

# ORIGIN 19



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HISTORY AND RESEARCH BUREAU**

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These are our historian, columnist and publicist.



Origin is going back to basics by finding historical facts about the N3F, fandom and science fiction and by researching what went into the making of the present position of science fiction and fantasy in the world of literature and in the public consideration. Any newspaper or magazine mentions of science fiction from the membership would be welcome, as would any other form of contact you might wish to make with our bureau.

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# EDITORIAL



## EIN!

The editorial's title is an outcry coming from the editor as someone tromps on his toe while he is writing his editorial. It's actually hard work doing editorial work. Here, in doing editorial work in the N3F, the problems include poltergeists, fairies, warlocks, witches, demons, and the like. Where do they all come from? Piled right near my computer are Stephen King novels, Tolkien's trilogy, Grimm's and Anderson's fairy tales, and many another of the same sort, all of them books whose characters come right out of them and bother or even frighten the reader. Yes, I'm dealing with a literature that may be upsetting. And the net brings me movies of this kind, which seem to aim at virtual reality as they present incursions of Gog and Magog, alien abductions, terrors from hidden crypts, dinosaurs from days of yore, all of which seem aimed to alarm the viewer—and there are also numerous end-of-the-world movies as well, accompanied by a public reaction which fills the net with talk about comets striking the earth or the sun becoming a nova. Well, we're fans, and we have full metal jackets to defend us against these perils, but it does make it difficult to react in print in an ordinary manner to what the subject matter of our reading and viewing is. But fans have fortitude, and will carry through, and I am just mentioning what may be involved when things seem to go wrong. Malware and blocking may be among our problems, and there seems to be some espionage on the net, too, improbable as that may seem as that is not a major concern of espaneurs. But this editorial is a call to overcome all such problems and get back into a straightforward concern with the form of literature we like.

# A History of Fandom

by Jeffrey Redmond



## Introduction

A fandom is a subculture composed of fans characterized by a feeling of empathy and camaraderie with others who share a common interest. Fans typically are interested in even minor details of the object(s) of their fandom and spend a significant portion of their time and energy involved with their interest, often as a part of a social network with particular practices (a fandom). This is what differentiates “fannish” (fandom affiliated) fans from those with only a casual interest.

A fandom can grow around any area of human interest or activity. The subject of fan interest can be narrowly defined, focused on something like an individual celebrity, or more widely defined, encompassing entire hobbies, genres or fashions. While it is now used to apply to groups of people fascinated with any subject, the term has its roots in those with an enthusiastic appreciation for sports. Merriam-Webster’s dictionary traces the usage of the term back as far as 1903.

Fandom as a term can also be used in a broad sense to refer to the interconnected social networks of individual fandoms, many of which overlap. There are a number of large conventions that cater to fandom in this broad sense, catering to interests in film, comics, anime, television shows, cosplay, and the opportunity to buy and sell related merchandise. Annual conventions such as Comic Con International, Worldcon, Dragon Con, and New York Comic Con are some of the more well known and highly attended events that cater to overlapping fandoms.

## Organized Subculture

Fans of the literary detective Sherlock Holmes are widely considered to have

comprised the first modern fandom, holding public demonstrations of mourning after Holmes was "killed off" in 1893, and creating some of the first fan fiction as early as about 1897 to 1902. Outside the scope of media, railway enthusiasts are another early fandom with its roots in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century that began to gain in popularity and increasingly organize in the first decades of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

A wide variety of Western modern organized fannish subcultures originated with science fiction fandom, the community of fans of the science fiction and fantasy genres. Science fiction fandom dates back to the 1930s and maintains organized clubs and associations in many cities around the world. Fans have held the annual World Science Fiction Convention since 1939, along with many other events each year, and has created its own jargon, sometimes called "fanspeak".

In addition, the Society for Creative Anachronism, a medievalist re-creation group, has its roots in science fiction fandom. It was founded by members thereof, and many science fiction and fantasy authors such as Marian Zimmer Bradley, Poul Anderson, Randall Garrett, David D. Friedman and Robert Asprin have been members of the organization.

Media fandom split from science fiction fandom in the early 1970s with a focus on relationships between characters within TV and movie franchises, such as STAR TREK and THE MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E. Fans of these franchises generated creative processes like fan art and fan fiction at a time when typical science fiction fandom was focused on critical discussions. The MediaWest convention provided a video room and was instrumental in the emergence of fan vids, or analytic music videos based on a source, in the late 1970s. By the mid 1970s, it was possible to meet fans at science fiction conventions who did not read science fiction, but only viewed it on film or TV.

Anime and manga fandom began in the 1970s in Japan. In America, the fandom also began as an offshoot of science fiction fandom, with fans bringing imported copies of Japanese manga to conventions. Before anime began to be licensed in the U.S., fans who wanted to get ahold of anime would leak copies of anime movies and subtitle them to exchange with friends in the community, thus marking the start of fansubs.

Furry fandom refers to the fandom for fictional anthropomorphic animal characters with human personalities and characteristics. The concept of furry originated at a science fiction convention in 1980, when a drawing of a character from Steve Gallacci's Albedo Anthropomorphics initiated a discussion of anthropomorphic characters in science fiction novels, which in turn initiated a discussion group that met at science

fiction and comics conventions.

Additional subjects with significant fandoms include comics, sports, music, pulp magazines, soap operas, celebrities and videogames.

### **Fan Activities**

Members of a fandom associate with one another, often attending fan conventions and publishing and exchanging fanzines and newsletters. Amateur press associations are another form of fan publication and networking. Originally using print-based media, these sub-cultures have migrated much of their communications and interaction onto the internet, which they also use for the purpose of archiving detailed information pertinent to their given fanbase. Often, fans congregate on forums and discussion boards to share their love for and criticism of a specific work. This congregation can lead to a high level of organization and community within the fandom, as well as infighting.

Although there is some level of hierarchy among most of the discussion boards in which certain contributors are valued more highly than others, newcomers are most often welcomed into the fold. Most importantly, these sorts of discussion boards can have an effect on the media itself as was the case in the television show *Glee*. Trends on the discussion boards have been known to influence the writers and producers of the show. The media fandom for the TV series *FIREFLY* was able to generate enough corporate interest to create a movie after the series was canceled.

Some fans write fan fiction ("fanfic"), stories based on the universe and characters of their chosen fandom. This fiction can take the form of video making as well as writing. Fan fiction may or may not tie in with the story's canon; sometimes the fans use the story's characters in different situations that do not relate to the plot line at all. Especially at events, fans may also partake in cosplay (a portmanteau between costume and play)—the creation and wearing of costumes designed in the likeness of characters from a source work—which can also be combined with role playing, re-enacting scenes or inventing likely behavior inspired by their chosen sources.

Others create fan vids, or analytical music videos focusing on the source fandom, and yet others create fan art. Such activities are sometimes known as "fan labor" or "fanac", an abbreviated form of the phrase "fan activity". The advent of the Internet has significantly facilitated fan association and activities. Activities that have been aided by the Internet include the creation of fan "shrines" dedicated to favorite characters, computer screen wallpapers, avatars. Furthermore, the advent of the Internet has resulted in the creation of online fan networks who help facilitate the exchange of

fanworks.

Some fans create pictures known as edits, which consist of pictures or photos with their chosen fandom characters in different scenarios. These edits are often shared on social media networks such as Instagram, Tumblr, or Pinterest. In some edits, one may see content relating to several different fandoms. Fans in communities online often make gifs or gif sets about their fandoms. Gifs or gif sets can be used to create non-canon scenarios mixing actual content or adding in related content. Gif sets can also capture minute expressions or movements. Fans use gifs to show how they feel about characters or events in their fandom; these are called reaction gifs.

Fandom is sometimes caricatured as religious faith, as the interest of fans sometimes grows to dominate their lifestyle, and fans are often very obstinate in professing (and refusing to change) their beliefs about their fandom. However, society at large does not treat fandom with the same weight as organized religion.

There are also active fan organizations that participate in philanthropy and create a positive social impact. For example, the Harry Potter Alliance is a civic organization with a strong online component which runs campaigns around human rights issues, often in partnership with other advocacy and nonprofit groups; its membership college age and above. Nerdfighters, another fandom formed around Vlogbrothers, a YouTube vlog channel, are mainly high school students united by a common goal of "decreasing world suck".

### **In Film**

Feature length documentaries about fandom (some more respectful of the subjects than others) include Trekkies, Ringers; Lord of the Fans; Finding the Future: A Science Fiction Conversation; and Done the Impossible. "Fandom" is also the name of a documentary/mockumentary about a fan obsessed with Natalie Portman. Slash is a movie released in 2016 about a young boy who writes slash fanfiction.

### **In Books**

FANGIRL is a novel written by Rainbow Rowell about a college student who is a fan of a book series called Simon Snow, which is written by a fictional author named Gamma T. Leslie. On October 6, 2015, Rainbow Rowell published a follow-up novel to Fangirl. CARRY ON is a stand-alone novel set in the fictional world that Cath, the main character of Fangirl, writes fanfiction in.

### **Relationship with the Industry**

The film and television entertainment industry refers to the totality of fans devoted

to a particular area of interest, whether organized or not, as the “fanbase”.

Media fans have, on occasion, organized on behalf of canceled television series, with notable success in cases such as STAR TREK in 1968, CAGNEY AND LACEY in 1983, XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS, in 1995, ROSWELL in 2000 and 2001 (it was canceled with finality at the end of the 2002 season), FARSCAPE in 2002, FIREFLY in 2002, and JERICHO in 2007. In the case of Firefly the result was the movie SERENITY, not another season. It was likewise the fans who facilitated the push to create a Veronica Mars film through a kickstarter campaign. Fans of the show CHUCK launched a campaign to save the show from being canceled using a Twitter hashtag and buying products from sponsors of the show. Fans of Arrested Development fought for the character Steve Holt to be included in the fourth season. The Save Steve Holt! Campaign included a Twitter and Facebook account, a hashtag, and a website.

Such outcries, even when successful, suggests a growing self-consciousness on the part of entertainment consumers, who appear increasingly likely to attempt to assert their powers as a bloc. Fan activism in support of the 2007 Writers Guild of America strike through Fans4Writers appears to be an extension of this trend.

Gaming fans have sometimes influenced content developers. In march 2012, when the new installment of BioWare’s Mass Effect series was released, the fandom was so displeased with the game’s available endings that they demanded there be some kind of change. Buckling under the pressure of this heated demand, BioWare released a DLC (downloadable content) packet on June 26, 2012 in hopes of reconciling the game’s endings and soothing the fandom’s aggression. This simple change to the game’s ending was a huge step for fandoms because the entertainment industry has never before taken such large steps to comply with a fanbase’s desires.

In science fiction, a large number of the practitioners and other professionals in the field, not only writers but editors and publishers, traditionally have themselves come from and participate in science fiction fandom, from Ray Bradbury and Harlan Ellison to Patrick Nielsen Hayden and Toni Weiskopf. Ed Brubaker was a fan of the Captain America comics as a kid and was so upset that Bucky Barnes was killed off he worked on ways to bring him back. The Winter Soldier arc began in 2004 and in the 2005 sixth issue it was revealed that the Winter Soldier was Bucky Barnes. Many authors write fan fiction under pseudonyms. Lev Grossman has written stories in the Harry Potter, Adventure Time, and How to Train Your Dragon universes.

S.E. Hinton has written about both Supernatural and her own books, The Outsiders.



Movie actors often cosplay as other characters to enjoy being a regular fan at cons. Daniel Radcliffe cosplayed as Spider-Man at the 2014 San Diego Comic Con. Before the release of the Amazing Spider-Man, Andrew Garfield dressed up as Spider Man and gave an emotional speech about what Spider Man meant to him and thanking fans for their support.

The relationship between fans and professionals has changed because of access to social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook. These give fans greater access to public figures such as creators, authors, and actors. Online platforms also give fans more ways to connect and participate in fandoms.

Some fans have made the work they do in fandom into careers. The book FIFTY SHADES OF GREY by E.L. James was originally a fan fiction of the Twilight series published on FanFiction.Net. The story was taken down for mature content that violated the site's terms of service. James rewrote the story to take out any references to twilight and self-published on The Writer's Coffee Shop in May 2011. The book was published by Random House in 2012 and was very popular, selling over 100 million copies. Many fans were not happy about James using fan fiction to make money and felt it was not in the spirit of the community.

Cosplay has also become a career and way to make money participating in Fandom. Some cosplayers have made money cosplaying at cons for companies and others have been featured in promotional materials. There is contention over fans not being paid for their time and work. Gambling Companies use fans to alpha and beta test their games in exchange for early access or promotional merchandise. The TV show GLEE used fans to create promotional materials, though they did not compensate fans.

The entertainment industry in particular has capitalized on the fandom phenomena, by promoting its work directly to members of the fandom community by sponsoring and presenting at events and conventions dedicated to fandom. Studios frequently create elaborate exhibits, organize panels that feature celebrities and writers of film and television (to promote both existing work and works yet to be released), and engage fans directly with Q & A sessions, screening sneak previews, and supplying branded giveaway merchandise. The interest, reception and reaction of the fandom community to the works being promoted has a marked influence on how film studios and others proceed with the projects and products they exhibit and promote.

Whatever your interest, fandom will always be for everyone to enjoy!

# SCIENCE FICTION IN THE PRESS

by JOHN THIEL

I received from Neal Wilgus a clipping from a publication called **Fifth Estate** wherein the writer was taking on science fiction fandom in an article called "The Politics of Fandom/ SCIENCE FICTION'S HISTORIC STRUGGLE OVER THE FUTURE", and it seemed a good example of the misrepresentation of fandom that has occurred in newspapers and magazines when (which is rare) they happen upon science fiction fandom and attempt to give it coverage. It is common in such articles to maintain an attitude of casual superiority and to write as if the statements being made were unarguable and well-researched, and that is to be seen in this article. A few statements may be made about it before beginning: I heard that newspapers were being called "The Third Estate" by people somewhere *via* H.L. Mencken, who said there wasn't a very good explanation for their being called that and that nothing else should be called an estate that wasn't one, which he then defined as property consisting of more than one household under a common ownership. Here is a journalistic publication called "The Fifth Estate", which might mean at two removes from the newspapers in terms of journalism, but this continues heeding that peculiar term that Mencken spotted. There is a photo going along with the article that shows ten magazine covers and the caption under it says that they are magazines from the thirties. They are in fact four issues of **Imagination**, three issues of **If**, and an issue of a magazine called **Worlds of Tomorrow**, which looks to be a British publication. *Imagination* and *If* are magazines of the fifties, and one can see the dates on all these magazines and the dates are all in the 1950s. It seems like the publication in which this appeared has been highly misinformed and even hoodwinked. The proposition the article makes is that science fiction fandom has an active political branch that is significant to the government. Fandom is simply fandom and is not set up to have any formal or official politics going on in it and if there is organized politics in it it isn't fandom, or isn't fandom any more, having been usurped by political concerns. There are in fact fans who are interested in politics, but it would be well with them if they wouldn't mix it with fandom. Politics is one thing, fandom is another. One can look at both, but they don't relate—fans are free-thinkers.

The article is considerably slanted: "A dedicated band of idealistic working-class teenagers crash a meeting of techno-fascists at a New York hotel, confronting the group's dictatorial leaders....this plot unfolded at the first ever World Science Fiction

Convention in 1939. Despite its reputation for campy story-telling and escapist plots, science fiction (SF) has always been highly political at its core, and this story began when Dave Kyle, a member of a fan club known as The Futurians, attempted to distribute a pamphlet criticizing the convention organizers....The Futurians were a famously scrappy club of leftist New York science fiction fans...the Futurians Science Fiction Club of New York, filled with leftists, sought to act like a radical labor union and tried to organize fandom to engage in that conflict." As an aside, it says, "Even Star Trek with its heaping helpings of progressive social commentary, is at heart a descendant of the techno-utopianism of the Futurists and the neo-liberal vision of peach through superior firepower." "Heaping helping" is a term I've heard once before, in the theme song of a TV show about backwoods hill-dwellers: "and have a heaping helping of their hospitality." (The show was called THE BEVERLY HILLBILLIES, about migrants to California *a la* Steinbeck's THE GRAPES OF WRATH, who ended up living in Hollywood.)

This article proposes that the Futurians were mostly a political organization who may have been able to spare some time for science fiction, which is not the truth at all.

This sort of thing is on the net and it impedes the way toward honest science fiction research.



*Hannes Bok was an outstanding fantasy artist and brought forth the wonder of fantasies the way few artists have done. Jon Swartz speaks of his place in science fiction:*



## **HISTORICAL VIGNETTE** by **Jon D. Swartz** N3F Historian

### **Hannes Bok Illustration Index**

In 1970 Ned Brooks and Don Martin compiled a 28-page index to all the known published artwork of Hannes Bok for the Collectors Bureau of the National Fantasy Fan Federation. The publisher of the index was identified as Ned Brooks under his legal name of C.W. Brooks, Jr. At the time the Collectors Bureau was located in Newport News, Virginia, the city where Brooks lived. The price of the index was \$1.00, except for club members who only had to pay fifty cents a copy. There were two subsequent editions of this index, the last in 1994 (and currently available on the Internet).

The INDEX consisted of all known published artwork by Bok in magazines, in books, in art folios/single prints, in fanzines, and as miscellaneous items. Magazines listed alphabetically ranged from **Astonishing Stories** (10 issues, 4/40—4/43) to **Weird Tales** (38 issues, 12/39—7/54); thirty-six books illustrated, listed alphabetically by title, ranged from ALIEN MINDS (Evans, 1955) to WHO GOES THERE? (Campbell, 1948); seventy-seven art folios/single prints, listed chronologically, from the early 1940s until the mid-1950s; art for twenty-two different fanzines; and three pages of miscellaneous items (Christmas cards, program books, calendars, bookplates, catalogs, collaborations, and some non-*genre* items).

Several books with his illustrations are important in the history of science fiction, including *THE HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND* (Hodgson, 1946), *SKULL-FACE AND OTHERS* (Howard, 1946), *THE CHECKLIST OF FANTASTIC LITERATURE* (Bleiler, 1948), *LEST DARKNESS FALL* (de Camp, 1949), *SIDEWISE IN TIME* (Leinster, 1950), *THE BLIND SPOT* (Hall & Flint, 1951), *THE MOON HELL* (Campbell, 1951), and *ALL OUR YESTERDAYS* (Warner, 1969).

### Authors

Brooks, C.W. (Ned), Jr. and Don Martin were active in N3F's Collectors Bureau and worked on the **Collector's Bulletin**, published by the Bureau. Brooks won the club's Kaymar Award in 1972.

### Artist



**Hannes Bok**

Hannes Bok was a pseudonym used by Wayne Woodard (1914—1964), an American artist and illustrator, as well as an amateur astrologer and sometime writer of fantasy fiction and poetry. Early in life he changed his name to Hans (later Hannes) Vajn Bok, as a tribute to his favorite composer, Johann Sebastian Bach, and at other times he used the pseudonym Dolbokgov.

Bok painted nearly 150 covers for various SF/F/H magazines, as well as contributing hundreds of black and white interior illustrations to these publications. Early in his career he provided artwork to fanzines, such as Ray Bradbury's **Futura**, and he was also a member of the famed Futurian Society of New York. Bok's work graced the dust jackets from early specialty book publishers such as Arkham House, Shasta, and Fantasy Press.

His paintings achieved a luminous quality through the use of an arduous glazing process, which was learned from his mentor, artist Maxfield Parrish.

Bok was the first artist to be awarded a Hugo Award (which he shared with Ed Emshwiller). As the years passed, Bok became prone to disagreements with editors over money and artistic issues; he also grew reclusive, mystical, and preoccupied with the occult. He eked out a living and was often in near poverty, until his death in 1964—apparently due to a heart attack. He was only 49.

Note: This vignette was written several years ago, and appeared originally in **The National Fantasy Fan**.

### Samples of Bok's Art



## Early Science Fiction Movies by Judy Carroll



Last month I gave a list of Science Fiction books from the 1940s—2010s, two books for each of the decades since the National Fantasy Fan Federation was founded. This month, I figure it's only fair to give a list of Science Fiction movies from the same period. Some people prefer movies over books. Both groups have a lot going for them.

With books you can get comfy in your spot. Have your drink and/or food of choice beside you, silence ringing through the room. Or, if you prefer, your favorite music flowing softly through the air. Reading a book is usually a solitary act. Your mind must pay attention to every word, every meaning, discover every tone hidden in the sentence. And let's face it, if you fall asleep you could lose your place, and spend many minutes re-reading the same pages you read before falling asleep. When you have finished the book and closed it for the last time you want to tell someone how wonderful it was or what a disappointment, but there is no one to tell. Well, you could call your buddy from work, but then you remember he only started the book yesterday. Of course, there's your Aunt Lydia. She's the one who recommended the book. She'd be so excited to know how much you liked it. Oh, no. Aunt Lydia lives in the east. She's two hours ahead of you. She'd be asleep by now. You will have to contain your excitement until you can find someone you can talk to.

Watching a movie, especially at the movie theater, is usually a two or more person activity. After buying a ticket you load up on popcorn, candy and soda. You find your seat. Get semi-comfy and hope no one tall will sit in front of you blocking your view.

You talk with your companions about each others' expectations of the show. Lights dim to almost nothingness. Music soars from the speakers assaulting your delicate ears and throbbing pulse-like through your mind. Seats creak and voices fade. The movie begins. You sit there, mind glued to the story, eyes scouring the huge screen trying to catch every movement, heart reacting to every loud explosion of sound. Hands clutching soda or popcorn, candy left unwrapped. You are mesmerized with excitement as the entire experience unfolds with vibrant colors clashing together as ominous sounds creep forward. All too soon, the sound fades. The screen rolls credits. You and your group stay seated, having decided this ahead of time, knowing there might, just might, be a scene with a glimmer of what the next movie will bring. As you walk out of the theater, all talking at once, you discuss the entire movie and express your likes or dislikes for the actors, the special effects and the story itself.

Following are two movies from each decade from the 1940s to the 2010s.

1940s—FLASH GORDON CONQUERS THE UNIVERSE and THE INVISIBLE AGENT

1950s—THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL and THIS ISLAND EARTH

1960s—2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY and PLANET OF THE APES

1970s—ALIEN and CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND

1980s—BLADE RUNNER and THE THING

1990s—THE MATRIX and TOTAL RECALL

2000—MINORITY REPORT and SIGNS

2010—GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY and LIVE DIE REPEAT: EDGE OF TOMORROW

It might be fun to compare the differences between the movies of the early decades to the later, in story, acting, and special effects, such as Flash Gordon Conquers the Universe and Guardians of the Galaxy.

**Below: posters and scenes from THIS ISLAND EARTH (first two), THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (number three), FLASH GORDON CONQUERS THE UNIVERSE (number four), THIS ISLAND EARTH (bottom left), and THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (bottom right).**







I haven't received any letters to Origin this month but in place of them I have a communication from Will Mayo that might just as well have been a letter to Origin:

**Will Mayo:** It's telling, I suppose—

#### WE ALL PLAY OUR PART

While I debate life and death and the meaning of both, while I wonder whether humanity will survive or not, while I play the part of a writer and sometime philosopher and my neighbors go to work outside my door, my brother works in a warehouse, lifting heavy freight (and, once, injuring his knee in the process), his wife handles their company's contracts, my sister dispenses medicine to the needy at a hospital down in Florida, my mother languishes in a nursing home, also in Florida, and all the world hungers for attention. While I press one more button on this machine and see my life hurry away. I go on my way and so do they.

*answer: A very good piece of writing. It almost makes me feel like talking. All I can do talking-wise is talk about how I don't usually talk all that much. But that's talking. It could be the start of talking about what your title suggests. And it might be said to further what you are saying; you talk about what others are doing around you, and I tell you what I am doing. Could this be a return to elemental speech, another start at talking?*

*Will's in the NFFF and has been appearing poetically in my NFFF zines and has been in Eldritch Science. I consider this communication to fit in Origin as I have been talking here about communication and activity and the lack thereof, and this writing is very much to the point of that. One might ask why there is such a slow-down, and Will seems to answer that, "It's telling, I suppose."*



