ROY TACKETT presents

A DYNATRON SPECIAL

FANTASY FICTION DECIMAL CLASSIFICATION

by

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INTRODUCTION

In presenting this decimal classification system for reprinting, I include as illustrative all the items in the Astounding Stories published by Clayton Magazines, taking them (and correcting a few errors) from the Clayton Astounding Index that Bill Evans prepared and I published after the war.

I hope to see someday an edition of the classification system in which all s-f and fantasy works are indexed at the appropriate subject headings. A large part of magazine s-f has been labeled with the appropriate decimal numbers, but no one has done the clerical work of arranging the stories by classification numbers, or the mechanical work of publishing them. In such a book, incidentally, each decimal number would be defined extensionally by the stories collected under it, as much as by the wording with which I attempt to define it intensionally.

You may not see the stories from Clayton Astounding at first, because the classification begins with the supernatural, which Bates's magazine rarely visited. But move along to such classifications as 44.3-K (invasions of Earth), and they come thick and fast.

I might as well explain the auxiliary letter symbols right now. The numbers indicate the fantasy element in the story. The letters indicate certain recurring treatments, one of which may be applied to different fantasy elements. There are not special categories for future war on earth, space war, interdimensional war, or war with intelligent insects; but there are categories for the future, space, "dimensions", and superbugs, and if the action includes a war, this is indicated by affixing the initial of Kreig to the decimal number. So also with the characteristics Humor, Juvenile, etc.

If this is the first time you have seen this table of numbers, you are likely to get lost in detail. Look at the broad classifications first, those with the numbers 10., 30., etcetera, which start at the left margin. Notice that 30. is broken down into extrapolations on various groups of sciences, 31., 32., and so on.

The shorter numbers such as 40. mean general and miscellaneous. The longer numbers, such as 43., incorporate the idea of the shorter number preceding each, e.g. 40. Thus 43.9-A alone would not be sufficient classification for Velikovsky's Worlds in Collision, because 40. implies the future, and 43.9 must mean future wanderers into the solar system. Since Velikovsky claims this took place in the almost prehistoric past, the number 43.9 should have 50. prefixed to it; or one could be more specific with 54/43.9-A. (We should append A because the book purports to be non-fiction; we try to classify things as they were intended to be when written, and do not pass independent judgements that this is ridiculous, or that should have been presented as pure fantasy, or intended humor isn't funny at all.)

One can run riot applying multiple classifications, especially in the crossbreds of letter-day stef, but restraints should be exercised. Cut Around Rigel 45.1/52-37.7 is about as complicated as they should get. (Apparently that story involved superspeed (or maybe the Fitzgerald contraction?), and dinosaurs on a Rigelian planet—quite a mixture.) An analysis published in FAPA by Coelit (?) showed that it is not feasible to index all the gadgets and ideas in every story, so just the ones determining the course of the plot should be sought.

If you decide to do some indexing yourself, here are some suggestions: In choosing a number to describe a story, prefer the specific (the number with more significant digits) to the general; thus The Fifth Dimension Catapult is 32.3, not just 32. However, if there is no obviously apt specific category, do not hesitate to use the general, which includes "miscellaneous" under that heading. Apparently Evans found Disowned eui generis, so he classified it 36. General categories can be broken
down by redactors if they get too full to be useful, but a work given an inappropriate classification may never be rescued from it. Thus a supposed ghost-story anthology includes some straight scifi, classify it CO., not C2. (On the other hand, I would label it II or History Rewritten 66.-40., because all but the last story in it are true tales.)

The subjects are so arranged that if you extend your search to the neighbors of a number, you may find nearly related types. Thus littleness and bigness are found side by side at 31.7 and 35.4. Androids and laboratory monsters are nearby at 34.8 and 39.1. Mystery-radio, 37.5, often leads to duplication of persons, 37.2.

Now, assuming the stories have been properly classified, let's see how to use such an index.

Say you're working on your doctoral thesis on Edgar Rice Burroughs. In the four pages devoted to The Master Mind of Mars, you want to mention whether any other story ever had a scientist transplanting a human brain into an ape body. Obviously this is an extrapolation on a biological science, and it concerns a man, so you look under 54. for an appropriate specific heading. You won't find "into ape body" specified, but under 32.3 is the title Marsape the Mighty.

Or any your employer, KVUE-TV, is being sued along with 99 other stations that telemailed a Grade B movie in which a monster came "from another dimension"; the plaintiff claiming that the movie idea was stolen from his story in a 1954 issue of Far Out Fiction and violates his copyright. You can be a hero by showing the boss half a dozen stories in the public domain whose plots come as close to the movie as the plaintiff's. All you have to do is find them. It takes a little analytical thinking, but you find your search objects at 32.3.

Maybe you want to avoid trouble before it comes. You do comic book scripts, and have this idea for Pan to show up in the twentieth century and send the cat. If it has been done several times before, you want to buy clearance from one author so you can tell the others, "This is the guy whose idea I stole, and I had his permission."

How do you find a story like this? Well, 10. the supernatural, is the most likely heading, and the subhead 11. seems on the beam. There's no specific heading on Pan, but in a complete index the story you want (From Unknown—Hi, Tucker!) will appear with not too many others under 11.62.

Perhaps you're trying to write for the prozines, and you wonder if anyone has ever published a story about a dream world such as yours that you wrote up in FAPA recently. A search through the 17.s should be helpful. Maybe you're desperately hunting an idea that hasn't been beaten to death lately. Browse through the tables. Hmm, 37.4, spy ray and image projector. Let's find another number to cross with that, say 41., and manufacture an idea.

Could be you're just a disinterested devotee of fine literature, and you want to know whether old-time sf was as ridiculous about rays as satirists represent it. You won't find all the stories with ray-guns indexed under 36.5, but that will give you a start.

You want to cite a number of stories in which s-f foresaw atomic energy. 36.61. You can check everything on the theory and practice of changing the future by looking under 42., in a complete index. Finding out all about Atlantus will involve consulting 54., and also 31.8 and possibly other headings. (Atlantians bob up in the damnest places. See Phalanxes of Atlantis under 31.5, Arctic and Antarctic.)

Maybe you vaguely remember a fine yarn you read in your halcyon days, but can't recall the title or author. You know it was about this invisible creature on the guy's spaceship, and he finally rendered it visible by throwing a box of powder over...
it. This is like shooting fish in a barrel: Adventures on a spaceship would be in the future somewhere, 45.2 to be specific, and under that heading is a story also bearing the number 37.6 which means invisibility.

You can test a theory that ordinary extrapolation stories were hardly ever placed in the future in early-day sf by checking the dates on the stories under 30. that have a 40. number also. Someone who wants to argue that a-f and pure fantasy are indistinguishable can take categories under 10. and try to connect them with categories in the 30's. You want to cite some examples of stories that were a-f when they were written, but would not be if written today? A good place to look is in the extrapolations on technology, and under the subhead of 30.7, transportation, should be some relevant titles.

Prozines sometimes print stories that never were either a-f or fantasy: The editor has a foggy idea of what "science" fiction is, and runs a short about a scientific detective all of whose methods are within present technology. The editor likes a story in which Johnny Day uses advanced mathematics, in a perfectly demonstrable way, to economize on electric cord, and he publishes it without stopping to think whether it's a sf. The acting editor of a weird pulp though a tale of sadism was deemed unusual. Or the publisher was trying to save money, and ran anything available that Jules Verne wrote, including some mere adventure. Also, many ghost stories in popular media are rationalized near the end and then have a "But was it?" thrown in for a kicker. Certainly such stories must be accounted for in indexes of the prozines, and 90. is the number for them, with some subdivisions showing the commonest forms.

I believe a classified index would be useful enough, that it justifies somebody working at it. If the comprehensive index is an intimidatingly large job, more modest projects might be made of the book-length novels in the Checklist of Fantastic Literature, or of the anthologies based on the prozines.

The classification system given here is unchanged from that in the Clayton Astounding Index, although there are a few emendations I would like to make in a new edition. For example, at 36.11, "Stationery calculators", the terminology is obsolete; nowadays we would say "Computers". I suspect that "Supernatural facilities" at 85.7 should say "faculties", but correcting that can wait. Much might be done, too, in filling in some of the numbers I skipped over where I thought there might be numbers needed later, and also in breaking down crowded categories, as 44.9, extra-Solar worlds, has likely become. But these needs will be easier to see after the stories are arranged under the present headings.

JACK SPEER
OCTOBER 1964


00. MISCELLANEOUS, ANTHOLOGIES.

01. Purefantasy collections.

02. Weird collections.

03. Science-fiction collections.
10. IMPOSSIBLE BY CONTEMPORARY SCIENCE: THE SUPER- AND EXTRA- NATURAL.

11. Supernatural elements in the familiar world.
11.1 Magical gifts and powers.
11.101 Soul-selling.
11.13 Wishes.
11.15 Occult arts.
11.16 Curses.
11.17 Divine miracles.
11.18 Charms: objects having magical influence.
11.3 Haunted things and places.
11.5 Ancestral memory, reincarnation.
11.6 Possession.
11.7 Beings and creatures of modern conception.
11.73 Gods created by human psychic energy.
11.74 Menace from Outside.
11.75 Lovecraft mythos, elder gods.
11.76 Fortean
11.8 Beings out of religious beliefs.
11.81 Animistic
11.82 Olympian
11.83 Biblical
11.839 The Devil
11.9 Creatures of folklore.
11.91 Men accursed.
11.911 The Wandering Jew
11.92 Werebeasts.
11.93 Vampires.
11.94 Death personified.
11.95 Elementals, succubuses.
11.96 Little folk, fays.
11.99 Folk heroes.

12. Unrationalized permutations, whimsies.
12.5 Animals that talk.
12.6 Unliving things personalized.

15.1 Subjective idealism.
15.5 The world is not of chance origin.

16. Life after death.
16.1 Consciousness in death.
16.2 Delayed realization of one's death.
16.3 Resurrection, zombies.
16.4 Ghosts in this world.
16.6 Afterlife elsewhere, judgement.

17. Mythological worlds of modern conception.
17.1 A literal heaven.
17.2 Dream lands.
17.3 Worlds out of space and time.
17.4 Medievalish magic-soaked kingdom.
17.7 Evil-possessed lands.

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18. Adventures in old mythologies.
  18.1 Oriental
  18.2 Biblical
  18.3 Graeco-Roman
  18.4 Nordic
  18.5 Hell
  18.6 Arthurian
  18.8 The land of Andersen and Grimm.

30. EXTRAPOLATIONS ON CONTEMPORARY SCIENCE.

31. Extrapolations on geography and geology.
  31.2 Africa and Eurasia
  31.3 Islands
  31.4 America, hidden Amerind civilizations
  31.5 Arctic and Antarctic.
  31.6 Earth's core
  31.7 Subterranean life, caverns.

32. Dimensional.
  32.1 Shortcuts through sub- or hyper-space
  32.2 A featureless Other or hyper-space.
  32.3 Parallel universes, other planes.

32.4 Four-dimensional objects.
  32.9 Two-dimensional.

33. Adventures in size.
  33.1 Macrocosm.
33.2 Microcosm

Prisoners of the Electron Oct30Ast
Beyond the Vanishing Point Mar31Ast
Seed of the Toc-Toc Birds Jan32Ast

The Midget from the Island Aug31Ast
Raid on the Termites Jun32Ast
Pygmy Planet Feb32Ast

A Scientist Rises Nov32Ast

33.3 Littleness

33.4 Bigness

33.2 Density

34. Extrapolations on psychology and biology relative to men.

34.1 Hypnotism, compulsion

The Murder Machine Sep30Ast
The Destroyer Nov30Ast
D: The Ray of Madness Apr30Ast
D: Murder Madness May30Ast

34.15 Truthfulness

34.2 Mind and brain transference.

The Stolen Mind Jan30Ast
The Soul Master Mar30Ast
The Soul Snatcher Apr30Ast
Stolen Brains Oct30Ast
Manape the Mighty Jun31Ast
Mind Master Jan32Ast

34.3 ESP by ordinary people:
telepathy, telekinesis

34.4 Mutants, artificial or natural.

34.41 Superman.

Creatures of the Light Feb30Ast
Holocaust Jun31Ast

34.42 Societies of mutants.

34.45 Retrogression

34.47 Aquatic men

From the Ocean's Depths Mar30Ast
Into the Ocean's Depths May30Ast
Seed of the Arctic Ice Feb32Ast
Under Arctic Ice Jan33Ast

34.48 Winged men.

34.5 Immortality, elixir.

34.6 Super surgery; resuscitation.

34.7 Brains in mechanical housings; heads.

31.8 Heads of Apex Oct31Ast
35.3: Cavern of the Shining Ones Nov32Ast
45.6: The Affair of the Brains Mar32Ast

34.8 Androids

35. Extrapolations on psychology and biology not relating to men.

35.1 Laboratory monsters.

Slaves of the Dust Dec30Ast

35.3 Intelligent Animals

The Cave of Horror Jan30Ast
Giants of the Ray Jun30Ast
Out of the Dreadful Depths Jun30Ast
The Sea Terror Dec30Ast
34.7: Cavern of the Shining Ones Nov30Ast

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35.4 Superbugs
35.5 Bacteria
35.7 Unicell animals
35.8 Advanced plants
35.9 Noncarbon life: crystals.

The Beetle Horde Jan30Ast
Poisoned Air Mar32Ast

The Wall of Death Nov30Ast
The Moon Weed Aug31Ast

44.7: The Planetoid of Peril Nov31Ast

36.1 Robots
36.11 Stationary calculators.
36.12 Sentient but specialized, not manlike.
36.13 Humanoid
36.14 Remote controlled

Revolt of the Machines Jul31Ast
Terrors Unseen Mar31Ast

36.2 Gadgets that do common things.
36.3 Transportation
36.31 Aircraft
36.32 Stratosphere rockets

Floating Islands of Madness Jan33Ast
The Diamond Thunderbolt Jul31Ast

36.5 Rays and vibrations.
36.51 Death rays.

Cold Light Mar30Ast
The Black Lamp Feb31Ast
K: Invasion Mar32Ast

36.52 Disintegrators.

Mad Music Feb30Ast
When Caverns Yawned May31Ast
The Great Drought May32Ast

36.53 Projected energy; forcebeams, walls of force.
36.54 Antigravity
36.55 Other electro-magnetic-gravitic spectrums.
36.56 Atomistics.
36.57 Atomic energy
36.58 Atomic particles per se

The Power and the Glory Jul30Ast
Compensation Jan30Ast

36.6 Transmission and new elements.
36.65 Contraterrene matter.

36.7 Changes in cosmos.
37.1 Mentally molded matter.
37.2 Duplication of persons.

37.3 Matter radio
37.4 Television, spy ray, and image projector.

An Extra Man Oct30Ast
The Eye of Allah Jan31Ast
The Meteor Girl Mar31Ast

37.6 Invisibility.

Invisible Death Jan30Ast
Raiders Invisible Nov31Ast
The Radiant Shell Jan32Ast

45.2: Salvage in Space Mar32Ast
37.7 Time-rate differences, super-speed. The Thief of Time Feb30Ast
End of Time Mar33Ast
45.1: Out around Rigel Dec31Ast
52: Out around Rigel Dec31Ast

40. CONDITIONS AND EVENTS CHARACTERISTICALLY BELONGING TO THE FUTURE.

41. Economic, social, and political life. Jetta of the Lowlands Sep30Ast
K: Tanks Jan30Ast
K: Werewolves of War Feb31Ast
K: Morale Dec31Ast

41.1 Leftist: collectivist, anarchist. Gray Denim Dec30Ast

41.2 Capitalistic. Small-scale engineering projects. Giants on the Earth Dec31Ast

41.3 Matriarchy. Slaves of Mercury Sep32Ast

41.4 Technocratic, scientific. Lords of the Stratosphere Mar33Ast

41.5 Large-scale engineering projects. A Problem in Communication Sep30Ast

41.6 Exaggeratedly urbanized world. Grey Denim Dec30Ast

41.7 Oppression and revolt. Giants on the Earth Dec31Ast

41.8 Decay of man. Slaves of Mercury Sep32Ast

41.9 Catastrophes to civilization. Lords of the Stratosphere Mar33Ast

42.1 Our barbarous descendants. 61.: When the Sleepers Woke Nov32Ast

42.2 Sole survivors. 61.: When the Sleepers Woke Nov32Ast

42.5 Plague 31.7: If the Sun Died Aug31Ast

42.6 Loss of strategic material 44.5: Wandl, the Invader Feb52Ast

42.7 Cloud from space 44.5: Wandl, the Invader Feb52Ast

42.8 Convulsions of nature: inundation. 44.5: Wandl, the Invader Feb52Ast

42.9 Intensified ice age, sun-dimming. 44.5: Wandl, the Invader Feb52Ast

43. Extraordinary astronomical phenomena. 44.5: Wandl, the Invader Feb52Ast

43.4 Destruction of the world averted. 44.5: Wandl, the Invader Feb52Ast

43.5 Destruction of the world. 44.5: Wandl, the Invader Feb52Ast

43.9 Manipulation of planets and stars, wanderers into solar system. 44.5: Wandl, the Invader Feb52Ast

44. Extraterrestrial life and adventures on other planets. 44.5: Wandl, the Invader Feb52Ast

44.1 Mercury and Vulcan K: The Pirate Planet Nov30Ast

44.2 Venus. Vampires of Venus Apr30Ast

The Earthmen's Burden Jun31Ast
Great Dome of Mercury Apr32Ast
Vulcan's Workshop Jun32Ast
44.3 Visitations to Earth.

The Jovian Jest May 30 Ast
The Grey Plague Nov 30 Ast
K: Spawn of the Stars Feb 30 Ast
K: Vandals from the Stars Mar 30 Ast
K: The Terror of Air-Level Six Jul 30 Ast
K: The Flying City Aug 30 Ast
K: The Attack From Space Sep 30 Ast
K: When the Moon Turned Green May 31 Ast
K: The Doom from Planet 4 Jul 31 Ast
K: Spawn of the Comet Nov 31 Ast
K: Vandl, the Invader Feb 32 Ast
K: The Hammer of Thor Mar 32 Ast
K: Raiders of the Universes Sep 32 Ast
45.9: Vandl, the Invader Feb 32 Ast
45.9: Raiders of the Universes Sep 32 Ast

44.4 Mars.

Monsters of Mars Apr 31 Ast
Martian Cabal May 32 Ast

44.5 Outer planets and their satellites.

The Copper-Clad 'World Sep 31 Ast
Red Hall of Jupiter Oct 31 Ast
Creatures of Vibration Jan 32 Ast
Loct of the Void Sep 32 Ast

44.6 Luna and our second moon.

The Moon Master Jun 30 Ast
The World Behind the Moon Apr 31 Ast
Dark Moon May 30 Ast
Brood of the Dark Moon Aug 31 Ast
The Finding of Haldgren Apr 32 Ast
K: Earth, the Marauder Jul 30 Ast
K: The Second Satellite Aug 30 Ast
45.3: Brigands of the Moon Mar 30 Ast

44.7 The Asteroids

The Lord of Space Aug 30 Ast

44.8 Artificial Worlds

The Forgotten Planet Jul 30 Ast
The Planet of Dread Aug 30 Ast
The Terrible Tentacles of L-472 Sep 30 Ast
The Dark Side of Antri Jan 31 Ast
The Ghost World Apr 31 Ast
The God in the Box Sep 31 Ast
The Terror from the Depths Nov 31 Ast
The Priestess of the Flame Jun 32 Ast
Death Traps of FX-31 Mar 33 Ast

44.9 Extra-Solar worlds

The Sargasso of Space Sep 31 Ast
Vampires of Space Mar 32 Ast
32.3: In the Orbit of Saturn Oct 31 Ast
37.6: Salvage in Space Mar 33 Ast

45. Space travel, no single planet the main locale.

45.1 Pioneer flights.

Into Space Feb 30 Ast
Beyond the Heaviside Layer Jul 30 Ast
37.7: Out Around Rigel Dec 31 Ast
52.: Out Around Rigel Dec 31 Ast

45.2 Adventures in a single ship.

The Sargasso of Space Sep 31 Ast
Vampires of Space Mar 32 Ast
32.3: In the Orbit of Saturn Oct 31 Ast
37.6: Salvage in Space Mar 33 Ast
45.3 Several ships involved.
The Slave Ship from Space Jul31Ast
Space Rover Feb32Ast
The Passing of Ku Sui Nov32Ast
44.6: Brigands of the Moon Mar30Ast

45.6 Action divided between various planets of Sol and space.
Vagabonds of Space Nov30Ast
Hawk Carse Nov31Ast
Bluff of the Hawk May32Ast
Pirates of the Gorm May32Ast
34.7: The Affair of the Brains Mar32Ast

45.7 The same, on an interstellar scale.
K: Winged Men of Orson Jan32Ast

50. THE PREHISTORIC PAST.
51. Origin of Earth.
52. Prehuman life.
53. Early men.
54. Legendary civilizations.

50. THE PREHISTORIC PAST.
51. Origin of Earth.
52. Prehuman life.
53. Early men.
54. Legendary civilizations.

60. DEVIATIONS FROM THE TIME STREAM.
61. One way travel from past to future: suspended animation.
From an Amber Block Jul30Ast
When the Mountain Came to Miramar Mar31Ast
42.2: When the Sleepers Woke Nov32Ast

63. Looking or traveling back and forth in presumably unalterable time.
The Man from 2071 Jun31Ast
31.7: The Port of Missing Planes Aug31Ast
32.3: The Atom Smasher.

65. Changing the present or future by going pastward.
66. Travel back and forth in time where infinite possibilities exist.
The Exile of Time Apr31Ast

68. Mixing of subjunctively contemporary persons and settings: sidewise.
69. Unmixed might-have-beens, current events that don't happen.

80. SCIENCE ARTICLES
81. The physical sciences.
81.1 Astronomy
81.2 Mathematics
81.3 Physics
81.4 Chemistry
81.5 Geology
81.6 Engineering

82. The biological sciences.
82.1 Zoology
82.15 Physiology
82.2 Botany
82.4 Paleontology
82.5 Psychology

83. The social sciences.
83.1 Archaeology
83.2 Anthropology
83.3 History
83.4 Sociology and economics.

The Expanding Universe Mar33Ast
84. Rockets and space flight.

85. The supernatural.
   85.1 Satanism, demonology, witchcraft.
   85.2 Vampirism and lycanthropy.
   85.3 Mystic cults.
   85.4 Ghosts
   85.5 Spiritualism.
   85.6 Other psychic phenomena
   85.7 Supernatural facilities
   85.8 Folklore
   85.9 Literature

90. STORIES NOT TRULY FANTASY.

91. Science, never going beyond contemporary possibility.
92. Mundane explanation, hoax.
94. Hallucinations perhaps objectified.
95. Insanity.
96. Torture.

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