

Science Fiction NEWS

FUTURIAN SOCIETY OF SYDNEY

1939 - 1969

An informal reunion on the 29th November brought together a number of formerly active Futurians not heard from for some years to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the foundation of the FSS as the first science fiction organisation in Australia to get beyond the preliminary stage. The inaugural meeting was actually on the 5th, but the last Saturday in the month was found the nearest convenient date.

Only foundation member attending was William D. Veney; another, Bert F. Castellari, phoned to apologise for being unable to make it as he intended. Bill recalled for scientifictionists of another generation the days when a youthful group interested in what was then a highly esoteric literature decided to look for ways of helping themselves to enjoy it better, and adopted the name Futurian to show their support for one side in a controversy of the time in American SF activists. The New York Futurians produced many noted writers and editors -- Wollheim, Pohl, Lowndes, Blish, Kornbluth, Wilson, Kubilins, Michel, Wylie, Bok, Kyle, Asimov -- but also stressed the idea of interest in SF being only one expression of a dynamic approach to life. Science fiction was felt to be in a way limiting as

a label. "A Futurian was something more than just a science fiction fan. A Futurian always had an interest in the changing world, did not bury himself in a pile of musty magazines, but looked forward to seeing something of those magazine dreams coming true. In that sense, to be a Futurian is to be the possessor of an honored distinction..." Wollheim wrote later.

It has always been hard to do much of positive value to advance the cause of science fiction in Australia, but for most of the FSS' more active period it was virtually impossible. Wartime conditions made anything other than a small discussion group out of the question, and the 40's and 50's saw little improvement. The dominant factor remained the lack of available SF, practically nothing being produced locally and very little being imported. Wartime exchange difficulties prevented most American publications being generally imported, and SF was discriminated against in a vicious system that amounted to censorship. What SF was published in Britain did not necessarily reach Australia at all or get adequate distribution if it did. Therefore SF remained very little known.

A library to form a central source of reading was contemplated from the first, established in 1947 and gradually built up into a respectable collection. It became eventually the main activity, and although it declined in importance greatly from the middle 50's it stands as the Society's main achievement today.

The 30th anniversary meeting concluded with a film screening featuring the 21st Century production Stranger Than Science Fiction, covering the role of SF as prophecy. It is significant that the value of early SF as the only available avenue for scientific

forecasting and speculation can now be frankly acknowledged in the mass media.

VISION OF TOMORROW

Issues 2 and 3 of Vision of Tomorrow have come to hand, and continue along the same lines as the first issue indicated. The format remains pleasing in effect, with the exception of the rather feeble illustrations; No. 2 is gluebacked, alas, and due to difficulties with distribution has had its September date overprinted December. No. 3, November, has the cover layout once used by most SF magazines with vortical picture flanked by side strip, and features interior color in two old cover reproductions -- unfortunately this is done badly, both being cropped in process, but the idea is new.

Contents are similar to the first issue, mainly by British writers with an Australian element. Tubb, Coney, Rankine, Wodhams, Bulmer, Douglas Fulthorpe, Dan Morgan, Temple, Lee Harding, Maurice Whitta, David Rome, Eric C. Williams, Philip E. High, Brian Waters, S. J. Bounds and Brian Stableford. Where are the Europeans? Franz Rottensteiner with an item on Science Fiction in Germany is the only entrant. Walter Gillings' The Impatient Dreamers continues the story of early British SF activities, a valuable contribution indeed, and a book review department appears under the repellant title Fantasy Review.

On the whole the magazine gives a favorable impression, with the generally mature tone that was once (believe it or not) characteristic of

Vision of Tomorrow

British SF magazines, it compares favorably with the current American field in many ways. On the other hand, none of the fiction in the first three issues is very remarkable, and much of it would hardly see print if material was more plentiful. Much of it badly needs intelligent editing: it is distressing to see such blunders as a hypothetical planet called "Zen" or even "Karamba"; it is baffling to read of a liver transplant as something that might be possible in 50 years or so; it is beyond understanding to have an Earthlike environment on Venus!

Nominally published in Australia, this magazine has not yet been on general sale here but only in Britain. Let us hope this problem can be overcome as soon as possible.

Contributions from Australian writers are welcomed by the publisher, Ronald E. Graham, at Box 53, P.O., Revesby, 2212.

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FILMS

MOON ZERO TWO is being advertised as "the first Space Western", realising a nightmare familiar to older scientifiictionists. It had to come, one supposes. But actually it doesn't sound too bad, though Monthly Film Bulletin's verdict (Oct) is "Just about bad enough to fill older audiences with nostalgia for the inspired innocence of Flash Gordon, or even the good old days of Abbott and Costello in outer space."

Films

Warren Mitchell as the villain could be a giggle.
Book version reviewed elsewhere.

TOMORROW is announced as a "Space Musical", which has indeed been done (Just Imagine of 1930 had a Martian expedition in the year 2000), but the information to date is nebulous. It features a cat-awauling group called Tomorrow and is supposed to have "a new musical sound and a fresh original concept in movie-making". We're going to hear more than enough of this offering as a heavy promotion is threatened.

The DAY OF THE DOLPHIN by Robert Morle is announced for filming, Roman Polanski to produce and direct.

REVENGE OF FRANKENSTEIN is visible here and there in Australia. Film Weekly comments that the Monster "doesn't know whether it's Arthur or Martha" by this time.

The ILLUSTRATED MAN is also showing but hard to catch. From all accounts excellent and worth pursuing, based on three SF stories by Bradbury fitted into the rather weak framework of the tattooed man. The memorably nasty The Veld, The Long Rain, and The Last Night of the World.

DOFFELGANGER is not based on Heard's novel but on the tired old identical counter-Earth idea. You know, the planet behind the sun with a duplicate of everything. A pity it didn't remain in the medieval alchemical literature where it presumably began. That title might be changed if the flick gets here.

NEW BOOKS

- ANTHONY, Piers and MARGROFF, Robert E.
The RING. Macdonald. 254 p. 25/- (1st Ace PB
1968) Review: Analog Mch 1969 p. 173
- BRUNNER, John [Kilian Houston] 1934-
NOT BEFORE TIME; science fiction and fantasy (sic)
New English Library. 128 p. PB 3/6d
- QUICKSAND. Sidgwick. 240 p. 27/-; Bantam. 217 p.
PB 75c.
- STAND ON ZANZIBAR. Macdonald. xvii, 507 p. 42/-;
Ballantine (01713) 650 p. PB \$1.65 (1st Doubleday
1968) Reviews: Amazing Sep 1969 p. 123; Vision of
Tomorrow Dec 1969 p. 62
- CAIDIN, Martin, 1927-
The MENDELOV CONSPIRACY. Moredith. 274 p. \$5.95
- CONKLIN, [Edward] Groff, 1904-1968, ed.
SCIENCE FICTION ODDITIES. Rapp. 156 p. 21/-
- COOPER, Edmund, 1926-
FIVE TO TWELVE. Putnam. 153 p. \$4.50
- CRICHTON, Michael, 1942-
The ANDROMEDA STRAIN. Knopf. 295 p. \$5.95; Cape.
295 p. 25/-. Reviews: Analog Sep 1969 p. 158;
Venturo Nov 1969 p. 105; Library Jnl. 15.6.69 p.
2485; N.Y. Times 8.6.69 p. 4; Newsweek 26.5.69
p. 125; Time 6.6.69 p. 112
- DICK, Philip K[indred], 1928-
The PRESERVING MACHINE. Ace (67800). 317 p. PB
95c

FANTHORPE, R[obert] Lionel

SPACE FURY. Arcadin. 192 p. \$3.50

GREEN, Joseph

An AFFAIR WITH GENIUS. Gollancz. 190 p. 25/-

HARNESSE, Charles L[eonard]

The ROSE. Panther. 158 p. PB 5/-. Contents:

The Rose; The Chess Players; The New Reality.

(The Rose in Authentic SF 29, Mch 1953; collection Compact 1966; Sidgwick 1968)

Review: Mag of F&SF Jly 1966 p. 32

HARRISON, Harry ed.

BLAST OFF: S.F. for Boys. Faber. 237 p. 21/-

HIGH, Philip E[m]pson]

TWIN PLANETS. Dobson. 159 p. 18/-

KNIGHT, Damon [Francis] 1922-

TURNING ON. Sphere. 159 p. PB 5/-. 13 stories.

(1st Doubleday 1966; Ace 1967; Gollancz 1967)

-- ed.

ORBIT 5; The Best all-new science fiction of the year. Putnam. 222 p. \$4.95

LYMINGTON, Joan

The GREEN DRIFT. Hodder. 189 p. PB 4/- (1st

Hodder 1965)

MACKLIN, John

A LOOK THROUGH SECRET DOORS. Ace (49025). 156 p.

PB 60c

Current Books

MAGIDOFF, Robert ed.

RUSSIAN SCIENCE FICTION, 1968: an Anthology. N.Y. University Press and London University Press, 1968. 3-211 p. \$6.50. 13 stories, translated by Helen Jacobson. Reviews: Analog Oct 1968 p. 160; Christian Science Monitor 14.3.68 p. 13; Library Jnl 15.2.68 p. 772; Saturday Review 22.6.68 p. 68; Times Lit. Suppt. 20.3.69 p. 287

MAXWELL, John C.

The WORLD MAKERS. Arcadia. 192 p. \$3.50

MERLE, Robert, 1908-

The DAY OF THE DOLPHIN. Simon & Schuster. 320 p. \$5.95. Trans. by Helen Weaver from French: Un animal doué de raison. Reviews: Analog Sep 1969 p. 160; Library Jnl. 1.5.69 p. 1899; N.Y. Times 13.7.69 p. 4; Saturday Review 28.6.69 p. 39

MERRIL Judith, 1923-

DAUGHTERS OF EARTH. Doubleday. 255 p. \$4.95 (1st Gollancz 1968). Contents: Project Nursemaid; Daughters of Earth; Homecalling.

NOLAN, William F[rancis], 1928- ed.

A WILDERNESS OF STARS; stories of Man in conflict with Space. Shorbourne. 276 p. \$5.95. Introd by Shelly Lowenkopf.

POYER, Joe

NORTH CAPE. Doubleday. 231 p. \$4.95

RANKINE, John

The JANUS SYNDROME. Hale. 190 p. 18/-

SILVERBERG, Robert

TO LIVE AGAIN. Doubleday. 231 p. \$4.95

-- et al.

THREE FOR TOMORROW: 3 original novellas [sic] of science fiction. Meredith. 204 p. \$5.95.
Contents: How it was when the Past went away, by Silverberg; The Eve of Rumoko, by Roger Zelazny; We all die naked, by James Blish.

SIMAK, Clifford D[onald] 1904-

TIME AND AGAIN. Ace. (81000). 256 p. PB 75c.
(1st as Time Quarry in Galaxy Oct-Dec 1950.
As Time and Again, Simon & Schuster 1951;
Heinemann 1955; as First he died, Dell PB 1953.
In German as Tod aus der Zukunft; in Italian as
Oltre l'Invisibile) Reviews: Astounding US Dec
1951 p. 159; Galaxy Aug 1951; Super Science
Br. 7

THOMAS, Theodore L. and WILHELM, Kate

The CLONE. Mayflower. 141 p. PB 4/- (1st Bork-
ley PB 1965; Hale 1968. Based on short story
The Clone by Thomas in Fantastic Dec 1959)
Reviews: Analog Aug 1966 p. 166; Galaxy June
1966 p. 145

TUBB, E[dwin] C[harles] 1919-

ESCAPE INTO SPACE. Sidgwick. 188 p. 24/-.
Review: Vision of Tomorrow Nov 1969 p. 34

van VOGT, A[lfred] E[lton] 1912-

The FAR-OUT WORLDS OF A. E. van VOGT. Ace (H92).
223 p. PB 60c. 12 stories. Review: Amazing
Nov 1969 p. 119

Current Books

van VOGT, A. E. contd.

(name misspelled van Voght)

The WEAPON SHOPS OF ISHER. New English Library. 127 p. PB 5/- (Based on version in Thrilling Wonder Feb 1949, revised to incorporate shorts The Seesaw, Astounding July 1941, and The Weapon Shop, Astounding Dec 1942. 1st Greenberg 1951; Weidenfeld 1952; Ace Double PB 1954; Nova PB 1954) Reviews: Astounding US Oct 1951 p. 143; Galaxy Sep 1951; New Worlds 18; N.Y. Times 5.8.51; Australasian Post 19.3.53

VONNEGUT, Kurt Jr., 1922

SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE, or, The Children's Crusade. Delacorte. \$5.95. NB, not SF, but involves hallucinations of the future, another planet etc. and may be of interest.

WALLACE, Ian

CROYD. Berkley (X616). 184 p. PB 60c.

Review: Analog Oct 1969 p. 175

WEINBAUM, Stanley G[raumann] 1900-1935

The BLACK FLAME. Avon. 223 p. PB 75c. Includes The Dawn of Flame. (The Black Flame in Startling Jan 1939; Fantastic Story Mag Spr 1952. The Dawn of Flame in Dawn of Flame and other stories, a memorial volume, 1936. In Thrilling Wonder June 1939. Both together in book form, Fantasy Press 1948.) Weinbaum wrote two dozen stories in a year and a half, was generally acknowledged as among the top writers of the day and grossly overrated, now largely forgotten. At his best, as in this book, recommended as slightly dated but pleasant reading.

REVIEWS

LOGAN'S RUN

By W. F. Nolan and G. C. Johnson

Gollancz, 1967

SEBC, 1969

FIVE TO TWELVE

by Edmund Cooper

Putnam, 1968

US SEBC, 1969

The similarity between these is that they both examine the results of an existing social change in the very near future by showing what happens to one individual. Neither is a "nice" book; there are sections in both which are not for the squeamish, as both depict a decadent society, but there the similarity ends.

Logan's Run deals with the result of the present trend towards a larger part of the population being in the lower age group. N. and J. suggest that by 1970 over 75% will be under 21, by 1980 the figure will be 79.7 and by 1990 it will be 82.4%. They don't go into dates precisely but leave the reader with the impression that somewhere about 2000 the present plague of student riots etc. culminate in a "Little War" which puts youth in charge of government. Their immediate fiat is to ensure this will continue by an automatic system which removes everyone reaching the age of 21: a system guaranteed by (a) all children being branded with a timed mark which shows when they reach the terminal age, (b) a forced education system which completes education at 7, crowds adolescence into 8-to-14 and allows a working life of 15-to-21, and (c) a corps of hunters which police the regulations. Those who do not report to a sleep center when the flower mark on the palm of the hand turns black but instead run are chased and killed as a risk to society.

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Some details are filled in; it is made obvious that it is a highly automated society where goods and services appear by technological magic, there are penal colonies in the Arctic in a frozen reverse hell, and food is collected from the ocean. Underground (both socially and topologically) gangs of hoodlum types roam certain disused parts of the cities.

The story centers on one Logan, whose flower changes color and who, though a hunter, elects to run instead of going out meekly. His run is made more interesting by the presence of a girl friend picked up on the way and by an undetailed transport system which shows signs suggesting the world's technical magic is coming unstuck. The two are shuttled around randomly in a way which reminded me (both in the manner of movement and in N and J's style) of the way Gully Foyle jumped about in Bester's *The Stars My Destination*. They are chased by another hunter, have trouble with a monster computer and finally escape to Mars where a "resistance worker" is sending rebels like them.

The good points of the story are: the style -- short sentences and paragraphs generally in a clipped narrative, a sequence of action which kept me reading at a good steady pace, the way a lot of details were just sketched in and I was made to deduce the rest. The latter, of course, means it's not a book for the lazy reader: N and J have written it so the reader's imagination has to complement theirs. Finally, they have described a society which is a logical development of present conditions, showing youth taking over running the world and as might be expected making a mess of it. That is both inevitable and just, as N and J point out, for all

the gadgets enjoyed by Logan's contemporaries are left-overs from the oldies who have been removed from the scene.

What's wrong? N and J have only developed one side of the picture to suit the story. This is an accepted and permissible rule in SF -- the logical nature of the development can be restrained (to use a computer term) in any reasonable way, but they have only noted that more babies are surviving without noting that people are living longer at the other end. Indeed, I have read equally gloomy predictions that the world will finish crowded out by retired people.

Secondly and, of course, of less importance, there is no "message" of social criticism. I think that if N and J had held up these trends and shown what was wrong in them the book would have moved from the satisfactory class into the very good. As it is it only entertains and does not instruct: it shows a state of affairs and expresses no opinion. These are the only faults and they are pardonable.

Five to Twelve concerns the society which may evolve from the Pill, and that puts it bluntly, and shows that it is a timely book dealing with a really current problem. Cooper makes one assumption (an SF writer is only allowed one impossible thing before breakfast, unlike the Red Queen), that the continued use of this modern pharmaceutical invention will result in an increase in the female half of the population, both in number and in physical and mental strength. This happens over a couple of hundred years until finally a world run by women is found, twelve of them to every five men. The roles of the sexes are reversed; women work and compete

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for the men they want as mates, women take men as "mistresses" if they don't feel like a permanent connection, and so on. Over the years of the development of this situation no wars took place because population pressure was decreased by reduction of rate of increase (this is, of course, another modern trend which N and J ignored for the sake of their plot).

The key character is one Dion Quern. He is picked up by an older woman when trying to burgle her apartment. She decides to keep him and wants a child from him, which she gets with no effort by herself by using a complete foster mother.

I get the impression Cooper has been whetting his knife over a few items for some time now and now, licking his lips, he has a good stab at a few ways of modern life while exploring how society may be changed by extension of modern trends. He points out that there are surer and cheaper means of achieving the same results as the Pill, but suggests that the pharmaceutical companies will ensure their products are bought because these keep the turnover going day by day and hence keep profits rolling in. He makes it clear that three children per couple (today's rough average) does not mean the mother is tied down for only 27 months, but that she becomes a "programmed teaching machine" for 13 years: I personally agree with him here but feel his figure is low. Twenty years, from what I can see, is more like it, and I share his concern for the effort our women folk put into this and agree with his implication that this is often a partial waste of great ability.

Now here we have the big difference between this book and Logan's Run. Even though Cooper en-

tortains with his work, he doesn't stop there but presses on to attack what he has observed. He hasn't tried to solve our problems but he has displayed them and let the reader know he doesn't like them, lifting his work above entertainment into criticism of these aspects of modern society.

Finally he shows how the man-woman-children relationship will persist no matter how much the overall pattern changes, and suggests that women by themselves would make as much a mess of things as N and J's youth would (or men by themselves would).

Quern's end is like that of Orwell's character in 1984 -- his brainwashed, drycleaned, preshrunk and hung out to dry so that he won't be a disturbance to milady's stable world. However, before that happens he has passed his disturbing genes on to eight sons and it is clear the oscillation he starts is not one to be damped out.

It's a good book. What I disliked was some of the language and the many pages given over to the bedroom (and elsewhere) shenanigans between Quern and his mate-for-marriage and mate-for-issue. The latter is part of the plot but I feel it could have been included more subtly than it was. The former, I believe, should have been avoided completely. These are personal dislikes but they put this book on the restricted list for younger folk. His technical innovations are outrageous to an engineer. The one-man fliers, though necessary to the plot, are not possible, being closer to witches' broomsticks of fantasy than extensions of today's transport machinery.

However, this is a good book. It is more of a "literary" book; Cooper's sentences are works of art which double and redouble through well struct-

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ured phrases and contain a wondrous variety of words. His characters are all Oscar Wilde-ish, speaking in delightfully epigrammatic ways with an occasional spoonerism thrown in. The action is nothing for marvelling but he holds the reader by the spell of this lousy middle of tongues we call English: whether we take a section which is descriptive prose or conversational narrative it is well written, and it seems not as the result of hard labor but of natural fluency.

Both books assume a present trend will continue, both neglect factors which now exist and will probably cancel their theses; both develop the chosen theme logically within the chosen frame of reference; both give a picture of a society which is our own, distorted by our looking down the mirrored tunnel towards the future. One is good because it is stronger in action, the other because it is well written.

Both are recommended as meeting the SF criterion of following through from a basic assumption. However much we may disagree with that original choice, if the author builds a structure consistent with the foundation the critic must agree with his result.

-- Ronald B. Ward

The CASSIOPEIA AFFAIR Gollancz, 1968
by Chloë Zerwick and Harrison Brown SEBC, 1969

These days "science fiction" is loosely interpreted, to put it charitably, or used as a come-on by unscrupulous publishers if you prefer, so that for every SF book issued there is probably about

.3 doubtful. Sorting the real from the spurious is one of the functions that make an Association essential. But quite apart from all the mysticism represented as science, adventure set on imaginary worlds and so on, there are cases that may confuse unsophisticated reviewers without the necessary background, like this book. The Saturday Review, Library Journal and Christian Science Monitor all reviewed it, none making clear whether it was real SF or marginal. Yet it is unquestionably sound SF, even though the action is mostly political intrigue complicated by personal relationships.

A full-scale project to monitor radio noise for possible interstellar signals is a good suggestion for spending money without much hope of any results, let alone returns, and for just this reason might come to appeal to the authorities in time. Certainly until it has been established there is always the long chance of missing something of incalculable value. Reaching for the stars surely has limited meaning without the hope of finding other intelligences, and finding them first by picking up their messages is an attractive idea.

Well then, what happens when against most expectations the first clear message is recorded? Zerwick and Brown tell a powerful story of human (and subhuman) responses among those who become involved as a consequence. A thoughtful adult view of what could happen, in fine detail. The intensity of writing makes apparent occasional flaws, particularly unnecessary vagueness with dates, but the overall effect is excellent.

-- The Po'sun

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The DREAMING JEWELS.
by Theodore Sturgeon

Gollancz, 1969
\$2-70

"They caught the kid doing something disgusting..." and we're away at the gallop. Sturgeon's first novel, back in print after too many years. If by any chance you haven't read it yet, it's a strange story of strange people, a boy who ran away to become a freak-show midget and his friends and enemies in a complex and original plot. The science is somewhat far out -- crystalline life-forms from beyond Earth lying around waiting to be discovered, for one thing -- but logically developed. And in a rarely meaningful story. Sturgeon's talent is such to discourage imitation: it is still original and individual.

PLAYER PIANO
by Kurt Vonnegut Jr.

Avon (NS16) 1969
PB US 95c

Another new edition of a first novel. This satirical look at an automated economy and its social meaning is completely up to date, quite an achievement. SF worked over all the problems in a general way long before, but Vonnegut was the first to give a rounded picture of the way automation was -- and is -- taking America and bring out some of the obvious snags and some suggested remedies, all in terms of what was happening by 1952, and as a result the book caught on with a broader public and enjoyed mild notoriety for a while. It certainly deserved popular success more than Orwell's wretched 1984 and its ilk: be that as it may, here it is again, as fresh, alive and right to the point as ever. Besides the basic theme, man made obsolete by automation, there is mystery, skullduggery and a few laughs.

MOON ZERO TWO

By John Burke

Pen PB, 1969

141 p. 70c

Based on the original story for the Hammer film
(not the actual script, Michael Carreras did that)
by Gavin Lyall, Frank Hardman and Martin Davison.

The film is being plugged as "the first Space Western", which is rather misleading. The book might have run in Thrilling Wonder or Planet without causing any stir, and is more in the tradition of Hamilton or Kuttner than of Anthony Gilmore. The style is more hardboiled detective.

Where the "Western" smear comes from is the false analogy of the "frontier" in space travel and exploitation 50 years from now to the "frontier" of the American West of romantic imagination. The plot here involves villainy over mining and salvage rights in a time when the Moon is colonised and being mined (unbelievably) by individuals like a glorified Lightening Ridge. Quite a lot is not clear -- the political setup which is hinted at is most baffling, for instance -- but read as a straightforward thriller it's quite a good book.

-- G. S.

SEARCH THE SKY

by Frederik Pohl and C. M. Kornbluth

Rapp & Whiting, 1968

\$2-35

Pohl and Kornbluth rarely made the most of their talents as a team. Their first novel, The Space Merchants, has endured very well even in the mangled text of the book version (read it as Gravy Planet in early Galaxy if you get a chance), becoming enough of a standard book to be plugged on the

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ABC. But the rest? All ingenious, full of ideas never properly developed, disappointing. Search the Sky went pretty well unnoticed in 1954 and I had assumed that I hadn't missed much until asked to review this first British edition. It certainly hasn't the pace and impact of *The Space Merchants*, but it's good pointed satire with good SF background and leaves their other books for dead.

Interstellar flight, with innumerable Earth-like planets found and settled over centuries. The isolation of the distances and times involved and the evolution of different societies. This is the setting and some of its implications are brought out. Beginning with a stagnating world where one of the rare interstellar ships -- one or two in a generation as it must be, not the regular traffic supposed in juvenile SF -- brings disturbing news of worlds dropping out of contact, we follow an expedition to Earth via several systems by a clandestine faster-than-light vessel, logically kept a secret for good reasons.

On the way there are three episodes with degenerate cultures: one ultra-feminist, one ultra-conformist in a special way, one identifying rank with age in rigid authoritarianism. All effectively satirise trends we all know. Finally Earth, and essentially the culture of Kornbluth's earlier *The Marching Morons*, a teeming world of subhumans kept running by a hidden caste of super-genii.

Good entertainment, and plenty to think about. Don't pass it by.

— The Bo'sun

ANNIVERSARIES

First issues -- Future Fiction, 1939. Companion to Science Fiction, ed. Charles D. Hornig. Other Worlds, 1949. An offbeat digest edited by "Robert Webster" later revealed as Ray Palmer. Often very interesting, completely erratic with the best and worst SF and non-SF together. Science Fiction Adventures, 1952. Ed. Lester Del Rey, fairly good but doomed by the overcrowding of the field. 1st issue misnumbered 6. Dynamic Science Fiction, also 1952. Ed. Robert Lowndes, same applies. Infinity, 1955. Ed. Larry Shaw, of high standard.

John W. Campbell quietly replaced F. Orlin Tremaine as editor of Astounding, 1937.

Authors first appearing --

- 1941. Ray Bradbury (with Henry Hasse). Pendulum, Super Science
- 1950. Milton Lesser. All Heroes are Hated, Amazing
Chad Oliver. The Land of Lost Content, Super Science
- 1952. Irving E. Cox. Too many Worlds, Amazing
Algis Budrys with two stories: The High Purpose, Astounding; Walk to the World, Space SF
- 1953. Theodore L. Thomas. The Fatal Third, Planet

Wonder Stories changed from quarto to pulp size like the despised Astounding, ragged edges lowering the tone, Nov. 1930; back to large and slick paper, 1931; pulp again, 1933. Amazing went pulp, 1933. Changes of format like these were taken very seriously by readers of the time, though not by all of them -- Bob Tucker announced his Society for Prevention of Wire Staples in Science Fiction Magazines in November 1935, first of a rash of similar movements. And Astounding was the first in digest size, 1943.

FROM THE BO'SUN'S CHAIR

"Hey, Graham, you goofed on my quibble over Blish's (?) figures: that should have read '1/80 of the cost of the Flll', i.e. the fleet of the things Uncle has conned Australia into buying, not 'an Flll'. I wasn't suggesting they might end up costing \$400 million each!" [They won't be delivered for a long time yet, if ever, so don't be too cautious. But yes, I made a booboo. That's what you call the human element I guess. Like my dating the issue Nov on p. 1 instead of Oct. - G.S.]

A more sensible than usual discussion of interstellar flight in the Science In SF column in Amazing, January, but there are some pretty naive views expressed there. How to pay for it is a major problem, but Benton and Book ramble on about public opinion as if it were significant: it could be under certain conditions, but it's unlikely. Governments reflect popular attitudes more or less, and certainly try to please the voters, but not to the extent of doing what they want unless it happens to be what they intend doing anyway. Did the American voters want a space program at all? No more than they wanted the Vietnam invasion; not to mention spy planes, nerve gas or the CIA. When a government, or an international body like MLDO, wants a starship it will be built, and paid for, and the voters won't even know till it's well into development.

Furthermore, you don't have to be an economist to comment on a statement like "If we [i.e. the US] continue our 4% average growth rate for 200 years our GNP will rise by a factor of a thousand."

-- The Bo'sun

HISTORY, CRITICISM, etc.

ACKERMAN, Forrest J., 1917- et al.

The FRANKENSCIENCE MONSTER. Ace (25130).

8-191 p. PB 95c. A tribute to Boris Karloff by numerous contributors.

ALDRITT, Keith

The MAKING OF GEORGE ORWELL: an essay in literary history. E. Arnold. [7], 181 p. 35/-

DANZIG, Allen, 1931- ed.

The THEME OF THE MACHINE. W. C. Brown, Dubuque, Iowa. xvii, 308 p. (Form and Content in Literature Series) PB \$3.75

OXLEY, B. T.

GEORGE ORWELL. Arco, N.Y. 146 p. \$3.95, PB \$1.95

WATTS, Harold H[olliday] 1906-

ALDOUS HUXLEY. Twayne. 182 p. (English Authors Series, 79) \$3.95

WOOD, James Playsted, 1905-

I TOLD YOU SO! A Life of H. G. Wells. Pantheon. 182 p. ill. \$3.95 (Portrait Series) A juvenile biography.

Orwell and Huxley are only marginal, their contribution to SF being small. It is hard to accept the implication that their work in general is significant enough to deserve more critical attention than the whole of modern SF since Wells, and probably including Wells!

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