Beyond chronology and profession

Professor W. McCarty
www.mccarty.org.uk/
September 2011
Senator Joseph McCarthy

Ronald Reagan testifying before McCarthy, 1947
“We must be ready, every day, all the time”

U.S. Civil Defense film,
Archer Productions, 1953

Atomic bomb test, Nevada Proving Ground
(Operation Upshot-Knothole), 1953.
Elapsed time = 2.6 seconds.
Saturday Evening Post, 16 December 1950: IBM World Headquarters, 57th Street and Madison Avenue, New York. The Selective Sequence Electronic Calculator (SSEC, nicknamed “Poppa” by passers-by) was in the front window.
Control room, Semi-Automatic Ground Environment anti-aircraft system (SAGE), active late 1950s to 1980s. On screen is a portion of the East Coast of the U.S.
'LITERARISM' VERSUS 'SCIENTISM'

The misconception and the menace

BY F. R. LEAVIS

A PUBLIC LECTURE GIVEN IN
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

"The computer can in no way lift the responsibility from human shoulders." That reassuring statement caught my eye on the front page of the first issue of a new journal. It might be in place as an end, but it hasn't been forgotten: the reassurance, accordingly, is thrown out—or thrown in: but the idea of its being required that it should mean some criteria, the statistical: "quality," that is, will look after itself. Clear implication? "Clear" isn't, perhaps, the right word: it might suggest that in any educated company, formula. "Literarism versus Scientism," as my own. The term "literarism" was in fact coined by the late Aldous Huxley for use against me, and I quote it as representing that description, with its context of assumptions, as a dismissal. There's perhaps no reason why we shouldn't read them: they have, one gathers, what is claimed pre-eminently for..."
Alfredo Crimi, drawing of the Sperry Ball Turret, 1943.
Walter Pitts and Warren S McCulloch, “How we know universals: The perception of auditory and visual forms” (1947)

Warren Sturgis McCulloch (1898-1969)
Cybernetic Serendipity

Serendipity

the faculty of making happy chance discoveries of ways of control and communication both human and electronic.

Exhibition

Institute of Contemporary Arts

August 8 to October 20

Franciszka Themerson, 1968
Images from/of 1936

Leaflet on automation, Trades Union Congress, Great Britain

Taylolian factory work depicted by Charlie Chaplin in *Modern Times*

“We may compare a man in the process of computing a real number to a machine which is only capable of a finite number of conditions....” (Turing)
Caspar David Friedrich,
*Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer* (1818)
ένθα καὶ ἡματίῃ μὲν ὑφαίνεσκον μέγαν ἱστόν,
Then by day I would weave at the great web,
νύκτας δ᾽ ἀλλύεσκον, ἐπεὶ δαῖδας παραθείμην.
but by night under torchlight I would unravel it.

Homer, *Odyssey* 19.149-50