

# SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

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## FEATURE SELECTION

THE DOOR INTO SUMMER, by Robert A. Heinlein. Signet, N.Y. D2443, 1964. 159 pp. 50¢

In the year 1970 it's possible to dream away all problems by taking the "long sleep"—suspended animation that lasts for as long as is desired. Dan Davis, electronics engineer, is placed in the long sleep by his business partners to insure their control of Dan's inventions. But when Dan awakes in 2000 A.D. he discovers it's possible to go back, and so he returns to the past bent on regaining his rightful fortune.

Heinlein, as usual, unfolds this plot with wit, humor, and attentive action. The complicated concept of going back in time to secure one's own future is presented in a manner readily understandable. Perhaps the major fault with this reprint is that it is placed so close in the future.

NOVEL - 2

—Marshall Hurlich

ESCAPE ACROSS THE COSMOS, by Gardner Fox. Paperback Library, N.Y. 52-273, 1964. 160 pp. 50¢

This is the story of the efforts of Kael Carrick to first escape the prison planet upon which he was abandoned as a convicted murderer, and then to accomplish the mission for which the man whom he supposedly murdered had prepared him. The action in this book moves quite well, but the hero becomes a "superman" in the end (illogically), to the detriment of the book.

NOVEL - 6

—Bill Pond

## THE BRITISH SCENE

by John Carnell

Britain's three-day Easter Convention at Peterborough was one of the finest social get-togethers fans have had for many years (could this be because of the absence of so many professionals?) Guest of Honor E.C. (Ted) Tubb was at his best and is still a universal favorite with fans despite a greatly reduced output of material in recent years. (His recent New Worlds serial, "Window on the Moon," is now published in hardcover by Herbert Jenkins Ltd under the title of MOON BASE, which title will also be used in the American Ace Books edition.) Welcome visitors to Peterborough were Ed Hamilton and Leigh Brackett, with TAFF delegate Wally Weber much in evidence.

Ian Ballantine of Ballantine Books, staying at London's Savoy Hotel for a few days, had a look of dismay on his face when he saw the Four Square paperback edition of CHILDREN OF THE DAMNED, the book-of-the-film sequel to Wyndham's "Village of the Damned," which nobody has any connection with as far as rights are concerned, Wyndham turning down offers of both film script and book production. The screenplay was written by John Briley and the book commissioned from the film, now showing in London's West End.

Trieste's second Fantascienza Film Festival (Italy) will be held July 9 to 18 but will not include a Book Festival or conference of s-f authors. It is planned to hold the latter every second year.

## SFR STORY RATINGS

Story category Length in words	SHORT STORIES (up to 9,000)	NOVELETS (10-18,000)	NOVELLAS (19-39,000)	NOVELS (40,000+)
Worth buying	a-b	A-C	I-IV	1-5
Worth reading	c-d	D-E	V-VI	6-7
Not recommended	e-g	F-H	VII-IX	8-10

The rating designates how well the story is liked. Collections and anthologies are not rated. "Worth buying" means that the story, by itself, is worth buying a magazine or book for. Two or more stories "worth reading" often make a magazine or book worth buying. For a detailed discussion of the rating system, see SFR #7.

OUTSIDE THE UNIVERSE, by Edmond Hamilton. Ace, N.Y. F-271, 1964. 173 pp. 40¢

This reprint is difficult to grade, because the style of science fiction has changed since Hamilton's heyday. The writing is stilted and of course science has advanced greatly since this was first published. The plot is well worn—our Milky Way is invaded by beings from a nearby dying galaxy. Incidentally, the term "universe" is used in place of "galaxy."

In spite of its differences from contemporary science fiction, this is a good book if you are looking for a "just for fun" story. In this fast moving novel there are several trips between galaxies, many narrow escapes from death, and an intergalactic war to the finish.

NOVEL - 7  
—Lawrence Beckwith

MARTIAN TIME-SLIP, by Philip K. Dick. Ballantine, N.Y. U2191, 1964. 220 pp. 50¢

MARTIAN TIME-SLIP appeared in Worlds of Tomorrow for August, October, and December, 1963, as "All We Marsmen."

Mr. Dick has some very interesting ideas in this book; however, it is its uninteresting ideas which he chose to develop. MARTIAN TIME-SLIP attempts to give the reader the same feelings as a schizophrenic but it is handled in such a manner that the only feeling the reader has is that of confusion.

NOVEL - 9  
—Glenn Keene

THE HUMAN ANGLE, by William Tenn. Ballantine, N.Y. U2190, 1964. 152 pp. 50¢

This eight-story collection is a reprint and worth buying. The best novelet is "The Flat-Eyed Monster," about a professor who is teleported to another planet as the prisoner of a telepathic race whose members resemble suitcases with tentacles. While on this planet the man discovers he can shoot rays of light that are deadly to his captors. The conclusion is very unusual (D).

Also of note is "Project Hush," about an overly secret trip to the moon (b). The ratings of the other stories are: one "E," three "c's," and two "d's." —Richard Larimer

PLANET BIG ZERO, by Franklin Hadley. Monarch, Derby, Conn. 431, 1964. 120 pp. 40¢

PLANET BIG ZERO is a novel which describes Lieutenant Ted Narly's discovery of and involvement with the Deotian empire, which sprang up after the war between the Deotians and the Terrans thirty years previously. Specifically, he is captured while on a mission and taken to the Deotian system inside a black nebula called Big Zero, after which the book is titled.

Although the book starts out interestingly enough, and immediately captures the reader's attention, there are places in the book where the plot becomes a bit fantastic. It is, nevertheless, a suspenseful adventure yarn.

NOVEL - 6  
—Bill Pond



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## MAGAZINE REVIEWS by Dean M. Sandin

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Serials are not rated until the review of the final installment. Non-science fiction is not rated.

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Science Fantasy, April, 1964. 124 pp.  
3/- (42¢)

Michael Moorcock ends his "Elric" series in this issue with "Doomed Lord's Passing," a very long novelet. The previous stories told of the struggle, for control of the Earth, between the Lords of Law and the Lords of Chaos. These supernatural god-beings make use of humans to fight—and the battleground is Earth. The hero, who fights on the side of Law, is Elric of Melniboné, an Emperor. In this last tale, Elric's group faces Chaos in the final engagement that will settle Earth's future. This series is a good number of notches above the average fantasy of its type and is very enjoyable. While it contains too many stories to fit into one volume, I hope that at least a book with selected entries—including the last, say, three stories, in which the series is brought to an effective climax—will be published soon. A warning: don't read this story until you have read at minimum the preceding one or two.

After debating with myself, I have decided to treat "The Deep Fix," a novella by James Colvin, as science fiction. A good story, it is one of those that, until the final pages, would be considered fantasy. The plot goes through a number of dips and turns before reaching its surprise ending; it begins to move when the hero, who must keep awake long enough to devise a special mind-affecting machine that he will use to protect himself from a mob, takes a new stimulant-drug and finds himself in another world.

NOVELLA - V

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Fantastic, May, 1964. 130 pp. 50¢  
(3/7)

Fritz Leiber's "Adept's Gambit," a novella featuring his two famous characters, the Gray Mouser and Fafhrd, is a Fantasy Classic reprint from 1947. In this adventure the partners are on Earth instead of their home, Nehwon. Amid their usual quota of swordplay and sorcery, they seek out a magician who has humiliated them in order to get them to come to him.

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Worlds of Tomorrow, June, 1964. 162 pp.  
50¢ (3/7)

"On Messenger Mountain," by Gordon R. Dickson, takes place on an uninhabited Earth-type planet. After a space battle, an Earth-ship and an alien one both crash on a high mountain. The surviving men must send a messenger rocket into space from the top of the mountain, so they send an expedition to make the hazardous climb. The men must not only fight the mountain, but also a surviving alien who is physically more than a match for the humans. Dickson's handling of the action raises the level of the story above what might be expected, and makes it tense and absorbing.

NOVELLA - IV

A second novella in the issue is Philip K. Dick's "What the Dead Men Say." It is about the confusion that reigns when an extremely powerful businessman dies. He is supposed to be "awakened" from death for short periods of time (then a normal practice due to a scientific advancement). However it is found that he can't be revived, and what's more, it seems that his thoughts are being picked up by electronic equipment on Earth, from a spot one light-week away!

NOVELLA - VI

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### PUBLISHER

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW  
Box 1568  
San Diego, California 92112  
U.S.A.

### OVERSEAS REPRESENTATIVES

Kenneth F. Slater  
75 Norfolk Street  
Wisbech, Cambs.  
England

Graham Stone  
Box 185, P.O.  
Manuka, A.C.T.  
Australia

SPECIAL REVIEW

THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE, by Philip K. Dick. Popular Library, N.Y. SP250, 1964. 191 pp. 50¢

THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE, 1962's Hugo-winning novel, was first published by Putnam's. It is science fiction for being set in an alternate world, but for that reason only. The technological level of this second Earth is generally the same as ours—it is the history that differs: Germany and Japan won World War II and split up the U.S. except for the free Rocky Mountain States. Once the reader becomes used to this there is nothing to mark the book as SF; it could be mainstream fiction.

Cultural detail makes the book, but the actual story nearly breaks it. Author Dick has done quite an unusual and creditable job in drawing his West Coast Japanese-dominated society; a lot of thought obviously went into the construction of its many facets, and I believe it is for this well-delineated society, which is so very real, that the novel was voted a Hugo. Unfortunately, the uninteresting plot almost undoes the background's good. This shortcoming is extremely serious, for the action is so slow that it never seems to build up at all. Such an unfavorable plot would have made most other books poor, but in this case the overall effect of the novel is of small, but positive, likeability.

NOVEL - 7

—Dean M. Sandin

THE COSMIC COMPUTER, by H. Beam Piper. Ace, N.Y. F-274, 1964. 190 pp. 40¢

This novel, JUNKYARD PLANET in hardcover, is expanded from "Graveyard of Dreams," Galaxy, Feb., 1958, and is part of the series which includes SPACE VIKING and others. It is set on a planet whose people live by salvaging from stockpiles left behind when their planet ceased to be a base in an interstellar war. The planet is in a permanent depression—the people have no ambition other than to try to find a giant computer supposedly left at the close of the war, and which they think will solve all their problems for them. The hero of this fast-moving book tries to trick them into solving their problems for themselves.

NOVEL - 5

—The Editor

THE CHRONOSCOPE

In this issue is the first installment of an irregular column, "The British Scene," by John Carnell, former editor of New Worlds and Science Fantasy. The nominees for the Hugo for the best novel of 1963 are: DUNE WORLD, GLORY ROAD, WAY STATION, and WITCH WORLD. A complete listing will be in the next issue. In the issue after next will be an article by A.E. van Vogt.

THE EXPLORATION OF SPACE, by Arthur C. Clarke. Premier Books, Greenwich, Conn. R228, 1964. 183 pp. 60¢

This excellent book is a very widely circulated (including Book-of-the-Month Club) text on what man is doing and may do toward the exploration of the universe. Mr. Clarke begins by explaining the problems associated with getting off the Earth, and then progresses to the problems of reaching the moon, planets, and stars, finally summing the book up in an account of the possible effects of space travel. This book is easy for almost anyone to read, with its many examples to acquaint the reader with the science involved, yet is not boring for someone who already has a basic knowledge of space.

—Bill Pond

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