

SCIENCE FICTION RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

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SFRA NEWSLETTER #11

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This issue of the SFRA NEWSLETTER is published one month late, and will be mailed together with the June issue on or about 27 June 1972.

THE SECONDARY UNIVERSE CONFERENCE

Secondary Universe V will be held on the campus of Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa on the Columbus Day - Canadian Thanksgiving weekend (Friday, October 6 thru Monday, October 9). The conference title this year will be "Science, Technology, and the Arts", and it will be sponsored by Drake's College of Fine Arts. Co-chairmen will be Prof Stuart Burns of the Drake English Department, and Prof Ivor Rogers of the Drake Department of Dramatic Arts. Prof Rogers is a member of the SFRA Executive Committee.

Conference registration will be \$10 in advance, and \$12 at the door. As conference registration is included in SFRA dues, there will be no fee for SFRA members.

During the week preceding the conference, films, plays, and dance programs will be presented at the university. The Drake English Department will sponsor a special university-wide lecture by Alexei and Cory Panshin on Thursday, October 5. Also planned for the week of the conference are special art shows; an exhibit at the Des Moines Science Center and Museum; an exhibition of braille SF books from the Iowa State Commission for the Blind (described in a recent article in *Luna* as the largest such collection in the world); a special "current publications" room; and many other activities.

During the conference itself, an entire day (Saturday, October 7) will be devoted to the teaching of SF. Sunday (October 8) will be largely devoted to seminars on various SF writers, with an emphasis on living authors. Every effort will be made to get these authors to attend and participate, as they have done in previous years. The Fourth Annual Conference on the Bibliography of Science Fiction, which will be held at Secondary Universe on Sunday, will have as its theme "Science Fiction in Non-Print Media".

Evening programming will stress the influence of SF in the various arts: dance, music, painting, and film. Several feature-length films have been scheduled, including the rarely-seen *It Happened Here*; and several film-makers are planning to attend the conference and show their films. We are booking one or two of the really fantastic "operas" of Harry Partch, and we are expecting to have one or two electronic compositions, a dance drama, and a theatrical "event".

A new feature of the conference will be a seminar called "Preview", to consist of *undergraduate* papers. Several papers have already been accepted. SFRA members are asked to encourage their outstanding students to contribute papers.

Papers are also solicited from graduate students, these will be presented in the regular conference sessions.

Because of illness and other difficulties, we are quite a bit behind schedule on soliciting papers. Several excellent ones have already been promised. *If you wish to contribute a paper or participate on a panel*, please contact Stuart Burns or Ivor Rogers immediately (addresses below). The final program will not be set until September 20, but we would like to know who is coming as soon as possible. Please send the title and a short abstract of your proposed paper, or list the writer or topic that you would like to discuss on a panel. Prof Burns will be coordinating papers and panels on narrative fiction, while Prof Rogers will be coordinating presentations on other media.

Further information on Secondary Universe V will be published in forthcoming issues of the SFRA NEWSLETTER. The addresses of the Conference Co-Chairmen are:

Stuart Burns
English Department
Drake University
Des Moines IA 50311

Ivor Rogers
Dept of Theatre Arts
Drake University
Des Moines IA 50311

NOTES AND NOTICES

The first meeting of a section on "Fantasy and Science Fiction" in the Northeast Modern Language Association's annual program was held at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs NY, on Saturday 8 April 1972, under the chairmanship of the founder, Prof Veronica M S Kennedy of St John's University, Jamaica NY. The secretary was Prof Virginia L Carew of Queensborough Community College in New York. Abstracts of the three papers read will appear in the June SFRA NEWSLETTER. The meeting was attended by 26 people and a tape-recorder; the latter was sent by an enthusiast who was ill at the time of the meeting, and added an appropriate touch of fantasy. It is hoped that next year's NEMLA meeting, to be held at Northeastern University in Boston, will also include a "Fantasy and Science Fiction" section; its chairman will be Prof Carew, and its secretary will be Prof Wayne A Losano.

As mentioned above, this year's Conference on the Bibliography of Science Fiction will be held at the Secondary Universe Conference, on the theme of "Science Fiction in Non-Print Media". The participation of those who have experience with bibliographical problems in this field is solicited; we would particularly like to have short presentations (10 or 15 minutes) on specific aspects of SF painting, maps, music, film, photography, and similar fields. Please contact the Conference chairman: Fred Lerner, 7 Amsterdam Avenue, Teaneck NJ 07666.

The 1972 SFRA Membership Directory will soon be going to press. Those members who have not yet returned their questionnaires are urged to do so, or to send in biographical information in other form if they have mislaid them. Send this material to: Janet Kagan, 1292 River Road, Edgewater NJ 07020.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Norman Lamm, *Faith and Doubt: Studies in Traditional Jewish Thought*. (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1971). 309p, \$10.

Protestant and Catholic writers have speculated on the implications for their theologies of human contact with extraterrestrial intelligent beings. Rabbi Lamm devotes a long essay on "The Religious Implications of Extraterrestrial Life" to an Orthodox Jewish examination of this question. He finds nothing in the Torah to deny the possibility that the Creator had caused intelligence to arise on planets other than our own, and summarises the medieval commentators who touched on the subject. Another essay in this volume, "Man's Position in the Universe", traces the history of anthropocentrism in Jewish thought.

-- Fred Lerner

Donella H Meadows, et al. *The Limits to Growth*. (New York: Universe Books, 1972). 205p, \$6.50 cloth, \$2.75 paper.

This report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind has been too widely publicised to require extended discussion here. It is a volume with which all of us will have to become familiar; for we are in a position to address ourselves to a part of the task that it assigns:

We would hope that society will receive each new technological advance by establishing the answers to three questions *before* the technology is widely adopted. The questions are:

1. What will be the side-effects, both physical and social, if this development is introduced on a large scale?
2. What social changes will be necessary before this development can be implemented properly, and how long will it take to achieve them?
3. If the development is fully successful and removes some natural limit to growth, what limit will the growing system meet next? Will society prefer its pressures to the ones this development is designed to remove? (pp 154-155)

These are the questions of which science fiction stories are made. Teachers whose courses deal with science fiction in this context will probably find *The Limits to Growth* a compact and readable statement of the problem of growth vs resources.

-- Fred Lerner

Foundation: A Review of Science Fiction. (London: Transcripta Books for the Science Fiction Foundation, quarterly). 50p per copy.

At first glance, *Foundation* might seem to be a cross between *New Worlds* and *SF Horizons*. It combines experimental fiction with serious criticism, in a compact and attractive package. The first issue includes the literary autobiography of John Brunner, a poem by George Hay, a discussion of the Science Fiction Foundation, and reviews and news notes. Three well-chosen essays are reprinted from fanzines; this presentation of fugitive material in more permanent and accessible form is a welcome idea.

The first issue of *Foundation* (March 1972) leaves a very favorable impression. It should appeal to both a scholarly and a popular readership, and may come to make its mark on science fiction, in Britain and elsewhere.

-- Fred Lerner

Thomas D Clareson, *Science Fiction Criticism: An Annotated Checklist*. (Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 1972).

Prof Clareson has compiled the first major bibliography of bibliographical, historical, and critical studies of science fiction. Over 800 reviews, essays, and monographs are listed and annotated. Coverage is limited to items published in the English language; material from fanzines and professional SF magazines is excluded.

Within its limits, the checklist aims for completeness; hence, it includes many items of little significance, such as ephemeral book reviews. This is an advantage; as anyone who has ever searched in periodical indexes for articles on SF knows, so many of the items one finds are completely superficial and utterly useless. A preliminary screening, using the annotations in the checklist, will save much wasted time.

There are two indexes: an author index of entries, and an index of authors mentioned. Unfortunately, references are to sequential numbers within chapters. Since running chapter heads are not provided, finding an entry can be tedious.

Some of the annotations are credited to contributors. Prof Clareson's condensation of these annotations does not always do justice to their contributors: in future editions, those annotations not published verbatim should not be credited. The contributors are listed in the introduction, which should be sufficient recognition.

Science Fiction Criticism is a useful work, and should be even more so in the future, as additions and corrections are discovered. The latest edition will be a necessity in any library supporting research into science fiction.

-- Fred Lerner

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

The Tale of the Future, by I F Clarke (revised edition). The Library Association (London), Summer 1972.

The SF Index, edited by R Reginald. Gale Research Company, 1974. ("a major new and comprehensive bibliography of the science fiction and fantasy book ... will be compiled completely anew from the traditional sources, including public and private collections of speculative fiction, and the standard library trade tools...")