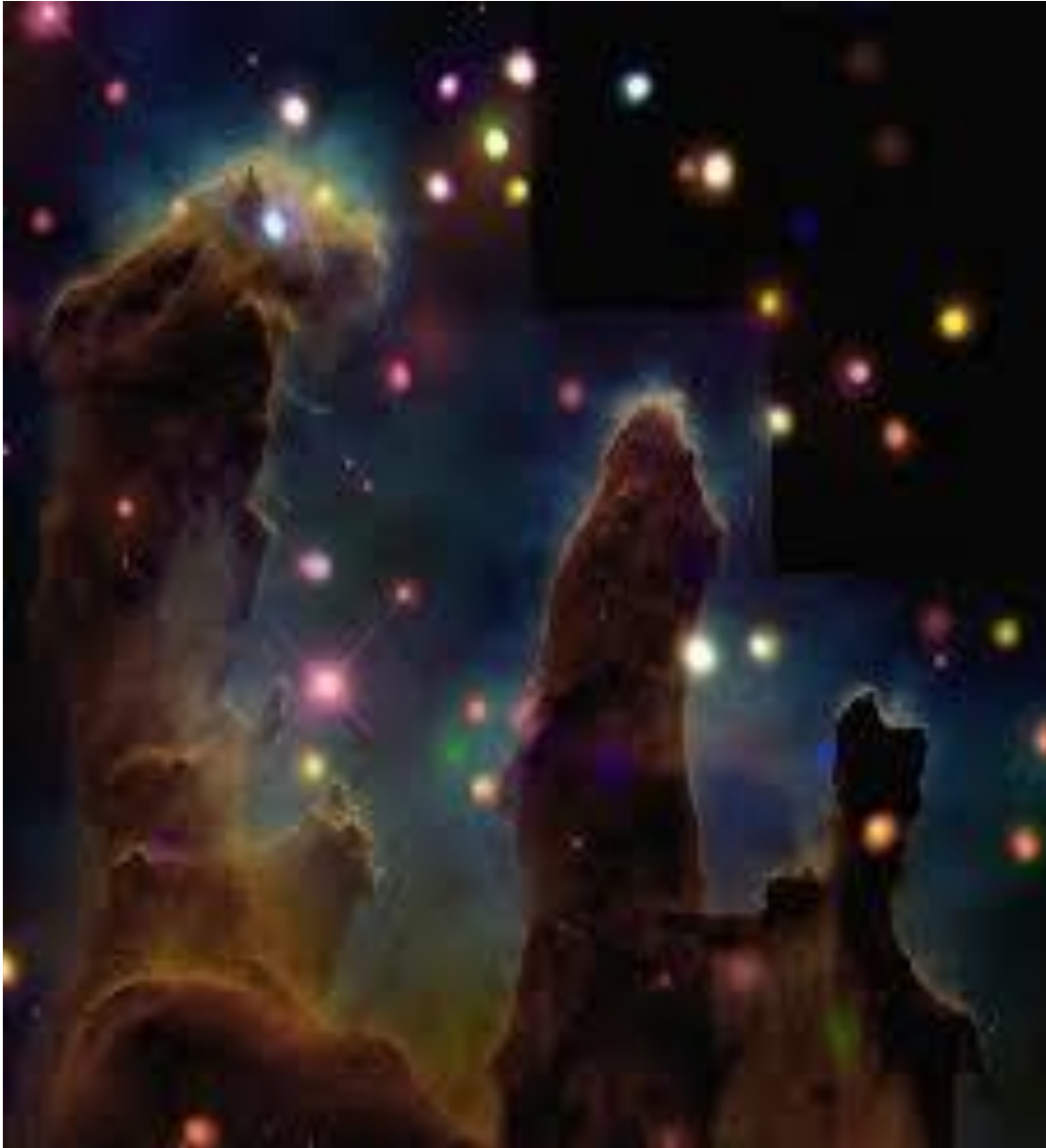


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**Journal of the National Fantasy Fan Federation
History and Research Bureau**

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A monthly publication of the History and Research
Bureau keeping the reader up to date on its activities
and publishing research results for the benefit of the
readers.

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Our purpose is to keep the National Fantasy Fan
Federation members aware of its antecedents and up to
date on current matters, and to provide information on
science fiction and fantasy and promote discussion of
its significance and place in the world of literature.

Active interchange with the membership is welcome;
you don't need to just look at the doings of the bureaus,
you can join in activities here.

EDITORIAL



by John Thiel

With this issue we commence our third year of publication, and I feel we may look back on a highly successful two years of organizational existence. The journal has aroused much interest in science fiction's past and its present, discernable on the net at large where science fiction is being discussed. (I would make special reference to Facebook, which has numerous science fiction groups including two run by our publicist Jeffrey Redmond and four by myself. Facebook is becoming a place to meet other science fiction fans and I would recommend it here.)

Are any of you having difficulty reading this due to the print being too small? It's difficult to imagine that you do not have any form of screen enlargement potentialities if this is so; look around through what you have. Zooms, views, are among the equipment to be found. It's always a good idea to have a thorough knowledge of the computer potentialities you possess when you are doing online work. I have been wondering if lack of proper equipment or unfamiliarity with the equipment is what's keeping the membership from being active. TNFF and Tightbeam seem to be having little or no communication from the paper readership; I've had John Polselli investigating this for the Fan-Pro Bureau. We don't like our organization to be stalled.

What's the advantage of science fiction activity? It keeps you aware of the world and helps you situate yourself in the world of ongoing affairs. It's a form of social consciousness to keep up with science fiction and be cognizant of world events—what scientists are discovering, how literature is progressing— be with it

and part of things and lead a more rewarding and fulfilling existence as more than a mere onlooker at things. Science fiction keeps pace with things as they are happening and so do its readers, and the next thing is to perhaps seek involvement in some of the happenings. Help make science fiction influential upon events and not just cognizant of them. And then, too, there is fantasy fiction, which is provocative of an often latent part of the world of the mind, the imagination. This is valuable in having a real feeling for the world around you, as well as visualizations of your own. I sit here pontificating, and thinking I am accomplishing something. Try doing the same. We need more contact, more communication, more discussion of things. The N3F puts forth opportunities for these things; why not try them out? I'd mention Judy Carroll's correspondence bureau work as a place to get started. There is nothing more participatory than exchanging ideas. It's being with it and living in this world. Try it for yourself and you might see just what I mean. Don't believe that this is a century of conflict and dispute. It's a century of whatever you want to make it be for you, perhaps a century of thought and discussion, and who knows, maybe the Age of Aquarius will be what improves things for all of us. Any disagreement with that statement? Controversy is talk, too!

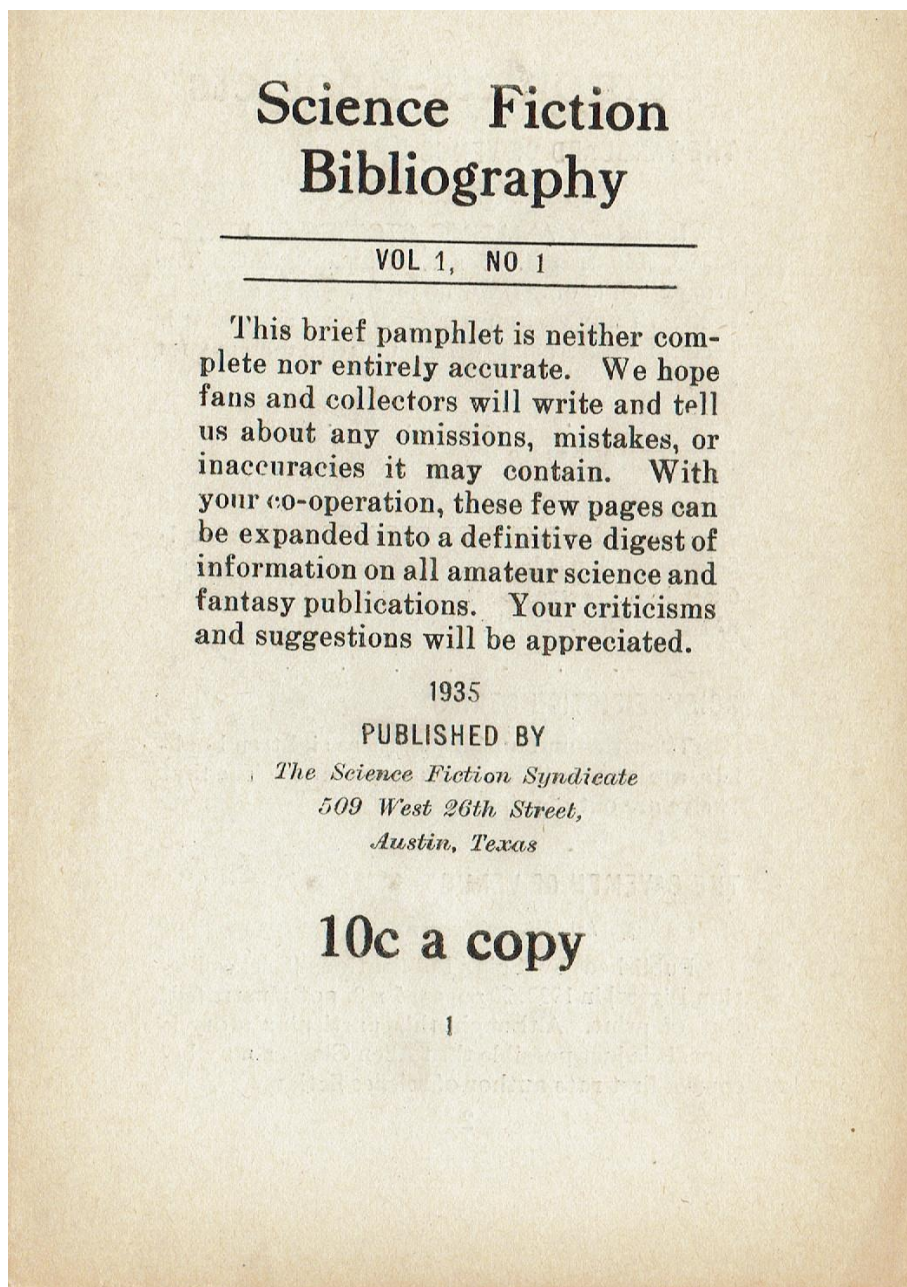
Just think about all the things there are to talk about in the present-day living which surrounds us. We all might have the unique thoughts of science fiction and fantasy appreciators, so much different from the solutions that are being offered to the pestilences, scourges, suppressions and confrontations that are taking place in today's world. We might want to begin to talk profitably, rather than with reactions based on thinking this must be the way things are.

Here's our opportunity, I keep thinking. A chance for thinking things over.



And now a look back...

THE SCIENCE FICTION SYNDICATE: AN EARLY ATTEMPT AT SCIENCE FICTION BIBLIOGRAPHY
by Jon D. Swartz, N3F Historian



In Austin, Texas, in the early 1930s a science fiction (SF) fan, D.R. Welch, went into business buying and selling SF publications. His business was located near the campus of The University of Texas and was conducted under the name of the Science Fiction Syndicate. In an attempt to further his business, Welch compiled (and William Crawford

published) **Science Fiction Bibliography**.

Today there are countless SF bibliographies on individual authors and the several different sub-fields of *genre* fiction. In the early 1930s, however, there were no such reference works. Although it listed only a handful of professional and amateur SF publications, Science Fiction Bibliography is credited with being the first such publication. In THE IMMORTAL STORM, noted SF historian Sam Moskowitz stated that Welch's work is "a collector's item of great interest". I agree with this appraisal and hope the reader concurs.

Partial Contents of Science Fiction Bibliography (Comments on various items by the author in brackets, and Welch's comments in quotes)

Pamphlets/Booklets:

THE VANGUARD OF VENUS by Landell Bartlett

BETWEEN WORLDS by Garret Smith

Science Fiction Series (18 booklets) [Welch wrote that these titles were too well known to be listed. This is not true now, of course; but a complete list is given in Tuck's THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY, Volume 3: *Miscellaneous*, page 781).

THE CAVEMEN OF VENUS by Allen Glasser ["Glasser may become a first rate author"]

"The Price of Peace" by Mortimore (sic) Weisinger ["later appeared in **Amazing Stories**...story is mediocre"]

"Thru the Dragon Glass" by A. Merritt ["reprint of A. Merritt's first story, which appeared originally in **All Story**"]

WOLF HOLLOW BUBBLES by David H. Keller ["listed as Scientific Detective Series, Number One"]

THE DOUBLE SHADOW by Clark Ashton Smith ["A collection of Smith's short stories and sketches..."]

GUESTS OF THE EARTH by Jerome Siegel ["Very rare and now selling at a high price"]

"The Metal Giants" by Edmond Hamilton [mimeographed by Siegal (sic) for the Swanson Book Company"]

"I Was a Passenger in My Own Body" by Captain North ["A juvenile attempt at writing"]

Pamphlet No. 1 by C.A. Smith and D.H. Keller ["Published by Fantasy Publications in 1934...No other numbers of the series have yet appeared"]

Fan Magazines:

Cosmology [The first of the fan magazines. Vol. 1, No. 1, May 1930, was titled **The Comet**, later changed to Cosmology. Appeared regularly every month for nearly a year,

lasting 17 issues. The final issue was dated 1933 (Vol. VI, No. 1). Raymond A. Palmer was editor for almost the entire period. ["Copies are now so rare that they are almost unobtainable at any price. Featured were letters and articles by Willy Ley, the German rocket experimenter, Miles J. Breuer, R.F. Starzl, Lilith Lorraine, P. Schuyler Miller."]

The Time Traveler [Possibly the best known of all the fan magazines, according to Welch, it was edited by Allen Glasser & Julius Schwartz, and ran for nine issues, until November 1932. Known for its indexes, the first issue contained a more-or-less complete list of SF films]

Science Fiction Digest [Vol. 1, No. 1 dated September 1932. Title changed to **Fantasy Magazine** in January, 1934. Editors/publishers: Conrad H. Ruppert and Julius Schwartz]. "Certainly the most valuable magazine for collectors. In its pages are indexes of science fiction in **Electrical Experimenter, Science & Invention, Thrill Book, Argosy, All-Story**, and other Mumsey and Street & Smith publications."

Science Fiction [Edited/published by Jerome Siegel, ran five issues. Volume 1, Number 1, dated October 1932. By mistake, the second issue, November 1932, was also numbered Vol. 1, No. 1. Illustrations are by Clay Ferguson and Joe Shuster]. "Out of print, difficult to obtain, prices are already very high." Welch further wrote that, prior to Science Fiction, Siegel (sic) edited two typewritten fan magazines: **Cosmic Stories** and **Cosmic Stories Quarterly**.

Fantasy Fan [Charles D. Hornig published the Fantasy Fan for 18 issues (September, 1934 to February, 1935) in an attempt to establish a medium for the lovers of fantasy]. Hornig is quoted: "We have learned that there are not enough lovers of weird fiction who are interested enough in the subject to pay for a fan magazine. We may call it an experiment that failed." Welch's comments: "Although he had a high ideal, and although he put as much as two hundred dollars into the venture, Hornig's magazine was never more than a pale imitation of the Science Fiction Digest. The Fantasy Fan lacked vigor and strength, not through any fault of the editor, but rather because the readers of fantasy are not as enthusiastic as the fans of science fiction."

Unusual Stories. An announcement was sent out in the fall of 1933 about a new SF magazine, Unusual Stories, with the first issue to be dated December, 1933. [See note at end of article]. For several months the subscribers heard nothing. Then they received the first 16 pages of "When the Waker Sleeps" by Cyril G. Wates, bound into a cover designated **Unusual Stories, Advance Issue**, March 1934, Vol. 1, No.1. A form letter was enclosed explaining the delay. A few months later subscribers were mailed the first

issue of **Marvel Tales**, with another form letter explaining that it would be issued in place of the original magazine. In the meantime, Crawford attempted to finish Unusual Stories himself, succeeding in completing six more pages. No subscriber received these last pages, but heard that the project had been abandoned. Welch felt it was a blessing that Unusual Stories failed because "When the Waker Sleeps" was the worst concoction (sic) ever foisted (sic) on a long suffering public."

Marvel Tales [Unusual Stories was never finished, but Crawford continued publication of Marvel Tales.] The first issue, dated May, 1934, contained stories by Lovecraft, Derleth and Keller. The second issue, dated July-August 1934, had short stories by Howard and Long. The third issue, Winter 1934, featured the first installment of P. Schuyler Miller's "The Titan". According to Welch, Marvel Tales is certain to be a collector's item of no small value because "the first issue is already out of print."

Minor Publications:

Planetoid [Vol. 1, No. 1, was dated December, 1932. The second issue, January 1933.] "There is not a single item of interest, or a scrap information [sic], in either issue....absolutely no reason why anyone should waste time collecting this item."

The Planet [This little mimeographed paper was the official organ of "The Sciences". Vol. 1, No. 1 was dated July, 1930. It was published monthly for six issues. Edited by Allen Glasser.]

Radiogram [A typewritten affair edited by John B. Michael and Edward Gervais. One issue only, dated April, 1933.] "No stranger collection of scientific fallacies and misinformation has ever been put into print—an unbelievable revelation of callow thinking and juvenile maunderings (sic)." Moskowitz says the title was **Radiogram** and that it lasted two issues.

International Observer [Official publication of the International Cosmos Science Club, beginning in September, 1934, edited by John B. Michel.] "It illustrates the general impotence of the average science fiction correspondence club. Contents are on a par with the Radiogram. No collector who has seen a copy will give this magazine any further consideration."

Bulletin [Originally titled **The Bulletin of the International Science Fiction Guild**, it was changed to **The Terrestrial Fantascience Guild**. Vol. 1, No. 1 was dated May-June 1934]. "A half dozen issues have appeared. The contents are on a level with the title. Unfortunately, it is still being published."

Some Comments

Some of Welch's critical assessments were right on target. Even today many agree that Science Fiction Digest (later **Fantasy Magazine**) was one of the best SF fanzines ever. A few of his comments, however, produce only cognitive dissonance in this writer (*e.g.* Glasser becoming a "first rate SF author"). Overall, however, all of his comments still make for interesting reading.

In addition to his reviews of current SF publications, Welch used his bibliography as a dealer's catalog. At that time he was selling single copies and subscriptions to Science Fiction Digest, a complete set (18 issues) of Fantasy Fan (\$4.00), the first three issues of Marvel Tales, and single copies of Science Fiction. His bibliography also included ads for Unusual Stories and **Scoops**.

About Unusual Stories he stated: "We do not guarantee to fill all orders for this item. Our stock is limited, and we cannot undertake to procure additional copies after our supply is exhausted." About Scoops ("The English Science Fiction Magazine") he wrote: "This short-lived (sic) magazine (20 issues), which appeared weekly in the early part of 1934, contained stories by some of the foremost authors of science fiction—A. Conan Doyle, R.M. Lowe, John Russel Fearn, Phil E. Cleator, President of the British Interplanetary Society (sic). As yet little known in this country, it will probably become a standard item in all science fiction collections."

Welch was appropriately modest, beginning this early attempt at SF bibliography with the following: "This brief pamphlet is neither complete nor entirely accurate. We hope fans and collectors will write and tell us about any omissions, mistakes, or inaccuracies it may contain." On the other hand, he aspired to higher bibliographic standards: "With your cooperation, these few pages can be expanded into a definitive digest of information on all amateur science and fantasy publications. Your criticisms and suggestions will be appreciated." Since he numbered his bibliography Vol. 1, No. 1, it appears he was sincere in these plans.

Every member of the N3F probably has heard of William Crawford, one of the first SF fans to turn publisher, but who was D.R. Welch?

I have been unable to discover much about him. His name doesn't appear in any of the Texas SF fandom histories or directories that I own, and he is not mentioned in Speer's **Up To Now** or in Sanders' **Science Fiction Fandom**. Pavlat & Evans list his bibliography, Warner mentions Welch and his bibliography, but Welch's work surprisingly is absent from Briney & Wood's SF BIBLIOGRAPHIES. In addition to comments on the Science Fiction Bibliography, Moskowitz reports on some

correspondence between Welch and Donald Wollheim (regarding Welch's criticisms) and credits Welch with setting up a local chapter of the Science Fiction league in the 1930s.

Conclusion

In conclusion, although this 12-page publication, with a host of typos, is a far cry from the SF bibliographies being published routinely today, it still can lay claim to being the first. Even more important to a present-day reader of SF, however, is the fascinating information it contains about early SF professional and fan publications. Just the various individuals mentioned: Hamilton, Hornig, Howard, Keller, Lovecraft, Palmer, Michel, and Siegel & Shuster—to list only some, conjure up for this writer vivid images of the early history of SF in this country, especially as it was represented in the pulp and comic book magazines of the 1930s.

Note: Welch had a LoC in the February, 1935 **Astounding**, as by "The Science Fiction Syndicate". In this letter he wrote: "In the latter part of 1933 many readers of *Astounding Stories* received an announcement circular of a new science fiction magazine—*Unusual Stories*. Although the projected magazine was never finished the announcement circulars have become collectors' items; and we are very anxious to obtain a number of copies." [My thanks to SF collector Jordan Kratz, who supplied this information.]

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Note: This article was written nearly 20 years ago, and originally published in *First Fandom's Scientifiction: The First Fandom Report*. It has been revised somewhat for publication here.

LOOKING OVER THE N3F *by Judy Carroll*



I think of the N3F as a lovely small town in a picturesque valley at the base of magnificent mountains. I can see it all in my mind—the quiet streets spreading out from the beautiful park in the center of town. Shops specializing in subjects of interest to the townspeople, such as art, gaming, writing—each settled on easily identifiable streets—Artists Keep, Games Away, N’APA Woods.

I would like to take you on a short trip back in time to Autumn 2016. At that time I was, as I am now, the Bureau Head for the Welcommittee. For nine months, from October 2016 to June 2017, my Welcommittee articles for TNFF were about Littleton, a fictional town I created to showcase the activities and people of the N3F.

“The Founding Fathers envisioned a place where ideas could flow freely, where new friendships became lasting ones and old friendships lasted to the grave. The town was popular for many years. So popular, in fact, that many of the residents didn’t leave. It became a town noted for its history and contribution to society.” (TNFF Welcommittee, October, 2016).

“Littleton is a special place where people of different backgrounds get together to meet, have fun, converse and learn from each other. The most common connection of the people of Littleton is their love of Things Imagined. The intertwining of Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror to create worlds and beings of surprising strengths and uncommon abilities. Dimensions and plans of unknown origins blending together in bizarre and captivating ways.” (TNFF Welcommittee, November, 2016.)

I really feel this way about the N3F. It is something worth preserving, enjoying and

sharing. It's our own little town filled with people of like interests. Worthy of knowing and interacting with. I suggest, if you are not already actively involved in the N3F, to become involved. Find something that interests you. Tell yourself you will try something new, something different. Don't just "window shop" looking at something that interests you and then walk away without ever entering the store and discovering if they have what you want in your size. Go into the shop. Try it on and see if it fits. If it does, great! If it doesn't, try another shop. It might have just what you are looking for.

Several years ago, when I first jointed the N3F, there was a Correspondence Bureau. At that time the Bureau Head matched members according to their interests. It was a good experience. I had never had a pen pal before. When I rejoined the club in June, 2015, the Correspondence Bureau was no longer in existence. A few months ago, with the approval of our club president, I restarted the Correspondence Bureau. At this moment there are only two members seeking pairing (for information on how to join please check the latest TNFF). I have been corresponding for over four years with a member of the N3F. When I became the head of the Writers Exchange Bureau a member offered to help me and has been helping me ever since. We have become good friends. We talk about many things related to and not related to the N3F. We share experiences and ideas and laughter.

What I find so much fun and so fantastic about the N3F is the variety of experiences one can have. If you are an artist we have a bureau. If you like gaming we have a bureau. If you are a writer we have a bureau, our own fanzine and a yearly short story contest. If you like corresponding we have a bureau. If you enjoy sharing your interest in movies, books, *etc.*, we have multiple round robins. Check out the second page of the latest TNFF for bureaus and activities. If you don't see anything you like you can make suggestions to the club president.

What I am asking is Give the N3F a Chance. Don't just be in the town. Live in the town.



SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF SCIENCE FICTION

by Jeffrey Redmond



Insight into the genre

Introduction

Science fiction is one of the most popular aspects of modern literature. And at the same time, the origin of science fiction literature dates back to ancient times. Ancient writers attempted to represent their ideas in fictional forms, and unite these fictional forms with their knowledge of real life. In the course of time, science fiction literature evolved, but it always remained focused on the representation of ideas, concepts, and beliefs of the writers. These were different from those that dominated reality, but were often closely intertwined with real life, or represented an alternative to various real life issues. Problems, and beliefs.

As a result, science fiction is an in-depth genre of literature, which allows writers to develop new concepts and ideas, and present these in literary form as an alternative vision to the reality presented by other writers. It is possible to refer to science fiction literary works created by such outstanding writers as George Orwell and Robert Sheckley. They created numerous sci fi literary works, which are both science fiction and also a sort of philosophical work, and also creations of these writers to convey their ideas and warn mankind about the risks that accompanied developments in our contemporary civilization.

Main Characteristics of Science Fiction Literature

Science Fiction is a very popular branch of contemporary literature. The emergence of science fiction literature is closely intertwined with technological progress in the world. These stimulate science fiction writers to create new works, where they depict

fictional worlds that derive from the ongoing progress of science and technology. At the same time, science fiction literary works do not necessarily involve a solid scientific basis on the grounds of which a science fiction book is written. Science and technology are not necessary for the creation of a science fiction literary work. Instead, the desire of a writer to present an alternative view or concept is crucial, because it is through the creation of a fictional science fiction story that the writer can express his or her alternative views or concepts.

Science and technology are important for the development of science fiction literature, but they are not crucial. Science and technology can give science fiction writers an insight and ideas to create the form in which writers put certain content or message which they want to convey to the audience. They use scientific discoveries and technologies as tools with which they construct their science fiction stories and write their books, to convey their ideas and concepts.

Science and technology are not the core of science fiction books. Instead, science fiction writers use science and technology to foresee the further development of the world, or to present their alternative vision of the development of the world, society, technologies, and so on. Science fiction literary works represent a blend of fact and fancy, where science and technology are facts that lay the foundations with which writers develop their images and create their futuristic worlds. These are different from the real world and real life.

[Editor's note: Jeffrey Redmond analyzes two writers in these terms, Orwell and Sheckley. I have transferred these sections of his article over to Ionisphere, where it should be readily available to all interested readers, and seems to me more in place. That issue of IO will come out at the beginning of April.—John Thiel]

Conclusions

Science fiction literary works represent their combinations of facts and fancy. And science and technology serve as tools to help science fiction writers depict new worlds and new societies. Writers depict their vision of a futuristic society. They create a fictional world, where the imaginary is closely intertwined with realistic facts taken from real life. But these are modified to the extent that the outcomes of writers' imaginations make the society and world described unique and different from real ones. At the same time, science fiction literary works represent the views and ideas of writers who attempt to create alternatives to the real world, where the impossible is possible.

Science fiction works like NINETEEN EIGHTY FOUR and ANIMAL FARM by George Orwell, or STATUS CIVILIZATION by Robert Sheckley, are warnings. The public must be made aware against the development of negative trends in contemporary society, and prevent potential risks and threats to the normal lives of individuals in the future.

[Editor's note: Again, these works are discussed in the April Ionisphere.—JT]



A Recollection from the N3F of the Past

by John Thiel

Some people have been expressing interest in what kind of activities were going on in the National Fantasy Fan Federation way back in the last century, in the time following the 1950s. Here is an item from August 1979 about a sort of side activity of the NFFF connected to one of its bureaus, called "The SF Line."

The SF Line, by John Robinson

The SF Line has been doing rollercoaster movements. I drop below 300 calls per week and then rise above 300 again, drop as low as 170 and come back through the mid-200s. Hope to reach 300 calls per week again soon.

My mimeo was giving me problems. Took it to A.B. Dick. They've had it for a month waiting for a part—clutch train—thing had only one speed. Once that is fixed I can finally get to publishing a newsletter for SF Line.

The whole idea of the SF Line was not so much to inform the callers but to get them to call often so some would send for the newsletter which might contain all sorts of fannish information that I simply don't have time to do in 6-9 minutes of tape weekly.

There were but twelve thousand calls the first year. Hope to get that up to 15,000 the second year but who can tell.

My TV series went twenty-one weeks. Five 5-minute segments per tape, so I was on three times a weekday in Schenectady. That's fifteen times per week. The cable stations with public access in Rensselaer and Albany ran the tapes without breaks and so much of the effect was lost by bunching the information. A five minute visit is okay but five in a row loses much of the audience.

I just did a live appearance of the SCHENECTADY! show and a half hour tape to renew the FIAWOL (or It Seemed The Fannish Thing To Do) series. I think it's too long to take, a whole half hour talking with the camera sometimes panning over a book, a magazine, a wargame, or whatever. I will most likely shorten the show to fifteen minutes and do two at a time back to back for programming during two separate weeks. That way I tape only once every two weeks.

There's no way to tell how effective TV is. They call Public Access the Channel Nobody Watches, though I've received comments from people I work with and members of the Schenectady Wargamers.

Actually, I am more satisfied with what I do on TV than what goes over the telephone because I don't give a damn if anyone is watching while the telephone has a meter that counts the calls and thus makes it more entertainment than information oriented if the meter is to continue to show good numbers, like three hundred per week. Last week two hundred and sixty, down a bit but recovering.

This article was probably referring to the intense science fiction activity occurring around New York around the time of the article, which resulted in writeups in the New York Times and put many science fiction books on the New York Times best-seller lists. A lot of critical activity regarding science fiction was pumped up during this time, and propaganda about science fiction came pouring out of New York City—one still sees a lot of it nowadays. At about the same time, science fiction work was being done around Hollywood, and this is the science fiction boom we see around us today. But as I have remarked, there isn't much going on at the center. This article suggests just that.



Hugo Gernsback. That's the issue.