

SCIENCE FICTION

JULY 1952

NEWS LETTER



HEADLINES:

Uncle Sam and the Flying Things (p.2)
Boucher & McComas Increase Production (p.7)
"Conquest of Space" Sold to Movies (p.13)

THE BIG BLOODSHOT EYE

Uncle Sam and the
Flying Things

Discard for the moment any derisive and cynical thoughts, or fervently-supporting theories you may hold, concerning the celestial objects which newspapers call "saucers," "discs," "skyhook balloons," "meteorites," and "green balls of fire"; suspend for the moment your personal beliefs on the subject and consider objectively the recent history of the phenomena. What Charles Fort has been reporting for hundreds of years may or may not be related to the present situation; for the moment, consider only that which has happened since Kenneth Arnold landed his plane a few years ago and unfolded a startling story.

The story was received with almost universal derision, and certain military arms of the government went to great lengths to disprove and ridicule the reports. The Air Force finally sought newspaper space in an attempt to drown the persistent reports and the waves of speculation which followed them. That was the situation for years. Now, suddenly, the government has done an abrupt about-face. They are "co-operating" with a large national magazine to "reveal" information about the flying objects. The large national magazine happens to have the greatest mass circulation in America, hence the revelations will reach the widest audience.

We suggest this magazine revelation is but one of the opening guns in a propaganda barrage already underway.

Another magazine with a large circulation has done several space articles; informative pieces on rocket ships, orbital platforms, the nearer planets, the moon, and so forth. Everything the lay public needs to know to prepare them for an announcement. So then, in April, the Air Force opened their files to the mass-circulation journal, and it was discovered that the Air Force is no longer attempting to stop the stories and speculations. To the contrary, they seem to be actively encouraging the thing. It is a common practice in the publishing world to "plant" a story; indeed, the government is now an old hand at planting favorable news and reports concerning itself and its interests.

We further suggest that these published reports are planted barrages in the propaganda campaign to prepare the public.

We expect the articles to continue to appear, the campaign to increase in intensity until the entire country is buzzing over the situation. It seems likely that the object of the publicity is to adequately prepare the public for one of three things:

- 1) The Army has grounded rockets on the moon's surface,
- 2) The Air Force has positively identified the "saucers",
- 3) The government is getting ready a gigantic appropriation of money to build/launch an orbital station.

We expect to know the answer within eighteen months. -BT

➡ The next issue of SCIENCE FICTION NEWS LETTER will be delayed until after the Labor Day convention, to cover that event.

THE VANISHING BREED

Science-fiction writers, those hard-driving hacks who have been monotonously pounding out the life-blood of the pulps more or less continuously since 1926, are doomed to extinction. Like the mammoth and the sabre-toothed tiger before them, like the bloody but unbowed Neanderthal who finally fell beneath a superior and crushing force, our science-hack's day is done. Ironically, the present flood of magazines is the responsible instrument; the very instrument those typewriter jockeys helped forge.

The first faint sign of the coming doom occurred nearly seventeen years ago, when Charles Hornig (then editor of *WONDER STORIES*) decided his pages needed something new and laid down a rule for his writers: henceforth, every story must incorporate a novelty -- get out of the rut, or get out. Had the writers retaliated then and there by organizing and striking against such a radical proposition, they might have staved off for some little while their eventual extinction. But they did no such thing; instead they meekly bowed under the editorial whip and crammed an assortment of novelties, new ideas, into their fiction. The die was cast.

John W. Campbell was probably the hand which scrawled the writing on the wall. With a rapid succession of editorial revolutions, he introduced "thought-variants" and "novas" --- unusual plots and treatments to the old science-fiction diet. The readers applauded, the writers leaped to obey, and the mantle of extinction made itself felt in the closing years of the thirties. After Campbell, events moved more quickly.

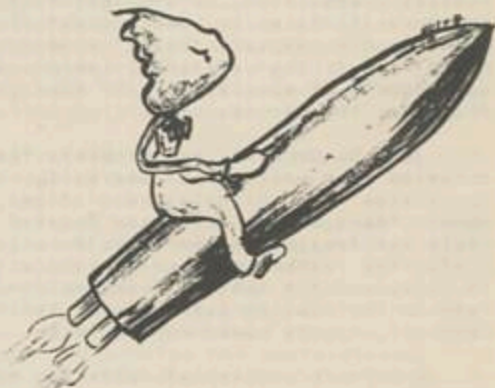
A pair of editorial upstarts named Boucher and McComas appeared on the scene with a new magazine and point-blank refused to print the grand old science-fiction. They were seeking a new deal in imaginative literature, and were soon publishing material that an old time editor wouldn't have touched with a ten-foot pole. No dynamic action, no ray-guns, no tractor-beams -- it was enough to make a hardened hack weep. The hardened hacks did weep, and fell back on the older but now smaller market. Perhaps they sensed the near approach of their eclipse.

Hard on the heels of Boucher and McComas was another radical, H.L. Gold, who banished old Bat Durston from the pages of *GALAXY* even before that hardened space-rat could place his toe in the door. We who have loved and ridden with good old Bat for lol a quarter-century or more could do nothing but gnash our teeth and retire to the nearest space dive, there to swill xeno by the gallon jug. The death blow had been struck!



Fired with the new idea of publishing only new ideas, other editors did their best to crowd into the act -- or at least make noises as if they were joining the show. "The space opera of the flashing ray-gun and invincible heroes has long since been overdone, but there are as many stories to be written of man against space as there are worlds out there waiting for us." In other announcements and assorted editorials (and in between the lines of the editorials) the bald truth comes out: no more hard-blasting jets, no more hairy old meteorite miners, no more space marshalls rocketing into Mars City and sun-downing Black Bart, no more ugly monsters rolling up Broadway, no more giant maulers coming up from the reserves to blast king-sized holes in space, no more slugs from Saturn, no more clicking mandibles of warrior ants, no more time travelers going back to knock off grandfather, no more lonely young men marooned with lovely young women on asteroids, no more company agents thwarting the trading-post natives, no more heroes with null-A and other pauses, no more double-brains, double-heads, double identities or double confusions. No more charging robots. The end has come. The hacks are done. Our pleasure is gone.

Perhaps the least-expected but most devastating blow of all was the Ziff-Davis entry into the quality field; good old Ziff-Davis, last bastion of the ray-gun and tractor beam! Now they too have deserted the old favorites to kow-tow to the slicker, and sophisticated reader. Space-opera is done, our beloved hacks are doomed. It is indeed an inglorious end for the pioneers who so bravely set out in 1926 to spread the star-begotten literature. In protest we are cancelling all our subscriptions. -BT



EXCERPTS FROM THE FAN PRESS (gems that otherwise might go unsung)

".... take the case of Ray Palmer and the Shaver Mystery. When it became evident that Mr. Shaver's deros were getting out of hand, fandom rose up in righteous indignation and smote the publicity seeker a mighty blow. And sure enough, five or six years later, Palmer left the editorial desk of AMAZING. Sheer power of public opinion."

Dick Ryan, in MAD #4.

"In a recent discussion in Rog Phillips' column "Club House," he mentioned refusing to review an obscene fan magazine. If anyone knows where I might obtain one of the copies, would you please write and tell me?"

Vic Waldrop Jr. in THE ALIEN #1.

(Two have been banned and a third threatened; for a small fee I'll supply you with names and addresses, friend. -BT)

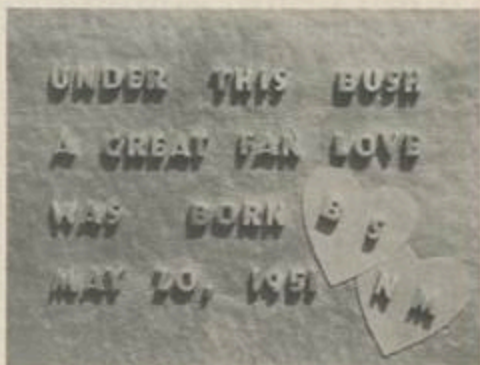
FAN-NEWS ROUNDUP

the Good Life in
these United States

Over a hundred fans, editors, writers and hucksters moved in on "Beastley's-on-the-Bayou" (Indian Lake, Ohio,) last May 9-10-11 for the third annual Midwest Conference. Master-minded by Dr. Barrett, the meeting drew people from New York City to the Mississippi, and from Detroit - Milwaukee to Georgia. Guest speaker was Arthur C. Clarke of London, who presented a slide-illustrated lecture on space flight, based on material from his books.

A small plot of ground containing a growth that someday may be either a bush or a tree, was "purchased" from the hotel and dedicated as a shrine to a fannish pair who last year found true love there. All other attendees shivered in the unseasonal weather, and swimming was out of bounds.

As in previous years, the entire hotel was taken over for the affair, causing the night watchman no end of anguish as he vainly attempted to restore peace and quiet each dawn.



-Martin Alger

Highlights of the conference were: a telephone call to Ted Carnell in London (who paid for this?), a preview tape-recording of a program to be presented at the Chicago convention, slides of personalities attending several previous conferences and national conventions, the presentation of five bricks to Tucker, the welcome given six travelers from Georgia and Florida, the goat-like antics of a New Mexico visitor, and the presence of The Bat. This lovable lady was barred from the hotel by the management, but took a room down the street presumably for the purpose of spending brief moments of sleep. The remainder of the time she flapped about the hotel, hunting victims who continually dodged her. Next year's conference will be at the same place and about same date.

Martin Alger, "ex-president of the ex-Michigan Science Fiction Society," disbanded that club last month after hectic weeks of attempted blood transfusions. Said Alger, the club: "planned more conventions than any other group; created more fanzine titles than any other group; developed a bomb small and cheap enough that every fan can afford one, yet powerful enough to create a city-wide sensation; had several members active in the famous Shaver mystery, two of whom are still 4-F for psycho reasons; discovered it is not necessary to have ever read s-f to be a fan; held several meetings devoted to detailed and highly fanciful speculation regarding the sexual behavior and capacity of our female members; gave fandom the beanie tradition; and had several members active in levitation, palmistry, spiritualism and similar highly scientific fields."

DEPT. OF CORRECTIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS WHITE-WASHING: Seldom an issue goes by but what we publish a bobble of one kind or another -- little tests, really, to determine if you are reading the magazine or using it for other purposes. The May issue was chock full of the embarrassing things, some of which you'll find corrected on the Letters page, and others below.

(a) Hannes Bok did not desert science fiction because of a conflict with a convention committee alone; there were other and equally obnoxious reasons. (b) Typo: Marvin Neumann sent us his letters, not hers. (c) Hugo Gernsback will, for the first time, be guest of honor at the coming Labor Day convention. Frank R. Paul, not Hugo, was the 1939 guest. As for (d), which consumes a lot of space, see below.

(d) T.E. Dikty, speaking for himself and Everett F. Bleiler, took exception to a letter written by Wilmar Shiras and published on page 13 of the May issue; a letter expressing the author's surprise at finding two of her stories reprinted in an omnibus without her knowledge or payment. Dikty and Bleiler, editors of the original anthology, point out the following: their publisher (not they themselves) made the reprint arrangements with another company; standard procedure in such cases is for the second company to pay royalties to the original publisher several months after publication of the book; the original publisher will then remit said royalties to the editors, who will in turn pass them along to the authors. In short, Shiras and the other writers involved will be paid several months after publication. Dikty also said standard procedure does not allow free copies for the many writers involved, nor are advance notices of such reprinting sent out. He closed by stating that his contracts with authors cover all possible reprinting deals and that money due will be paid as it comes. Let us hope this explanation clears any besmirched or beclouded reputations.

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MYSTERY OF THE MONTH: Did Nancy Moore join the WACS? A hot communique from Michigan fan De Vore said yes she did (Ben Singer allegedly drove her to it); and another hot communique from Missouri fan Shapiro said no she didn't because he just talked to her on the telephone. Nancy ain't said nothing, 'nor shall we.

ROUND-UP: "Project Fan Club" is the title of Orville Mosher's move to publish massive data he has collected on how to form a fan club. ** The Connecticut Science Fiction League has blossomed into existence with Ronald Rentz as president. ** Al Bender, also an official in the Connecticut organization, is opening one of his own, The International Flying Saucer Bureau (P.O. Box 241, Bridgeport, Conn.) ** Charles Stewart Metchette was finally caught by the army and is currently in an airborne infantry outfit at Breckenridge, Ky. ** Helen and Sheldon Wesson (plus two small Wessons) moved bag, baggage and new Ford station-wagon across country last month, enroute to Japan. Erle and Irene Korshak increased the fannish population in June by one small male. ** Niel Dejack, book collector, up and married; as did Bob Pavlat, and Lynn Hickman (but not to each other, it should be pointed out.)

And this is to remind you that the next issue of News Letter will be delayed until after the Chicago convention.



FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION will switch to a monthly schedule this summer, and include book-length novels in future issues. Tony Boucher states the issue dated September will appear in August, and a new issue every month thereafter. (An August number is currently on sale, making it monthly as far as dates are concerned.)

Already purchased for the magazine is a 42,000 word novel by Ward Moore, of "alternate worlds and the American Civil War."

Howard K. Pruyn, of the New York business office of the same magazine, is engaged in compiling a comprehensive list of fantasy and science fiction fans all over the world. What was begun as a national list of such fans taken from directories and membership rosters (as well as fanzine subscription lists), has now grown to be of world scope. Pruyn is contacting fans, organizations, fan and professional magazines for assistance. They do not plan to publish the final lists, but use them for promotion purposes; however the master file will be available to commercial organizations on a rental basis, and to non-profit fan groups for a lower rate.

A CHECKLIST OF FANTASTIC MAGAZINES is a new index to more than 160 science and fantasy periodicals, as published in eleven countries. Priced at \$1, the 24 page lithographed booklet was issued by Raymond Isadore (1907-A south 14th st, Milwaukee 4, Wisc.) and Bradford M. Day (127-01 116th ave, South Ozone Park, 20, New York). Tabulated in cross-columnar form, the index delves into such rare volumes as those legendary pieces published in Japan, Mexico, Cuba, Holland, France, Spain, Sweden and Argentine, as well as all American, Canadian and British magazines. Information given is the year, month, volume and whole number of each magazine (where available). News to us is the information that the French magazine *CONQUETES* published a second issue after that experimental, undated number in 1939.



OTHER WORLDS have moved into a new editorial office at 806 Dempster st., Evanston, Illinois. This magazine will shortly begin using back-cover paintings, and a better grade of paper thru-out.

THE FLICKERS: The super-gorilla epic of two decades ago, *KING KONG*, is again being shown around the country.

The long-threatened "*Abbott & Costello Go to Mars*" space-opera commenced filming at Universal studios this month.

New picture: *RED PLANET MARS* (United Artist studios). An American scientist establishes contact with Mars, a Russian says it's a fraud he perpetrated, and religion takes an upswing.

Books



YEAR'S BEST SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS edited by Everett F. Bleiler and T.E. Dikty. (Fell, New York, 1952, \$3.50). (and)
FIVE SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS compiled by Martin Greenberg. (Gnome Press, New York, 1952, \$3.50).

It is to be remarked that this idea of anthologizing short novels wasn't thought of long before this—we don't mean the process of throwing in a short novel at the end of a book simply to fill it out, but the choosing of five "best" novels to make an anthology; these make fine companion pieces to the many short story collections appearing almost weekly—actually, we'd much rather own these than some of the useless anthologies of shorts.

The Bleiler and Dikty volume is intended as an annual companion to their yearly short collections; the use of the word "best" in their titles must be regarded as a trade mark and not necessarily descriptive. Three of the five novels in this, their first volume, are truly outstanding while the remainder

are merely going along for the ride. We like and recommend Eric Frank Russell's "...And Then There Were None," Arthur C. Clarke's "Seeker of the Sphinx," and Frank M. Robinson's "The Hunting Season." Remaining two are Walter M. Miller Jr.'s "Lizard and the Membrane," and Poul Anderson's "Flight to Forever".

The Greenberg collection, appearing almost simultaneously, presents the reverse in contents: two fine ones and three which you read to kill time. Absolute tops in the volume is Norvell W. Page's chilling "But Without Horns," one of the finest stories ever to appear in the late lamented UNKNOWN WORLDS. Fritz Leiber is present with another good one, "Destiny Times Three." Others



are "Crises in Utopia" by Norman L. Knight, "The Chronicler" by A.E. van Vogt, and "The Crucible of Power" by Jack Williamson. Personally, we'd prefer more of these collections of novels and far less short story ditto. -BT

FIND THE FEATHERED SERPENT by Evan Hunter; MARCOONED ON MARS by Lester del Rey; FIVE AGAINST VENUS by Philip Latham; EARTHBOUND by Milton Lesser; and SON OF THE STARS by Raymond F. Jones. All are original novels for the teen-ager, from John C. Winston Co., Philadelphia, 1952, at \$2.00 each.

These books are published by a company long associated with school and text books and are aimed at school libraries and other youth groups. Each has been written with a primary interest in adventure and a secondary interest in science; what science is present is painless and not always accurate, but it serves to move the story and provide the necessary background.

Hunter's FEATHERED SERPENT is a time-travel yarn and the best of the group from the viewpoint of interest, readability and general treatment of subject; three men and a boy crash into ancient Yucatan, and together with the crew of a Viking ship blown off course, introduce many modernizations there while searching for legendary gods. A suggestion is offered for the genesis of one such god, Kukulcan. Milton Lesser's EARTHBOUND is the least rewarding of the lot, being the old story of the youth kicked out of the space academy, eventually joining the space pirates and clearing his good name by his undercover activities.

SON, by Jones, after hurdling the obstacle of a flying saucer, gets going as the tale of a young man from the stars who is shot down by trigger-happy American aircraft; in spite of this the stranger realizes our friendliness and prevents his fleet from blowing Earth out of space by way of retaliation. Latham's VENUS is, happily, not one of his "earth is doomed" tales; it is the chronicle of a family bound for a new life on the moon, then diverted by a villainous ship's crew. They crash on Venus, find themselves fighting all manner of flora and fauna until rescued. Del Rey's MARCOONED is a twist on the same. The boy, originally scheduled to fly in the Martian ship, finds himself bumped, but stows away nevertheless. The ship crashes on Mars and the crew must fend for themselves among the Martian cavern dwellers. All this is hardly meat for the fan, but the two kids in this household considered it keen stuff. -BT

ROBOTS HAVE NO TAILS by Lewis Padgett. (Gnome Press, New York, 1952, \$2.75.)

Galloway Gallegher is self-admittedly the greatest inventor since Leonardo da Vinci and Tom Swift; a screwball scientist who can make anything with toothpicks, baling wire and beer cans. He is present here with five adventures originally from the pages of ASTOUNDING and those adventures make fine, light reading. Also present, usually to Gallegher's discomfort but always to his rescue in times of trouble is Joe the robot. The contents are: "The Proud Robot," "Gallegher Plus," "The World Is Mine," "Ex Machina" and "Time Locker" ---with the latter two perhaps the best of all.

Henry Kuttner (Padgett) is also the author of a non-fantasy book published last month: MAN DROWNING (Harpers, New York.)

THE HAPLOIDS by Jerry Sohl. (Rinehart, New York, 1952, \$2.50.)

An original novel which opens with a dying man admitted to a hospital--dying from no known cause that medical science can name but yet evidently not dying fast enough, for shortly thereafter a woman slips in to murder him. The tale that follows is a combination science-detective yarn with a reporter who eye-witnessed the murder backtracking the woman to discover the haploids, an artificially-created race of women. Not mentioned in the book is the fact that the author did medical research for the novel, to show (at least to his own satisfaction) that haploids are quite possible. The volume is dedicated to the doctor who "created the first haploid."

From the hospital, the woman's trail leads to a hastily-deserted laboratory and the first faint glimmerings of truth about the haploids---a race apart. Sohl has done a competent job of giving a brand new twist to an old theme, a twist that is painstakingly built within the framework of modern medical experimentation. It is also refreshing science-fiction because the usual trappings of space ships, beams, tractor beams and galactic wars are absent. The time and place is here, today.



TAKEOFF by C.M. Kornbluth. (Doubleday, New York, 1952, \$2.75.)



Another original and entertaining novel, one that does involve a space ship, but a ship which never gets off the ground until the last chapter --and the body of the story is the continuous uphill struggle to get it off the ground.

Kornbluth pictures a government which talks much but does nothing about building and launching such a ship, pictures an enthusiastic group of amateurs and professionals who have more faith in space than their government and who undertake to build and launch one themselves. The story is told by a young ceramics engineer, hired away from the AEC to design and build the liner for the tubes; his first suspicions are aroused by a study of the blue-prints and further investigation reveals to him that the ship is intended for a far different purpose than the announced one, and is being financed from a secret purse. Well worthwhile. -BT

IMAGINATION UNLIMITED edited by Everett F. Bleiler & T.E. Dikty. (Farrar, Straus and Young, New York, 1952, \$3.50.)

Thirteen yarns drawn from the back files of four magazines, each representing to a greater or lesser degree some branch of science; in some cases the editors have picked a very fine story tailor-made for that particular science, while in other cases they strayed very far indeed. Similarly, some of the stories are poor specimens considering the very large field to choose from---but then we suppose anthology editors are rapidly coming to their wit's end, as well as the bottom of the barrel; is there any other field of fiction which has been so thoroughly reprinted?

The contents: What Dead Men Tell (Sturgeon, mathematics), Referent (Bradbury, philosophy), Blind Man's Buff (Jameson, geo-

logy and geography), Pressure (Rucklyne, chemistry), The XI Effect (Latham, physics), Old Faithful (Gallun, astronomy), Alas, All Thinking! (Bates, biology), Dune Roller (May, bio-chemistry), Employment (de Camp, paleontology), Dreams Are Sacred (Phillips, psychology), Hold Back Tomorrow (Neville, sociology), Berom (Berryman, linguistics), The Fire and the Sword (Robinson, anthropology). Our personal choices for choice reading are those by Julian May, Peter Phillips, Kris Neville and Frank Robinson. -BT

CITY by Clifford Simak. (Gnome Press, New York, 1952, \$2.75.)

We have long been an admirer of Simak and his works, and so looked forward to this volume with keenest expectations. It did not disappoint us, representing as it does some of his very best, most sensitive writing. The publisher deserves a rude thumb for stating on the jacket "a new science fiction novel of the future" ---for it is not. It is however a fine blend of seven previous tales, together with much new material, and the end result is a ten-thousand-year history of a family and that family's servants.

In the beginning the cities are deserted by all but the sentimental few because cities are obsolete; this is the original tale, "City". Afterward come "Huddling Place," "Census," "Paradise," "Hobbies," "Aesop" and "Trouble With Ants". The 10,000 years roll on and man becomes obsolete, replaced by dogs and robots who speculate on the creature that ruled the earth before them. Finally, they in turn are hauled up short and the wisest among them can foresee their own end as the ants began building a city. Recommended -- don't pass this one by! -BT

THE MIXED MEN by A.E. van Vogt. (Gnome Press, New York, \$2.75)

Turning up a van Vogt volume each month is getting to be a habit --we wonder what the man and his various publishers will do when all his old serials and short stories are exhausted? This volume consists of three of his previous tales, "Concealment," "The Storm," and "The Mixed Men," rewritten into a continuous narrative. The connecting links aren't too well-fitted and the seams show, where one yarn ends and the next begins.

Van Vogt the empire builder is again at work, and perhaps it is his Canadian ancestry which is responsible for his curious preoccupation with royalty as the ruling class. Here, "the Right Honorable Gloria Cecily, Lady Laurr of Noble Laurr, Grand Captain of the (ship) Star Cluster" is leading home her mighty vessel from an exploratory and star-mapping ten years in space when they stumble across an alien weather-station in the Greater Magellanic Cloud--where no such weather-station has a right to be. Captured, the stationmaster kills himself but is promptly revived and nearly pumped dry of knowledge; unwillingly he reveals the existence of a people expelled from earth fifteen thousand years before. And the Right Honorable Gloria Cecily cannot rest until she digs them out and welds them into earth's empire, whether they like it or not. Involved in a sub-plot are the three races hidden among the stars: Dellian, non-Dellians, and the mixed men. -BT

SPACE HAWK by Anthony Gilmore. (Greenberg, New York, 1952, \$2.75)

Subtitled "the greatest of interplanetary adventures", this story could just as easily have been set in a cow-town. Since it

Is a reprinting of yarns twenty years old, we weren't expecting much and was therefore surprised to find the writing very good. Certainly it is more than adequate for the plot---which is out of the cornfield, and the characterization---which with one exception is stereotyped. The exception is the hero's Negro assistant, a brave and intelligent human being. The other characters are the indestructible hero himself, his enemy the arch-villain Doctor Ku Sui, and the Master Scientist. The Scientist's Daughter is not mentioned until near the end and there is no sex or love interest unless you go in for symbolism.

Hawk is the kind of a hero who calmly files his fingernails while the battle rages around him, and every so often his eyes turn bleak. In one scene he is a captive of a minor villain named Judd the Kife; Judd stands over him, gloating, and every few minutes delivers Hawk a kick in the head. No wonder the poor man's eyes go bleak. We would recommend this book to (1) the completist, (2) the old time nostalgic Hawk Carse fan, and (3) the younger element who like Space Patrol, Buck Rogers and the like. Others save your money.



-Reviewed by Len J. Moffatt

• WRITERS •

Tony Boucher's science-fiction mystery, **ROCKET TO THE MORGUE**, has been released by Dell books at 25¢. When this first appeared in hardcovers several years ago, speculation ran rife as to who the real characters might be, behind the fictitious names; the mystery deals with fans, writers, editors and others in the science field. The favorite indoor sport of the day was to leaf thru the story, point out names, and say "this is Ackerman, this is Williamson," etc. Try it once.

Lester del Ray's yarn "Nerves," originally published in **ASTOUNDING** in 1942, has been purchased for filming by Paramount Pix. No cast has been announced at this early date; picture probably will be seen next winter or spring. Meanwhile, George Pal bought the sequel-novel, **AFTER WORLDS COLLIDE**, to follow up his previous picture. Flak-happy publicity men first announced that Pal "was having the sequel written for him."

William F. Temple (London) has sold his **GALAXY** novel, "The Four-Sided Triangle" to the studios. The picture will be filmed in London beginning this summer and Barbara Payton has been billed as the feminine lead--although this may be only a publicity stunt to cash in on the woman's recent newspaper triangles.

Joseph Payne Brennan of Yale Univ. Library has published a bibliography of H.P. Lovecraft, including works about the writer as well as fiction by him. (Biblio Press, 1104 Vermont ave, N.W. Washington 5, DC). Priced at a dollar.

Sam Moskowitz is continuing his **HISTORY OF FANDOM**, bringing the chronicles up to 1950. The volume will be published in hard covers by Henry Burwell, co-publisher of the first volume.

Murray Leinster is doing three teen-age science novels built around space ships and stations.

David Hegerman, book collector and University of Chicago fan club member, died in a fire at his home last Easter. Hegerman was science fiction book reviewer for the Chicago DAILY NEWS.

Alfred Bester's serial THE DEMOLISHED MAN is being completely revised for hardcover publication this fall (Shasta). Bester recently returned from a vacation in Europe. He explains his use of off-beat character names in the story as derivations of Texan brands, projected into a future society. Some extreme examples of those names will be eliminated from the revised book, and many parts of the novel rewritten for a newer public.

Raymond F. Jones is revising his "Peace Engineers" series, including much new material, for book publication this fall.

Five writers: Walter M. Miller Jr., L. Sprague de Camp, Poul Anderson, Sam Merwin Jr., and Frank Robinson, have been commissioned by Shasta to do original novels, most of which will see print this year.

David Kyle is editing a "who's who" of fandom, for future publication. The lithographed booklet will contain biographies as well as photos. (300 west 67th St., New York).

Mack Reynolds now residing in Louisville, Ky., until after the elections, doing political writing. After this fall he expects to settle in southern Indiana. SCIENCE FICTION CARNIVAL, the humor anthology co-edited by Reynolds and Fred Brown is expected in the fall.

Robert Bloch has sold a cut-down version of his new novel, "Call Me Faust" to BLUE BOOK, plus two shorties to Howard Browne.

Isaac Asimov's Gnome Press novel, I, ROBOT, will be pubbed in a dollar edition this year by Grosset and Dunlap.

Willy Ley and Chesley Bonestell's king-sized space primer, THE CONQUEST OF SPACE, has been purchased by Paramount Pix and turned over to George Pal for production. (See "COLLIDE" on previous page.) It is not known at this early date just what Pal intends to do with the book-- perhaps film the statistics.

Actor's son William Powell Jr. is writing the screen story for "Space Island," upcoming space-opera from Universal studios.

Fletcher Pratt & Jack Coggins have another illustrated \$1 book from Random House: BY SPACE SHIP TO THE MOON.

Heinlein's film, DESTINATION MOON, is now available for home showing on 16mm machines.



INTRODUCING A NEW SCIENCE FICTION AUTHOR

...and the kind of reviews his first novel has been receiving



Jerry Sohl

Books—
Hapless Haploids
(Just Look It Up)
Almost Rule World
"THE HAPLOIDS" by Jerry Sohl
(Rinehart, \$2.50).

By Carl Vesper Little
Brother Sohl writes such an ingenious story that we'll not only win the addicts from the science-fiction addicts but will be cheered likewise by the old-line whodunit fans and the general reader as well.

In short, this seems to be every-one's answer to how to spend an evening.

The plot, without going too deeply into its pseudo-scientific aspect, concerns the revolt of artificially produced women against male supremacy. (Female frogs have become mothers with the help from the male of the species in experiments of Dr. Gregory Purvis and this is an extension of the idea.)

The intention of these women, called haploids (a dictionary word meaning a cell or organism with one set of chromosomes instead of the usual two sets, male and female) is to wipe out the male population because men have mistreated women since time immemorial and because they have made a botch of running the world. And the haploids would have succeeded had it not been for Travis, a newspaper reporter, and Betty, a nifty looking haploid who turns traitor when she falls in love with Travis.

THE HAPLOIDS
by Jerry Sohl
\$ 2.50

W.B. Read & Company

-Booksellers-

Bloomington, Illinois

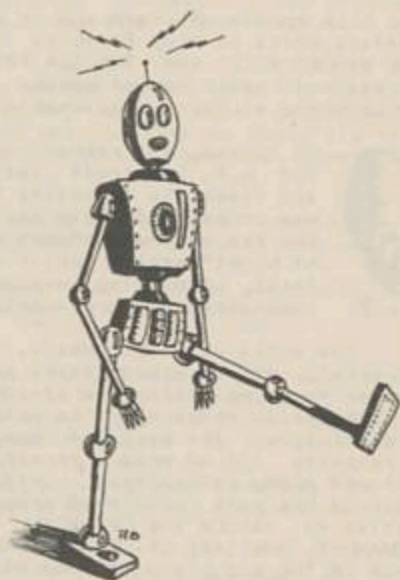
Autographed copies upon request.

THE FANTASY BOOKMAN

by Darrell
C. Richardson

The appearance of the first volume in the new Polaris Fantasy Library is an event of first magnitude; **THE HEADS OF CERBERUS** by Francis Stevens is a superb example of book-making art. Boxed in a slip case, printed on special deckle-edged antique paper, and set in modern Electra type face, the volume is a delight to the book lover. Lloyd Arthur Eshbach should be congratulated on this project which caters to the genuine collector and connoisseur. The price is \$3 and can be obtained only from Polaris Press (P.O. Box 159, Reading, Penna.) The edition is strictly limited to 1500 numbered copies, ten of which are bound in a special edition in red half-leather and gray cloth.

Francis Stevens (real name: Mrs. Gertrude Bennett) was one of the best of the old-time fantasy writers. I have always felt that her writing was on par with A. Merritt, Garret Smith, J.U. Giesy, Charles B. Stilson, Homer Eon Flint, Austin Hall and other old masters of fantasy. Originally published in 1919 in **THRILL BOOK**, "The Heads of Cerberus" has been an almost legendary item. P. Schuyler Miller calls it "perhaps the first work of fantasy to envisage the parallel time-track concept with an added variation." The story holds up very well according to modern standards and is easily one of the better pieces from the pen of "Francis Stevens". Eshbach has written an excellent introduction which contains hitherto unknown facts about the author. The next Polaris Press selection is **THE ABYSS OF WONDERS** by Perley Poore Sheehan.



TRENDS

I have found it interesting from time to time to observe the trends of collecting in the science fiction and fantasy worlds. It doesn't take much to cause certain books, or writers, or types of stories, to be suddenly sought after. For example, since 1943 when **FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES** changed their policy and began publishing classics that had appeared only in book form, almost any story appearing there became sought after in its original book form by fans and collectors. I have observed this in the fan press, in want ads, and in the many fan and dealer lists which I receive. Quite often, when an unusually popular story appears in **FRM**, collectors desire other stories by the same author. As a result, they begin avidly searching for those other

fantasy books; many dealers have been clever enough to capitalize on this trend and the prices have gone up accordingly.

In 1947 I wrote an article for Langley Searles' FANTASY COMMENTATOR called "The Tarzan Theme". In that article I discussed various books using the "Tarzan theme" --- books dealing with the children raised by animals and growing up in savage environment. I especially commended THE LION'S WAY and KASPA THE LION MAN, by C.T. Stoneham, and LORD OF THE LEOPARDS by F.A.M. Webster. Sometime later I furnished a copy of THE LION'S WAY to Mrs Gnaedinger for use in FRM. These books seemed to strike the fancy of hundreds of fans and readers; I do not remember how many letters I received wanting me to locate copies of them. Several British book dealers reported a run on the titles; I placed a standing order with them to send me all the copies they could locate, but I still could not supply the demand. And I still occasionally receive letters begging for books on "the Tarzan theme". Several Burroughs' collectors now consider these books as necessary companion volumes to their Tarzan sets.

A couple of years ago a sudden interest developed in the fantasy works of Dion Fortune. Such titles as THE GOAT-FOOT GOD, THE WINGED BULL and THE SEA PRIESTESS commanded premium prices. It was not until recent months that copies of these books could be obtained at fairly reasonable prices.



Of course, the rather curious and nearly fanatical demand for H.P. Lovecraft (especially THE OUTSIDER) has ebbed and flowed in intensity for over ten years. This demand may or may not have had some relationship to the demand for the various volumes in the English "Creeps" and "Not At Night" series which reprinted many stories from WEIRD TALES, including Lovecraft tales. These books are still considered prime collector's items.

The works of Talbot Mundy, practically all of which are out of print, struck a high level of popularity a few years ago and appear to be maintaining a steady appeal for the book collectors -- especially those who like both fantasy and the Orient. At the present time, the works of George Griffith seem to be undergoing a revival; all at once a terrific demand for his titles has developed among collectors. Griffith was a British writer who had most of his work published around the turn of the century; such titles as VALDOR THE OBT-BORN, THE ANGEL OF THE REVOLUTION, OLGA ROMANOFF, THE LAKE OF GOLD, ROMANCE OF THE GOLDEN STAR, THE OUTLAWS OF THE AIR, and various other books listed in The Checklist are very much sought.

These trends develop, I believe, for a number of reasons. For one thing, we like to read what everybody else is talking about; furthermore, we are curious souls and we wonder why a sudden interest develops in certain books or writers. We have an idea that, if a lot of other people like certain books, maybe we will like them too. And of course there are those of us with the pack-rat instinct who simply want to have any books or magazines that are rare and sought after.

Just arrived: GREEN FIRE by John Teane. (FPCI, \$3). This scarce and sought-after tale is back in print for the first time since 1928. This epic novel about the super-science of 1990 will be reviewed in this column next issue.

-DCR

LETTERS

Poul Anderson (Minneapolis): "This letter is to inform you that you have made a serious error, attributing to me a damaging statement which I never made and laying yourself open to charges of libel, slander, character-assassination, murder, arson, counterfeiting, barratry, Communism, malfeasance, and conspiracy. On page 3 (of the May issue) I am quoted as answering the question "Do you read science fiction in the bathtub?" as follows: "I find it an extremely difficult place to properly hold or suspend the average pulp publication devoted to science fiction while immersed in hot water and too the light is not properly located in any bathroom conducive to casual browsing."

Anyone reading this vile sentence will, if he is so gullible as to believe I said it, consider me guilty of (a) splitting an infinitive and (b) cruelty to animals, since if I ever used the bathtub it would frighten the goldfish no end. I can produce fifteen witnesses of undisputable integrity who did not hear me make the above statement.

However, rather than drag this sordid matter into the courts, I would prefer to settle it privately, by the more gentlemanly custom of the duello. If you do not publish an immediate retraction, my seconds will call on you in the morning. They get up before I do."

((Retraction: Poul Anderson would not dream of reading s-f in the bathtub, thereby frightening the goldfish by either end.))

James Blish (Long Island City): "... I think it should be pointed out that JACK OF EAGLES is not 'an original novel, never before published.'

The statement in quotes is exactly 50% true. JACK was first published as a 30,000-word 'short novel' in the December, 1949, THRILLING WONDER STORIES under the title "Let the Finder Beware." A notice to that effect was supposed to appear in the book version, but the publisher inadvertently omitted it. There is, however, quite a bit of new material in the book version; it is twice as long as the magazine version and was rewritten from scratch."

((Was the visit to the six worlds of tomorrow a part of the new material? We can't quite visualize TWS following your trick paging for the Fourth Tomorrow. -BT))

Frederik Pohl (New York): "Thank you very much for the note in News Letter announcing that I am getting married this month. (However) it is a little premature, in that I've not as yet got unmarried. You get an E for Effort, though, and whatever wedding presents come in I'll split with you."

((Never mind the presents-- send along a bridesmaid and I'll marry you off in every issue. -BT))



People Notes

Darrell C. Richardson's monumental volume of research and bibliography, **MAX BRAND, THE MAN AND HIS WORK**, has been published in hardcovers by FPCI. To be reviewed here next issue.

John Collier and Arthur C. Clarke won the 1952 Fantasy Award in London last month. Collier's **FANCIES AND GOODNIGHTS** was chosen the best in the fiction field; the annual award is a table lighter mounted on a wood base, with a space ship model mounted just to the rear of the lighter. Second and third place in the fiction field went to John Wyndham for his **DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS**, and to Ray Bradbury for **THE ILLUSTRATED MAN**.

Clarke, author of **THE EXPLORATION OF SPACE**, won the non-fiction award, with second and third places going to Willy Ley for his **DRAGONS IN AMBER**, and to Fletcher Pratt for **ROCKETS, JETS, GUIDED MISSILES AND SPACE FLIGHT**. As usual, the awards machinery was hampered by lack of funds, mostly British capital backing the annual affair.

Norma Erier and Dave Hammond are the names behind the pen-name "Nade," appearing in this issue. And the picture at the right represents pure nepotism. Two issues ago, my daughter had a picture herein, which immediately created a howl from the younger son. This is to restore peace in the family.



Judy May, chairman of the Chicago convention, reports that more than six hundred memberships have now been sold --by far the largest of any of the annual conventions.

Fred Goetz (3488 22nd st., San Francisco) has organized an international tape-response exchange, similar to his earlier wire-recording club which has several hundred members. Perhaps half a dozen fans owning tape recorders are active in same. Goetz has interested some of the tape manufacturing companies in his organization and they are assisting by means of advertising & publicity.

EXCERPTS FROM THE FAN PRESS (items that otherwise might go unsung)

"Please tell Marion Brady though she means well, that I'm not quite thirteen, and never will see twelve or thirteen again. I am mature, cultered high school freshman who has reached the wise ole age of 14. And if anything hurts the circulation of a mag more its to tell the public that the editor is 13 or 14 or 12. I'm sure Marion didn't mean anything, but her and Rog Phillips made the mistake. Not quite as worse as not getting sub. is to get one filled with fawning moudling slop about how nice it is to have someone so young publishing a fanzine even though it is crud. I live in dread fear of the Chicon. How are the fans going to react to a 14 yr. old in attendance? When they retire to the 770's & smoked filled rooms will there be room for this creature? Or will he be cast out, like a street urchin, tossed and ragged, domed to spend the night alone? ..."

-David Ish, in **OPUS #4**.

(Nobody should be domed to spend the night alone! If they toss you out ragged, Dave, join me down in the bar. -BT)

SHOCK

THE LONG LOUD SILENCE

by Wilson Tucker

is the most sensational science fiction novel since "The Twenty-Fifth Hour" and "Final Blackout".

Realistic, grim, hard-hitting, this startling novel paints a brutal picture of the United States torn down the middle --- of American troops stationed along the Mississippi to enforce the division --- of one-half the population with radios, neon lights, comforts; the other half with nothing left to them but the bitter picture of life, light and sound across the river.

THE LONG LOUD SILENCE is descriptive of the twenty-six states sealed off by troops, descriptive of the dead future enforced on them. This compelling novel strikes the very roots of such an existence, brings into the open every resultant evil.

THE LONG LOUD SILENCE has no "good" hero. It has a tough-minded protagonist caught on the wrong side of the river, a man who brawls and shoots his way across nine states to reach safety--and an unexpected reception.

THE LONG LOUD SILENCE will not be published until October, but so unusual a book deserves an unusual advance announcement. All book stores will take your reservation now. \$2.50

The Long Loud Silence

by Wilson Tucker



RINEHART & COMPANY



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New York 16, N. Y.**

SCIENCE FICTION



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