

# Introduction to the



1953 was a time of transition in SF and publishing. The pulp magazines, which had reigned for much of the century, were in the process of becoming extinct. They were being replaced by the digest-sized



1953 was a critical year for fandom in a great many ways. The SF magazine boom had passed its peak. Fanzine editorials and fan correspondence were



naturally, “The Lovers”.

And that was it. No fanzine Hugo. No Fan Writer Hugo. No Semi-Pro Publication Hugo. All of those came later. Much later.

If there had been such awards in 1953, which names would have risen to the top? Harlan, for *Dimensions*? Probably. Lee Hoffman, for *Quandry*? Probably. *Fantasy-Times*, as the “Newspaper of Fandom”? Maybe. The content was informative, but the style made for dull reading. Then there were all those other fanzines out there, either being published or in the planning stages. And many of those fanzines were edited by future pros such as Robert Silverberg, Marion Zimmer Bradley, and Terry Carr.

Fifties fandom was marvelously incestuous; well-established pros were not too proud to contribute to fanzines “for the usual”—a free issue or *wow!* a free sub! And there were still more fans







own] *Spaceship* by name, or note that Lee Hoffman and Walt Willis, two of the biggest fan names of the era, failed to attend the con.

Significant fanzines of the period were Lee Hoffman's *Quandry*, Harlan's *Dimensions*, Bob

There were no Hugo Awards given for the year 1953. That's a shame, in one way, because in the novel category in particular there were some very important works that were never recognized by the World SF Convention. On the other hand, maybe it's just as well that we never had to decide which of the contenders was actually the best of the year.

The competition was probably hotter that year than at any time before

Shiras' sole SF effort, *Children of the Atom*, remains one of the most effective stories of unintentional mutation.

There were no Bram Stoker awards in 1953 either, but two horror novels appeared that year that are worth noting, although they would have had little chance of winning the Hugo. Fritz

















candidates for 1953 are the inimitable Frank Kelly Freas and the superlative Ed Emshwiller, who seemed to share the rest of the field between them for the next decade. While he began in 1950 with a























people—into prehistoric form.  
*Phantom from Space* has the  
authorities searching for an  
invisible alien. More interesting  
is that producer/director W. Lee

