

Communications

Brief technical articles, comments on prior articles and book reviews

Comment on: “Review of *Pyrotechnics*”

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In the late 1960s there was only Weingart’s *Pyrotechnics*, and it was a suggestion of a re-write to the Publisher that led to my own first edition in 1972. As we have grown in experience there have been two further editions. It has been interesting to see how many little bits of new information first published in those times are now taken as commonplace.

However this is what progress is all about. Nevertheless it was never intended to print all the commercial information that had been accrued through hard graft and time and that our competitors in parts of the world with cheaper labour than us are keen to learn. We have also yet to see them publishing what they do.

I found the three reviews of the Hardt book quite interesting, and I am delighted that all three of them gave the deserved praise that was due concerning the quality of the book itself, a tribute to those who spent hours of time on it for very little return on such a specialised work. It is also a tribute to a printing house with a great love for the subject. I can also vouch for the soundness of what was written concerning the practicality of the firework chapter and its formulations.

No doubt the Publisher will now be wondering whether it was worth taking on the publication of the book now that our information has moved on. He will be asking whether the whole thing should have been re-written by various ‘experts’. I recall the problem of first receiving the script from Dr Shimizu, being sensitive to

his attempts in English and of trying to keep it much as he had written it. In the end was it Hardt’s Book or something else. I ought to have converted my book into a PhD thesis and put more into it, but I asked one or two others to make contributions.

Now I do not know Barry Sturman, and I am sure that he is a splendid fellow, but his review has made me feel rather unhappy for all my sympathies are with the people who got the book into production. All the more because I know that like me they are not going to make any money out of it. I note in his final words that it would have been a mammoth task for another editor to put the book into a form that would have been pleasing to him. I shall look forward to his major opus, which will—in the words of the hymn—leave us all ‘lost in wonder, love and praise’.

In the meantime we are grateful to those who are making the effort to look into these scientific issues that are of limited interest and value to the practicalities of firework manufacture—or what there is left of it—in the West but even more thanks to the Publisher for a fine piece of work.