



Science-Fiction Fanzine

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### The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy

#### מועדון הקריאה

במרכז דיוני מועדון הקריאה בחודש נובמבר יעמוד הספר זוכה פרס גפן בקטגוריית המקור "החמישית של צ'ונג לוי" מאת יואב אבני. מועדון הקריאה בתל אביב יתקיים ביום רביעי, 24/11/10, בשעה 19:30, בבית הקפה "קפה קפה" ברחוב חשמונאים 95 (כשר). המנחה: דפנה קירש. לצורך היערכות למספר המשתתפים, מומלץ להירשם מראש באמצעות הדואל, בכתובת [dafna1485@walla.co.il](mailto:dafna1485@walla.co.il), כמו כן רצוי להביא למפגש עותק של הספר. ההשתתפות במועדון הקריאה אינה כרוכה בתשלום ואינה מותנית בהגעה למפגשים נוספים, ופתוחה גם למי שאינם חברי אגודה. בחודש דצמבר יוקדש מועדון הקריאה לספר זוכה פרס גפן "כתבי אייזק אסימוב – כרך 1" מאת אייזק אסימוב. פרטים על מפגשי המועדון העוסקים בספר זה יתפרסמו באתר האגודה ובמכתב החודשי. המעוניינים להנחות מועדוני קריאה בכל רחבי הארץ מוזמנים לפנות בדואל למרכזת הפרויקט, ליאת שחר: [liat42@gmail.com](mailto:liat42@gmail.com).

#### מפרוקריוטים עד פרימטים – כולם בכנס מאורות

בתאריך 9 בדצמבר, נר שמיני של חנוכה, ייערך זו הפעם השנייה כנס החורף השנתי של האגודה, "מאורות", המוקדש למדע הבדיוני. הכנס השנה יוקדש לנושא "החיים, היקום וכל השאר", בסימן שנת המגוון הביולוגי העולמית. גם הפעם הוא ייערך בשיתוף עם נוער שוחר מדע בירושלים, בקמפוס אדמונד י' ספרא (גבעת רם) של האוניברסיטה העברית. בתכנית: שלל הרצאות, פאנלים, סדנאות, הפעלות לנוער בנושא הכנס ויצירת חיים יש מאין בשלושה שיעורים קלים. בימים אלה אנו שוקדים על איסוף התכנים לכנס. בינתיים תוכלו להשתתף בסבלותיהם של אנשי התוכן, ביומן התוכן של הכנס. מתנדבים מוזמנים להירשם בטופס המתנדבים באתר: [meorot.sf-f.org.il/?page\\_id=1046](http://meorot.sf-f.org.il/?page_id=1046)

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

## Letters to the Editor

**Editor's Note:** The October, 2010, issue of *CyberCozen* provoked responses from two *Star Trek* fans:

**Dear Aharon:**

As usual, I read the entire October edition of *CyberCozen* in one immediate sitting -- it's always irresistible and can't be put down (in more ways than one!). I particularly liked the piece by Eli Eshed about the Holodeck, even though I don't care for *The Next Generation* series of *Star Trek*. The author misspelled (actually mixed up) the captain's name of the original series prequel -- not Picard (that's the one from *TNG*); rather, Pike (as in Chris).

Like any other technology, things can go wrong, and each has advantages and drawbacks. In the case of Capt. Pike, after his radiation accident, the Talus 4 virtual world was the most humane way to live out the rest of his life, whereas prior to the accident it was cruel of the Talosians to perform an experiment on him with a number of illusions. The Holodeck was used for a wide variety of purposes -- fantasies, upkeep of hunting skills, a simulated (or pre-recorded?) post-mortem goodbye speech from a recently-deceased crew-woman, etc. It was also employed to imprison/trap people in one of the books I reported on a while ago.

Sincerely, **Gary Roth**

Dear Aharon,

I read Eli Eshed's article on *Star Trek*'s holodeck in the October, 2010, issue of *CyberCozen* with interest.

First, I would like to make a few corrections or suggest a change in nomenclature. The name of the captain in the pilot episode of *Star Trek*, "The Cage", was not Picard, but Christopher Pike, played by Jeffrey Hunter. Jean-Luc Picard, played by Patrick Stewart, was captain in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

Second, I find it difficult to refer to the holodeck as a machine. Perhaps this is a problem in going from Hebrew to English. I would refer to it as a device, a simulator, or an appliance. The *StarTrek Encyclopedia* calls it a suite.

Third, in addition to the Talosians illusionary skills in the original series episodes "The Cage" and "The Menagerie", there was a holodeck-like device in Episode 28, "The City on the Edge of Forever". McCoy in a deranged condition brought on by an overdose of drugs transports himself down to the planet which the Enterprise was investigating; Kirk and Spock follow. On the planet, they find a portal-like device called the Guardian of Forever. McCoy jumps through the portal. Kirk and Spock follow and find themselves transported to New York City of the 1930s. They encounter a number of adventures in finding McCoy. Kirk finds through reading a newspaper article of the time that he must allow one of the characters of that time to be killed in an automobile accident, otherwise the course of history will be changed. In addition to the holodeck-like experience, the episode also involves time travel. In Episode 78, "All Our Yesterdays", Kirk, Spock, and McCoy beam down to the planet, Sarpeidon, which is about to be destroyed by an explosion of its sun. There they find a library supervised by a Mr. Atoz which contains a device called the Atavachron. This is a similar time portal, except that it shows continuous television-like scenes of historical events. Kirk hears a woman scream and jumps through the portal and finds himself in an environment similar to 17th century England. McCoy and Spock follow and find themselves in the planet's Ice Age. With the help of one of the 17th century London individuals, Kirk returns to the Library where he helps McCoy and Spock return. Mr. Atoz leaps through the portal to an era of his choosing and disappears. The others return to the Enterprise and leave the planet. Again, this episode involves elements of simulation and time travel.

Aharon, you might want to connect with me regarding issues concerning *Star Trek* and all its manifestations. I literally have a shelf full of reference books on such matters. Also, in order to save space, I somewhat simplified the stories of the two episodes I cited.

**Ted Henderson** ([TedChasH@aol.com](mailto:TedChasH@aol.com))

**The Editor comments:** I asked Eli Eshed whether it was really Picard who was captain in the pilot episode, and not someone else, but he didn't remember, and I didn't bother to check. The result is proof at least that two people read *CyberCozen*.

**Aharon**

### **Book Review by Aharon Sheer:**

*Standing Wave* by Howard V. Hendrix (1998), 386 pages.

Howard V. Hendrix (b. 1959) has a BA in Biology, and both an MA and a Ph.D. in English Literature. He also seems to be one of the biggest bull-shitters in modern sf. This book is so filled with pseudo-philosophical crap that it was hard for me to finish it. One thing he's

good at is getting into the heads of his characters. He has created a series of philosophical people who successively fill the pages with their deep ideas and (in several cases) their incomprehensible (but highly significant) poetry. Nevertheless he creates vignettes about

these people which can be gripping as much as they are disgusting. I don't know what other people think of him, but I expect he is controversial.

Hendrix's first novel was *Lightpaths* (1997). It was followed by *Standing Wave* (1998), set in the same SF universe. *Better Angels* (1999) is a prequel to the other two. The following is from a **Locus interview** with Hendrix, published in 1999:

"Of the novels, *Lightpaths* is much more a biological and sociological novel, whereas *Standing Wave* is more of a novel of physics, philosophy, and apocalypse. The third novel, *Better Angels*, has an odd relationship to the others.

"The background for the first novel came from my long-term interest in utopian and apocalyptic ideas. ... the left hand of apocalypse is the right hand of utopia. There are very similar pushes, because both are initially viewed as end-points to history. Utopias are often seen as a static non-changing future, while apocalypses are the abrupt end. In *my* utopia, it is not something that ends – it changes, shifts, a constant goal that's never really achieved.

"I was trying to deal with how imperfect humans can make a more perfect society. So I set it aboard an orbital habitat which, of course, is threatened, because isolated places are always threatened. And I tried to work out a number of social, political, and biological issues."

Here are some quotes from *Standing Wave*, to give some of the flavor of the book. Mei Ling, retired, builds a wooden maze, and lets sea water flow through it:

"As the weeks passed, Mei Ling became more and more the connoisseur of chaos as a subtler form of order. The waves in the

maze behaved in a manner that was neither quite random nor quite predictable, and it was exactly there that beauty lay. Like the round of her days here, there was something quite soothing about them as, tide after tide, seated on the sand, she watched the wave maze and logged in the endless variations the waves created in their interaction with it. The tidal bore was never boring." [p. 17]

Can one rely on computers to make really important decisions? A chemical megacorp has a solution:

"A young woman from an 'economically stressed' family had been head-shot into a coma by youths holding up the Kwikstore where she'd been working. ...soon enough the damaged woman had been *volunteered* by her family to serve as a 'minder', an overseer of all the chemical conglomerate's toxic waste monitoring facilities.

"In exchange for Big Chem paying all her hospital bills, the comatose young woman had been interfaced to Big Chem machines so that she completely oversaw their toxic waste reprocessing concerns. Good for Big Chem's bottomline, good for the family's budget, even if it did smack vaguely of slavery." [p. 21]

The Allessah is an artificial alien object with which some Earth people can communicate.

"As nearly as I could tell,' she began cautiously, 'it started out as a joint venture of a number of expansionist spacefaring cultures. Something like ten million years ago. What became the Allessah began as a distributed structure of self-replicating, self-improving information retrieval, storage and transmission devices. The only human things I've come across that parallel its initial design are what

are called Von Neumann probes. Or maybe nodes of an artificial galactic nervous system, only each point along it a satellite-library vastly more infodense than Earth's entire noosphere." [p. 64]

Some people interfacing with the network suddenly die horribly. Investigators look at a video of what happened:

"This is normal speed,' Lanier said as they watched. 'It begins from the point of view of the user, in this case a North London businessman, Walter Oliver. He is working with data belonging to Crystal Memory Dynamics, his employer, through a pirate virtual mail system called SubTerPost. That's their logo there, the post horn with all the extra spirals in it. Oliver has his terminal's camera in room-surround mode – that's his real-time image, the overlay in the lower left hand corner. Here it comes.'

"As Mei-Ling watched, a cascade of data suddenly poured into Oliver's node in the infosphere. The man in the lower left-hand corner began to grope about in severe agitation. Lanier isolated and blew up the image-stream taken from Oliver's room camera. Lights flashed on either side of Oliver, his image and the space around him seeming to distort for an instant. Then it appeared to Mei-Ling that she really was watching an almost explosive eversion, the turning inside-out of a human being – a bursting loose of splattering blood and gore. Where, an instant before, a man in a business suit had sat, now there was only intestines and other viscera steaming on a lumpy broken mound." [p. 85]

And here is a little philosophizing:

"... he wondered now why it should be that matter-energy was supposed to come first, and consciousness was supposed to arise out of that. Why couldn't consciousness come first, then matter and energy precipitate out of it, instead? Why was it that matter and energy were supposed to shape space and time? Why didn't space and time shape matter and energy?

"At the very least, he thought, there should be some kind of synergistic process whereby consciousness, space-time, and matter-energy all interacted strongly with each other, even if phrasing it this way did make it sound as if space-time and consciousness were somehow two types of the same thing..." [p. 146]

And then there is Dundas, one of the evil people of the book, a Christian fanatic who has infiltrated a peaceful nature-loving society that tries to live without metal machines:

"He looked at them now, in their simple homespun garments, gazing in rapture up at the tall trees. From what he overheard them saying, he knew that, instead of seeing the big trees as examples of the divine handiwork put on Earth for Man's use, they were reveling in the fact that the trees had been 'preserved' from the timbermen....

"Their kind were all meddlers, muddlers, lumpers, makers of mud people, Dundas thought. No respect for what God's will decreed about boundaries between sexes, races, and species. Making everything and everybody a big mess of 'equal rights'. Denying God's ordained hierarchy and ready to unleash anarchy in its stead." [p. 164]

I hope these quotes give you a fair taste of this strange book.

**Science Fiction and Fantasy Go Together** by **Miriam Ben Loulu**  
(January 1995)

This is a kind of game I play with myself --trying to combine titles so  
that they make sense.

1. Night Mare Nightwatch
  2. My Best Decision at Doona
  3. Star Gate Out of the Silent Planet
  4. This Immortal Raphael
  5. The War of the Worlds Hospital Station
  6. The Warlock in Spite of Himself Beyond the Farthest Star
  7. The Warlock is Missing The Water of the Wondrous Isles
  8. The Demon Breed Gremlins
  9. Unicorn and Dragon Coils
  10. The Veils of Azloroc Stardance
  11. Glory Road Roadmarks
  12. Forty Thousand in Gehenna Expecting Someone Taller
  13. The Warlock Unlocked The Door into Summer
  14. Fire Time Sundiver
  15. The End of the Matter Slipt
  16. The Outcasts of Heaven Belt To Die in Italbar
  17. Chaining the Lady Agent of Vega
  18. The Hand of Oberon Raising the Stones
- .....  
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1. David Starr Space Ranger: The Ultimate Enemy
  2. Gladiator at Law: The Last Defender of Camelot
  3. The Dreamstone: Silmarillion
  4. Eye of Cat - Catseye
  5. Crystal Singer, Crystal Witness - No Crystal Tears
  6. Brother Assassin: The Warlock Heretical
  7. Citizen of the Galaxy: The Postman

**Quote of the Month:**

“Those who focus on one narrow line of our ancestry deny the complex connections – genetic and cultural – that shape identity. Harvard University’s Henry Louis Gates, Jr., an African American, was both shocked and bemused to learn that his DNA on his mother’s side did not track back to the Yoruba people as he had long dreamed. The Yoruba have a rich mythology and are believed to have been among the most culturally sophisticated of the African cultures before the arrival of Europeans. ‘A number of exact matches turned up,’ Gates wrote, ‘leading straight back to that African Kingdom called Northern Europe, to the genes of (among others) a female Ashkenazi Jew. Maybe it was time to start listening to “My Yiddische Mama.”’”

From *Abraham’s Children* by Jon Entine (2007), p. 62-63.

For Comments: 13 Pinsker St., Rehovot 76308. Email: [asheer@netvision.net.il](mailto:asheer@netvision.net.il). Tel: Aharon Sheer 08-947-1225  
 Editor: Aharon Sheer. Logo by: Miriam Ben-Loulu  
 For free email delivery write to [asheer@netvision.net.il](mailto:asheer@netvision.net.il) (PDF format).  
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