

L.A. ON

PROGRESS
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FREDERIK POHL

"Fred Pohl?" said Larry Niven, recently. "He looks like the farmer in *American Gothic*, but with 3 drinks in him. He likes to play with science --- he's invented a new way to count to 1,000 on your fingers, using binary numbering, that works as fast as counting to 10 the old way. He's been damned helpful in getting me started as an author."

Frederik Pohl is the model of a once-cherished goal of fandom: the Fan turned Successful Pro. He entered New York fandom in his teens in the mid-1930's, and was an active participant in the fanzine publishing & the fan politics of the period. In 1939, he: a) founded a literary agency; b) was excluded from the first WorldCon; and c) became editor of 2 new magazines, *SUPER SCIENCE STORIES* and *ASTONISHING STORIES*.

But these evanescent glories faded, and it wasn't 'til the '50's that he became known as a top author, at first in collaboration with an old fannish friend, Cyril M. Kornbluth (*The Space Merchants*, and others), then with an increasing number of short stories and novels of his own. To date he has a dozen collections and novels of his own plus over a half-dozen collaborations. He edited the excellent *STAR SCIENCE FICTION* anthologies for Ballantine Books in the '50's, and took over *GALAXY* and *WORLDS OF IF* magazines in the early '60's, building the latter up from the bottom of the field to make it a three-times "Hugo" winner. These are just highlights; there are few fans who don't have at least one of the books he authored or edited in their libraries.

Pohl was one of the pioneers of the sociological-satire school of s-f. His favorite targets have been the advertising agencies and other aspects of mind-control, but he has also taken wryly horrified glances at potential drawbacks to such aspects of modern society as conspicuous consumption, or medical advances leading toward 'immortality'. Kingsley Amis refers to him in *New Maps of Hell* as "the most consistently able writer science fiction, in the modern sense, has yet produced."

What can you do if you're a hermit living in the wilds of rural Indiana? Well, you can publish a fanzine --- Buck and Juanita Coulson have made their *YANDRO* a top fanzine for 200 issues as you read this: a record in longevity and consistent quality (it won a "Hugo" in 1965). Though it features material by many people, its guiding spirit is the personality of the Coulsons: Buck's opinions on books, records and current events, stated in the manner the dictionary calls 'trenchant' (if he doesn't like it, he tells you so, and why); and Juanita's friendly commentary on history, TV, the household, and life in general.

You can be a part-time pro. Juanita has written 2 s-f novels for Ace Books: *Crisis on Cheiron* and *The Singing Stones*. Buck has coauthored (with Gene DeWeese as "Thomas Stratton") 2 "Man from U.N.C.L.E." novels. Both have coauthored short stories for *F&SF* - the latest, *The Tracy Business*, by Buck & Gene DeWeese, is in the February 1970 issue.

You can attend conventions. Buck usually has a table in the hucksters' room where he sells old prozines and paperbacks while Juanita's out socializing, 'till they trade places after a couple of hours. In the evenings, Buck heads for the more congenial parties, and Juanita starts or joins folk-song sessions.

You can take interests in public affairs. Juanita has been a den mother in the Cub Scouts. They donate to what they consider to be genuine and worthwhile charities. Though they've had health problems and job difficulties of their own over the years, they've never stopped taking an active interest in the world around them.

Robert and Juanita Coulson have been *Good People* for a long time now. Their rural route address has given them a chance to play hermit, but they aren't, really, as the fans who've met them have found out to their pleasure. Look around at the L.A.-Con for a folk-song group, or a large man with a moustache and a black T-shirt in the middle of a party or a conversational group -- the least hermitlike places you can think of -- and you've found them.

FAN GUESTS OF HONOR:

BUCK AND JUANITA COULSON

ANNE McCAFFREY

Anne McCaffrey is moving to Ireland. The move shouldn't affect her writing output, but we'll miss her anyway. The SFWA will miss her -- she's been an active member, and was Secretary/Treasurer for the 1969-70 term. East Coast conventioners will miss her -- she's been an enthusiastic attendee of regional Cons in the last few years, giving speeches, enlivening parties, and outsinging Isaac Asimov. We'll look forward to return visits by her, and we hope that her trip to Los Angeles in 1972 won't be her only one.

Anne McCaffrey's first s-f story was published in 1953, but she didn't begin to appear regularly in the magazines until the mid-1960's. Her first novel, *Restoree*, was published in 1967, just before her *Dragonrider* stories began in *ANALOG*.

Her *Dragonrider* stories have won her two awards: *Weyr Search* tied for the "Hugo" in the Best Novella category for 1967, & *Dragonrider* won the "Nebula" award in the category for 1968 and was the runner-up for the "Hugo" award of that year. *Dramatic Mission*, the last of the *Ship Who Sang* stories, was a runnerup for the "Nebula" for Best Novella of 1969, and is a "Hugo" contender in that category as this is written. Not bad for a 3-year period.

Her interests are clearly visible in her stories. "I dabbled in the Theatre Arts, studied voice production for nine years", and *Dramatic Mission* revolves about the introduction of Shakespeare to an alien culture. "...collect Graustarkian romances...", and *Restoree* is a tale of a girl of Earth thrust into the Balkan court intrigue of another world. "...am currently raising three children, five cats .. ride horseback...", and her love for children, animals, and nature is clear in *Decision at Oona*, in which a child on a green, unspoiled planet helps humans and feline aliens to make friendly contact. Her stories are strongest in characterization with warm, believable people, because she is such a friendly and outgoing person herself. We hope she enjoys Ireland as much as we'll enjoy having her back to be our Toastmistress at the L.A.Con.

L.A.CON -- SEPT. 1-4, 1972

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THE 30TH NORTH AMERICAN SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION.

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