



Science-Fiction Fanzine

Vol. XVII, No. 5; May, 2005

The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy

"האנושות – נזר הבריאה או האמבה של האינטליגנציה" – הרצאת גפן בחודש מאי

הרצאת גפן בחודש מאי תעסוק בעולמו של הסופר ג'יימס אלן גודנר ובהיבטים יוצאי הדופן של היקום המופלא בספריו.

המרצה ד"ר אמנון טטופ הוא פיסיקאי, מנהל מדעי של צומת נאס"א בישראל באוניברסיטת ת"א, וחובב מד"ב ותיק.

ההרצאה תתקיים ביום ד' 25.5.05 בשעה 20:00 בבית אריאלה (שד' שאול המלך 25, ת"א). הכניסה חופשית. ראו http://www.sf-f.org.il/story_731.

חוג מדע בדיוני ברחובות – SFIR - Rehovot Science Fiction Club

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

15.5 – הקרנת הסרט *Neverwhere* חלק ראשון. 22.5 – הקרנת הסרט *Neverwhere* חלק שני.
29.5 – הרצאה – מבט כללי על עולם הקומיקס

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

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

Book Review by Clara Rimon

Flying Sorcerors -- An anthology of stories edited by Peter Haining (1997), 288 pages.

This contains 24 short stories of humorous fantasy. Most of the stories are by well-known sf writers like Clarke, Pratchett, Piers Anthony, Harry Harrison, Vonnegut, Robert Sheckley, etc. But some are written by definitely *non-sf* writers. Eric Knight is represented by "Sam Small's Better Half" from *The Flying Yorkshireman*, P.G.

Wodehouse by a Mulliner story. There is a story by Stephen Leacock, whose humor I appreciated when I was in high school. Each story is introduced by a short well-written piece about the author and the story itself. I had never heard of Haining, but he deserves credit for his excellent introductions.

Of the 24 stories, there were only two I didn't like. "Danse Macabre", by Mervyn Peale, was overly long, about a tux that leaves the wardrobe and goes out to the woods to dance with an equally empty evening gown. Dr. Seuss did it much better in his poem "The pants with nobody in them", which I used to read to my grandchildren. The second was "The Lady of the House of Love" about a female vampire, which was long and boring. Or maybe that's my prejudice – I've never enjoyed a vampire story. Maybe I should read *Dracula* for the real thing.

The other 22 stories were very agreeable and humorous. I particularly enjoyed Nelson Bond's "The Gripes of Wraith" about an unhappy ghost, and John Wyndham's "Female of the Species" about the creation of a scientist that yearns for a mate!

H'mm. I think I'll take down *The Flying Yorkshireman* that's sitting on my shelf and looking at me; it's time to reread it.

Short Story: We Have the Technology

by Elaine Shipp

Captain Waldec glanced down at the report. His crew had been busy, but then he expected nothing less.

"The blue planet has no defense against us. Even their spacecraft are unarmed. I believe there will be little or no resistance."

"No weapons at all?" Commander Pasturel sounded surprised.

"They have nuclear capabilities but we can neutralise them."

"There is little time, Captain, before our fleet arrives. Ensure you have completed the research study of Earth." The comms screen went blank.

The Captain turned to his First Officer. "Juro, concentrate on the satellites. Prepare to remove their communication array before the attack."

"Yes, sir."

"Sir?" Observation Officer Kinwe's voice was raised in alarm. "I'm tracking a small craft... *this just isn't possible!*"

"What is it?"

"I've never seen anything like it, sir. It's travelling over the speed of light." Kinwe checked the readings again.

"They don't have that technology!" The Captain leant over the screen. "Can we move closer?"

"No, sir. We are undetected here."

They watched as the blip on the screen accelerated and then stopped, and then repeated the process.

"What is it *doing?*" The Captain pondered aloud.

"Hopping, Sir."

"I can see that with my own eyes, Officer Kinwe."

"Sorry, Sir." Kinwe swallowed and kept his eyes focused on the screen.

"To accelerate and decelerate in that short a time, the engine must be extremely powerful. Scan for more information." The Captain paused and then murmured under his breath, "If they have concealed this, what else don't we know?"

"The craft is three rimms by one rimm, and has ten life forms on board, sir."

"Is that all?" The Captain began to pace. "To move that fast we would need an engine three times the size of that craft." He stopped and gripped Kinwe's shoulder.

"Three rimms, you say?"

Kinwe nodded quickly. His hands flew over the console. "It's impossible... impossible!" Kinwe muttered over and over as he scrambled to find out more. "I cannot get any readings on engines, weapons or what radio frequencies they use."

"How can they mask those? Even we don't have the technology to do that." Alarm flashed across the Captain's face before he hid it behind his usual stern expression.

"Captain, shall I contact Command?" Juro asked.

The Captain squared his shoulders. "Yes, tell them to abort. Kinwe, pull yourself together and gather every detail you can about that craft." *Who knows what they have aimed at us!* he thought. "Pilot, get us out of here."
#

Flying across the Pacific, Santa Claus turned towards Australia. He liked the southern hemisphere - much warmer this time of year.

"Ho! Ho! Ho!"

The sleigh began to descend into Sydney, a little red beacon lighting its way.

"This story was first published in the Infinitas newsletter, April 2005 (www.infinitas.com.au)."
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***Jackass* – Reviewed by Aharon Sheer**

Jackass – TV Series, 2000-2002, created by Johnny Knoxville, Spike Jonze, Jeff Tremaine, shown on *MTV* cable channel 89 (22:30-23:00, several nights a week)

Jackass – The Movie (2002), directed by Jeff Tremaine, Rated R for dangerous, sometimes extremely crude stunts, language and nudity (87 minutes)

A couple of years ago there was a bitter debate at **ICON** about the showing of ***Jackass – The Movie***. It was Raz Greenberg's idea to show it, and there were some people who objected vociferously. (I didn't get to see it at **ICON**, as it was shown after my bedtime; also, it was completely sold out.) The objection was that it is such low-level, childish humor, that showing it would be taken by the intelligent public as a sign of the low-level, childish people who come to the Society's science fiction and fantasy convention. At that time I had no idea of what was being discussed. The

movie was not yet available on DVD in Israel (even months after it came out in the U.S.), you could not yet see it on TV, and so the name ***Jackass*** just rested in the back of my head for a long time. Finally, one day recently, I turned on my cable TV and there was ***Jackass*** on *MTV*. At last I could find out what all the fuss was about.

Jackass, it turns out, is about dreams and nightmares. Ever have a dream in which you were walking down the street and you suddenly realized you were completely naked? Or a dream in which you are skateboarding down the street and suddenly the street disappears

from under your feet and you are flying through the air, not knowing where you will land? Or dreamed that you were riding in a shopping cart just like you wanted to do when you were eight years old, except that now you are 25? Or dreamed that you are about to fry what appears to be a delicious omelet with tomatoes and red peppers and onions, and you suddenly realize that it's vomit?

In *Jackass* they actually do all those things! After seeing several of the TV episodes I went out and rented the DVD of *Jackass – The Movie* – which is finally available in Israel long after it appeared in the U.S. The claim of the producers is that they wanted to make a movie with all kinds of things they couldn't show on TV, like frontal male nudity. Big deal. On the other hand the DVD has some great special features scenes, like seeing all the actors getting caned on the bare butts by their judo teacher in Japan (well, that's one of my fantasies). And best of all are the running comments by the producers, on one track, and by the actors, on another track. There are enough amusing comments here for hours of enjoyment.

In one of the *Jackass* TV episodes I saw a couple of nights ago – which stimulated this review -- Bam Margera's parents were interviewed. Bam is one of the stuntmen for this series. Bam's mother describes looking out the picture window of their ranch house years before and seeing seven year old Bam flying through the air. She rushed out and asked him what happened. "I just wanted to see what it would be like if I jumped off the roof of our house," he said. She said that

she thought that when her son reached the age of 18 she would no longer have to worry about him. (He was 22 when *Jackass* was made). Not so, it seems. One of the great episodes of *Jackass* is when Bam puts an alligator in his mother's kitchen. "Bam! Is that a real alligator?" "Yes, mom." Now how's that for a nightmare – finding a live alligator in your kitchen?

OK, so I'm low-level, childish – actually I'm psychologically sixteen years of age, like all science fiction fans. But I enjoy *Jackass*. I love the TV show (although the 15 minutes of ads in the half-hour program is frustrating, plus the fact that they keep showing the same episodes over and over again). And the movie is good too.

And *Jackass* is definitely for us grown up teenagers, especially for those who are into dreams and nightmares.

Not only that, there is even a sequel series, *Wildboyz*, only one episode of which I managed to see so far on cable TV. In *Wildboyz*, two of the same *Jackass* nuts (actors?) -- Chris Pontius and Steve-O -- visit various countries, and look for the most disgusting things they can do to shock the viewers. In the episode I saw they visited people in India who claim to eat human meat, among other strange things in that country. I'm told they've traveled to South America too, but I haven't seen any other episodes than one in India. If there's a movie of this sequel series, it *definitely* should be shown at **ICON**. You won't see these things on the National Geographic channel.

For Comments: 13 Pinsker St., Rehovot 76308. Email: asheer@netvision.net.il. Tel: Aharon Sheer 08-947-1225

Editor: Aharon Sheer. Logo by: Miriam Ben-Loulou

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כל הזכויות שמורות למחברים וליוצרים, כפי שצוינו.

Short Book Review by Aharon Sheer

The Lifeship by Gordon R. Dickson and Harry Harrison (1976), 251 pages.

Gordon Dickson's great talent is in describing alien societies convincingly. Although he wrote the popular *Dorsai* series, which I didn't like, his best books to my mind are singletons in which the central interest is contact between man and alien beings. This book has a curious additional feature: The distant future described has mankind divided into two stratas: The "Adelman" are superior humans whose job is to make decisions and take responsibilities, and the "Arbiters" are those whose job is to work and obey orders. [Note: "adel" in German means "aristocracy", so an "adelman" should be an aristocrat. "arbeiter" in German means "worker".] An Adelman, a group of Arbiters, and one alien member of the alien Albenareth race find themselves in a lifeship after the space ship they were in was destroyed by an explosion. To the Adelman and to the Albenareth this looks like a two-man situation: The one Adelman, who sees himself as having to represent all the humans on board the lifeship, opposite the alien; both see the opinions of the Arbiters as irrelevant. What is important about the alien is that the Albenareth have provided humankind with space travel. Only the alien is capable of flying the lifeship. In this artificial situation we have a story about getting to know one another. The Adelman is forced, for the first time in his life, to find out what the Arbiters are like as human beings, and not just as his slaves. He also has the opportunity to get personally and deeply acquainted with an Albenareth. There is also a problem: the alien insists on continuing on to the space ship's original destination, even though there is not enough food in the lifeship to get them there alive. This is a matter of pride for the alien. There are also a number of puzzles to be solved. This is not a great novel, but I enjoyed most of it.

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