me all the time.

Good reading.....

Frank



# A Review Of REVIEWERS

An  
Address\*  
by

EDWARD E. (DOC) SMITH, PH. D.

For some unknown reason or other there seems to have developed an unwritten law that critics cannot be criticized. Thus, any writer, actor, or singer who fights back at a critic--no matter how biased the critic is, or how little he knows of the material he is criticizing, or whether or not he is telling the truth--is, automatically, a sore-head and should be publically castigated for his temerity.

Not that I'm against free speech. I am very decidedly for it. I believe, however, that both sides should have it. Thus, when Conklin says that he read my "Gray Lensman" with, quote, "Alternate waves of incredulous laughter and dull, acid boredom", unquote, I have no grounds whatever for objection. That is, in essence, a statement of one man's opinion of my work, and as such is unquestionable and unanswerable--except, perhaps, by an investigation into the bias that made such an opinion possible.

However, when Boucher and McComas say (F&SF Jan. 1954) of Heinlein's space-drive, quote, "Beautifully worked-out system of congruencies in folded space which is, physically and mathematically, the most plausible method we have ever encountered", unquote, they are saying something---either in ignorance or otherwise---that simply is not true, and it seems to me that rebuttal is very much in order. By inference, they are claiming to know n-dimensional mathematics, whereas the internal evidence is completely definite that they do not. It is a virtual certainty that I know a lot more about advanced mathematics than Boucher and McComas do, and my findings are that Heinlein's "congruencies" are no more plausible---and no less so, either, by the way---than the sub-ethers and the spacewarps that have been used for years.

In fact, the only really mathematically plausible super-light drive I have ever heard of---the mathematical theory of which was developed by Dr. Alastair Cameron and a couple of other PhD's in nuclear physics---is based upon the control of sub-atomic probabilities and is so utterly wild---it gives instantaneous translation across any finite distance---that nobody except a PhD in physics or mathematics would stand for it! But to get back to this article: what started it was that, a couple of years ago, I attended a luncheon, after which there was held a panel discussion of criticism and critics. The moderator was Frederick Babcock, the panelists were other well-known people in the world of newspapers, books, and the theater.

During and after the discussion, which was not entirely without rancor, the opinion of the great majority seemed to be that most critics, from Claudia Cassidy down---or up---thought they were gods and that something ought to be done about it. However, as far as I know, nothing ever was. Later, discussing the thing with a SF editor, I said that someone should make an exhaustive study of SF critics. He agreed with me, and said that if I would do the job he would publish it. I accepted the assignment and went to work.

\*Presented Friday evening, September 2, 1955 at the Clevention, the  
13th World Science Fiction Convention held in Cleveland, Ohio.



Going through my files of magazines, I listed and abstracted all the reviews I could find of nearly five hundred books, ranging in content from pure SF to pure fantasy. Each review of each book was graded, as follows: 1 -- very unfavorable; 2 -- unfavorable; 3 -- non-committal or so-so; 4 -- favorable; and 5 -- very favorable. Shortly, however, I found that I had to add a zero grade to take care of certain reviewers' opinions of Burroughs, Asimov, Howard, Merritt, Doc Smith and a few other such bunnies on the great toe of Literature.

I tabulated the nineteen-hundred-odd individual grades, subjected them to the various operations of statistical analysis, started to work up the article---and quit cold, for I had more zeros than any other writer in the field. Bob Heinlein, with a straight-across-the-board average of 4.8 could probably get away with such an article, but I simply didn't have the nerve. While I am sure that the criteria I employed reduced my personal bias to a point at which it could not affect the validity of the final scores in the first decimal place, I could not prove it to anyone not familiar with the mathematics involved. Hence, the only outcome of this project was a note I wrote to Campbell, congratulating him upon his choice of P. S. Miller as book reviewer.

However, since I was fairly certain that I would have almost as many friends in this audience as enemies, I agreed to give a brief summary of the analysis to you fans assembled here.

The critics involved are: P. S. Miller, Groff Conklin, Boucher and McComas, Merwin and Mines, Damon Knight, R. W. Lowndes, George O. Smith, Robert Frazier, Lester del Rey, Mark Reinsberg, Sam Moskowitz, Torry Ackerman, L. Sprague de Camp, Katherine McLean, and Kendell Foster Crossen.\* In regard to the last named, all I will say here is that his book-reviewing is just about what could be expected of the man who wrote that "Take the science out of science fiction" guest editorial for STARTLING (Feb. 1953), and who wrote, in FUTURE (Nov. 1953, p 41) quote, "Discounting such writers as Aldous Huxley, George Orwell, and Ward Moore..... science fiction writing has been poor indeed.....It has fed on the admiration of a small select circle.....the very make-up of the audience, editors, and writers---an incestuous professional daisy-chain---was one which, I suspect, scared away the writers who might have changed it." Unquote. Exit Crossen.

It will be noted that two prominent names are absent from this list---Leiber and Derleth. This is because their reviews appeared in newspapers, not in magazines. I read many of them, but did not save them; hence am unable either to evaluate them exactly or to give specific references. From memory, however, I would put Leiber up near Miller, Derleth somewhere between Conklin and Boucher---probably a little closer to Boucher.

Since it is impossible to present any detailed data in this paper, I have selected seven authors, each having had enough books reviewed by enough different critics so that the numerical results are significant to the first decimal place.

\*This article, while it dates back to 1955, is still true; and a continuation of it up through 1962 would, I think, show the same results---with, of course, a few new names added. (Doc)



First, Heinlein. His average grades are as follows: Miller 4.5; Conklin 4.5; Boucher 4.8; Merwin-Mines 4.7; Damon Knight 4.5; Lowndes 5.0; G. O. Smith 5.0; Ackerman 5.0. It will be noted that Miller and Conklin gave him the same average grade; Boucher a significantly higher one. Why? My guess is that Miller and Conklin deduced what I know to be a fact, that even the great master of us all wrote a pot-boiler now and then---and upon two or three occasions wrote with his tongue stuck so far into his cheek that he must have looked like a squirrel pouching a walnut. I am referring, of course, to the Doctor of Philosophy whose like never was on land or sea and never will be---and I was very much surprised that Boucher, such a stickler for verisimilitude, credibility, characterization, and so on, didn't part Bob's hair with a baseball bat for that one.

Second, Asimov. Here again Miller and Conklin each give 4.3; Merwin-Mines also 4.3. Lowndes is again high with 4.8. George O. Smith is down to 2.9. Boucher is really down---to a flat 2.0. I have no hypothesis to explain these facts.

Third, van Vogt. Here the field really reverses itself. Tony Boucher is high, with a flat 5.0. Lowndes 4.7; Miller 4.6; Conklin 3.9 (notice the abrupt departure from Miller's grading); and Smith is low with a 3.0.

Fourth, Merritt. Miller 5.0; Conklin 3.2; and Boucher and McComas cut him down to a flat 2.0.

Fifth, Bradbury. Boucher & McComas and Frazier each award the maximum grade of 5.0. Merwin-Mines 4.4; Conklin 3.9; Miller 3.5.

Sixth, Robert E. Howard. Miller 4.6; Lowndes 4.2; Merwin-Mines 4.0; Conklin 1.7; and Boucher-McComas also 1.7.

Seventh, E. E. Smith. Miller 4.1; Merwin-Mines 3.1; G. O. Smith 3.0; Frazier 2.0; Conklin 1.8; and Boucher & McComas a flat 1.0.

The results from which these averages were taken, properly plotted on coordinate paper, show conclusively who is biased, toward what and against what, and almost exactly how much. They are interesting, believe me---and if any of you are really interested in finding out what makes critics tick, I suggest that you repeat this analysis and see whether or not you check my results.

Now for a few specific items that struck me as being worth mentioning in detail. Lowndes, writing in FUTURE (Nov. 1952) said, quote, "...Norvell Page's BUT WITHOUT HORNS is, to my way of thinking, not only the outstanding, but the only plausible approach to the superman theme..." unquote. He is the only critic in this study who did not bow down and worship Odd John. Thus, the editors of F&SF (Boucher & McComas) say (Sept. 1953) quote, "...Olaf Stapledon remains the greatest thinker in science-fantasy..." unquote. Now to my way of thinking Odd John remains one of the poorest pieces of characterization and motivation ever perpetrated. He was, by definition, a superman---yet he lived a life of hopelessly abysmal frustration and futility and wound up a suicide. Hurrah for Lowndes!

Yet this same Lowndes went 'way, 'way off the beam when he reviewed (DYNAMIC June 1953) Jack Williamson's SEETEE SHIP. About Jack's SPACEMAN'S HANDBOOK and the chromium-plated gingerbread on the old house he said, quote, "Every last meticulous detail...is as false as a dollar drum." Unquote. This statement is simply, definitely, and demonstrably untrue. Engineering and technical handbooks



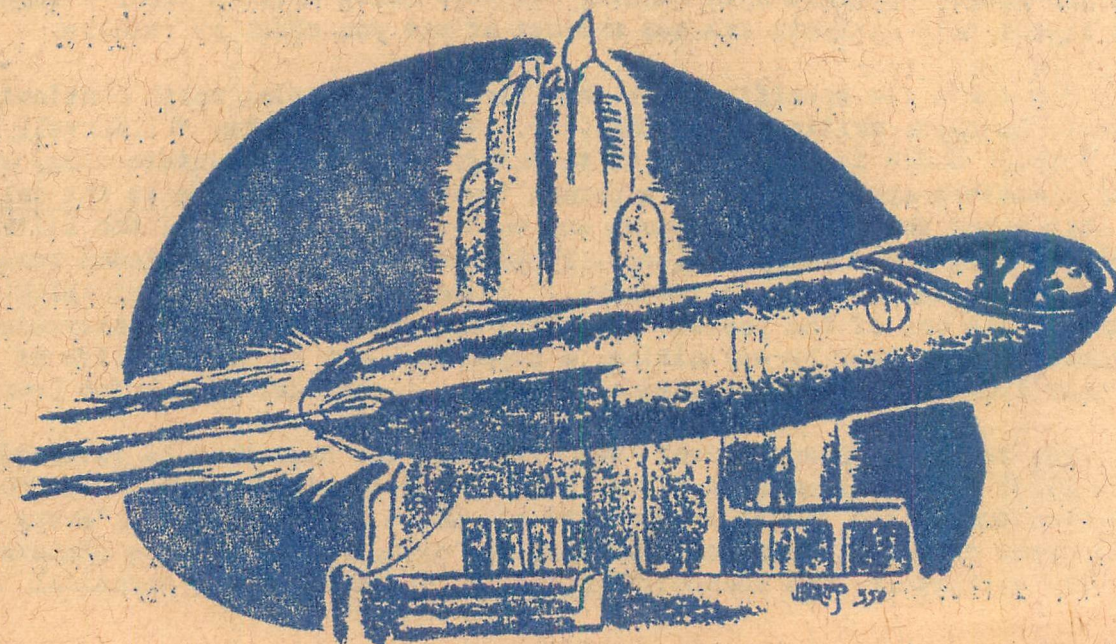
are the most important tools of my particular trade; I have worked with them for forty-odd years; and anyone who cares to check will find many worse passages in Perry, Knowlton, Marks, Kent, and Shunk---the five best current handbooks---than the one Lowndes was screaming about. And as for chrome-plated gingerbread not getting rusty and dingy, all he has to do is look at his own automobile---or, if his trim is still in good shape (if it is, it isn't one-fiftieth as old as Jack's house was) he can come and look at mine!

Finally, any article on criticism must have a paragraph or so on Damon Knight. I could not find enough of his detailed reviews to compute figures statistically significant to the first decimal in all cases; but the indications were that he is in a class all by himself.

He agrees with one side in his review (SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES Feb. 1953) of Taylor Caldwell's DEVIL'S ADVOCATE, quote, "This eloquent novel", says its jacket, making two mistakes in three words." Unquote. However, this same critic says (FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION Sept. 1953), quote, "...a large volume by another man often labeled 'a master of fantasy', A. Merritt's DWELLERS IN THE MIRAGE and THE FACE IN THE ABYSS...We note this for those who seem to like this writer's work..." And, a few lines later, quote, "Isaac Asimov's SECOND FOUNDATION and E. E. Smith's SECOND STAGE LENSMEN...should appease the appetites of those who, for reasons we have never understood, are willing to go on year in and year out reading hundreds of thousands of words about Foundations and Lensmen" unquote.

The Greeks may have a word applicable to the quality of critical acuity---or of inexplicable selectivity---displayed in tying Merritt, Asimov, and me up into a bundle and tossing us down the drain....but I don't know Greek.

To sum up: From a statistical analysis of approximately nineteen hundred reviews and criticisms published in magazines of imaginative fiction, I conclude that the best and least biased have been written by P. S. Miller and published in ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION; the poorest and most strongly biased have appeared in the MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION.





# CHANGING TRENDS

A discussion\* by

JOHN W. CAMPBELL JR.,

Editor of Analog Science Fact - Science Fiction, and

ED EMSHWILLER, Hugo Award Artist,

with SAM MOSKOWITZ as Moderator

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## Introduction

SAM: The plan I intend to follow is this: We have taken about thirty slides of representative science fiction covers from 1902 to present which we will very briefly show through. They are primarily cover art. The major reason for our showing these slides is not to entertain the audience, but to give the two participants something to chew on; something to think about, to kick them off, in their conversation. Just as John Campbell in the past has published articles to supply new ideas for his writers; we are showing these slides to provide ideas for the participants of this panel, and I will give a very brief running commentary as we move through them.

[A representative selection of science fiction cover art, photographed by Christine Moskowitz, in full color, was shown. As the slides were flashed on the screen, a running commentary on the artistic techniques and the cover art policies was given by Sam Moskowitz.

Among the samples shown were the following:

- \* Two full-color scenes from 1902 editions of Frank Reade Weekly, possibly the earliest regular publication with color science fiction art in the United States.
- \* Frank R. Paul covers depicting The Skylark of Space and the second issue of Amazing Stories Quarterly.
- \* A typical Argosy cover by Robert Graef.
- \* The Fall, 1929 Science Wonder Quarterly, showing a scene from The Stone From The Moon by Otto Willi Gail, by Frank R. Paul.

\*Presented on Sunday Afternoon, September 4, 1960 at the Pittcon, the 18th World Science Fiction Convention held in Pittsburgh, Penna.



- \* Early Wesso covers from Amazing Stories.
- \* Early Morey covers from Amazing Stories including those with the circular design motif.
- \* Sigmond's symbolic covers on Amazing Stories.
- \* Bug-eyed monster by Howard Brown on the first Thrilling Wonder Stories.
- \* The first issue of Planet Stories.
- \* Roger's Grey Lensman cover from Astounding Science Fiction.
- \* Frank Kelly Freas from Fantastic Universe.
- \* Alex Shomburg on Amazing Stories.
- \* Ed Emshwiller on Astounding.
- \* Mel Hunter from Fantasy and Science Fiction.
- \* A combination symbolic and abstract cover from the British Science-Fantasy.
- \* A Christmas scene from the December 1954 Astounding.
- \* A selection of current science fiction paperback covers.]

\* \* \*

SAM: I think I will have the artist speak first because he is going to be speaking from a production artistic standpoint, and certainly the ultimate consumer, who is John Campbell, will want to comment on the economic feasibility of the points that Ed makes.

JWC: I am not the ultimate consumer. They are. [Indicating the audience]

SAM: Shall we say the initial purchaser?

JWC: OK.

SAM: He has to satisfy you before he gets to us.

EMSH: My feeling about the series of slides that we just saw is that we have had in science fiction, from the beginning, illustrators of competence within the framework of the current schools of illustration. We have had professional artists, or professional caliber illustrators, from the word go, and the range and variety has been quite wide. I think that it's evident that science fiction and speculative fiction has attracted artists who felt that they could loosen up and let their imaginations go without being hamstrung by a lot of tight rules that govern many of the other outlets for illustration.

I feel that, as far as where science fiction illustration is going, it primarily depends on the people who buy the art, in choosing from among those artists who present themselves. I feel that science fiction, as a commercial outlet for illustration, attracts some people, some illustrators, because it allows



forms of freedom and less typing of the individual than the general magazine illustration field. It also attracts people who are trying to come up through the ranks, and, since this is one of the least competitive fields of illustration because of the pay scale basically, people who are less finished illustrators try to get samples and starts. Many, many illustrators use science fiction as a stepping stone.

I feel that the artists who present themselves to the buyers are going to determine the selection, but it's going to be the people like John over here who are going to set the character within the range that they have to choose from.

*JWC*: Ed says that it's the art director, the art selector, that sets the character. I think it would be advantageous if you would explain to the folks the different ways in which different art directors work with the artist. There's a great difference there.

*EMSH*: That's very true. In science fiction, which is of course the field in which I've done the major part of my illustration work, I have received assignments from a wide range of people. These would run from a specific assignment where I was told practically where to place the people, and how and what they were to be dressed like and so forth, through the case where I had to illustrate a story, but had no idea of the story, to the case where I was given a manuscript and given a free hand, and other cases where there's a discussion, give-and-take, an expression of ideas, to cases where they say: "We want something different from last month. We had a black cover last month, we want a red cover this month." Almost everything under the sun.

The illustrator, I feel, is happiest generally when he has a pretty wide latitude to work in and when he feels he isn't going to be typed, he isn't going to be expected to do regularly one type of thing, but has a fair amount of latitude in the selection of his style, in the selection of material to illustrate. I hope that answers that.

*JWC*: I think it gives them some idea. There's a considerable variation of the techniques by which an art director works with the artist. In the case of the system where the art director says: "I want you to paint a picture of a girl over here, and a man over here, and he's got a ray gun, and there's a space ship coming down there." the artist is not told what the story is about. He's told what the picture is, and how it's to be done. In this case I think it's entirely true that the art director establishes the character of the art.

My standard operating procedure is somewhat different. I usually give the artist the manuscript and tell him: "See what you can find, see what looks like a good picture to you." Recently I gave a manuscript to Schoenherr to try for a cover, a story by the name of Prologue To An Analog. He took it, stewed it over for four or five days, and brought it back and said: "Here's about all I can get out of this one. It's a dramatic story, it's got a lot in it, but it's not pictorial."

Sometimes you can't get a satisfactory cover out of a particular story. So that is not going to be a cover story. Instead we're going to have a cover for Poul Anderson's new yarn, The Longest Voyage. It's not always possible to get a cover out of a particular story. Also, what two different artists will see as the optimum cover picture can be entirely different, even given the same story. Because one of the things that determines it is that artist's particular interest, his particular specialty.



van Dongen does a lot of seascapes, for instance. You can therefore imagine that if there's a story in which there is a scene with a seascape possibility, he's apt to pick that area of the story. Kelly Freas likes to do the hard-boiled sergeant, so if there's a scene in that story in which there's an opportunity to present the hard-boiled, tough-looking sergeant, he's apt to pick that scene. I like to give the artist the manuscript and see what he gets out of it. I'm not an artist. I don't know what can be done with art. I'm interested to find out. If the artist can present something to me that I never thought of.....gee, this is fun! Now we got something new to play with.

I don't try to specify what the art should be. I want to find out what it should be. I know some things that it shouldn't be. It shouldn't be so busy, so complex, that the reader passing by the stand just gets a blurr of confusion. There are a lot of ways in which a very complex thing can be subdued to act as a mask, so that what looks in some respects like a very complex cover works out to be one strong dominant theme standing out against a mottled background. It isn't very easy to make any rules whatever in dealing with art. Sometimes I've gotten excellent results by saying, "Now this sort of thing can't be done." Six months later somebody who's heard me say that, and has thought: "Oh yea? Well, let me see", he'll come up with something that is precisely what I said couldn't be done. And this almost invariably makes a heck of a good job. It'll happen not only in stories (one form of art), but in the graphic art. You know that story, Needle, by Hal Clement. I had commented to him that you couldn't write a detective story in science fiction, it just didn't work. So that's why he wrote Needle.

Almost every time I've made one of those flat statements, it's been the cause for somebody doing a darn good piece of work that has been a lot of fun. I'm happy to make flat statements and have somebody prove me a liar; I always come out ahead! They may show me a liar, but they show me a darn good piece of art. What I'm trying to do is to find what can be done that's more effective in science fiction art. Science fiction art is not all that easy.

One of my greatest difficulties is that the modern art schools have gone over to this concept of abstract art and symbolism and impressionism. These, it turns out, mean: I don't have to learn how to draw, I can just put things on the paper and say, "That's what I want." They don't bother to learn the discipline of drawing. They don't bother to become draftsmen. That is the hard part of art. That is the drudgery. That's the thing they don't want to bother to learn. Then they come in and show me their blobs; and I don't happen to approve of their blobs. I had one young woman artist who spent about half an hour telling me how little I knew about art, because I didn't like her blobs. Sorry, my readers don't like blobs either. This is what I have found.

I'll tell you, incidentally, there's a friend of mine, a young art teacher. I'd been complaining about the quality of craftsmanship in the art school graduates. He said, "Well, there's one thing about it, you don't have to worry about the people of the future thinking that this was the kind of art we did. It won't last."

Not only do they fail to learn the discipline of draftsmanship, they also fail to learn the disciplines of their technique. They mix paints that won't mix. They mix their paints with improper materials, so that they slide off the canvas. They mix a lead white with a sulfide color, with the result that within about six months it's solid black. They don't learn any technique. This makes it very easy to do art, if that's what art is.



I have a real trouble getting men who will take the trouble to learn what science fiction is, and what art is. I am limited in what I can present in the way of art by the artists that I can find. I have the same limitations in stories, of course. There are limitations in the printing process. A painting loses about 20% of its brilliance when it goes through the reproduction process. If the artist doesn't overpaint his original, it's going to look dull and flat. This makes it difficult to judge the finished quality of the job you're going to work with.

There are a lot of very real problems. The economic problem is, of course, one of them. We unfortunately can not pay for our covers the way the Saturday Evening Post does. We don't seem to have quite as many subscribers. From the artists' viewpoint every one of those obstacles to his expression of what he wants is a damn nuisance. It may even appear to be the whimsical arbitrary dictatorial ideas of the editor. Many times the editor is in the peculiar position of having to be sort of like a telephone: he is here, and the other end of the telephone is six months in the future. I have to guess now how you people are going to react six months from now. Many times the artist is quite convinced that I've guessed wrong. Sometimes I have, but all I can do is go ahead and try guessing. My business: I'm a professional prophet. A prophet can remain in business so long as his guesses are right more often than they are wrong. And that's what I have to do, but they remain guesses. But I have to make a decision, I can't say, "Well, I think maybe, perhaps, but I'm not sure. Let's see, let me think about this another week." Meanwhile the printer says, "Well, we haven't got that cover in yet, so we'll have to print the magazine without the cover."

I've got to make a decision, whether it's right or wrong. There are a good many things that keep pushing at me; not only the fans, the artists do too. Sometimes it's a help, sometimes it's a headache. Economics, that pushes very hard. There are several artists that I've encountered who are very, very good. They are in some respects better than any of the artists I'm now using. The reason I'm not using them is that they don't get their work in on time. I cannot use an illustration that comes in three weeks after the magazine is printed. This is another thing that puts pressure on the artist. Now notice that the artist's job is in many respects much tougher than the author's job. The author is expressing what he wants to say. The artist who is given the assignment of illustrating his story is not permitted to say what he wants to say, he has to present what the author wanted to say. Sometimes this isn't easy, because the author didn't figure out what he wanted it to look like. His description may turn out to be quite contradictory, at which point the artist has the interesting problem of making a picture that illustrates something that has two different appearances. The artist has lots of problems; Ed, suppose you tell them some of the headaches you've run into on that.

EMSH: Well, before I do, John, I'd like to ask you, would you use Richard Powers on Astounding, working in the vein that his work normally is? He is the one in the last group who had the surrealist abstract blobs. And he's used on a great number of paperbacks. Would you use him on Astounding?

JWC: No, I would not. I wouldn't use that technique. Now, if he has another technique, fine.

EMSH: Yes, well, this is in a sense a point I was trying to get at earlier, that within the magazines the various artists present themselves, and they are selected by the art buyer, who may be buying on the basis of what he believes the audience wants. Now obviously a great number of paperback editors and art buyers believe that Powers is a good artist to illustrate their science fiction. You do not.



JWC: Our audiences are not the same.

EMSH: One of the things that I find most stimulating about science fiction, and what really keeps me in love with it is that science fiction has a lot of people in it who like a lot of things. And if you're an artist who likes to work in a variety of styles, you can find acceptance for the tight realism, for the character analysis, and for the blobs. You can keep free.

The headaches of art; of course I think you've outlined a number of them. Time is a big headache for many artists. You have to work rapidly in this field if you're going to have enough volume, especially if you concentrate primarily in science fiction, to keep yourself and your family in bread and butter. So you have to work rapidly, not only for the sake of the deadline, but in order to do enough work so that you can sustain yourself. However, I don't really feel deadlines are a headache unless they ask for finishes, as happens regularly in advertising, the next day, or the same day, or the day before mostly. That's the hardest.

SAM: You as an artist, your personal preference, what direction would you like to see science fiction art go in? Any of the directions we've shown here, or something else?

JWC: His direction, probably.

EMSH: Right, right, right, that's it! [Applause] I'm often amused at comments made by fans who take a very rigid stand on art. Because it seems to me that science fiction and fantasy is a field to stimulate and to broaden and to allow for growth and experience and all of those grand things. And when people say, "We want all Bronstell", or "We want all Powers", I think they're cutting themselves off from growth and living a little broader spectrum of life.

JWC: Shortly after I came to Astounding, when it was dear old Astounding Stories, I wanted to start a series of covers that would be astronomical color plates. I had quite a time getting that. There wasn't anybody in the business who could do a decent astronomical color plate. I worked at it, and asked for it, and gradually got work done in that direction. Schneeman did one of the first that I thought was pretty much what I wanted. Then Bonestell showed up, and did some beautiful stuff. You know, once you have done a job in science fiction, once you have done something, about this time everybody would say, "OK, now we've seen that, show us something new."

Well, about the time in the astronomical color plate business I was really getting them, it was time to change. For the next ten years I got astronomical color plates running out my ears. Now the astronomical color plate is something I can't use, because it is now the trademark, practically, the stamp of the juvenile space book. All of these juvenile How-To-Get-Into-Space and By-Rocket-To-The-Moon books, all of these come up with the astronomical color plate. This is not exactly a matter of a fad, but that when somebody has made the break-through of figuring out how this type of work can be done, then everybody starts saying, "Oh, that's how we do it", and starts doing it. You know what I mean on that, Ed?

EMSH: Sure.

SAM: John, what have you felt is the importance of science fiction art work in the sales of your magazine; in the purchase of it; to what degree is it important?



JWC: I'll be darned if I know. A while back Somerset Waters and Walt McBride were very interested in figuring out what type of cover sold the magazine best. So they went over the covers for five years, correlating the cover and the sales of the magazine for those five years. And they came to the conclusion that it didn't make a damn bit of difference what went on the cover. The sales were completely independent of the cover. I don't know what this means. I think what it means is that so long as the cover is a reasonably good job, my readers are willing to allow, and want, a great divergence, a great deal of difference and new approaches. They like it that way. With the result that it's impossible to say, "This is the type of cover they want."

Inside, the art is very important in helping the story along. One of the great problems the author has in science fiction is that he not only has to describe his characters; this is something that any author in any field of literature has to do; but in science fiction he also has to describe their world. In the mainstream literature if you say a man is in New York, you don't have to describe New York for him. In science fiction, the problem of describing the man's background is a really rugged one for the author. Here is where the artist can be of immense help. The black and white art I really feel does more for science fiction than the single cover.

SAM: I wanted to ask you, Ed, do you prefer to get a specific scene, to be told exactly what you are to draw in an interior or on a cover, or would you prefer to be given a manuscript, or, for that matter, a blank check, and someone says, "You just do me a cover"?

JWC: Who wouldn't like a blank check?

EMSH: You're right. The blank check, of course, would win hands down. That doesn't happen very often. The check has qualifications almost invariably. The major qualification is preliminary sketches before you go and spend the money you're not going to get if you're off track. As far as the manuscript goes, I'd prefer to have the story to read it, to get my own feeling for it, feeling for the characters, and so forth, and maybe know what they look like, rather than just get a couple of lines, which happens all too often in some places, and I never know. I've done many, many jackets, I've done many, many illustrations where to this day I've never read the story.

JWC: There is one item you might mention here, the inversion of the usual system. There's one cover, that Astounding cover of Ed's there that was on the screen a while back, the bears and the weird-looking monster. In that case the author had a look at the cover before the story was written. Ed invented the picture. The author wrote the story from it. The same is true of that cover with the man looking out the window on the moon of the five year quarantine section. Every now and then it's the artist that decides the story.

EMSH: I'd like to comment on that, if I may. I really get almost the greatest kick out of that type of situation. I think I get the most out of it that any artist can get out of science fiction in this sense: that I've just put a germ out, I've put a little fragment out, and a writer takes it and makes a story of it. It's fascinating to the artist, believe me, to see what ingenious ideas the writers come up with, and how they handle these things, how they manage it.

It's an outgrowth, it's a development from a fragment, whereas illustration is really just an adjunct and a reflection of a fragment of a story. So that any time a writer compliments me on how I've illustrated a story, well, I know it's just a pale reflection of the sense of satisfaction I have when I see a good story written around a cover I've done.



[Slide flashed on screen: Cover of Space Stories, January 1953, illustrating The Dark Side Of The Moon by Sam Merwin, painted by Ed Emsh]

SAM: Ed, one of your covers was just flashed on the screen. It was an action scene. Would you consider there are elements in that different than some of the action scenes we showed from way back?

EMSH: Well, I'm not sure of exactly what you mean.

SAM: What I mean is, if you had been given this cover to draw in 1932 or 1933, would it have been the same type of cover?

EMSH: Probably the style of illustration would have been somewhat different, because all of us are influenced by contemporary styles whether we like it or not, and this I believe reflects one of the schools of contemporary illustration. The technique of applying the paint and so forth and organization is a typical contemporary technique. I couldn't say much beyond that. If someone else has a comment one way or another, I'd like to know.

JWC: May I make this comment: that in an earlier period the color intensity range would have been much greater, and there would have been a feeling - you couldn't measure it with a protractor - but there would have been a feeling of angularity about everything in the picture. What this comes out to in terms of art terms I wouldn't know, but I think Ed can explain what I mean.

[Slide flashed on screen: Cover of Science Wonder Quarterly, Fall 1929, illustrating Shot Into Infinity by Otto Willi Gail, painted by Frank R. Paul]

EMSH: Well, yes, this though I believe does reflect a style of painting, an interpretation of reality as seen through the eyes of illustration in those days.

JWC: May I point out another difference. We have here loosely wandering ropes, freefall, with the rockets blasting full force. This is another thing that Ed would not be permitted in 195- whatever it was.

EMSH: But on the other hand, John, I've been encouraged to do just as flagrantly wrong ideas on covers simply for the effect, in some magazines. I will admit that though I believe in doing scientifically accurate work in many cases, I have, in doing each individual job, standards that apply to that one, and that one only. And I will do jobs, gladly, that have an effect which I know full well are not supportable scientifically.

JWC: This brings up that lovely question: Is it always honest to tell the truth? And the answer is: No, it is not. If you want to be honest you must make statements that convey to your audience the correct meaning. A beautiful example, a purely geometrical example, is the problem of perspective. If you do a picture of a man with his hand pointing like that - toward the viewer - you make his hand much bigger than the other one. Now this is not truth. It's honest, but it's not truth. Many times it is necessary to distort the truth to produce an honest impression.

SAM: John, there's one question I've always wanted to ask you, and that is: You began a vogue of showing faces on covers. You've had a great many of them, and you still occasionally do. Do you have any specific reason for that?



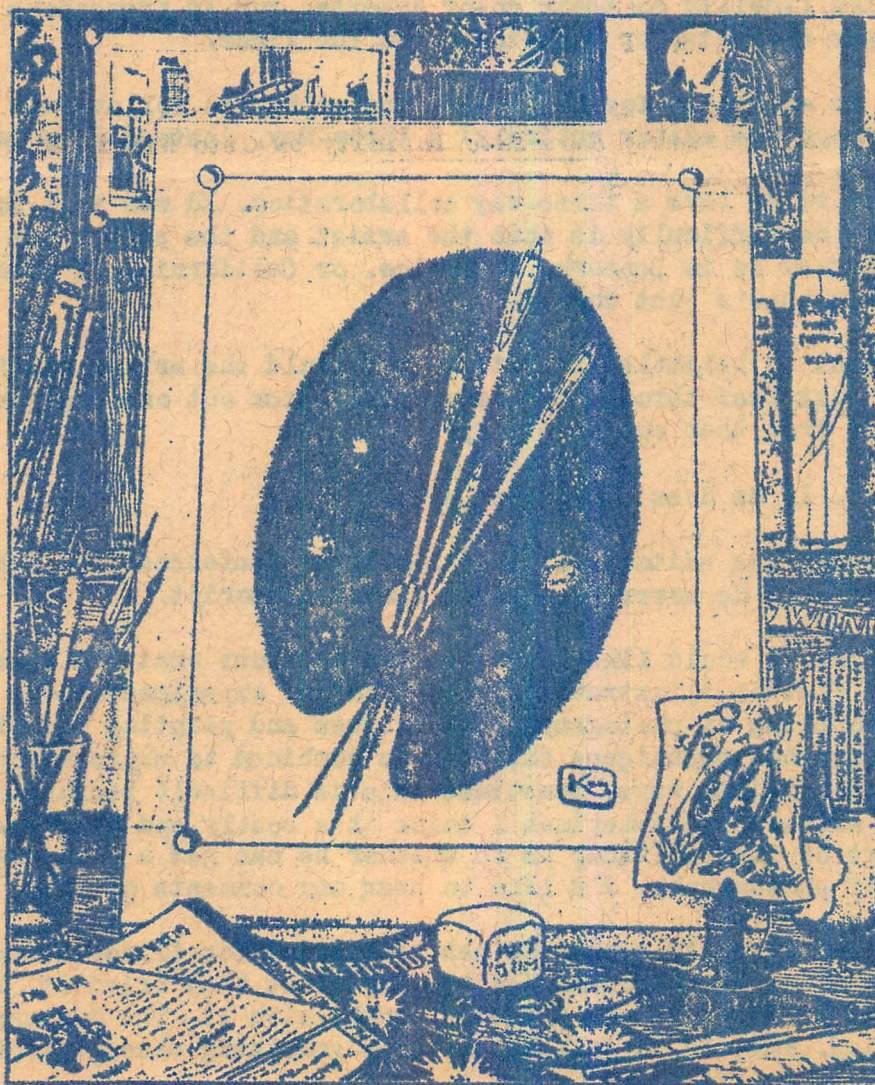
JWC: Yes, I have two specific reasons. The first is Hubert Rogers; he likes doing portraits. The other is van Dongen; he likes doing portraits too.

SAM: You mean that it isn't necessarily what you would have ordered?

JWC: No. As I say, I turn over the manuscript to the artist, and let him go ahead

SAM: I would like to elaborate a little on some of the technical points that John brought out previously. For example the limitations of the technical ability to reproduce a drawing. Things are better now than they were in 1928 or 1929. Most covers then were just three colors, and they didn't have as high a fidelity, and you couldn't put in as many subtle lines or shades of color. You had to very sharply differentiate where something began and where something ended, and this probably contributed toward the poster effect. Now, an artist can bring to an editor a sample work which is a magnificent piece of artwork on the canvas, but which would just look like hell when reproduced. It would just be awful.

JWC: Then there's that lovely cover that van Dongen did for the Hal Clement story, Mission Of Gravity. You should have heard the engravers scream. You remember that one, with the dark mass of the tank-like vehicle coming through this mass of dark, low vegetation, with a thunderstorm sky over it, it was all in very dark tones? You should try picking this up with photography. It looked fine in the original, but the engravers really screamed on that one.





SAM: And in many cases the colors that you see on the cover, particularly the shades of color, are not the same ones that were on the original illustration. Not only because of the quality of the illustrations. A very graphic example of that was a group of slides that I showed on the history of science fiction art a year ago, where we took a Bonestell cover as originally published on an issue of Air Trails And Science Frontiers, and I wouldn't have paid five dollars for the original of that pretty sad, washed out thing, which was reproduced in three colors, and then the very same original reproduced in Willy Ley's book, Conquest Of Space.

JWC: Four colors, originally. One of the other difficulties: there is not only the technology of producing the color plates, there is the additional technology of printing them. When you are printing them by the 100,000, sometimes the press doesn't do such a nice job. Even the best printing facilities get out of whack, out of adjustment. I think you must have been unfortunate and gotten one of the lousy samples that will get turned out, the lemons. Almost any production line product does have lemons. It's kind of like mutation. It is conceivable that something could go wrong with the press, so that it printed a better picture than the artist painted. It's conceivable. That's like mutation, it's conceivable that some.... woosh....in the genes and you get a superman. You're more apt to get a moron.

SAM: Well, two comments. One: It's quite possible for a good engraver to improve an artist's drawing. I've had that happen, in Science Fiction Plus, where the reproduction was superior to the original, but of course we were using five color plates, and paying a good deal of money for them. On the other hand, Life magazine gets some very high fidelity on their color inserts, run in tremendous quantities. Are there any other comments, or questions from the floor?

Query: Is there an advantage for the artist and author to collaborate directly, without going through the editor entirely? A three-way, instead of a two-way job.

JWC: Many times we do have a three-way collaboration. Ed can tell you about some of those. Usually the difficulty is that the artist and the editor are in New York, and the author, he may be in Denmark, or Mexico, or California. Of course he may be in New York. But that's just chance.

Query: I don't want to belittle the artist, but could the artist sometimes when he is in a hurry just leaf through the manuscript, pick out one page and read that, and make a picture from that one page only?

JWC: Sure, sure. If he does a good job of it.

SAM: In many cases the editor will read him three sentences from the story and say, "Illustrate that." He never even gives him a manuscript.

EMSH: That's right. I would like to say something about what I'd like to see happen in science fiction illustration. I like to see experimentation, and I'd like to see the coupling of photographic techniques and painting techniques, and any other visual graphic techniques that can be combined to express something in somewhat fresh and original ways. Sometimes this is difficult because of the time involved for the artist, and sometimes I think it's costly and hazardous, it's a gamble on the part of the publisher as to whether he can get a good engraving from some types of photographs. I'd like to hear any comments on that.

JWC: Straight photographic technique has been tried for illustrating science fiction covers, you may remember some of the magazines that tried it. No magazine has ever succeeded in doing it and pleasing people with it. The montage technique has also been tried. What Ed is talking about is something else, more like the



films he is doing. That gets us back, essentially, to the pure symbolism. And my impression, the impression I've gathered from the reader reactions is that the readers want more of a feeling of absolute reality. They don't want symbolism, they don't want the vagueness, they want the feeling that this world of the future is real. Not merely a fantastic vague sort of symbol.

SAM: I'd just like to interject there that I agree with that comment. I've always had my own theory: that science fiction itself is so fantastic that every effort of the author and the artist should be directed towards making the story believable, obtaining that willing suspension of disbelief, and that an abstract drawing tends to work in the opposite direction, makes it more difficult to believe the story, rather than easier.

EMSH: Well, I would like to disagree. I feel that there is room for the type of work that you both describe, and I'm all for it. And I like to see good, the very best writing, and the very best illustration, to support that. But on the other hand I also feel that you don't write poetry with prose, and that I would like to see the field wide enough, and the audience broad enough to incorporate and include experimental writing and experimental art work and symbolic evocative work, as well as the tight firm rendering of reality.

Here's one objection, incidentally, that I have to the realism of the future. As in the case of those old illustrations of futuristic gadgets, the artist is invariably not ahead of time, he can't be. We haven't got time machines. He's just reflecting what we have right now. I've heard the comment many times, and I think it's a valid one: If you try to make a futuristic machine, you have no idea of what it's going to be, except in terms of what we consider contemporary and futuristic now. Which is tail-finned, and chromed-up, and a few more buttons.

JWC: One of the comments I have made to a number of the artists that come in; the art schools tend to teach the proposition: Don't try to compete with the camera, that's not the artist's job, therefore they're not emphasizing the ability to realistic draftsmanship. That's fine, but there are no cameras that I know of that can take pictures of the future. That's why I want the artist to use realism.

Comment by Hans Stefan Santesson: Just one point - two points actually. The point was made about symbolic covers. I'd like to point out that on Fantastic Universe we've used fantasy covers. Fandom and the general readership failed to show their appreciation of this. There was, if I remember right, a drop in circulation between 10,000 and 15,000. Enough point one. Second. I don't think it has been made quite clear - and I believe Ed will agree - that very often the artist is working while facing several handicaps. He is inadequately paid. He is not given time enough to produce what is wanted - not three weeks, not even two weeks, but two days sometimes - by the art director, or whoever he is dealing with.

JWC: Not while Miss Tarrant is running things!

Quarry: Mr. Campbell, as one of your ultimate consumers, I would like to register one protest. I have enjoyed the artwork, but dammit will you stop giving away the punch line by putting some of the artwork too far in advance of the interior story? I've had several of them. I can't give you any specifics, unfortunately.

JWC: There have been a couple of cases where both the artist and I made the grievous error of allowing a real giveaway to go through. We try to avoid that. This is a little difficult when we're trying to illustrate a story without telling what the story is about. Sometimes we slip.

SAM: Our time has run out, so I'd like to thank the panelists, Ed Bushwiller and John Campbell. /Applause/



# FANZINES WANTED

Revised List

Cash - Trade - Etc.

CRY: #122, 120, 119, 118, 116, 112, 104 and earlier.  
FANTASY TIMES: #64, 62, 61, 60, 51 to 47 inc., 45 to 40 inc., 38, 37, 35, 31, 30, 27, 25 to 11 inc., 3.  
FANZINE INDEX: #2 (Pavlat)  
HYPHEN: #29, 20, 18, 17, 16, 14 to 9 inc., 7 and earlier.  
SHAGGY: #56, 55, 54, 53, 52, 39, 38, 36, 35, 32, 31, 30, 28 to 15 inc., 13, 12.  
YANDRO: #97, 88, 74, 71, 64, 62, 60, 58, 56, 53, 51, 49, 47, 43 and earlier.

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