
Frederik Pohl

The Space Merchants (The Space Merchants #1)



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Description

It is the 20th Century, an advertisement-drenched world in which the big ad agencies dominate governments and everything else. Now Schocken Associates, one of the big players, has a new challenge for star copywriter Mitch Courtenay. Volunteers are needed to colonise Venus. It's a hellhole, and nobody who knew anything about it would dream of signing up. But by the time Mitch has finished, they will be queuing to get on board the spaceships.

Insightful reviews

David: Utterly brilliant. I adore this book. And I'm really happy I read this revised edition. I would strongly suggest that everyone ignore the earlier version. This is something every college student should read. It's as vital today as it was when it first appeared.

j: Great fun if "Mad Men in space" sounds like money to you. In the future, all women will revert to 1950s stereotypes, and all men will be Don Draper.

Andreas: This dystopian satire about advertising agencies which rule the world was written in 1952. Which means, it was pre-Computer miniaturization, before industrial automation and of course before cell phones and the internet revolution.

Sometimes, this doesn't matter when reading classical sci fi. I simply ignore or smile about actors who stop for a telephone cell to call someone or having to flight in person to achieve something.

But in this novel, the antique technology projection into the future disturbs: The plot depends heavily on loads of manual work done by people - nowadays, most of this work would be done by factory automation.

The world building is interesting - a business promotion equals climbing the social ladder and leads to different rights. Everything is ruled by advertising. The US Congress directly represents corporations.

But the characterization of the main actor - Mitch - isn't very believable. Very often he acts and thinks quite strange and sometimes absurd. Changes in directions aren't motivated very well. And the simplicity of this detective story is a little bit one dimensional, but makes it a quick read with all its action density.

Thankfully, this is a quite short read with it's less than 200 pages which makes it quite easy to forgive the plot holes.

Nikki: the gap retailers has a really 1984 feel: the underground movement, the occupation of the most character... yet it's totally varied as well. the same situation, should you like, yet with a capitalist society taken to the extremes instead of a socialist one. i am shocked at humans asserting it feels outdated; i am with the folks who consider it nonetheless turns out unusually proper for whatever written within the 1950s. It's a really quickly read, and one worthy studying no longer a lot for characters or relationships, yet for how the assumption performs out.

Ali Çetinbudaklar: Basıldı mı? y?l göze al?nd?nda (1952), daha önceden de okurken yazdım yorumun tam aksini söylemem gerekiyor.- "Roman Ballard'ın Gökdelen(1975) ve Öteki dünya(2006) romanları'nın dolaştığı yerlerde geziniyor gibi gözüküyor. Hafif de bir Dick havası var(A Scanner Darkly-1978)."- Bu 2 yazarın romanlarında kullandığı birçok öğeleri yine bu romanda bulabiliyoruz. Ballard'ın Öteki dünya romanında oldu?u gibi reklamcı?k çok büyük önem arz etmekte. İnsanlar, bu illüzyonlarla hiç ulaşamayacakları yalandan amaçları'nın arkasında hayatları'nı harcarken, verilen uyuşturucu maddelerle ve hipnoz edici yayınlarla bilinçlenmelerini önlenmekte. Yazdım bu "worldbuilding" ile ilgili kışkırmalar belki ?u an için çok klişe gelebilir ama 1952'de yazıldı mı? varsayınca gerçekten zamanın ?n ötesinde oldu?unu kabul etmek gerekir.

Ümit: Sandığımdan çok daha sevdim, reklamcı?k ve tüketim alışkanlıkları, şirketlerin hukuku hiçe saymaları, hiç fark etmiyor, hâlâ."B s?n?f? i? sözleşmesinin mantığını? kapmı?tım. Ne yap?p etsen borçlanmaktan kurtulamıyordun. Kolaylıkla verilen krediler sistemin bir parçasıydı, insan? bu kredileri kullanmaya mecbur bırakan simsarlar da öyleydi. Her haftayı on dolar açlıkla kapatırsam sözleşmemin bitiminde Chlorella'ya bin yüz dolar borçlu olacak ve borç silinene kadar da çalışmak zorunda kalacaktım. Ve çalışırken de yeniden borçlanıyor olacaktım."Herhalde bunun günümüzden tek farkı, kredileri kullanmak için artık gönüllü olmamız.

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