



Science-Fiction Fanzine

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The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy

נא שימו לב לשינוי מקום ההרצאה הזאת בסדרת ההרצאות ע"ש עמוס גפן
ההרצאה תתקיים ביום ראשון 1.1.2006 בשעה 20:00, במסגרת כנס "גבולות"
פרטים על כנס "גבולות":

נא שימו לב למיקום: "בית ראשונים", רח' ברנר 14, תל-אביב.
חופשת חנוכה, ביום ראשון 1.1.2006, החל מהשעה 10:00 ועד שעות הלילה המאוחרות
דגש על סדרת **מסע בין כוכבים: חלל עמוק 9**
הקרנת פרקים, סרטים וסרטונים
יוקרו לראשונה בארץ **סרט פארודיה מפילנד על מסע בין כוכבים:**
Star Wreck: In the Pirkinning (12:00-14:00)
מחיר כרטיס לכל היום: 60 ₪; מחיר כרטיס לאירוע בודד: 25 ₪ (הרצאת גפן בחינם)
אתר הכנס:

<http://www.starbase972.com/modules.php?name=Content&pa=showpage&pid=287>

מיקום מדויק במפה:

http://www.starbase972.com/contents/events/rishonim_map.jpg

נושא הרצאת גפן: "ממדע למד"ב ולהיפך"

ההרצאה (בשעה 20:00) תעסוק בהפריית הרעיונות ההדדית שבין אנשי המדע לבין סופרי
מדע בדיוני, ותכלול דוגמאות אחדות.

המרצה: ד"ר אהרון האופטמן

ד"ר אהרון האופטמן הינו חוקר בכיר במרכז לחיזוי טכנולוגי באוניברסיטת ת"א. במאה הקודמת
ערך את כתב-העת "פנטסיה 2000", ונמנה עם מקימי האגודה הישראלית למדע בדיוני ולפנטסיה.
הוא עורך את סדרת הרצאות גפן מראשיתה.

הכניסה להרצאה חופשית (חלק מהאירועים האחרים בכנס יהיו בתשלום – כמפורט באתר הכנס)

חוג מדע בדיוני ברחובות – SFIR - Rehovot Science Fiction Club

פעילויות התא מתקיימות בימי א' בשעה 20:00 בפולטה לחקלאות ברחובות, חדר 2, בבניין ליד הבריכה.
הפעילויות ללא תשלום.

18/12: סרט – לידי נץ

25/12: סרט – Tank girl

מידע נוסף ניתן לקבל באתר התא (<http://sfir.tk/>) או בדוא"ל sfir42@yahoo.com.

סדנת הכתיבה ברחובות

לפרטים נא לפנות ליולי גנטמן בכתובת ygantman@yahoo.com

More Society information is available (in Hebrew) at the Society's site: <http://www.sf-f.org.il>

Short Book Review by Aharon Sheer

Time Trap by Keith Laumer (1970), 156 pages. When I spotted this book in the Rehovot used paperback book store, I remembered the name Keith Laumer (1925 - 1993) favorably, but not much else. It turns out to be an amusing politically incorrect farce, which made me laugh out loud frequently. Much unlike the sly subtle humor of Connie Willis, this book was just fun without making the reader think much. Refreshing! The hero is a young man, Roger Tyson, about whom we learn almost nothing throughout the book except that he is resourceful and not easily fazed by the unexpected. Here are some examples:

He's been asked by an alien woman to write a message and put it in an Aperture which just happens to be in a stall in the men's room of a Greyhound bus station. He borrows a pencil and writes out the dictated message. But when he goes back into the men's room two men follow him and stop him from going into the stall. The following conversation ensues:

“Have you been, er, decorating the walls, young fellow?” he enquired.

“You’ve got it all wrong,” Roger protested, ‘I was just—’

“Don’t let him go back in and erase them!” the clerk warned....

“Let’s just take a look at your work,’ the gray-haired man said easily, reaching for the door.

“You don’t understand!” Roger backed into the stall. ‘I was just—’

“Grab him!” The clerk caught his sleeve. As they sought to drag him forth, Roger struggled to free himself from their clutches.

“I’m innocent!” he yelled. ‘This place was already illustrated when I came in!’

“Yes, of course,’ the gray-haired man panted. ‘Don’t get the wrong impression, sir! I’m a curator of the graffiti collection at the museum of Contemporary Folk Expression. We’re looking for creative minds to do a hundred-foot mural for our rotunda!’” (p. 24-25)

The “graffiti collection at the museum of Contemporary Folk Expression”? At this point we begin to suspect that this whole book takes place in a parallel universe. Or did they really have such things in the U.S. in 1970?

The “Time Trap” idea in the book is that very powerful aliens have converted numerous small areas on earth into museum exhibits. Each exhibit has a limited area. The people in that area walk in a straight line for a few kilometers, and find themselves right back where they started. Not only that, but every 24 hours all inanimate objects in the exhibit go back to their state of 24 hours before, while the people remember what happened before that. The people trapped can use up all the food and water and anything else they have, it will all be returned to its original state once every 24 hours. Note that each trap is in a different time-place. 1970. 1909. 1918 (in the war front in Europe). Etc.

Roger has been enlisted by a good-looking female (Q’nell) who is part of a future group of humans fighting the first set of aliens (the ones who set up the time traps). Q’nell tells him to remove what looks like a hearing aid from her ear, and put it into his own ear. The device now gives him instruction. He has been told to send a message via

the Aperture to her coworkers, but thanks to the interference of the graffiti expert, he falls into the Aperture himself, thus inadvertently becoming a participant in the whole battle. Falling through the Aperture into successive time traps (museum exhibits) he figures out how to get out of each one by finding the Aperture of that museum exhibit, and is then transported into another exhibit. Finally he makes contact anew with the female Q'nell and her coworkers, and they begin cooperating.

Q'nell's colleagues suggest removing the "Reinforcer" (the "hearing aid") from Roger Tyson's ear, and the following conversation ensues:

"The filamentary system is inextricably intermingled with T'son's [Tyson's] neural circuitry. Tampering with it would instantly prove fatal, as it did when T'son removed it from Q'nell."

"You mean I killed her?" Tyson blurted. "Good night, Miss Q'nell -- excuse me!"

"It's nothing. If I ordered you to do so, I doubtless had my reasons."

"You're certainly being a sport about it," Roger said admiringly.

"We citizens of Culture One seldom descend to the level of purely emotional reactions," the girl stated calmly.

"Oh, really?" Roger raised an eyebrow. "I seem to recall seeing you blush just a few minutes ago."

"My physiological reactions system bears no relationship to my intellectually determined course of action," Q'nell snapped.

"Ah-ah! Anger, anger!" Roger said playfully. "Actually you're not a bad looking girl at all, you know. Why don't you and I—"

"My I remind you, T'son," R'heet put in, "that I have offered Q'nell a cohabitation contract. Your attentions are therefore unwelcome."

"Well, let's just see what she says about that...." (p. 83-84)

There's a lot of very sophisticated technology, and Roger has a few slipups in operating it. As we see, it's not so easy:

"Roger closed his eyes and attempted to rotate his self-concept 90 degrees. Imagining his eyes to be peering out from the approximate position of his right ear was a difficult trick; a lifetime of orientation toward an arbitrarily designated 'front' was not easy to overcome. But after all, he reminded himself, there was no reason the mind, an intangible field produced by the flow of current in a neural circuit, should be bound by such mundane restrictions...." (p. 87)

The resultant travel has its unexpected aspects:

"How did you do that?" Roger inquired, and noted with surprise that his lips failed to move. Neither was he breathing....

"Don't struggle," Q'nell's mental voice sharply. "We're in a null-time state, where events like heartbeats and respiration can't take place. Don't let it distract you, or we'll find ourselves expelled from the channel."

“‘How long is this going to take?’ Roger asked nervously. He felt no physical distress from lack of air, but a conviction of suffocation was rising in him.

“‘No time at all — other than subjectively.’” (p. 89-90)

One of the most amusing events was when he finds he has inadvertently exchanged bodies with the Q’nell, whom he has been propositioning unsuccessfully since they first met. She’s a feminist who thinks that he should control himself. Now *she* discovers what male hormones do to the human body – in his body she is overwhelmingly attracted to him – who is in her body.

Short and sweet (only 156 pages – ah, the good old days when you could read a book in a couple of hours), good fun, and a pleasant break from Neurobiology.

Quote of the Month:

“... it was possible to clone Dolly the Sheep – to take an ordinary cell from an adult sheep and make it grow into another sheep. The trick actually requires *three* adult sheep. First, there’s the one from which you take the cell: call her ‘Dolly’s Mum’. Then you persuade the cell’s nucleus to forget that it came from an adult and to think that it’s back in the egg, and then you implant it into an egg from a second sheep (‘Egg Donor’). Then you put the egg into the uterus of the third sheep (‘Surrogate Mum’) so that it can grow into a normal lamb.

“Dolly is often said to be a perfect copy of Dolly’s Mum, but that’s not completely true. For a start, certain parts of Dolly’s DNA come not from Dolly’s Mum but from Egg Donor. And even if that slight difference had been fixed, Dolly could still differ in many ways from her ‘mother’, because sheep DNA is *not* a complete list of instructions for ‘how to build a sheep’. DNA is more like a recipe – and it assumes you already know how to set up your kitchen. So the recipe doesn’t say ‘put the mixture in a greased pan and place in an oven set to 400 degrees F’, for instance: it says ‘put the mixture in the oven’ and *assumes* that you know it needs to go into a pan and that the oven should be set to a standard temperature. In particular, sheep DNA leaves out the vital instruction ‘put the mixture inside a sheep’, but that’s the only place (as yet) where you can turn a fertilized sheep egg into a lamb. So even Surrogate Mum played a considerable role in determining what happened when the DNA recipe for Dolly was ‘obeyed’.”

From *The Science of Discworld* by Terry Pratchett, Ian Stewart and Jack Cohen, p. 208

STAR TREK Book Review -- Submitted by Gary Roth

Star Trek: Voyager -- The Black Shore, by Greg Cox. (1997), 278 pg.
 Bonus at the end: excerpts from another book called ***Mosaic***.

I don't like this book, mainly because it incorporates a good deal of fantasy, which detracts from the hardcore sci-fi aspects. I became much more acquainted with the ***Voyager*** characters,

having watched very little of the TV series previously. I honestly believe that the female captain commanded some things differently than any male counterpart would have, which sometimes is

beneficial to the crew and on other occasions detrimental.

Captain Janeway receives an enticing space message to come visit a beautiful planet named Ryolanov, which is just what her exhausted, bored crew needs -- shore leave. However, they get more than they bargained for; rather than rest and relaxation, they encounter humanoid beings who unbeknowningly feed on (steal energy from) the visitors through eye contact. One of the male hosts becomes jealous of one of the Starfleet crew when the former's girlfriend flirts with the latter, and a nasty scuffle ensues. The reader then learns that the hosts are capable of killing others if eye contact is maintained long enough! Later in the story, the Ryol residents push for a tour of the Federation vessel, only to literally transform into monsters who almost succeed in taking over the ship. Also, the meaner side of the Ryol people is revealed during a social gathering between the hosts and the visitors -- little critters called neffaler are bossed around with a vengeance while catering the affair. It turns out that these unfortunate "aliens" are the real natives to the planet; that the Ryol monster-humanoids crash-landed years ago and instituted a rather inhumane system of slavery. In the end, however, the underdogs get their revenge and freedom thanks to the good guys -- read the book to find out how!

Janeway's crew consists of an American Indian, Chakotay, who is not only a first mate but also able to consult

his scientific equivalent of the ancient Indian "idols" and accompanying paraphernalia, in order to predict the future via his spirit guide. He is symbolically warned of the upcoming danger on the plane. On board is a female, Kes (as in our Ethiopian "rabbi/priest"), with psychic powers, who senses a certain foreboding on a particular part of the planet. Neither of them manages to delay the evil that is inflicted upon themselves, but with the help of the ship's holographic physician (the concept was described in a previous book review), the tide is turned. The attackers are fooled by a holographic projection of the captain and her security guards and end up doing damage to themselves, rather than to the people projected in the realistic images.

There is a brief, humorous episode towards the beginning: an officer insisted that a lower ranking crew member undergo a routine physical examination. The holographic doctor immediately began his work, only to be stopped a few seconds later by the patient. When the doctor correspondingly vanished into thin air, the officer voiced an order to resume, at which point the computer-physician reappeared -- and continued what he had been discussing from the exact same place in the sentence!

People who enjoy imaginative, unusual plots will like this book. However, pure science-types like myself should not bother picking up this book.

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