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EDITORIAL

WHY OR NO, A WAYS TO GO

Always talking in my editorial space about how things are coming along, how much we've got things shaped up, what our prospects are, and in general suggesting that we are falling short of perfection, not quite secure and comfortable with what we have.

I've been boastful in my reports in TNFF when I discuss our accomplishments, and I think I have good reason to be, and that we all have reason to point out what we have accomplished so far since we were brought in as a new bureau. But I still think we have a long ways to go before we have things operating exactly as they should be doing.

In a way we do have things going—we are producing new publications. But we hope to broaden our activities by including our readers in the membership in our activities and to increase interaction among the bureaus and within the bureaus as well. Getting a lot to do and having that be productive activity is one of our goals. It's so much better than looking at all the problems in the world around us. In line with this, are there any questions the membership would like to ask about our bureau? We really should be communicating actively with the membership—if we got that kind of correspondence going, we'd be sitting on top of the world. And you might like to know more about our bureau, so why not ask us about ourselves?

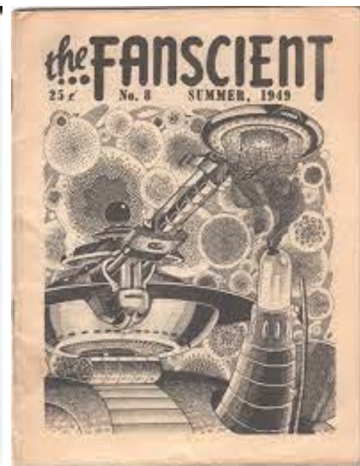
It's always nice to have and be in a thriving science fantasy organization. It does something for the individual who can say he is in one.

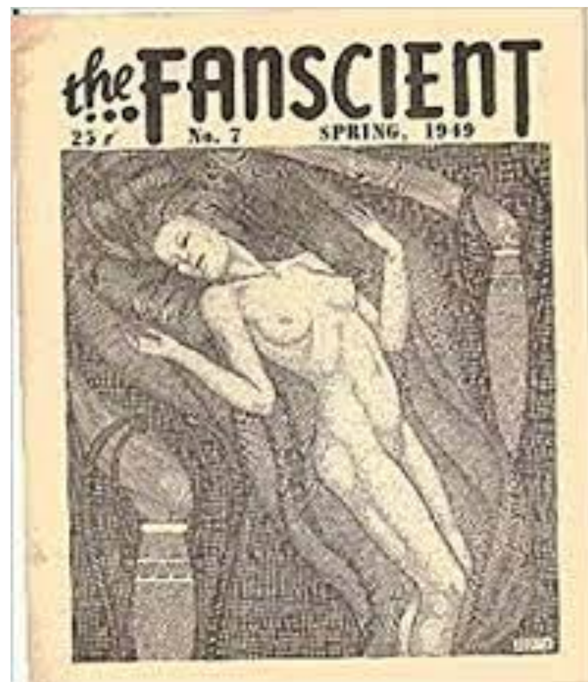
In advance of this, we are starting to say something about ourselves in this issue of Origin.

FANZINE RETROSPECTIVE 2

By Jon D. Swartz, N3F Historian

The subject of the first "Fanzine Retrospective" was an issue of **Amateur Correspondent,** a fanzine from the 1930s. This time we take a close look at an issue of **The Fanscient,** a rather unique fanzine published during the late 1940s/early 1950s.





THE FANSCIENT for Spring 1949 (Vol. 3, No.1/Whole Number 7)

The Fanscient was edited by Donald B. Day for the Portland Science Fantasy Society. Published from September 1947 until Spring-Summer 1951, this sercon publication appeared for a total of thirteen issues. The last issue was double-sized (64 pages) and double-numbered (13/14). The Fanscient was known principally for its "Author, Author" column that featured autobiographical sketches by well-known SF authors. The authors featured, together with the issues' numbers in which they appeared, were: 1) A.E. van Vogt; 2) Edmond Hamilton; 3) E.E. (Doc) Smith, PhD; 4) Jack Williamson; 5)David H. Keller, MD; 6) Ray Bradbury; 7) Will F. Jenkins; 8) Robert Bloch; 9) Robert A. Heinlein; 10) George O. Smith; 11) Theodore Sturgeon; 12) Anthony Boucher; and 13/14) L. Sprague de Camp. Photos of the authors and up-to-date bibliographies of their published work accompanied the sketches.

A.E. van Vogt

Edmond Hamilton

E.E. Smith

Jack Williamson

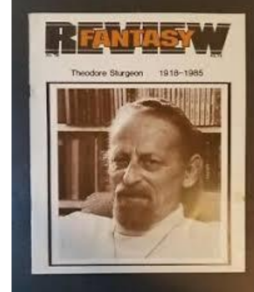
David H. Keller

Ray Bradbury

Will Jenkins

Robert Bloch

Robert Heinlein



George O. Smith **Anthony Boucher** **L. Sprague de Camp** **Theodore Sturgeon**

Format/Policies:

The Fanscient initially was published quarterly in octavo format, then halved to a tiny five and a quarter by four and a half booklet, which is the size of the issue under review here. All issues were black and white, except for the duo-color issues 9 and 13/14. The Spring 1949 issue was lithographed, and sold for twenty-five cents. (A 6-issue subscription was $1.00.) The cover illustration was a drawing of a nude woman by D. Bruce Berry.

Contributors/Contributions:

DONALD B(YRNE) DAY [1909-1978], editor. Day worked at various occupations until he became a postal clerk in 1940. He began compiling his INDEX TO THE SF MAGAZINES in 1935. He was an active fan in local and national SF affairs from 1946, chairing the 8th Worldcon (Norwescon) in Portland in 1950, and editing The Fanscient for three years. His private Perri Press, founded for publication of his Index in 1952, became established as a spare-time offset and letterpress printing shop, with a regular business location and a partner. In this particular issue of The Fanscient Day contributed an editorial, an article, a memo, and (with Ken Slater) a "Checklist of British Science Fiction & Fantasy Magazines." This checklist served as an addendum to Slater's article on the British prozines. Day's "Memo to Reluctant Fanzine Publishers" offered help to readers who wanted to publish their own fanzines but lacked the resources. Day also provided the "Checklist of Fantasy Books in Print", one of the fanzine's regular features. In the **1948 Fantasy Annual** Day was ranked #8 in the Best Fans of 1948 list and #9 in the Top Fan Journalists list.

D(OUGLAS) BRUCE Berry [1924-], cover artist. Berry served in the Air Force as a sign painter, and later worked at an advertising agency. He has been an SF fan for most of his life, and was a member of comics fandom in the 1960s. Berry began his SF work with William Hamling's Greenleaf magazines, illustrating **Imagination**, **Imaginative**

Tales, and **Space Travel** (with his first cover art for the May 1958 issue of Imaginative Tales). Later he provided artwork for **Witchcraft & Sorcery**, **Rogue**, and **Men's Digest**. He then became a writer. When he was unable to write because of injuries sustained in an accident, he returned to illustration and entered the comics field as a letterer/inker. At one time he assisted Jack Kirby. Still later Berry published two SF novels: THE BALLING MACHINE (1971) [as by Jeff Douglas] and GENETIC BOMB (1975), both written with Andrew J. Offutt. In addition, Berry wrote at least one book under the pseudonym of Morgan Drake. In the 1948 Fantasy Annual he ranked third in the list of Top Fan Artists.

DAVID H. KELLER, M.D. [1880-1966], contributor of an article on book reviewing. In his article Keller gave ten rules for reviewing books:

1) Honesty on the part of the reviewer is most important.
2) Has the book sufficient merit to warrant a second reading?
3) Is the novel based on an original plot or at least a new twist of an old plot?
4) Does the book sustain interest?
5) In the narrative the reviewer should find harmony with either the real experiences or daydreams of the ordinary man.
6) Every novel, even every short story, should be clear enough so a capable reviewer can condense it into a sentence of not more than ten or fifteen words which will clearly show the *motif* of the tale.
7) There should be no unnecessary and obvious "padding" to give extra bulk.
8) The description of format is important but should not overshadow the merits of the novel.
9) The reviewer, if worthy of the name, must consider a book objectively.
10) No book should be reviewed unless it is read carefully and completely.

Keller was a physician who wrote SF/weird fiction for his own pleasure until his first sale at age 47. He also was a frequent contributor to amateur magazines. It has been written that he was "put upon" by fanzine editors, but near the end of his life he wrote about his fanzine activity: "During the past 25 years, I have contributed largely to those magazines and have never regretted it. The constant contact with youth has served to lessen the ravages of time. Many of my best friends were fanzine editors. While none ever asked me to serve as assistant editor, they all seemed to appreciate my efforts to make their magazines more interesting." One of Keller's stories, "The Thing in the

Cellar", has been reprinted many times over the years. In the 1948 Fantasy Annual he ranked 14th in its list of Top Fan Journalists. He is a First Fandom Hall of Fame recipient (posthumously).

WILL F. JENKINS (Murray Leinster) [1896-1975], subject of the "Author, Author" column in this issue. Jenkins' early ambition was to be a scientist; he built and flew a glider at age thirteen and won a prize from **Fly**, the first aeronautical magazine. During World War I he served with the Committee of Public Information and the U.S. Army (1917-1918), and during World War II he served in the Office of War Information. He was also an inventor, and patented several inventions, including a front-projection method for filming backgrounds. The Murray Leinster pseudonym was created from his family lineage, including relatives who had lived in Leinster County, Ireland. He became a full-time free-lance writer at the age of twenty-one. His first publication was an essay on Robert E. Lee in the **Virginian Pilot** (1909); his first SF publication was "Oh, Aladdin!" in **Argosy** (January 11, 1919 issue). [Some reference works cite his "The Runaway Skyscraper" that appeared in the February 22, 1919 issue of Argosy as his first SF publication.] His first published novel was SCALPS (Brewer and Warren, 1930), and his first published SF novel was MURDER MADNESS (Brewer and Warren, 1931). The latter originally appeared as a four-part serial in the May-August 1930 issues of Astounding. His first SF collection was SIDEWISE IN TIME, AND OTHER SCIENTIFIC ADVENTURES (Shasta, 1950). Jenkins/Leinster won several awards in the SF genre: Hugo Award (Best Novelette) in 1956 for "Exploration Team" [later titled "Combat Team"] in the March 1956 Astounding; GoH, 21st Worldcon (DisCon), 1963; Gernsback (Novel), 1936 [1983 Retro Hugo] for THE INCREDIBLE INVASION, a five-part serial in Astounding, August-December, 1936, retitled THE OTHER SIDE OF HERE when published in book form; Hugo Award (Best Novelette), 1945 [1996 Retro Hugo] for "First Contact" which originally appeared in the May 1945 Astounding; many other awards, including being named a First Fandom Hall of Fame recipient in 1969. For years he was known as the Dean of Science Fiction Writers.

KEN(NETH) F(REDERICK) SLATER [1917-], contributor of an article, "The British Prozines". Slater is a well-known British SF/Fantasy fan who has belonged to fan organizations in several countries. He created "Operation Fantast" that helped facilitate the exchange of SF magazines between the United States and England in the post-World War II years, and published the fanzine **Operation Fantast** as well as a yearly handbook. He later founded a book and magazine business, Fantast (Medway) Ltd. In

Wisbach, Cambridgeshire. Forrest J Ackerman presented the Big Heart Award to Slater at the 1995 Worldcon.

Other Features/Contents:

Californian Leonard J. Moffatt contributed a short fiction piece, "Amnesia" (illustrated by J.M. Higbee). Moffatt was the editor of the **1950 Fan Directory**, a published author in the early 1950s, and a member of First Fandom. Portland fans George Wetzel and W.E. Bullard both contributed short fiction pieces: "A Tale of the Older Gods" by Wetzel, illustrated by Miles Eaton; and "Unsung" by Bullard, illustrated by G. (Jerry) Waible. Thyrill L. Ladd contributed an article, "Grandfather Read Fantasy, Too!" Ladd was a prominent SF collector/fan of the day; in the 1948 Fantasy Annual Top Fan Poll Results, he ranked in the top twelve of Fan Writers, in the top eleven of Fan Critics, and in the top seven of Fan Article Writers.

Also included in this issue were two cartoons by Waible, and two pieces of art by O.G. Estes: "Classics of Fantasy: THE WORM OUROBOROS", and an illustration for Leinster's "Proxima Centauri".

Advertisements all were genre-related. One was for fantasy postcards from Day's Perri Press. Two were from First Fandom member Darrell C. Richardson, a "wanted" ad, and a "Fantasy Books for Sale" ad. There was also a house ad for back issues of The Fanscient (most selling for twenty-five cents each, with subscriptions one-third off on orders over seventy-five cents), and an ad for books ("Scientifiction, Fantasy, Weird") from the House of Stone in Lunenburg, Massachusetts.

Conclusions

The consensus of SF historians writing of the period is that The Fanscient was a leading fanzine of its day. Warner has written that The Fanscient was "one of the leading serious fanzines of its period", was "neat, a delight to read, and never stuffy", and only ended (in part) because "Day became interested in square dancing". Joe Siclari, in Science Fiction Fandom, describes it as follows: "A good quality fanzine, unusual because of being quarter-size for most of its run. It contained fiction, articles (often by major professionals), and many illustrations." Donald Tuck says, in part: "It began duplicated and lithographed at five and a half by eight inches, then was completely litho in 'vest pocket' size…[and] featured fiction and articles of high standard." In the 1948 Fantasy Annual it was reported that The Fanscient had been voted the top fanzine of

1948.

It was also noticed in the mundane world: the May 21, 1951 issue of **Life**, in an article titled “Through the Interstellar Looking Glass”, The Fanscient was pictured along with nine other contemporary fanzines. Even today, when many fanzines and semi-pro publications do a better job of featuring the same type of material, The Fanscient would be viewed as a very good example of amateur publishing. On the other hand, the very small format (with type that is difficult to read) probably would elicit some negative comments.

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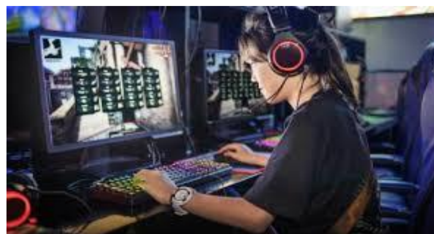
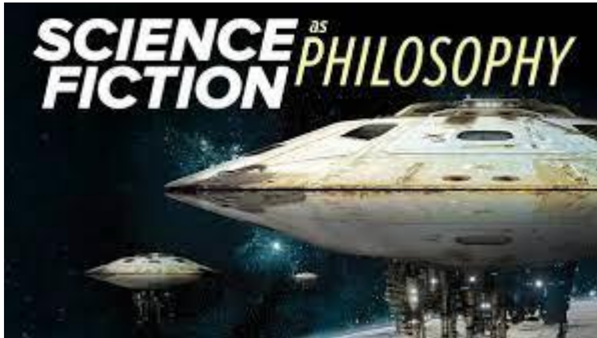
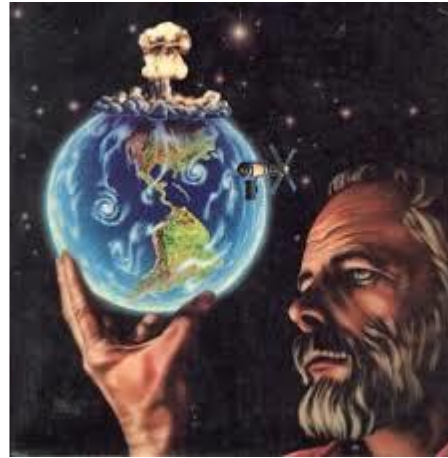
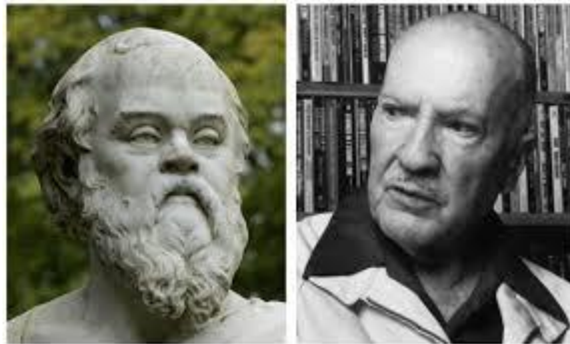
Note: This article was written years ago for publication in First Fandom’s **Scientifiction.** It has been revised somewhat for reprinting in Origin.



SCI PHI: SCIENCE FICTION AS PHILOSOPHY by Jeffery Redmond







Science fiction is worth pondering

Science is directly related to philosophy. Indeed, it was birthed from it. Philosophy just means "love of wisdom", and as the study of all things, originally philosophy was the only thing that one could study. Science came to be because certain philosophers developed methods of thinking and investigation that could guard against the biases of our senses and natural reasoning to discover the way the world actually is. It began with Aristotle, of course, but the revolution happened thanks to philosophers like Francis Bacon, David Hume, John Stuart Mill, William Whewell, and C.S. Peirce. Indeed, the first scientists were called "natural philosophers". Their methods were simply so successful that the employment of those methods eventually became its own discipline "science" and those that employed them went by a new name "scientists".

This is true of pretty much every discipline that exists today. Medicine, mathematics, economics, political science, education—everything is an offshoot of philosophy. When people study the founding and influential thinkers in their fields, they are studying the work of philosophers—like Hypocrites, Descartes, Adam Smith, Plato, Dewey—who

discovered methods and answers so groundbreaking and important that they spawned their own discipline. This is why philosophy has the inaccurate reputation of being discipline about unanswerable questions. In reality, philosophers find answers to questions all the time. It's just that when they do, the answers are so groundbreaking that they spawn new disciplines that get new names—and the people still dealing with the questions that have yet to be answered are still called philosophers.

But to answer them, philosophers often turn to thought experiments—made up of scenarios that reveal our beliefs and institutions that can also be used to make arguments. We can reveal your intuitions about, for example, whether overall happiness is the only good, by imagining a situation where an entire society is made blissful by continually torturing one small child. If you don't think such a thing is morally justified, the thought experiment should convince you that "the most happiness for the most people" is not the only metric by which to gauge the morality of actions.

And that's where science fiction comes in, and why it's so useful to philosophers. Indeed, Ursula K. Le Guin's "Those Who Walk Away From Omelas" describes just such a society, and is used by philosophers to show that our moral intuitions often don't align with the moral theory of utilitarianism. Because science fiction can be set in a future time, distant planet, or alternate world, and can involve advanced technologies and alien beings, science fiction is an ideal place for philosophers to go to find the thought experiments they need.

Sometimes philosophers are inspired by science fiction to make up their own. Modern philosopher Robert Nozick imagined a sci fi-like virtual reality generator he called an "experience machine" to argue against a philosophical view called hedonism. Since most people wouldn't trade a virtual world of happiness and satisfaction for real life, happiness and satisfaction must not be the only thing that is valuable. Derick Parfit used thought experiments with Star Trek-like transporters to make an argument about what philosophers call "personal identity". Is a "reassembled Mr. Spock" still Spock? Are you now, and your eight year old self, the same object?

Sometimes philosophers inspire science fiction stories. Plato's Cave Allegory which he used, among other things, to argue against willing ignorance, later inspired The Matrix. Rene Descartes thought experiments about not being able to tell dreams from reality inspired inception.

And sometimes, philosophers simply use existing science fiction to explain philosophy. Indeed, there are two "Philosophy and Popular Culture" books series—one

by Wiley Blackwell and the other by Open Court, but both started by William Irwin—that do exactly that with popular culture in general. Not surprisingly, some of the best books in both series are on science fiction. They use it as a thought experiment to explain and make philosophical arguments. And this has been going on for twenty years.

But something that often goes unappreciated is something that's been happening for longer—about 2000 years longer. Science fiction authors have been doing philosophy. Since before science or science fiction was even labeled or identified as a field or genre, authors have been writing stories that today we would call science fiction to make philosophical points and arguments.

In the 2nd Century, Syrian philosopher Lucian of Samosata wrote a story about a ship that sailed beyond the Pillars of Hercules and was whisked away by a whirlwind to the Moon, called "A True History". The crew finds it inhabited by cloud centaurs, giant birds, and an all-male society embroiled in a war with the inhabitants of the Sun over the colonization of The Morning Star. The work was intended as a criticism of the Sophists and the religious myths of the time, and even as a satire of some philosophers. The name itself mirrors Socrates' profession of ignorance. In the Apology, Socrates argues that no one really has knowledge. Only those who—like him—admit their ignorance are truly wise. In the same way, most histories of Lucian's time were complete myth. Only those that openly admitted to being false, which Lucian does in his introduction, were really "true".

In the 1200s, Islamic philosopher Ibn al-Nafis told a story about a spontaneously created man. He was named Kamil, and his creation envisioned something like cloning. It was called "The Theorem Autodidactus". Kamil proceeds from the island out into the world and, through empirical observation alone, reaches all the same conclusions as the Islamic scholars. The point was to suggest that what Islam revealed or professed could be discovered by reason.

In 1515 the philosopher Thomas More coined a term by writing a story about an ideal society on the fictional island of Utopia. This is Greek for both "The Good Place" and "No Place". In Utopia, Hythloday (which is Greek for "speaker of nonsense") recounts his visit to the crescent-shaped island of Utopia. It is protected from outside invasion because its inner bay contains hidden ship-sinking rocks that only the Utopians know how to avoid. It's a seemingly perfect society—very intellectual, and totally communistic. All property is held in common and everyone works. It is completely superior to the European society in which More found himself. And, of course, that's the

point. It's a philosophical argument for improvements which could be made to European society.

About a century later, Francis Bacon made a similar argument in a similar way with The New Atlantis—a story about a utopian society, on the island of Bensalem, with devices like submarines and microscopes, that is ruled by science. Indeed, the story could be seen as an argument for Bacon's method of doing science—and for the idea that science and religion are compatible. Bacon takes time to make clear that religion also plays a role in this scientific community.

And in 1705 Daniel Defoe used his work The Consolidator to poke fun at the politics and religion of his day. In it the protagonist visits the Moon in a feather-covered Chinese rocket ship called "The Consolidator". With special magnifying glasses that enable them to observe the Earth, the Lunarians reveal the iniquities and absurdities of the humans' lives and governments. It's kind of a story version of Carl Sagan's we all live on a "pale blue dot" observation, to try to get people to see the absurdity of our disagreements and war.

All of this is before Frankenstein. This is usually considered the first work of science fiction, which itself is a philosophical argument about the dangers of "playing God", and "science gone too far". It makes a host of other philosophical points that others have pontificated about at length. Writers have been using science fiction to make philosophical arguments before "science fiction" was even a thing.

But, of course, it didn't stop with Frankenstein. Since then, the efforts have just intensified. At first it was relegated to the written word, and other philosophers have written on the plethora of science fiction short stories and novels that explore philosophical themes. But it eventually moved on to film and television. As Kevin Kelly, founding editor of **Wired** magazine once put it on the Syfy Origin Stories podcast:

"…the science fiction authors…of today…[are] the people who are really wrestling with the great what if questions [and] grappling…not just with the political possibilities, but 'What does it mean to be human?' 'Where do we fit in the cosmos?' I think they are doing all the heavy lifting of the philosophical question even as they're doing chase scenes…"

That might be a bit overstated. Philosophers are doing philosophy too. But the point is well taken.

With this in mind, imagine the moment The Teaching Company approaches with the idea of doing one of their "Great Courses" on the intersection of philosophy and what

we might call "moving picture science fiction". Film and television, as opposed to printed media science fiction. It is compelling to insist that we call it "Sci-Phi: Science Fiction as Philosophy". Rather than, say, "the Philosophy of Science Fiction" or "Philosophy and Science Fiction". Because, even though it's all well and good to use science fiction to explore and explain philosophical topics, we would want to identify and evaluate the philosophical arguments that the authors of moving picture science fiction are making.

For a public philosopher with an obsession with science fiction, this is kind of the part he or she was born to play—or the course they were destined to teach. Star Wars, Star Trek, Doctor Who, The Matrix—the hours and hours we spend watching science fiction would finally be about to pay off! But not to just concentrate on favorites or popular titles. The course has to have variety. It has to have both the old and the new, the fun and the depressing, hard science fiction and soft, and both popular and obscure titles. And of course, everything has to be making a philosophical argument.

The popular stuff is easy. Star Wars is about the difference between good and evil. Star Trek's prime directive is an argument against colonialism. Doctor Who can be used to talk about the possibility of time travel, and The Doctor's pacifism to talk about violence and just war. The Matrix's thesis? Ignorance isn't bliss. The Matrix sequels? Free will exists.

The obscure stuff is also fun. For example, a British sci fi show from the late 70s and early 80s called BLAKE'S 7 can be used to talk about justified political rebellion. Most who see it think it's just "British Star Trek" because it has transporters called "teleports", but it's actually a precursor to Firefly. Indeed, although Josh Whedon denies it, it looks like that's where he got the idea for Firefly. They both are stories about politically rebellious crews of 7 roaming the Galaxy in ships with "glowing bug bites" for engines.

The hardest science fiction, in terms of scientific accuracy, is probably Carl Sagan's CONTACT or Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY. Contact is undeniably a film that argues for the compatibility of science and religious belief, something that Sagan argued for many times publicly. I examine the argument the film presents. Kubrick's 2001 was considered by many to be "the first Nietzschean" film. Indeed, there's that famous opening named "Thus Spake Zarathustra" after Nietzsche's book of the same name. Although it can be argued that Kubrick got Nietzsche wrong.

The softest science fiction is something that others might argue isn't science fiction at all: Margret Attwood's THE HANDMAID'S TALE as an example. But using Damon Knight's definition "Science fiction is what we point to when we say it," it could be

included in the course. Soft sci fi often involves speculative dystopian societies, such as 1984 and Brave New World. Since the world of The Handmaid's Tale certainly qualifies as dystopian, some people certainly call it sci fi. But it can be included because, as seems obvious to me, it is an argument for feminism, and yet Attwood herself has said explicitly that it's not. We can try to figure out whether or not she is right. Inception could be used to argue that authorial intent can't determine the meaning of a work of art.

The most depressing story is SNOWPIERCER. The movie itself is really good, but it can be an argument for a position on climate change called "lukewarmism", which suggests that global warming isn't going to have the catastrophic effect that many suppose. The philosophical issue is how non-experts should draw conclusions on such issues. Unfortunately, given the evidence, it seems that we should conclude that the effects of global warming are likely going to be worse than we have supposed, not better. Indeed, our prospects look even bleaker since these were recorded just a year ago.

The most fun is STARSHIP TROOPERS, which on its face is a shallow, poorly acted shoot-'em-up about sexy teenagers killing space bugs and having sex with each other. But it turns out that it was screenwriter Edward Neumeier and director Paul Verhoeven's expressly stated intention for Starship Troopers to satirize nationalism and fascism—something they thought that America was in danger of embracing. And that was back in the 90s! One wonders what kind of film they would make today. The fact that American audiences largely didn't catch the satire indicates that Ed and Paul were probably on to something. Those being satirized often don't recognize that they are being satirized.

Speaking of fascists...The oldest sci fi film was METROPOLIS, a silent film from the 1920s, which was written by someone who eventually became a Nazi: the director Fritz Lang's later ex-wife Thea von Harbou. Ironically, Metropolis was praised by Nazi propagandist Joesph Goebbels, but then edited by American studio director Alfred Hugenberg for American audiences to cut out its "inappropriate" communist subtext. Keep in mind, the Soviet communists were America's allies against the Nazis in WWII. In reality, Metropolis is just an argument in favor of labor unions. "THE MEDIATOR BETWEEN HEAD [the owner] AND HANDS [the workers] MUST BE THE HEART [the union president]."

The newest sci fi is Seth McFarlane's new show on Fox: THE ORVILLE. As a kind of mashup of M*A*S*H and Star Trek, nearly every episode makes a philosophical point.

Only one episode is needed to make a point about the dangers of social media ("Majority Rule"). But the entire series talks about the most effective way that science fiction makes philosophical arguments. Something we can call "cloaking bias to create cognitive dissonance" through what Darko Suvin called "cognitive estrangement".

By presenting us with a world unlike our own, science fiction forces us to leave our biases behind as we draw conclusions about it. Then, when we realize that the sci fi world is like our own after all, we'll often find the conclusion we drew regarding it to be the opposite of one we have drawn about the real world. This cognitive dissonance forces us to recognize our bias and the fact that we should probably abandon it.

In the Orville episode "About a Girl", for example, we conclude that Bortus—a member of an all-male race called the Moclans—is wrong when he wants to force his newborn daughter to undergo a sex change operation. But then we realize that what Bortus is doing is not unlike what many parents do with their gay children, and Moclan biases against females are not unlike the biases that exist against transgendered people in the real world. Indeed, in the episode, cognitive dissonance through cognitive estrangement is what changes Bortus' mind.

He watches the claymation "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer", and realizes that what some consider a hindrance could actually turn out to be an asset. "Christmas would have been ruined," Bortus observes, "if Rudolph had been euthanized at birth, as his father wished." Like Bortus, when we are presented with a paradox—a contradiction in how we react to science fiction and the real world—we have the opportunity to realize our error and change our ways.

Perhaps Lucasfilm's Chief Creative Officer John Knoll explained it better on the SyFy Origins podcast:

"One of the big misconceptions about science fiction is that it's…escapist entertainment for kids. That it doesn't tackle serious themes. But the best science fiction gives you an opportunity to explore philosophical and moral themes. There are often societal problems that are very emotionally loaded…but if you…recast them in a science fiction setting, and are thus looking at a more novel situation, then you can leave some of those preconceived notions behind and…re-evaluate it anew. This may cause you to rethink your position on the terrestrial version of that problem."

So that is what Sci Phi is about. It's about not only how science fiction can be used to explain or illuminate philosophical arguments, but about how the authors of science fiction stories can use them to make philosophical arguments. They, of course, may not

always be right. After all, the Starship Troopers book by Robert Heinlein on which the movie was based was overtly pro-fascist. But as authors of both fiction and non-fiction write for the Sci Phi Journal, we hope they keep in mind what Sci Phi can be.

An introduction to staff member Jeffrey Redmond, shown here in a recent shot standing by a factory. Jeffrey is not only on the staff of Origin, but of Ionisphere as well, and is also in the recruitment bureau. He has a Facebook science fiction group with a tremendously large membership, where George Phillies and I are both assisting him as moderators (Jeff is the Administrator). He belongs also to my Facebook group SF FANDOM. The variety of his articles shows the extent of his scope; clearly he does a lot of reading and observing, along with contemplation and consideration. He's a very active N3F member.

Introduction

We're having some introductions this issue, hoping to make NFFF members more familiar with us. Here's a look at Judy Carroll, written by herself. She is or has been in several NFFF bureaus: the correspondence bureau, the welcommittee, and the writers bureau. Obviously she approves of interaction.

A bit about me.

As most of you know, I am a huge fan of science fiction, but I also have other interests. I like watching murder mysteries, especially British and Australian.

I can't really tell you why they appeal to me more than American murder mysteries.

Perhaps it's the accent or the characters or the local traditions and customs that many times play an important part in the story.

I'm not much of a fan of biographies and true events in any form, and I rarely introduce myself to them. I don't like knowing about the sad and terrible things that happen in a person's lifetime. Granted, they also have happy days and good experiences, but, for some reason, with me, it's their sadness and pain that lingers in my heart and haunts my mind.

I love being around children. I was trained in Early Childhood Education, and I have spent many hours with many children. Some of my most rewarding moments happened while sitting beside a young child. I've learned that if you are calm and focusing on the child you can feel their innocence, their love, and their wonder.

Reading to toddlers and preschoolers can be fun and rewarding. Their little faces are open books to their feelings; smiling, laughing, serious, excited.

I used to work in the front office of a child care center. The children were three to eight years old. Sometimes, when an older child was misbehaving, or upset and needed to calm down, they would be sent to my office. I would always ask them why they were there. After hearing the circumstances which brought them to me, I would tell them a story. Not a made-up story—a true story. The story was always about something I or a relative did as a child and it had a connection to what that child was going through at that moment. One time I had one of the older boys back in my office just a couple of days later. I asked him why he was back and was he in trouble again. He smiled, shook his head and replied, "I want to hear another story".

I like writing, but I have a tendency to start a story and then forget about it. And,

I don't care much for poems. But, I have discovered this past year, there are many

stories popping in and out of my mind begging for attention. I've started a few, and have actually finished two of them. They are children's stories. Another thing I have discovered: I find myself writing poems and finishing them. Some are short-focusing on one incident or feeling. While others are long and tell a story. A couple of weeks ago I was stressing over something. I threw the problem aside and wrote a poem. I felt a lot better afterwards.

My favorite instrumental music is Native American and Celtic.

My favorite season is Autumn.

I love the rain and hearing its pattering as it hits the concrete.

I can see more than one side of a situation.

I play devil's advocate a lot.

I like sitting on a rock watching the waves swell to the shore.

I like watching parents play with their children.

I can understand, but don't condone, how a person may hurt someone when very angry.

I cannot understand how a person can make a plan to hurt someone.

I can understand a nation finding horror in the past doings of their ancestors.

I cannot understand their elimination of objects and the burying of past offenses, destroying the evidence that that nation has improved, giving hope that the current situations can be improved also.

I can understand being curious of others' beliefs or customs.

I cannot understand how one can condemn them for their differences.

I have two personal mottos:

"People are more important than things."

"There are no disposable people."

My Background in Science Fiction and Early Days in Fandom

by John Thiel

editor at Gus Grissom Air Base

Back in my childhood, we children were highly imaginative and always making up stories about the world around us and what we were doing in it. I was born in Gary, Indiana and can remember playing with other infants in the infant education center. I also remember stories about the atomic bomb in the Gary newspaper. My father said, "Some world you're coming to live in." He'd returned from overseas where he'd been stationed in the army and he had experienced warfare.

We moved to Valparaiso, Indiana and it was there that the children played imaginative games; in Gary we'd had a gang that went around looking in various territories. I suppose you might call my reading books by Dr. Seuss at school my first introduction to fantasy, and there were also the Mowgli stories of Kipling. We had ANIMAL FARM by Orwell too, and fairy tales. When I was in second grade I saw Flash Gordon movies, and there was also a show on television called Captain Video, whose spaceship crew were called Space Rangers. We didn't get to go in the adult section at the library but an older fellow we knew found books that were called science fiction there, which included MAGIC, INC. by Heinlein and THE CAVES OF STEEL by Isaac Asimov. We'd read those and discuss them. Asimov's book wasn't very comprehensible to us, so I preferred the Heinlein. Along came some fantasy movies—FRANKENSTEIN, DRACULA, and THE HOUSE OF WAX. I used to write stories based on these—humorous ones—and made up a song about one of my child associates: "Tito is a friend of mine, he resembles Frankenstein; he will do it any time, for a nickle or a dime." Then a couple

of science fiction movies came along—RIDERS TO THE STARS and INVADERS FROM MARS. I went with the others who had been discussing science fiction to see this film and found it interesting, and the older fellow who was introducing us to his science fiction discovery explained the movie as an example of science fiction, comparing it to Captain Video. He wrote a story about adventurers going into outer space, and having their ship attacked by a nebulous being called an Energy Eater. That's my grounding in science fiction; later Heinlein juveniles like THE ROLLING STONES appeared on the new books rack in the children's section. And a friend of mine had gotten THE GODS OF MARS by Edgar Rice Burroughs from somewhere. I liked that one real well. Also my father acquired a volume of horror stories by Edgar Allen Poe, illustrated by Fritz Eichenberg. That was my grounding in fantasy and science fiction, a rather solid one, I think.

Moving to Illinois, I found science fiction magazines on the magazine racks and science fiction paperbacks on the stands. I was familiar with a lot of the pbs that Jon Schwarz listed, and you saw the covers going along with his listing. I really liked those covers, and bought a lot of science fiction pbs with my allowance money. I particularly liked Galaxy Science Fiction and bought a subscription to it. In Amazing Stories I saw the first fanzine reviews I had seen, and they looked interesting and were sold for from a nickel to a quarter each, with some being free, and I started sending for them. I liked Sigma Octantis and Eisfa best of the fanzines I sent for. After I had been reading them for some time I thought of doing one myself, but had no means of doing so, until Richard Andre (whose art appeared on the cover of an issue of Surprising Stories; we both live in different places now, but I discoveed him on the net) brought over an old battered mimeo of a cheap variety. We straightened out some bumps in the barrel with a hammer and got some stencils and ink. The mimeograph never did print anything worth sending anywhere. I got a hectograph too, but those only printed up to twenty copies. We tried to start a science fiction club in town but the people gotten together fell out like a bunch of trolls and never got anything started. Andre, my brother Mark, and a fellow named Robinson tried to rig up a small shed as a time machine using gadgetry acquired from a trash yard. Ah, youth.

I finally acquired a mimeograph which, although it was a simple model, would print up passable pages to the amount of a hundred, and started getting material to put together into a fanzine. Some of the fellows in the neighborhood had things to contribute and I did a story myself called "The House That Jack Built" about a house

under a glass bubble built on a small asteroid whose builder was isolated and forgotten about and he finally started hearing voices coming from beings of outer space. Before I got it completed and mailed out my brother Eric did a six page fanzine called BEM on the hektograph, master copying each page twice so he had about forty copies. My own fanzine was called CAVEAT EMPTOR. There were some good reviews for both zines and we acquired some acquaintances. Caveat Emptor developed over the years and had material in it by Marion Zimmer Bradley, Forrest J. Ackerman, Dan Adkins, Robert E. Gilbert, Bob Farnham, Richard Brown, Glenn King, William Rotsler, and others, and the zine made something of a name for itself. I was a member of the Space Club (identified with Amazing Stories), the Cosmic Pen Club (identified with Imagination), the National Fantasy Fan Federation, and the Cult. I also started a correspondence club called the Junior International Science Fiction Club, which was advertised for in Other Worlds and publicized in Science Fiction Adventures' fanzine and fandom column.

There was a temporary partial withdrawal from fandom when feuding started taking over in large areas of fandom, and among the things I detached myself from was the National Fantasy Fan Federation, where a lot of strife had commenced. Some time later I left science fiction and fandom altogether when I did two years in the army and was stationed overseas. When I got back I didn't look up fandom all that quickly, and when I did, it was hard to locate people I knew in fandom, and fanzines mostly weren't being reviewed in the magazines. I found reviews in the short-lived ODYSSEY, edited by the somewhat forgotten Roger Elwood, who was publishing stories like "Bind Your Sons to Exile", which had a sort of Greek title, and the fanzines had names like "Notes from the Chemistry Department" and "The Spanish Inquisition", but I sent out a new fanzine called Pablo Lennis to get in contact with them. Also I found a fanzine called The Alien Critic, edited by Richard Geis, who had been in the Cult when I was in it; it was being sold in a local book store located near the college, and it was rather avant garde in its outlook. It was also avant garde to be selling a fanzine in it. I took a science fiction course at Purdue, read some issues of Geis' fanzine, organized a local group called the Lafayette Interstellar Society, and went to meetings of the Indiana Science Fiction Association, The SS Voyager Society of Purdue (which liked Star Trek), and the Purdue Society for Creative Anachronism, a Medievalist society. In Fandom I rejoined the N3F, and also joined Frefanzine, APA-H, and the Cult (who didn't have good records of the previously existing cult and none of the same members, though I found Jack Harness of the Cult over in APA-H). Also I joined FAPA for a year, and edited some of the issues of

Shadow Fapa. I attended five conventions, which I had never done before—they were three Windycons in Chicago, the Autoclave in Detroit, and the Hoosiercon. That was fandom up until 1990, and by 1990 I was not in any of these any more because Frefanzine, the Cult and APA-H had ceased being, and I had stopped getting along with the NFFF, where there were still tremendous arguments going on. The Interstellars no longer existed, its membership having moved, and the Purdue organizations had become sporadic. However, when the Worldcon was in Chicago again in the early nineties, I attended that, and during the 90s I also joined SAPS, which organization didn't last through the 90s. Local fans got together a convention called the Wabashcon, held in Purdue's student center, and I was at that. In the new century I was at a few conventions—the Context in Columbus, Ohio, Starbase Indy in Indianapolis, and I dropped in briefly at the InConJunction in Indianapolis. I was on the net at that time and met a few fen I knew from the net at the Context; Juanita Coulson was at the InConJunction, but I didn't meet anyone else familiar to me there.

I should mention that when I was in the N3F after getting out of the army I was made the head of the N3F Fan-Pro Coordinating Activity and started the fanzine Ionisphere, which was discontinued for some number of years after I dropped from the N3F. Laurraine Tutihasi was part of the fan-pro activity for awhile and Carole Klees-Starkes was in the letter column. I met a few Neffers of the present time in these various activities. I was made the OE of APA-H for a time, then Elst Weinstein took it over.

At the time I attended the Worldcon, people broke into my room and made off with my briefcase and the papers in it, which were nothing more than various flyers I had picked up at the convention. But I think this experience indicates that there was still feuding going on in science fiction fandom, and that it went on for a long time. Some of it is breaking out now, but hopefully we will see an end to it and begin to prosper more in our fantasy organizations. I think science fiction has had what it takes to retain its fandom, all statements of pessimism to the contrary.

I'll be happy to bring up later descriptions of fandom in future issues of Origin; as you can see from this, I have had quite a lot to do with fandom.

THESE MOST OF ALL

by Will Mayo

I have seen the faces of old men

and their children's children.

I have stood waiting for hours in the raiin

for a ride when but a boy.

Yes, I have seen many strange things

all as the world passed me by.

But none more frightened, none stranger

than that of those with something to hide.

Those will leave you hanging at the end

for that last, sudden sadness.

The scared man with rabbits up his sleeve

leaves us all in the last goodbye forward.