



Federation

H. Beam Piper

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Federation Details

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Author : H. Beam Piper

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Asteinb1 says

Like all of H. Beam Piper's works that I've read, the contents of this anthology were really fun, but occasionally contained some politically problematic baggage.

'Omnilingual,' the first novella, is easily the best - it's fun, smart, and, ultimately, inspiring. The other fiction (4 more novellas and short stories) is also fun, but sometimes seemed to endorse militarism and/or colonialism in ways that I found somewhat disturbing. Even in the most problematic story, 'When in the Course-', in which (view spoiler) was very fun if you glossed over the problematic aspects.

Overall, well worth reading. A knowledge of H. Beam Piper's Future History (which I do not know much about) might be helpful, but is by no means required.

Derek says

Of all the contained stories, only "When in the Course--" is unique: it is still in copyright and is apparently not reprinted elsewhere. In his introduction, John Carr suggests that it is the earliest version of what eventually became Lord Kalvan of Otherwhen, by way of a Paratime series conversion into "Gunpowder God". The Lord Kalvan DNA is obvious, but the novel is superior in every way, not the least because of the TerroHuman Future History -> Paratime conversion. The overwhelming Terran/Federation technology (view spoiler) is a plot shortcut that replaces any useful tension or risk with Terran success after success, especially when paired with the irresistible force of Terran knowhow in the face of Freyan ignorance.

"Graveyard of Dreams" is Cosmic Computer in a nutshell, with the (view spoiler). This difference lends a new meaning to the efforts of the protagonist.

Everywhere is Piper's universal contempt for public enterprise: Federation entrepreneurs are desperate to prevent the Gummint from becoming involved and mucking things up. This is especially true for "Oomphel in the Sky", where a 'leftist, Marxist' character forms a strawman until her inevitable conversion to Piper's view.

"Oomphel" is also interesting in the way it uses the historical Cargo Cult phenomenon.

Kenneth says

My copy of this book is held together with Duct tape. I bought it new, many years ago. I reread it often, and never get tired of it.

Jim says

A collection of 5 interrelated stories by this author. Also use: Lord Kalvan of Otherwhere (1984) and Empire

(1981).

John says

1983 grade A

short novel

Paul says

Fills in important pieces of the Federation history, and introduces key players who show up again later in other stories.

Sean Brennan says

PLEASE IF YOU LIKE SF, THEN TRY H BEAM PIPE

A couple of years ago I started reading old issues of Anlog from the early 1960's I was amazed at the consistent quality of both the authors and the stories they told, one of the guy's who stood out was the wonderful H. Beam Piper.

As the introductions informs Piper was the dictionary definition of the struggling writer, he was a self educated railway worker who took to writing and in times oh hardship was forced to shoot pigeons to feed himself, not wanting to be a financial burden to family and loved ones he eventually took his own life.

All Piper's stories are concerned with philosophical questions albeit in a futuristic setting, they are eminently enjoyable, accessible and readable and I cannot recommend the guy enough.
