

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

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ROBERT W. FRANSON

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A DEFINITION OF SCIENCE FICTION

by Lawrence III

Reviewing science fiction literature is the main purpose of Science Fiction Review, but there have been reviews of stories that the reviewer did not think were true science fiction. In writing the reviews SFR has its own approximate definition of science fiction: the extrapolation of plausible ideas from existing science. It is often easier to explain what science fiction is not rather than what it is. Fantasy, weird, horror, and macabre are often associated with, but are not, science fiction.

For example, a huge monster is often employed in tales, which is supposed to automatically make the story science fiction. Most of the stories with these monsters are fantasy or horror tales. There is no evidence that such an overly large animal could exist. Not only would this monster, in all probability, be crushed by its own weight, but even with a constant food source it could not feed itself fast enough to stay alive.

In science fiction stories, beings from other worlds are approximately the size of a human—sometimes they are friendly and other times not. Usually an explanation for the organism's form is given, such as a description of the natural envi-

ronment of the being.

While SFR does, occasionally, review fantasy and other types of non-science fiction stories, no grade is given as the scale is intended for science fiction only.

—Lawrence III

IMPACT-20, by William F. Nolan.
Paperback Library, N.Y. 52-250,
1963. 158 pp. 50¢

This is a collection of twenty short stories. The author, who is one of the editors of Gamma, has ended his stories with novel twists. These stories are not unlike Rod Serling's tales. However, none of the stories are science fiction.

—Lawrence III

Aldous Huxley, the author of BRAVE NEW WORLD and many others, is dead at 69 of cancer.

THE SUBSPACE SERIES:

Dear Mr. Franson,

This concerns the trilogy you mentioned: the Subspace series that was introduced by "Subspace Survivors," novellet, published in the July, 1960, issue of Analog. After the first book was finally finished to my satisfaction, it developed that JWC and I could not agree on either content or treatment—particularly the latter—so it didn't appear anywhere. While no contract has been signed, it now appears highly probable that SUBSPACE EXPLORERS will be published in hard covers by Canaveral Press in the not-too-distant future.

—Edward E. Smith, Ph.D.

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SFR STORY RATINGS

Story category	NOVELLAS	NOVELETS ...	SHORT STORIES
Length in words	(19-39,000) ...	(10-18,000) ..	(up to 9,000)
Worth buying magazine for ..	I-IV	A-C	a-b
Worth reading	V-VI	D-E	c-d
Read at your own risk ...	VII-IX	F-H	e-g

NOVELS

(40,000+ words)

Worth buying	1-5
Marginal	6-7
Buy at your own risk .	8-10

The ratings designate how well we liked the story. We do not rate collections or anthologies. Two stories "worth reading" usually make an issue worth buying.

A LIFE FOR THE STARS, by James Blish. Avon, N.Y. H-107, 1963. 143 pp. 45¢

This novel is the second in the Okie, or Cities in Flight, series, and is reprinted from Analog, Sept. and Oct., 1962, and Putnam. The main character is a boy who is kidnapped by the Okie city of Scranton just before it leaves for the stars. Although the basic plot may not be too unusual, the concepts involved are some of the most original in science fiction. It won't matter if you haven't read the first book in the series.

NOVEL - 4
—The Editor

METROPOLIS, by Thea von Harbou. Ace, N.Y. F-246, 1963. 222 pp. 40¢

METROPOLIS is a bizarre classic about a huge city of the 21st century. In this future place of complexity and confusion, Freder is bewildered by his father's remorseless rule of the metropolis. He decides to investigate, using the identity of a slave from the underground machines. These machines are the life-throb of the city, and completely take over the minds of those at their controls. It is a future world of almost complete mechanization. An example of a poor novel of "the good old days." (See issue #8) NOVEL - 9

—Gene Rider

GREAT SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES, ed. by Larry T. Shaw. Lancer, N.Y. 72-697, 1963. 168 pp. 50¢

This is an anthology of four novelets from Science Fiction Adventures.

"The Starcombers," by Hamilton, is about a group of space scavengers who find trouble on a world that is almost split in two (D). "Hunt the Space Witch!" by Silverberg, tells of a deadly interplanetary cult that is led by a faceless woman (G). "The Man From the Big Dark," by Brunner, is about a space pirate who decides a world's fate (F). "The World Otalmi Made," by Harrison, is about a hired killer who hunts a dictator that has gained power through mind control (E).

—Robert Merryman

SCIENCE FICTION OMNIBUS, ed. by Groff Conklin. Berkley, N.Y. F851, 1963. 190 pp. 50¢

SCIENCE FICTION OMNIBUS is a paperback reprint of OMNIBUS OF SCIENCE FICTION, published by Crown in 1952. However, this edition contains eleven stories while the original contained forty-three. Stories which distinguish this anthology are: "Plague," by Murray Leinster (C), "Homo Sol," by Isaac Asimov (d), and "Instinct," by Lester del Rey (d). Generally the material contained in this anthology is of fairly high quality.

—Bill Pond

MAGAZINE REVIEWS by Dean M. Sandin

Serials are not rated until the review of the final installment.

If, January, 1964. 130 pp. 40¢
(2/6)

Poul Anderson's latest novel, "Three Worlds to Conquer," begins in this issue and will conclude in the next. Man has established communications with creatures on Jupiter's surface, from its moons. Two conflicts make up the story: one is between the Jovian hero's nation and a previously unknown nation which has attacked it; the other is between the human hero's group on Ganymede, a moon of Jupiter, and a battleship with a diehard crew which has failed to surrender to the leaders of a successful revolution on Earth.

"Waterspider," by Philip K. Dick, is, as Editor Frederik Pohl put it, a Poul Anderson story. But Anderson is a main character, in this humorous tale of that science fiction author's being kidnapped by men from the future. NOVELET - E

INFORMATION ABOUT IF

If's subscription address is:

Galaxy Publishing Corporation
421 Hudson Street
New York 14, New York

If is bimonthly. Its subscription price is twelve issues (two years) for \$3.60 in the Western Hemisphere and U.S. possessions, and \$4.60 in all other places. If Science Fiction arrives in a mailing wrapper, in good condition, as do its two sister magazines, Galaxy and Worlds of Tomorrow.

ANNOUNCEMENT

England's remaining two science fiction and fantasy magazines are due to fold after their March, 1964 issues. This news is official, coming from their editor, John Carnell. The two are New Worlds, which began in 1946; and Science Fantasy, of 1950 origin. Earlier, a sister magazine, Science Fiction Adventures, was discontinued. Science fiction, especially in England, has thus suffered a double loss. These demises will leave eight science fiction and fantasy magazines, all American. The outlook is not dim all over, though. This year, two new American publications were launched: Frederik Pohl's third entry in the genre, Worlds of Tomorrow; and Gamma.

New Worlds, November, 1963. 128 pp. 3/- (45¢)

Part one of three parts of "The Dark Mind," by Colin Kapp, is good. The hero is Ivan Dalroi, a private investigator working officially, and on his own, against Failway Terminal, a huge business so powerful that it is above the law. Dalroi, it seems, is a supergenius at staying alive, no matter what is thrown at him. There is an undercurrent to the novel that suggests that his mind has something more than normal.

"Crux," by John Rackham, also is involved with the unknown part of the mind. An "X"-person is one who has an abnormal mental talent. The hero finds out his in an emergency, when he needs it the most.

SHORT STORY - d

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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THE CHRONOSCOPE

For inexplicable reasons, Andre Norton's LORD OF THUNDER did not arrive. Hopefully, we will have it in time for the next issue. In any case, there will definitely be a review of Miss Norton's JUDGMENT ON JANUS, along with reviews of Nourse's RAIDERS FROM THE RINGS, Jones' MAN OF TWO WORLDS, and Henderson's PILGRIMAGE.

Also in the next issue, we have an article by Poul Anderson on his favorite science fiction story. We plan this article to be the first of a series of articles by prominent science fiction authors.

For some slightly longer-range information, we have some announcements of forthcoming books: SWORDS AND SORCERY, edited by de Camp; a reprint of van Vogt's VOYAGE OF THE SPACE BEAGLE; a reprint of Clarke's collection, REACH FOR TOMORROW; and another de Camp, an Ace Double, THE SEARCH FOR ZEI & THE HAND OF ZEI; Dick's Hugo winner, THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE; and, of course, E.E. Smith's SKYLARK OF VALERON.

The preceding are all paperbacks; in the hardcover field the most interesting item is Poul Anderson's collection, TIME AND STARS, containing "No Truce With Kings," "Epilogue," and four others.

A HANDBOOK OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY, compiled by Donald H. Tuck, is now out of print. Tuck is revising the HANDBOOK for future publication, which will probably be in 1965 or 1966. —The Editor

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FEATURE SELECTION

THEY WALKED LIKE MEN, by Clifford D. Simak. MacFadden, N.Y. 50-184, 1963. 176 pp. 50¢

This reprint was first published by Doubleday in 1962, and was also a Science Fiction Book Club selection.

The plot of this novel is a new one, although the author has used a couple of old (but good) gimmicks. The story is typical Simak, with a newspaperman hero, aliens, and a Dog. It takes place here on Earth in the immediate future, and concerns extra-solar aliens who can take whatever shape they please, and in the guise of humans they are buying up stores and shutting them down. The aliens, of course, have some nefarious purpose in mind, but for reasons of their own they are doing everything according to human laws, although their existence is not known to the humans.

The story is written in Simak's usual style, with a strong mood that some have called pastoral. If you like Simak at all, you'll like this one.

NOVEL - 4
—The Editor

THE SENTINEL STARS, by Louis Charbonneau. Bantam, N.Y. J2686, 1963. 156 pp. 40¢

THE SENTINEL STARS is a fast-moving novel on the theme of 1984, telling of a world after an atomic war that forced mankind to live in huge protected cities. Life is static and everyone's desire in life is to attain the position of Freeman, possible only after one's tax debts have been worked off. The plot centers around one man who "dares to rebel," which is a quite familiar idea. Even though the plot may not be new, the book is worth reading. (6)

—Marshall Hurlich