

FANTASY FICTION

the national fantasy review

FIELD

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BI-WEEKLY

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FANTASY SPOTLITE fan & pro news

ACE BOOKS continues their heavy schedule of science fiction in the months ahead, according to Don Wollheim. Coming in November is WHEN THE SLEEPER WAKES by H. G. Wells, STAR BRIDGE by Jack Williamson and James Gunn, a John Brunner double-book featuring THE RITES OF ONE and CASTAWAYS' WORLD, LORD OF THUNDER by Andre Norton, METROPOLIS by Thea von Harbou, and BACK TO THE STONE AGE by Edgar Rice Burroughs. Appearing in December: CARSON OF VENUS by Edgar Rice Burroughs, BEYOND THE STARS by Ray Cummings, L. Sprague de Camp's double-book featuring THE HAND OF ZEI and THE SEARCH FOR ZEI, THE GAME-PLAYERS OF TITAN by Philip K. Dick (his first new novel since winning the Hugo). For January, Ace will be publishing: A double-book containing THE ASTEROID STEALERS by Calvin M. Knox and THE TWISTED MEN by A. E. van Vogt, THE PRODIGAL SUN by Philip E. High, LAND OF TERROR by Edgar Rice Burroughs, and ALIEN PLANET by Fletcher Pratt.

By way of Wild Bill Bowers, Andre Norton reports there will be a sequel to WITCH WORLD. The new opus, titled QUEST FOR KOLDER, is already in the hands of Ace, but publication date is not known at this time. Andre says it will be some time before she does any more sf or fantasy, since she is now working on a(n) historical novel requiring a vast amount of detailed research.

John Boardman has recently become secretary of the United Federation of College Teachers, AFL-CIO. John also wanted a mention of the possibility of a charter flight to Pacificon II next year by East Coast fans. He mentioned this in his fanzine, KNOWABLE #5, but I have misplaced my copy and am not able to repeat his remarks from there.

MAGAZINE OF FANTASY & SF -- lineup for December, 1963

The Tree of Time (first of 2 parts)

Ferdinand Feghoot: LKVII

The Court of Tartary

BOOKS

The Eternal Lovers

Pete Gets His Man

SCIENCE: Roll Call

What Strange Stars and Skies

Damon Knight

Grendel Briarton

T. P. Caravan

Avram Davidson

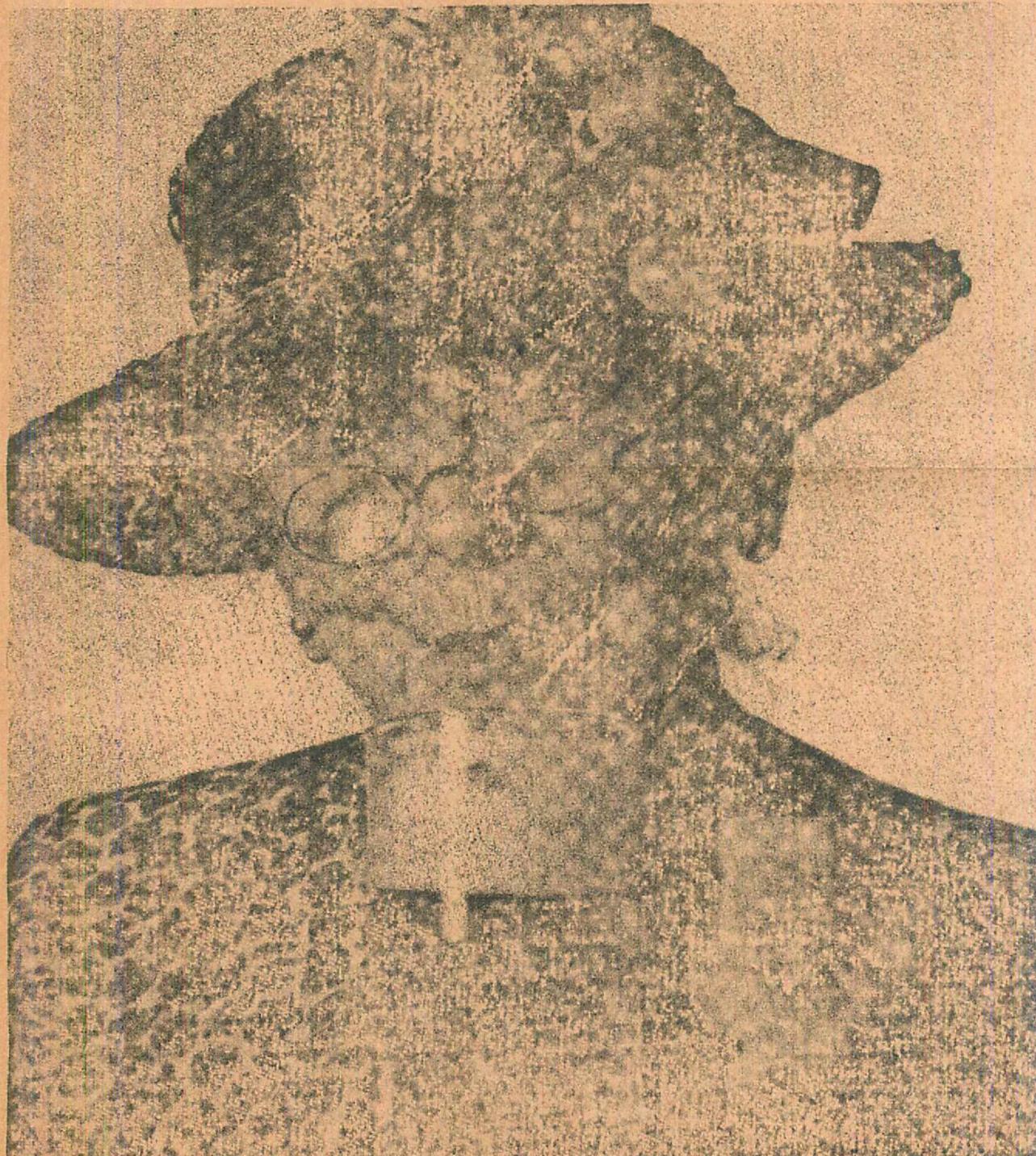
Robert F. Young

J. P. Sellers

Isaac Asimov

Avram Davidson

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"WELL, I'D LIKE TO LET YOU IN ON THE NEO-FUND, VIC --
BUT YOU SEE WE HAVE THIS PROBLEM WITH THE TREASURY..."

SPOTLITE on the PROS

by Bill Bowers

FANTASTIC, October, 1963 - 50¢

Originality of ideas is apparently the exception rather than the rule in modern science fiction. Such originality is, of course, not unheard of, but science fiction today seems to be in the position of the brash and bawdry young barbarian who, having carved out an empire, has now reached middle age and is consolidating his position, rather than trying for more empires. Such, to me, seems to be the case in point. Science fiction writers, having developed craftsmanship, have lost showmanship. Apparently in agreement with the naive public in believing that "science fact has caught up with science fiction," and rather than "going beyond" these writers are apparently satisfied with consolidating the frontiers laid down by Wells, Verne, and a few more recent authors such as Doc Smith. True, they make beautiful sounds in many cases, but it's still the same old themes with, if we be lucky, perhaps a new twist.

The above may be considered a prelude to Robert F. Young's "Let There Be Night." As a story -- the technique in which he handles it, not the theme -- it served its purpose in entertaining me for a few minutes. What is more surprising in these days when I'm becoming old and cynical, it held my continuous interest.

Mr. Young is perhaps to be commended in that he chose one of the lesser worn artifacts of science fiction to build his story around. The setting may have been different, but I'm sure most of you have read at least one (probably more) story in which a citizen of a more advanced technological culture is stranded among a (in comparasion) more primitive people. Most of the time it is aliens (preferably BEMs) landing on Earth, but sometimes the opposite might hold true. Such a story is "Let There Be Night."

Taking a puritanical world, and adding the old adage of a "Man In the Moon," Mr. Young builds a surprisingly entertaining and somewhat satirical story around these bare bones. In this case, the face, which is conveniently so orientated as to face the sole inhabitable continent (which, incidently, is shaped in the form of a headless body), is so realistic and the mouth so formed as to unconsciously shape the populace's life in the already mentioned puritanical manner, as well as forming the basis of their religion.

This is the prospective home our hero, one Benjamin Hill, faces when he is stranded on "Perfection". As always in this type of story, the problem of getting the hero there and stranded is rather quickly and unconvincingly disposed of, but perhaps it is better this way. Naturally, as the product of the advanced society, and with an education broad

(continued on page 5)

THE FANZINE FIELD

by Mike Deckinger

LOGORRHEA #3 (Tom Perry, P. O. Box 1284, Omaha, Nebraska, Irregular)
LOGORRHEA is a thin, but meaty and stimulating fanzine, handled by Tom with an eye for material that is a cut above the average. Various subjects are expounded upon with a minimum of verbal trickery or needless rehashing. The repro is fine, the back cover quotes are as good as any that have appeared in HYPHEN, and the general atmosphere is one of relaxed informality. There is even a snatch of faan-fiction that manages to sustain itself through three pages without becoming over-obvious. Joe Pilati doesn't like the title, nor do I, but said title is probably the least preferable item of this fanzine. Otherwise, it's quite good.

FANTASY-NEWS #13 (Ken Beale, 115 East Mosholu Parkway, Bronx 67, N. Y. weekly, 3 for 25¢) The unexpected success of this newszine comes as a distinct surprise to me. I had more or less expected the grandiose plans surrounding the birth of FANTASY-NEWS to sink into an eventual obscurity, along with the zine, but here it is, thirteen issues later. This issue is devoted to a skimpy DisCon report, which nevertheless touches on most of the important features. There are a few errors in the report itself; Carol Pohl came as Donna Creery from "The Reefs of Space," for instance, not just an interplanetary female. But for a quick run-through of what went on during those three hectic days this recount is unreservedly recommended. Maybe FANTASY-TIMES can make its niche after all -- who knows?

JARGON #1 (Dave van Arnam, Apt. 353, 1730 Harrison Avenue, Bronx 53, N. Y. 10053. monthly, 25¢, mtl, trade, LoC) Another first issue, this one dedicated to "light-hearted pomposity or to scrupulous immorality," whichever happens to appeal to the editor at the time, apparently. As most first issues go, it has many of the redeeming qualities and few of the less favorable ones. Dave's own material, consisting mainly of an expanded and categorized editorial, is light and informative. What he says, he does so in a definitive and clearly stated manner. There is also a reprint of an excerpt from a Burroughs article by Dave which is probably the sort of thing that every Burroughs Bibliophile will unabashedly cherish. I didn't care much for it. Ted White pens a postmortem on the successful Willis fund, recounting the previous fan funds, and offering a superfluous rebuttal to a plainly biased and inaccurate article Robert Jennings wrote some time ago attacking TAWP. The recount is good, but I hardly think it's necessary to refute anything as meaningless as Jennings' attack, which was written in an over-emotional, thoroughly unreasonable style. With the publication of "A Trip to Hell," Jennings pretty much sealed his own fate in fandom. Further examples of his illogic do nothing to clarify a more distasteful image of himself. Elsewhere, Dave pleads for good material and good letters. A plea like that, particularly when advanced in so promising a first issue deserves to be heeded.

THE FANZINE FIELD, continued

INTROSPECTION #7 (Mike Domina, 1104 $\frac{1}{2}$ South Trip Avenue, Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453. Irregular, 20¢, cont. LoC) Dittoed fanzines are becoming about as rare and inaccessible as unattached girls at conventions. Good dittoed fanzines are even more of a rarity. Intro is no Hugo winner, but it's not a bad fanzine either. The ditto work in particular, except for the tope of several pages where the fluid flowed too rapidly, obscuring the print in a bluish haze, comes out extremely well. George Barr's cover is a meticulously detailed alien landscape, without a single Conan-esque figure slinking in the background. The inner material includes some examples of free verse by Ed Gorman, one of them painfully riddled with Salinger-ish dialogue, which proves for the n'th time that you must be a Salinger to write like one -- and who is? Bob Tucker fondly reminisces over a few defunct fanzines, stirring some coals of interest in their moribund issues. Harry Warner has the usual adequately handled article, and there is also a well edited lettercol, which sags in spots, but it is helped by a long and readable letter from Harlan Ellison, who has a lot to say in the incomparable Ellison-ish style that defies description and invites acceptance. G. M. Carr is present, too, but I'm disappointed. There is not a single defamiation in her letter (though she does cast a disapproving eye at LOLITA). Perhaps the general unreliability and irascible nature of ditto machines is serving to keep them from a more widespread usage in fandom. Ever so often there are some beautiful examples of ditto work (TWIG and MAMMON, for instance) but these are confined to the minority. What I'd like to see is a resurgence of creative fortitude, whereby a do-or-die attitude is adopted and extended to ditto work. It isn't always bad (as witness this issue) and sometimes it can turn out to be highly attractive. Any takers?

JELERANG #3 (The Mercurian Club, c/o Harriett Kolchak, 2104 Brandywine Street, Philadelphia 30, Pa. Bi-monthly, cony., LoC) "The Magazine of Creative Squirrel Baiting" it proclaims on the cover of this issue, and that's as good a heading as anything, and perhaps more representative of the diversified content than anything else. What we do have are such items as a Mercurian picnic report, some bad fiction and mediocre poetry, a book review that scratches the surface, and a lettercolumn that's better than last issue's. The Mercurians appear to have learned some tricks about fanzine editing, and if they'd only use them JELERANG could be a lot better. Creative Squirrel Baiting indeed! #

SPOTLIGHT ON THE PROS, continued

enough to "invent" everything from steel mills to electricity and taxation, our hero sets out to make a mint at the cost of the poor natives. He does. Helped by the ability to change the expression of the Moon "God" to one more suitable for progressive capitalism (by means of missiles), it is almost too easy.

"Let There Be Night" is the story of the rise and fall of our pet marvel man. And despite some of my ramblings above, it is recommended as being one of the better examples of magazine science fiction this month. Go, thou, and read. #

IN THE RACKS reviewing the paperbacks

SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES by Ray Bradbury, Bantam H2630, 60¢, 215pp
Ray is considered by some to be the master of mood writing in present day science fiction writing. Certainly, collections like R IS FOR ROCKET, THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES and THE ILLUSTRATED MAN have proved this. With SOMETHING WICKED Ray tries to write a complete novel with a kind of prose poetry at which he has proven himself adept. That it is not a success might be expected. That it is a failure and a success is a bit harder to explain.

Superficially, the story concerns itself with the adventures of two boys and the father of one of them, when "Cooger and Dark's Pandemonium and Shadow Show" rolls into town on a dark October night. Underneath, you find a richness of allegories, a profusion of underlying commentaries on the nature of man and his environment, a poem in novel form. Yes, a richness. This book cannot be skimmed as can most of our genre's gadget stories and adventure novels. It must be slowly read, it must be slowly savored to find the flavor within its pages.

The pity of it is that it is not a success. The beauty of it is that it is far from being a failure, however mighty its shortcomings in plotting. For it fails as a novel and is a beauty as ... as something else. Unfortunately, you will either love this book as I do or be appallingly bored by it. For, like the better Burroughs adventures, at least half the flavor must come from the reader. It is to be hoped that Ray's next novel will not only have a plot more worthy of a novel than a short story, but that it will be more carefully written so as to infuse the entire book with the kind of lyrical beauty he hits at spots within this book. Like where he speaks of women and births and immortality and old men and their 3:00 AM's in the morning. It is to be sincerely hoped that Ray will do better next time, for he can do better, as he proves within this very novel. Read this one only if you've got the time to go through it carefully.

--Reviewed by Dick Schultz

THE HUGO WINNERS edited by Isaac Asimov, Avon S-127, 60¢, 310 pp.
It is to be hoped that about seven or so years from now the Good Herr Doktor will edit yet another Hugo Winners collection -- this time including those of the years just past and those to come. For this one proves that with the aid of the Hugo awards it is possible to bring together a really fine collection of short stf. Admittedly, they're maybe not all going to be classics. That is, renowned and famed forty years from now. And maybe once or twice they even failed to get the really Best of that year. But they have come awfully close, at worst! They range from the really classic "The Star" by Arthur C. Clarke to the hilarious "Allamagoosa" by Eric Frank Russell -- the one that produced the heart breaking and hilarious adventures of Ken Bulmer trying to get the Hugo into Russell's hands despite the GPO and Customs. The stories are the abovementioned plus things like "The Darfstellar" by Walter M. Miller, Jr., and "Flowers For Algernon" by Daniel Keyes. Stories this good are bound to be anthologized elsewhere, of course. But if you want

IN THE RACKS

a collection of top grade writing all in one place, you could invest in worse projects. One of the better collections of the year, in fact.

-- Reviewed by Dick Schultz

DARKER THAN YOU THINK by Jack Williamson, Lancer Science Fiction Library 73-421, 223 pp., 60¢. About four years ago George Young, he of the Hurt Look and Detroit Fandom, shoved a book into my face. It was a thick book, so I knew immediately that it wasn't a book printed in the late '50's, but more probably in the '40's. This FPCI edition (I think it was FPCI -- am not sure) was carefully given to me, and George became Enthusiastic. "This is a Great Book," George said. This immediately made me say to myself, "Let's see it Prove It." A week and a half later, waiting for "Twentieth Century" to come on TV, I started it. I soon hated myself for putting it off so long.

Williamson was known to me as the World Blaster, the dark side to Edmond Hamilton, as one person put it. A sort of extra-galactic King and Yang of science fiction, that's what Hamilton and Williamson meant to me then. It is one of those quirks of fate that I read both DARKER THAN YOU THINK and Edmond Hamilton's WHAT'S IT LIKE OUT THERE? for the first time in the same week. Both of them proved that stereotypes probably never really fit the person they're trying to portray.

Plot-wise the real classic lycanthropy story here concerns itself with a reporter who becomes entangled with an expedition back from the Far East. The expedition is bringing back information about the existence of real were-creatures and finds itself bucking the organized efforts of the witch-people and were-creatures themselves, aided by an unbelieving and unaware society. It's terror, it's suspense, it's action, it's adventure, it's easily one of the best stories to come out of that spawner of literary giants, UNKNOWN. Calling it an adventure thriller is like calling "Foundation" a story about a group of feather-merchants and intelligensia trying to take over the galaxy.

Indeed, in a long line of disappointments and non-greats, this one does deserve the line in the Lancer pocketbook as few of the other Lancer "Classics" have. "A Science Fiction Classic," unquote. Also, I'm quite surprised to see Lancer not only dropping its ridiculous 75¢ price tag, but improving the quality of its selections immeasurably at the same time. Let us hope it is not a flash in the pan.

-- Reviewed by Dick Schultz

SUPERMIND by Mark Phillips, Pyramid Books F-909, 191 pp., 40¢. When it came out as "Occasion For Disaster" in ANALOG, I hoped that it would be a good book. Unfortunately, "Mark Phillips" was engaged in working the grand idea of "The Queen's Own FBI" into the ground whilst superficially working FBI agent Malone closer and closer to a solution to the strange disasters and societal foul-ups that were the disasters of the serial title. As in "Out Like a Light," FBI agent Kenneth Malone

(concluded on next page)

IN THE RACKS

solved everything through the Superman Gambit. In that novel gambit the hero doesn't think his way out; he doesn't fight his way out; he doesn't luck his way out; he simply acquires a new Power and awes the enemy into compliance. Now you know why I call it the Superman Gambit.

The writing is very slick, the quips are multitude, and the authors have completely re-written the middle and end three-quarters of the book from the serial. They did a good job of re-writing, I might add. But the bloody thing remains slick, pretentious, facile -- and it still ends with the Superman Gambit. That's sort of like throwing grass seed on concrete. No matter how much you throw on, it still doesn't make the concrete any the more fertile.

-- Reviewed by Dick Schultz

WE GET LETTERS SOMETIMES, and a card from Ed Meskys expresses doubt that Blish halted his DisCon speech because of stage fright, as reported in FFF a few issues back. I had been exercising the editorial privilege in the con report of condensing paragraphs into sentences, and the thought occurred that perhaps I had misinterpreted BEM's remarks on the subject, because, as Ed says, that was not the first time Blish had been before a large audience. Part of BEM's reply to my query went like this: "...It may be true that Blish didn't have stage fright, and just said so because he was sick ... if he was sick he never claimed to be in public, tho he could have to his personal friends there. But I highly doubt it ... he SAID he had that "severe case of stage fright," and that's what we believed it to be -- how could we believe otherwise?" # Tnx also to Gary Deindorfer for an analytical and welcome letter. # My apologies that page 2 did not come out better.

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