

Next SCIENCE FICTION CLUB Meeting:

Tuesday, February 4, 1997, 8:15 p.m. -- Lecture (in ENGLISH)

Dr. Jack Cohen, Visiting Scientist,

Dept. of Membrane Research and Biophysics, Weizmann Institute

"Figments of Reality - the Evolution of the Curious Mind"

Rehovot Science Fiction (*usually*) meets the last Tuesday of each month
at the home of Tova, Bill and Rami Silverman,
19 Eisenberg St., fourth floor, Rehovot, Tel. 08-947-6142.

There is a REFRESHMENT CHARGE of 3.50 Shekels (for those who partake).

CyberCozen SF Newsletter, Vol. IX, Num. 1, January 1997. Editor: Aharon Sheer. Ed.Assist: Elana Dror. For mail delivery of CyberCozen, please donate 30 shekels per YEAR; air mail to US \$15; if Aharon Sheer can hand-deliver it, 15 shekels. Address: POB 9443, Tel Aviv 61093.

Copyright (C) 1997, All rights reserved to specified authors and artists.

Who is Dr. Jack Cohen?

I'll answer that question by telling you first what Jack did at the 1996 World Science Fiction Convention in Anaheim, California:

Jack was on a panel *"The Works of James White"*, with author James White and others.

Jack gave a talk entitled *"Alien and Human Sexuality"*.

Jack gave a talk entitled *"Why Flying Saucer Aliens Can't Be Real"*.

Jack is a reproductive biologist, as well as an sf fan, who has helped such sf authors as Larry Niven, Jerry Pournelle, Anne McCaffrey, Harry Harrison, and David Gerrold to guarantee the biological accuracy of their imaginary creatures.

Jack Cohen is also the co-author of **The Collapse of Chaos**, with mathematician Ian Stewart, one of the most successful popular science books of recent years.

■ ■

Quote of the Month:

"Time seems to flow in one particular direction; it has a well-defined 'arrow'. However, it seems logically and mathematically possible for time to flow backward instead -- a possibility exploited by such novels as Martin Amis's *Times's Arrow* and the much earlier *Counter-Clock World* by Philip K. Dick. ..." [p. 251]

"In our world, rocks fall off cliffs and end up at the bottom. If we happen to be creatures living in a universe that had chosen to run its time in the other possible direction rocks would suddenly leap into the air, landing on top of cliffs. ... [We] wouldn't be the least surprised. Before a rock made such a leap, we would be able to detect vibrations of the ground, converging from the distant horizon, focusing themselves upon that particular rock, and combining their efforts in one final shove to hurl it into the air. Clearly rocks on the ground attract such waves. We would offer a similar explanation for a tree levering itself upright, after which the lumberjack uses his axe to repair the final wedge-shaped cut in its trunk, picking up wood shavings from the ground and slotting them into the tree. We would explain how rivers are formed by an excess of water in the sea, deposited by 'devaporation', creating a pressure that forces the water up into the mountains, in ever-narrowing course, until it forms pools that pour raindrops up into waiting clouds....

"We are the context in which we observe the world." [p. 261-2]
From The Collapse of Chaos, by Jack Cohen and Ian Stewart (1994) ■ ■

ראיון עם ג'ק כהן מאת דותן דימט (פורסם במקור בצומת השרון של רשת שוקו)

קצת אחרי השאלה המטפזית העמוקה "האם יש חיים במקום אחר כלשהו ביקום?" נשאלת גם השאלה הסקרנית "ואם יש, אז איך הם ניראים?" העובדה שהתשובה הנכונה היחידה לשאלה הזו (כמו גם לראשונה) היא "אין לנו מושג" לא אומרת שאין לאנושות דעות בנושא. בין האפשרויות שהועלו, ישנה עמדה לפיה צורות-חיים שהתפתחו על פלנטות אחרות (חייזרים) יהיו כה שונות מאיתנו עד שאיננו מסוגלים אפילו לדמיין אותן. מנגד ניצבת עמדתו של הביולוג הידוע וודינגטון (Waddington), שהאמין כי צורת-החיים העילאית שתפתח במקום אחר ביקום תהיה דומה להפליא לוודינגטון עצמו.

רוב ההשערות המעניינות באמת מסתובבות איפשהו בתחום שבין שתי הדעות הללו, שם משתעשעים יוצרי המדע-בדיוני ומדענים הרפתקניים. אחד מהם הוא ד"ר ג'ק כהן, 62, ביולוג מאנגליה. כהן הוא מדען רציני מצד אחד וחובב מדע-בדיוני מצד שני, שהקדיש הרבה מחשבה לעניין החיים על כוכבים אחרים, נתן הרצאות בנושא ואף ייעץ ומייעץ לסופרי מדע-בדיוני ידועים (כמו אן מקאפרי, לארי ניבן, ג'רי פורנל, הארי האריסון, בריאן אלדיס, רשימה חלקית), שמעוניינים לתת בסיס מדעי ליצירי דמיונם. על גירסתו של וודינגטון, בדבר היות האדם נזר הבריאה, יש לכהן דעה מוצקה. "בני-אדם הם יצורים שמתוכננים בצורה די גרועה", אומר כהן, "למשל, יש לנו צינור נשימה שמצטלב עם צינור הובלת המזון שלנו, ולכן יש לנו נטייה למות מחנק בתדירות מפחידה. התכונה הזו היא אחת הטיעונים החזקים שיש נגד הרעיון של תיכנון אלוהי. דוגמה אחרת לתיכנון מחורבן היא השילוב שיש אצלנו בין מערכות המין וההפרשה, שגורם לנו לבעיות סניטריות קשות. מישהו כבר אמר ש'כל ארכיטקט שהיה ממקם את גן-השעשועים בתוך הביוב היה מפוטר לאלתר'."

"למעשה, שתי התכונות הללו קיימות אצלנו בגלל אירועים מקריים שהתרחשו במהלך האבולוציה שלנו. שתייהן הופיעו בסך-הכל פעם אחת בתולדות החיים עלי-אדמות, באב הקדמון של החולייתנים, ולכן ספק רב שיופיעו שוב במהלך התפתחותם של חיים בפלנטות אחרות. לכן סביר שאם נפגוש חייזרים, לא יהיו להם פנים כמו אלו שיש אצלנו ואצל בעלי-חיים אחרים, עם אף מעל הפה. זו תפיסה שגויה שמופיעה אינספור פעמים בסרטים, בטלוויזיה, באמנות ובספרים. וגם אם יהיה להם חוש הומור, לא יהיו להם בדיחות גסות, כי הקישור בין מין וטינופת הוא תולדה של הביולוגיה יוצאת-הדופן שלנו."

לכהן באופן אישי יש חולשה מיוחדת לבדיחות גסות, (לצערי הרב נמנע ממני מלתרגם את רובן בגלל שאלו שאני זוכר נשענו על משחקי מילים באנגלית), והשיחה איתו נוטה להגיע כמעט באופן בלתי נמנע לסקס, אולי בגלל שהוא עובד בזה: כביולוג כהן חוקר מדוע יש צורך בכל-כך הרבה תאי-זרע ומדוע כל-כך מעט מהם הם בעצם בעלי יכולת הפרייה. כשהוא סיפר את האנקדוטות הכי טובות, הטיף היה מכובה. נהייתי מכל רגע. יש ראיונות עיתונאיים שנעשים בכדי להביא לציבור סיפור מעניין או חשוב, ויש כאלו שנעשים כי נראה לכתב כיף לעשות אותם, כמו כשרון מיברג הולך לקטוף עשבי תיבול עם השף של 'אוקיאנוס', או לאה אתגר יוצאת לכרסם קוויאר עם רם אורן. הראיון הזה היה אחד מאלה.

כהן הוא המדען שכל חובב מדע-בדיוני חולם להיות. הוא מכיר את כל האנשים המעניינים, ממדענים מפורסמים כמו סטיבן ג'יי גולד ועד סופרי מדע-בדיוני כמו לארי ניבן, ויודע עליהם רכילויות עסיסיות. אייזק אסימוב היה חבר שלו. וטרי פראצ'ט, ידיד קרוב, יוצר סידרת הפנטסיה ההומוריסטית המצליחה 'עולם הדיסקה' (מישהו בסדר גודל של דאגלס אדאמס), ביסס עליו את דמותו של כהן הברברי, גיבור קשיש עם ניסיון חיים מרשים בלא להיהרג.

לאחרונה הוא כתב יחד עם איאן סטיוארט, המתמטיקאי המפורסם ביותר באנגליה, ספר מדע פופולרי, "התמוטטותו של הכאוס", שהיה שוס היסטרי וקיבל ביקורות היסטוריות בכתבי-עת מדעיים נחשבים כמו "נייצ'ר". הספר בעצם הופך את רעיון הכאוס על פניו ושואל, אם אפילו מערכות פשוטות מתנהגות בצורה כאוטית ומשתנה, איך בכלל קיימות מערכות פשוטות?

כמובן שכל הרווחים מהספר הזה הם כסף קטן לעומת מה שכהן הרוויח מעבודת ייעוץ שעשה לאן מקאפרי, שסידרת "הדרקונים של פרן" שהיא כותבת היא אחת

Next SCIENCE FICTION CLUB Meeting:

Tuesday, March 4, 1997, 8:15 p.m. -- Lecture (in HEBREW)

Eli Eshed, Science Fiction Historian אלי אשד, היסטוריון של מד"ב
פרוטו-מד"ב - ספרות שהיום היתה יכולה להחשב כמדע בדיוני

Proto-SF: Early Literary Works that Today We Might Call Science Fiction
with video excerpts from four works -- עם קטעי ווידאו מארבע יצירות
Gulliver's Travels, Frankenstein, Baron Munchausen, Cyrano de Bergerac

Rehovot Science Fiction (*usually*) meets the last Tuesday of each month
at the home of Tova, Bill and Rami Silverman,
19 Eisenberg St., fourth floor, Rehovot, Tel. 08-947-6142.

There is a REFRESHMENT CHARGE of 3.50 Shekels (for those who partake).

CyberCozen SF Newsletter, Vol. IX, Num. 2, February 1997. Editor: Aharon Sheer. Ed.Assist: Elana Dror. For mail delivery of CyberCozen, please donate 30 shekels per YEAR; air mail to US \$15; 15 shekels if Aharon can hand-deliver it. POB 9443, Tel Aviv 61093. email: asheer@netvision.net.il
Copyright (C) 1997, All rights reserved to specified authors and artists.

Is Rehovot Science Fiction Dead?

In May 1992, Sara Svetitsky, astrophysicist and SF fan, gave a talk in our club on "The Birth of Stars". About twenty people came, and several said it was one of the best club talks ever. In November 1996, Sara spoke again. At 8:30, with the lecture to start, only five people were present (not counting Bill, Tova and me). At 9 pm a second carful of people arrived, increasing the count by five more. This seems to be a pattern in the last two years. When a big name like Brian Aldiss or Jack Cohen speaks, there is a large crowd. When an outstanding speaker who is not a big name comes, we get not more than ten people (witness the excellent talk last year by Aharon Hauptmann, who was one of the editors of *Fantasia 2000*). So maybe we should just close down?

The phenomenon is not completely new. Amit Yizhar, a founding members of this club, used to give us a talk on developments in the space program about once every half year. He talked on such topics as "The Martians are Going! The Martians are Going!"

"Space Medicine"

"Space Program Down to the Wire: In Space You Can Save Billions of Dollars with a Piece of String (Provided it's 22 Miles Long)"

The last talk he gave, in February 1992, was called:

"Moon Mining: Future Plans for Research, Development and Colonization of the Moon"

Only ten people came. He was so offended he never came again.

Another example: Psychologist Shlomo Kravitz. He gave two very successful talks:

"Aliens among us -- How we react to people who are different"

"ARE MENTAL IMAGES REAL?", with special reference to the SF book "SOLARIS" by Stanislaw Lem.

Then, in March 1991, he gave a talk entitled:

"Stanislaw Lem's 'Fiasco', A Study in the Failure of Interstellar Empathy"

Only ten people came. He was so offended that he refuses to give another talk, contending that club members are not interested in hearing what he has to say.

Suffice it to say that if we cannot get enough people at our

meetings, serious and good lecturers will simply refuse to come.

Today there is a new aspect to things. The Israeli Society for SF and Fantasy now exists, and it devotes itself to BIG EVENTS. Showing Brian Aldiss around Israel. Organizing a Short Story Competition (that attracted 350 stories). An SF Film Festival. A Star Trek Gala. Perhaps these BIG EVENTS are all that people today want.

So maybe Rehovot SF isn't needed any more.

I've discussed this with a few people. One said that the competing Society will die when the first enthusiasm wears off. Another said that perhaps the Club should only meet when it has a BIG NAME, like Jack Cohen. Another said that one low-attendance meeting means nothing.

I'd be happy to hear - and publish - other reactions, for example: Dear Aharon, I'm sorry to hear that very few people came to the November talk. Maybe the Rehovot SF-club should be renamed to something like "The Mobile Rehovot SF-Club" (or "Transportable"...) and have meetings in other cities.

For example, speak to the Netanya SF writer, Reuven Danziger. Have him organize a meeting in Netanya. I could probably get you a nice room in one of the cultural centers, or even in the AACI.

Leybl Botwinik, Netanya

■ ■

Story: **THE DUNGEON MASTER** by Nachman Israel

On the night the trees left the village to try and find their destiny elsewhere, Hugo was walking home through the woods on the outskirts of the small village. He was rather tired, and quite frustrated. He had just lost a game of billiards that had taken him the better part of the year, and this after he had told everybody that he would beat Martin with the greatest of ease. Walking home through the woods usually calmed him, helped him steady his thoughts (which were now clouded by the cheap ale he had been drinking all evening). When the first trees started moving he froze. What was happening? Were his eyes playing tricks? But no, he was seeing the impossible happening. More and more trees seemed to be coming out of the ground, roots and all, all headed in the same direction. By the time all of the trees seemed to be moving, Hugo finally managed to get himself together, and started following them. He noticed some trees coming out of the village itself and following their big brothers. He also noticed a few bushes tagging along, but they were brushed away soon enough by the bigger trees, who realized that this journey was meant only for those fit enough to survive it.

"Where are you going?" Hugo shouted, knowing very well that it was pointless. Trees can not talk, and therefore could not answer him. "Why are you leaving? What will I do without you?" There was yet no answer. But his shouting did seem to disturb the birds sleeping in the trees, who had, until then, not noticed what was happening. Thousands of birds flew out of the trees, making a huge noise, coloring the dark-blue night in black, going in all different directions, some of them flying straight up, never to come down again to the face of the planet. Then all was quiet again. And the trees marched silently on. This went on for a long time, and only when the last one was out of sight did Hugo go home.

When he woke up the next morning, he immediately rushed to the door to look at the woods, hoping it had all been a bad dream. But the trees weren't there. He stood at the doorway, as people went off to work, wanting to see how they would react. Nobody seemed to notice any change. George went by with his cart loaded with his tools, not even looking in the direction of what used to be the woods. Paul flew to his job at the mill, and he didn't seem to notice anything, either.

"Jack!" Hugo called out when his good friend passed him. "Did you see what happened to the woods?"

Jack looked around, puzzled. "I don't know what you're talking about, Hugo. I don't see any woods here." He started walking again, then stopped. "I heard Martin beat you yesterday. I was sorry to hear, after all you had gone through. Try to get over it." And he walked away.

As far as everybody was concerned, Hugo realized, there were never any trees in Tillon. Even Richard, the woodcutter, went with his brother George to work in the fields as if that is what he has been doing all his life. Hugo could not understand it.

Instead of going out to the field, he went to talk to the Old Wise Man. The Old Wise Man lived at the northern edge of the village, in the oldest house in the village. In fact, he was far older than anybody else who lived in the village. The villagers estimated his age at around one hundred, which was strange, for at least two people in the village were old enough to remember that sixty years earlier he was also estimated to be of the same age. As Hugo got to the house, the Old Wise Man sat down on his veranda, resting after having just completed a set of two hundred push-ups.

"Strange day, is it not, Hugo?" the Old Wise Man asked, without having even looked in his direction. "But we're the only ones that know it."

Hugo was shocked, then realized that he shouldn't be, and he sat down next to the Old Wise Man. "But I don't understand, how can trees just get up and walk away?"

"Why not?"

"Well, they're trees. They can't walk, they don't even have the will to make themselves walk. They can't think."

"Why do you say that? Just because it has never happened before? That's no proof. Anyway, Tillon is a special village. Strange things happen here, and I think I know what causes it. Let me try and explain. How do you know that you exist?"

Hugo was puzzled. "What do you mean, I know I exist!"

"So you think, but just maybe you don't really exist, suppose you're just the figment of someone's imagination. You think you exist, because he imagines that you think you exist."

"I think I understand, but that's ridiculous. I can't disprove what you're saying, but as far as I'm concerned, what difference does it make?"

The Old Wise Man smiled. "That is why strange things keep on happening here. Reality isn't what we think it is; we're living in somebody else's story, and he can write whatever he wants to."

"How long have you had this idea for?" Hugo asked after a few minutes of silence.

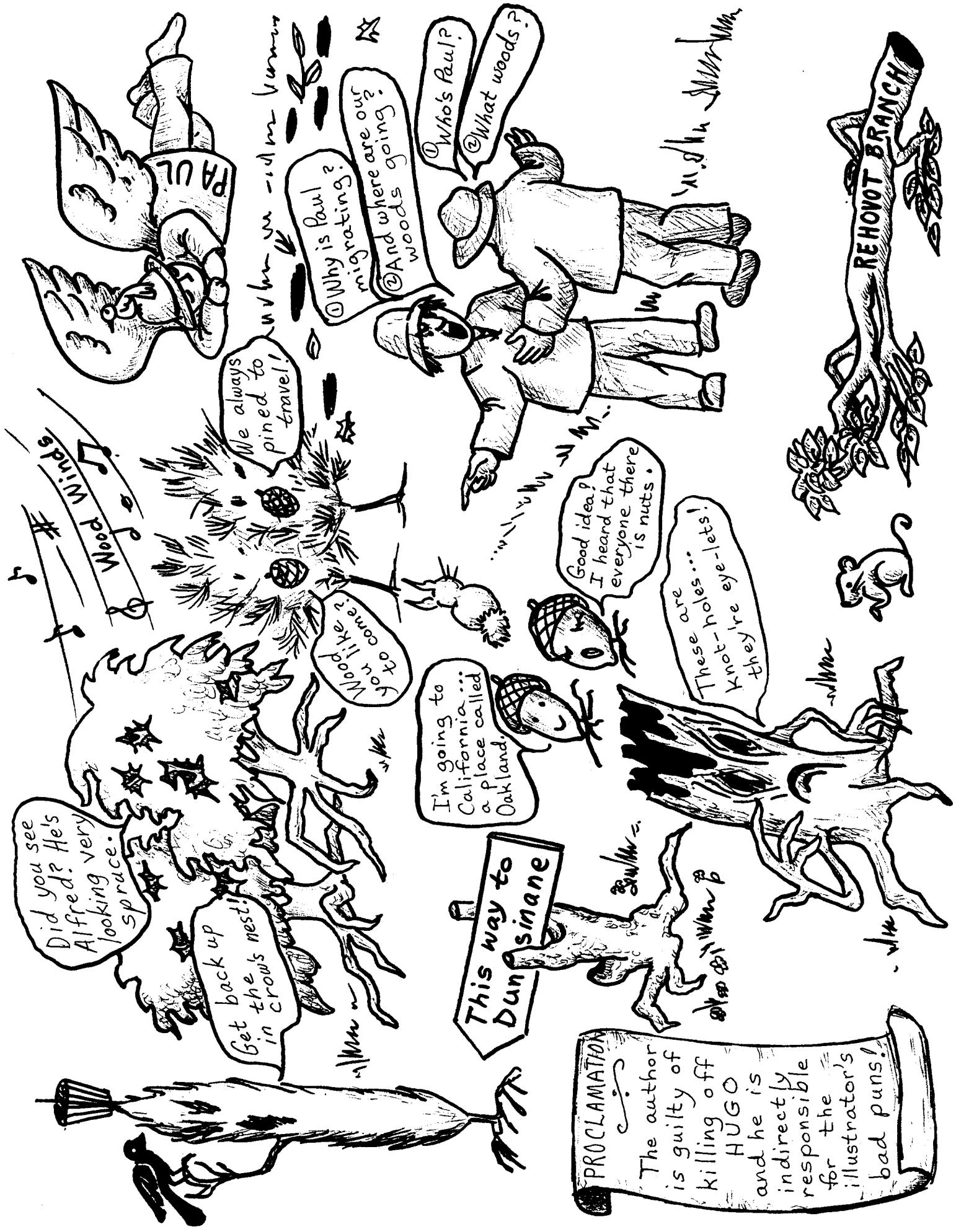
"For a very long time, longer than I can remember. But I was finally convinced when Paul grew his wings and started flying around."

Hugo thought of this. As strange as it may seem, He had actually never noticed anything weird about Paul's wings until now. But there had to be a more logical explanation....

"No, Old Wise Man, I can't accept your explanation." Hugo started walking away, then turned back. "You know what, if you're right, damn the man who imagined my life. He made me live a terrible life, he made my kid die last winter, and he made me lose my big game with Martin. I hate him. Let him play with somebody else's life."

The Old Wise Man looked at him, a worried look on his face, as if he hoped he was wrong, for if he wasn't

Hugo turned around once more and started walking home. He had walked no more than thirty steps before vanishing forever. ■ ■



Did you see Alfred? He's looking very spruce.

Get back up in the nest!

Wood like it to come?

I'm going to California... a place called Oakland.

This way to Dunsinane

Good idea? I heard that everyone there is nuts.

These are knot-holes... they're eye-lets!

① Who's Paul?
② What woods?

① Why is Paul migrating?
② And where are our woods going?

We always pined to travel!

PROCLAMATION
The author is guilty of killing off HUGO and he is indirectly responsible for the illustrator's bad puns!

REHOVOT BRANCH

Next SCIENCE FICTION CLUB Meeting:
Tuesday, April 1, 1997, 8:15 p.m. -- Lecture (in ENGLISH)

**Leybl Botwinik, Yiddish-language sf writer, on
"Yiddish, Science Fiction, and the Ashkenazic Tradition"**

Rehovot sf (*usually*) meets the last Tuesday of alternate months
at the home of Tova, Bill and Rami Silverman,
19 Eisenberg St., fourth floor, Rehovot, Tel. 08-947-6142.

There is a REFRESHMENT CHARGE of 3.50 Shekels (for those who partake).

CyberCozen SF Newsletter, Vol. IX, Num. 3, March 1997. Editor: Aharon Sheer. Ed.Assist: Elana Dror. For mail delivery of CyberCozen, please donate 30 shekels per YEAR; air mail to US \$15; if Aharon Sheer can hand-deliver it, 15 shekels. Address: POB 9443, Tel Aviv 61093. Copyright (C) 1997, All rights reserved to specified authors and artists.

EXPERIMENT: The Mobile Rehovot sf Club will meet alternately in Rehovot, and elsewhere (Ramat HaSharon, Tel Aviv, Netanya, etc.) ■ ■

Of Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

(Three stories of future Jewish History

-- In memory of Shmerke Kaczerginski, Partisan-poet of Vilna)
by Leybl Botwinik*

... My name was once known to you,
Ask not now who I am. Ask not.
I no longer have a name,
I have only a number,
My number is three-eight-five-six...
- from Sh. Kaczerginski's "Milyon"

... באקאנט אייך געוועזן א מאל איז מײן נאמען
ניט פרעגט איצט ווער בין איך, ניט פרעגט.
אייך האב ניט קיין נאמען,
אייך האב נאר א נומער:
מײן נומער איז דריי-אכט-פינף-זעקס (3856).
- פון ש. קאטצערגינסקי'ס "מיליאן"

Story 2 - Million by Leybl Botwinik

[Author's note: The conversation takes place entirely in Yiddish]

"Hayim-Shmuel! Oh why, why ..." spit out Leah bitterly, as she pushed herself out from his embrace. "Why must you be so different? So distant? So cold? ..."

Hayim-Shmuel Schmid sat quietly on the wide, white, soft sofa, immersed in his thoughts. He felt himself afloat, as if on a cloud. The room was half-lit by a sole corner lamp. Strains of tranquil classical music floated in the air. "Leah is so beautiful, standing there in the semi-darkness," thought Hayim, "as if the light emanated from within her. Enveloping her. Caressing her ..."

"What? What did I do?" He spluttered suddenly, as if he had just woken up from a dream.

"It's not what you did. It's what you didn't do! I'm your wife, your mate. I wish to be as one with you.... But when you hold me ... sometimes, like just now, I feel as if you were somewhere else, somewhere far....", and quietly, with a sad undertone, as if lost and seeking, "You still love me, don't you? Or have you found someone else ... ?"

Hayim sprang up, as if bitten. "What are you talking about? Leah, darling! You're my one and only. There can never be anyone else. You know that. But ...", and here he paused and looked deeply into Leah's eyes, "I can't give you all my love, my full devotion, because ..."

"Aha!", interrupted Leah, "I knew it! You haven't been telling me the whole truth. You're hiding something.... I've noticed you going out, alone, in the evenings, returning late, tired. Now tell me, where do you go, what do you do? Who are you spending your time with?!!"

"Stop it. Stop screaming, Leah. I beg you. Calm down, and I'll tell you everything. You know who we are, what we are, ... where we are. Come on over here, sit down. Good. Now roll up your left sleeve, and I will too."

"I don't want to."

"You must! Here, don't you see why we exist?"

On his left arm was tattooed a number, consisting of four digits: 3, 8, 5, 6.

His tightly clenched fist trembled. In his voice was a controlled anger. With grit teeth, and a voice crying out from the deepest void, from the worst Hell, he recited:

"Remember! Remember Ponar and Majdanek. Remember what the Nazi-Germans did to us. Remember the Amalekites. Remember who you yourself are:

"Where we come from. Our folk-treasures and our poverty; our sufferings and our joys. Our high points as well as those fallen moments of our people. And on that basis, rebuild that which has been destroyed...."

"Oh, you're just living in a dream-world, Hayim. You sound like a recorded message. Look around you, you're not there, in the 'Old Home'. This is a different time, a different place. Who needs those old memories of a world which no longer exists, which will never again be. Let's begin anew, make a fresh start, erase ..."

"No! Never erase! We dare not. We have a debt, a destiny to carry out. Not just to remember, but to rebuild...."

"To rebuild? -- Ha! And how are you going to go about that? You know that I can't even ... That we can't have children. And to build? For whom? You don't even belong to them, to the Martyrs. You're not one of the survivors. Why you're not even ..."

"I am a Jew! And until the end of my years. True, we weren't there. True, we're not from that terrible era, not from that place. But we carry in us their spirit.

"We are a part of the Millions."

"Spirit? Millions? You don't know what you're talking about. You think, that because you have some second-hand information in your brain, about that era, seen films, read and studied the history of that Swastika-Crusade, the Nazi War against the Jews -- and because you have those numbers burnt into your arm like the real sufferers...."

"Enough, Leah. You just don't understand...."

"Don't interrupt me, Hayim! Do you actually believe that those four digits are a key to the souls of the six million martyrs? -- Not even to one. You've only talked yourself into believing that you're somehow connected to them. You're nothing but a complete fool -- a robot...."

It was suddenly quiet in the room. Leah's heated words were abruptly stilled, as if drenched in ice cold water. Her hand shot to her open mouth, as if to catch those last escaping words. But it was too late. With frightened eyes she looked to Hayim, then ran over to him and fell into his arms, sobbing:

"Oh, please forgive me Hayim. That's not what I meant to say...."

"It's all right, it's all right.... You're absolutely correct. I wanted to do too much, all at once. But remember, wherever we may be, whenever that may be, so long as a spark of memory exists, we must remember the martyrs, and immortalize their souls. How was it said by the partizan-poet Shmerke Katczerginski in his song, 'Milyon':

'צעשאכטן מיין פאלק איז,
דעריבער מוז יעדערער
זיין איצטער ווי א מיליאן'
[Butchered are my people,
therefore each must
now be like a million]

"But Hayim, how can we -- what right have we to carry out that final wish?"

"Come with me, Leah. I'll show you. You say that I am not ready yet; that I'm like a cold robot, and therefore without the real Jewish, humane spirit necessary to carry out this holy mission -- to be as one with the millions, to become, myself, a million. And if it is not for me to fulfil, then it will be carried on by our children and children's children...."

"But Hayim, what are you talking about? You know that we can't have any children ..."

"Shush. Come with me and you will see what I've been so busy with. I tried, on my own, to create a child, an heir -- in the laboratory. I wasn't successful. But maybe, together with your help, we'll succeed."

Hayim went to the apartment's exit with Leah. Having opened the door, a thick, swirling red cloud surrounded them. The heat outside was several hundred degrees. The poisonous atmosphere contained gases similar to the Zyklon-B which was used to gas to death hundreds of thousands of Jews in the death camps. A 300 kilometer-an-hour wind blew outside.

Ignorant of wind, heat and poison air, the two robots -- Leah and Hayim -- held each other lovingly, as they made their way to the laboratory building not far from their house. Everywhere around was empty as a desert.

Just off the side of the building was a sort of grave-marker. It

was made up of remnants of a spaceship which had long ago crash-landed on this death-planet.

The sole passenger had had only one identifying feature: on his left arm were tattooed the digits: three-eight-five-six.

With his last breath, after crash-landing, he had input the four digits into his on-board computer. This was a code, a sign, for the apparatus. The pre-programmed system had absorbed into itself the man's spirit and soul, and had transferred them into the two robots which had accompanied him to this new world.

* Story 2, which appears above, is a translation from the Yiddish (by the author) of the original short story "Milyon", second in the trilogy "Fun Nekhtn, Haynt un Morgn", originally published in the Yiddish students' magazine Yugntruf (Aug - Dec 1985 issue, New York). Story 1 appeared in the May 1996 issue of CyberCozen. Story 3 will appear in a future issue.

Letters to the Editor:

Dear Aharon,

The reason I have decided to take another year of CyberCozen is the high quality of your December issue. The article by Sara Svetitsky was a truly delightful summary of much of the work recently done in the field of extra-solar planetary research. It was a nice bridge, I am certain, for your purely speculative Sci-Fi types to the world of real astronomical research. You might commission another author to review the fabulous plans in the field of interferometric (my word) telescopic research, hopefully, in the next few decades, to actually image planets as they orbit those distant, yet near neighbors of our own sun. What an absolutely mind expanding experience that will be!

David Brust

Editor's note: Dr. David Brust is an ex-physicist with an interest in extra-solar real estate.

Dear Aharon,

Thanks for the article on extrasolar planets. That field sure is opening up, isn't it? I see there's now a controversy as to whether at least one of the findings may be spurious, but most still look well-established. These evenings we're often out with telescope and binoculars watching Comet Hale-Bopp, and have an idea of finding some really dark location about the end of this month....

All best, Poul Anderson

■ ■

Quote of the Month:

"In order to journey to Mars or beyond, you needed a crew. How many people would you need? Military captains, expedition leaders, start-up managers, and crisis centers had long recognized that a team of eight was the ideal number for any complex hazardous project. More than eight people, and decisions got slow and squirrely; less than eight, accidents and ignorance became serious handicaps. [John] Allen and [Mark] Nelson settled on a crew of eight. [p. 140]

"'You want to have a higher ratio of females to males for reproduction insurance,' [Peter] Warshall [, a consulting ecologist,] told me. 'Ideally we like to have at minimum five females per three males. I know that director John Allen says that eight humans -- four female, four male -- is the minimum-size group needed for human colony start-up and reproduction, but from an ecologically correct rather than politically correct point of view, the Bio2 crew should be five females and three males.'" [p. 145]

From Out of Control, by Kevin Kelly (1994).

■ ■

Next SCIENCE FICTION CLUB Meeting:
Tuesday, April 29, 1997, 8:15 p.m. -- Lecture (in HEBREW)

אורי אלמי, פיזיקאי בכיר בחברת אל-אופ, קרית ויצמן
על "הנשק האלקטרו-אופטי בשדה הקרב העתידי"

Uri Almi, Senior Physicist at El-Op, Kiryat Weizmann
on "Electro-Optical Weaponry on the Future Battlefield"

Rehovot Science Fiction (*usually*) meets the last Tuesday of each month
at the home of Tova, Bill and Rami Silverman,
19 Eisenberg St., fourth floor, Rehovot, Tel. 08-947-6142.

There is a REFRESHMENT CHARGE of 3.50 Shekels (for those who partake).

CyberCozen SF Newsletter, Vol. IX, Num. 4, April 1997. Editor: Aharon Sheer. Ed.Assist: Elana Dror. For mail delivery of CyberCozen, please donate 30 shekels per YEAR; air mail to US \$15; if Aharon Sheer can hand-deliver it, 15 shekels. Address: POB 9443, Tel Aviv 61093. Copyright (C) 1997, All rights reserved to specified authors and artists.

Thursday May 15 at Beit Ariela, Tel Aviv: Israeli Society for SF and Fantasy; Panel Discussion on "Genetic Engineering"; open to the public.
יום ה' 15 במאי בבית אריאלה, תל אביב: מד"ב על "הנדסה גנטית". פתוח לכל.

Short Reviews: by Aharon Sheer

Zodiac by Neal Stephenson (1988), 308 pages. Recommended by Bill Silverman. Neal Stephenson, born 1959, is one of the best of the younger writers. Called "An Eco-Thriller" on the cover, this is a near future novel about a "feisty" (Bill Silverman's term) fighter against industrial polluters. The science fiction aspect is in the new and imaginative uses of genetic engineering to create better, and ever more dangerous pollution. At one point he even has his hero ask "... we are talking about the end of the world here, aren't we?" when the latest genetically engineered bacteria threatens to turn all of the salt [sodium chloride] in the oceans into a poisonous chlorine chemical [polychlorinated biphenyl]. Fast-moving, with more vicious and murderous villains than seems possible (do some American polluters really murder anyone in sight to keep their crimes from being exposed?), it is nevertheless fun to read (the hero positively delights in catching those nasty guys at work). You'll learn things too. Recommended.

Timelike Infinity by Stephen Baxter (1993), 304 pages. Bill Silverman recommends books by Baxter. He is one of today's younger writers (born 1957) dedicated to writing **far-future hard sf**, with a strong **SPACE** orientation. In this book wormholes are used to go both backwards and forwards in time. There's a lot of mumbo-jumbo to justify wormholes and time travel, but it doesn't sound to me like a serious look at the subject. It is a good read, however, and I strongly recommend Baxter for hard sf. He's imaginative and entertaining. His characters stink, but his stories are great. The physics cosmology stuff is overly didactic toward the end, and really far out. Sounds like complete nonsense, to me, but a physicist may have a more favorable opinion. To check, I asked physicist and sf fan Sam Braunstein if there really is a theory about "exotic matter" (which Baxter uses to line his wormholes), or is that Baxter's pseudo-science? Sam answered me as follows:

"Surprise surprise. Quantum theory allows for exotic matter and we have even created tiny quantities in the laboratory. But in flat

space it doesn't seem like you can get enough to be of any use. What can really be done with it is a totally open question and virtually nobody is seriously thinking about this yet. We just don't yet know where to begin."

So you see, Baxter is thinking seriously about exotic matter, and has found a use for it. Read Stephen Baxter! Note to Emmanuel Lottem: TRANSLATE Stephen Baxter! It's not "literary", but it's good sf.

Red Dwarf and Better Than Life by Grant Naylor (1990), 553 pages. Recommended by Richard Dahl. This is a science fiction humorous TV soap opera, in the tradition of **The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy**. The advantage of the humorous approach is that you can do things that no SF writer would dare to do: For example, the space ship approaches the speed of light, then gradually exceeds it, after which time becomes all jumbled up with past and future intermixed. The ship then slows down, returning to normal conditions. This is unlikely from a scientific point of view, and there is not even an attempt to create a pseudo-scientific explanation. It's just meant to be funny, and it more or less is. The main characters (of which there are hardly any) are not at all heroic: a typical dumb sailor type, a stupid dead officer brought back to life as a hologram, a vain computer controlling the space ship, a cat evolved to the intelligence of a human being but with the personality of a siamese cat. The amusing events that happen are grossly exaggerated, and repeat themselves ad nauseam, but if you like the worst of the **The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy** books, you will probably enjoy this too. ■ ■

Two books by Kim Stanley Robinson reviewed by Aharon Sheer

The Gold Coast by Kim Stanley Robinson (1988), 389 pages. After reading Robinson's wonderful **Red Mars**, I wanted to try something else. This is the kind of SF book I would like to see an Israeli writer write. The author has taken a place he loves, Orange County in Southern California, and asked the traditional SF question: What will this place be like if things continue to develop as they have up to now? In Israeli SF the only kind of future most authors can imagine is a military dictatorship, or a religious dictatorship, or an Arab dictatorship, as if Israeli democracy will inevitably fail; that is, things cannot go on in Israel as they have up to now. Robinson, in contrast, simply predicts more of the same: larger freeway interchanges, bigger apartment buildings, more drug use, etc. Shopping malls become so gigantic that some include apartment complexes whose residents can carry on all their daily activities without ever using a car, like in the early small towns in Orange County, except that they never go outside either (sort of like in a moon colony, only with higher gravity). He does not neglect religion, nor war, nor politics, but they are just parts of the future. The story describes the lives of a group of young people in their late twenties, about the year 2040, who have grown up together in Orange County. The hero loves to read and talk about what things were like 50, or 100 years ago, there. How did it get to be what it is in 2040? Why can't an Israeli writer put political and religious fanaticism aside and just write a story about Israelis in a livable, possible, future?

Icehenge by Kim Stanley Robinson (1984), 262 pages. Recommended by Bill Silverman. Memory is a peculiar thing. A friend of mine complained about a movie I had "*persuaded*" him that we go and see. "It's true," I replied, "that I suggested it. But you responded enthusiastically, and even proposed the day and hour that we go." He denied it all. Another example: The Holocaust is a subject of debate. There are people who

claim it never happened. Yet there are people alive today who lived through it, and remember it! How can anyone say it didn't happen? But suppose that everyone alive today who had lived through the Holocaust could not remember it?

Icehenge is a sort of sequel to Robinson's **Red Mars** trilogy, although it was written many years before. It takes place in a future in which Mars has been terraformed, and also large numbers of people live their whole lives on and among the asteroids. Longevity treatments have increased people's life span by a factor of perhaps ten. In the latter part of the book there are people alive who were born more than 500 years before. The problem is (and in this respect the book is *different* from **RED MARS**) that the longevity treatments affect memory: People can remember only the last three or four decades. If a hundred year old man moved away from Mars fifty years ago to the asteroids, and hasn't been back since, he cannot remember the town he grew up in, the university where he studied, or even what it was like when he raised his children or played with his grandchildren on Mars. Praise a person for having done some wonderful thing fifty years ago, and he will tell you quite honestly that he knows nothing about it, and will be quite sure that it never happened. Memory!

Icehenge is about how we know (or think we know) what happened in the past. But does the idea of longevity amnesia make sense? Consider the following quote from Dr. Elizabeth Loftus, psychologist from the University of Washington in Seattle, about *memory*: "We add to and subtract from it. It is malleable and suggestible. We recast memories over and over again; otherwise they deteriorate or disappear altogether." In other words, in the normal course of time we forget almost all events of the past; instead we remember our remembering, a process which goes on all our lives. Therefore, there's no reason to think that we would forget our earlier lives completely, and Robinson's thesis dies! A fascinating book, and well worth reading. ■ ■

Quote of the Month:

"In every branch of science you will find people who will tell you what everything 'really' is -- indeed, what you yourself 'really' are. A quantum physicist will explain that you are really a wave function. A molecular biologist will tell you that you are really a DNA program. A computer scientist will tell you that you are really a neural network. All make the same mistake: assuming that because they have some universal system that can mimic, describe, or prescribe something else, no other valid viewpoint exists. Look at yourself in a mirror. Do you see a wave function? A DNA program? A neural network? [p. 312]

*"no other valid viewpoint exists: This is the central 'simplex, complex, multiplex' theme of the unusual science fiction novel **Empire Star**, by Samuel R. Delany."* [p. 465]

*From **The Collapse of Chaos**, by Jack Cohen and Ian Stewart (1994)* ■ ■

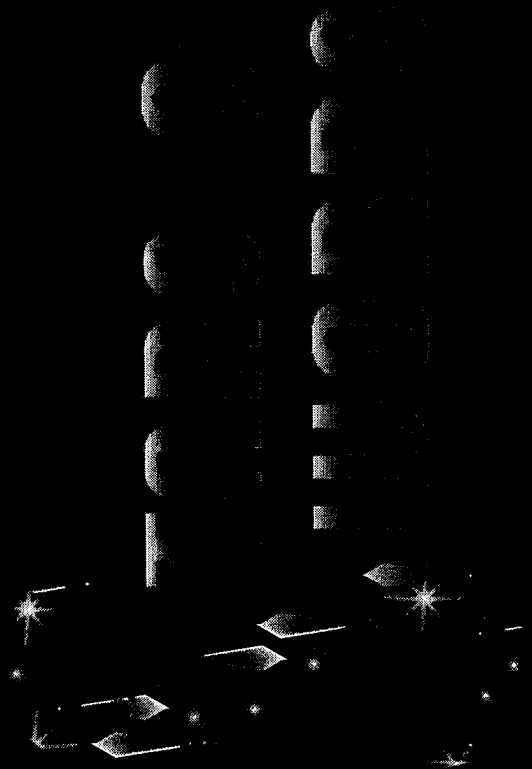
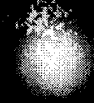
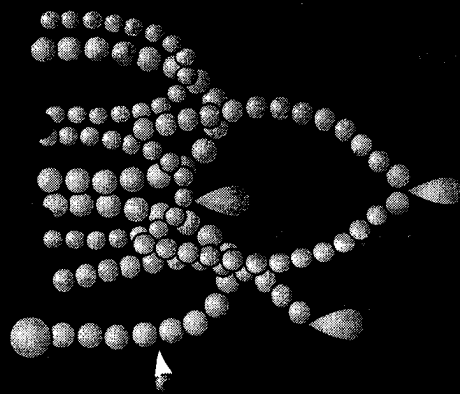
Advertisements Advertisements Advertisements Advertisements

Reader's Corner bookstore has good SF section, not expensive. Telephone 09-834 5767, 30 Shmuel HaNatziv, **Netanya**. Owner: Zvi Swerdlow.

Internet Site of The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy:
<http://www.actcom.co.il/~ny> ■ ■

Drawing by Miriam Ben-Loulou -- see the following page

ARTIST'S NOTE: Having just completed a course in computer graphics I decided that at least one of my drawings for CyberCozen should be done by computer. I am still looking for work in this field, and if any of you readers should happen to know someone who is looking for an employee, please let me know. Thanks. **Miriam Ben-Loulou**



האגודה הישראלית למד"ב ופנטזיה

The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy
תתחיל סדרת פגישות על הנושא: "לקראת המאה ה-21: ספרות מול מציאות"

will begin a series of meetings (in Hebrew) on the subject
"Toward the 21st Century: Literature vs. Reality"

ביום רביעי, 14 למאי, בשעה 20:00, בבית אריאלה, שד' שאול המלך 25, תל אביב
Wed. May 14 1997, 8:00 p.m., Beit Ariela, 25 Shaul HaMelech, Tel Aviv
שיחה על "הנדסה גנטית":
Panel Discussion on "Genetic Engineering":
מנחה: חדווה יששכר, קול ישראל
Moderator: Hedva Yissachar, Kol Yisrael
פרופ' דורון לנצט, מכון ויצמן
Prof. Doron Lancet, Weizmann Institute
חרמונה שורק, האוניברסיטה העברית
Hermona Soreq, Hebrew University
יבסם עזגד, סופר מד"ב
Yivsam Asgad, sf writer
עמנואל לוטס, עורך ומתרגם מד"ב
Emmanuel Lottem, sf editor/translator

Rehovot Science Fiction will NOT meet in Rehovot in May;
we're all going to the Society meeting in Tel Aviv on May 14
פגישת מד"ב רחובות לא תתקיים ברחובות במאי, כולם נוסעים לתל אביב ב-14 למאי

Rehovot Science Fiction (usually) meets the last Tuesday of each month
at the home of Tova, Bill and Rami Silverman,
19 Eisenberg St., fourth floor, Rehovot, Tel. 08-947-6142.

CyberCozen SF Newsletter, Vol. IX, Num. 5, May 1997. Editor: Aharon Sheer. Ed.Assist: Elana Dror. For mail delivery of CyberCozen, please donate 30 shekels per YEAR; air mail to US \$15; if Aharon Sheer can hand-deliver it, 15 shekels. Address: POB 9443, Tel Aviv 61093. Copyright (C) 1997, All rights reserved to specified authors and artists.

Short Review: by Aharon Sheer

Twistor by John Cramer (1989), 338 pages. Recommended by Yossie and Bill Silverman. This is a physics thriller by a genuine physicist from the University of Washington, Seattle. Cramer invents a "twistor effect" (no relation to the hurricane movie "Twister" which was recently so popular in the movie theaters), which is based on one possible version of superstring theory. This effect lets us get to "shadow worlds" parallel to ours; the existence of these shadow worlds explain the missing "dark matter" in our universe, as well as the missing neutrinos in the sun's radiation.

The question is, is a near future sf novel written in 1989, based on 1989 physics questions, still relevant speculation today, or have new developments made it out of date? Just a simple example, the author has a sixteen year old computer freak using a really FAST modem: 4800 baud. Well, 4800 baud sounded fantastically fast in 1989, but it's really slow in 1997, and yet the book is still clearly in OUR 1997 future.

As a thriller it makes a good page-turning read. I carried it with me and read it everywhere, even at work, something I usually don't do. Just one example of the potential uses of the twistor effect: you could use a shadow world as a dumping ground for radioactive waste. (This assumes that no inhabitants of the shadow world are smart enough to just dump it right back.) At any rate, a lot of unsavory characters are interested in controlling this device, and they do some pretty scary things in the effort to do so.

Except for a couple of very short passages which were disgusting (but not more so than one can see on Cable TV any evening), I would strongly recommend the book to any hard sf fan, including teenagers. It's real good old-fashioned sf, like they wrote in the Golden Age, but only ten years out of date instead of forty.

בס"ד

לכב' החבר'ה של מדע בדיוני, שלום רב !

נכנסתי לחנות ספרים לחפש ספר מדע בדיוני. לשם השעשוע החלטתי לבחון כמה אחוזים (בערך) תופסים נושאים שונים של מדע בדיוני - בתוך הכתיבה המאוחדת תחת השם " מדע בדיוני " .

והרי התוצאות :

90 % - פלישות של יצורים מזרזים לכדור הארץ, או המצאות מזרזות ומשונות (ולא מענינות) , או הרפתקאות של גיבורים מסוג סופרמן. (כלומר - חומר קריאה לא מענין .)

9 % - סיפורים של המצאות טכניות (דמיוניות), והדרך בה משתמשים בהן (מה שנקרא **HARD CORE**) + סיפורי פנמזיה בסגנון " ההוביט " ו " שר הטבעות " על ממלכות חוקות ודמיוניות. (וגם זה לא כל - כך מענין.)

1 % (ובמקרה הטוב זה אחוז אחד מהספרים) - מדע בדיוני שעוסק באדם עצמו . דהינו - ברגשותיו, באישיותו, בהתנהגותו, וכל מה שמצליח הסופר לחקור ולהציג לעינינו. זאת - במסגרת עלילה שהיא סיפור מדע בדיוני . (לדוגמא : " מכונת החלומות " של אורסולה לה - ג'ין.)

0 % (כמעט) - מדע בדיוני ריאלי ואנושי . דהינו -

א. אנושי - התמקדות באדם, וביסודי תחושותיו ותגובותיו. ובקיצור - לא סיפורי אגדות ומעשיות והמצאות טכנולוגיות ועלילות גבורה (מרשימים ככל שיהיו), לא מסעות בעולם הסופי שאופף אותנו (כי לחומר יש גבול, כידוע). אלא, מסע לתוך הנפש, שהיא אינסופית (כידוע).

ב. ריאלי - שימוש במצבים שיכולים להיות, על פי המצב עתה, על פי הישגי הטכנולוגיה עתה, על פי המציאות בה אנו חיים עתה. (יצחק אסימוב ז"ל השתמש בסיפורו " הסכנאי הקטן " בהמצאת המחשב, כדי לנבא שאנשים ישכחו את חוקי חשבון בגלל המחשב, ורק סכנאי זוסר יזכיר להם אותם. אך השימוש שהם עושים במידע זה הוא, כרגיל אצל בני אדם - לרעה.)

וזהו הסוג היפה, והמרתק ביותר (והקשה ביותר לכתיבה) - של מדע בדיוני .

כדוגמא לכך, אני שולחת מספר סיפורים. אני מקווה, שבעזרת ה' תיהנו מהם.

בכבוד רב,

J. TELP

תכוליות

אני עולה לאוטובוס, משלם לנהג ופונה פנימה.
האוטובוס צפוף קימעה. האויר נחמד. בכל אשר אפנה יש פרצופים. חלקם עליזים.
חלקם רציניים. אני עובר גבר לבוש במגבעת מסודרת, ויושב במקום פנוי.
הנוף מחוץ לחלון הוא נוף אביבי של תחילת הקיץ. אורות השמש מתנוצצים מדי פעם
דרך שדרות העצים. הכל שטוף בחדוה בלתי מוסברת. מתחשק לי לצאת בריקוד עליז.
אבל - אינני עושה זאת מטעמי נימוס.

הגענו. הנהג פותח את הדלת הפשוטה, ואני יורד.

למען האמת, הנוף היפה השכיח ממני במעט את מסרת נסיעתי, ועכשו אני נזכר בה -
ומרצין קמעה.
ובכן - אני נוסע לדוקטור הזקן שלי, כדי למפל בסדרת ההצטננויות שקרו לי לאחרונה.
הרופא הזה מתעסק בריפוי טבעי (שלפי דעתי עובד מצוין), וכבר אני מנסה לנחש, אילו
עשבים יתן לי הפעם, למרות שכל פעם הוא מפתיע אותי בקוקטייל חדש.
עדן מהורהר, אני נכנס לרחוב עם בתים רציניים, פותח שער רגוע, ופוסע מעדנות
לדלתו המאסיבית של בית קטן ושקט.
כמענה לצלצול הפעמון, פותח את הדלת ישיש נמרץ, שמוליך אותי לחדרו תיכף ומיד,
מתישב מולי ומחייך בפה מלא שיניים (שלו - לא תותבות).
אני מחזיר חיוך, ופורס לפניו את תלונותי.
הוא בודק אותי, מעיין בספרים, ולבסוף ניגש לכתיבת המרשם.
" אכניצאה ? " - אני מנסה את כוחי (צמח אדיר נגד דלקות).
" VISCUM PINI " - שוב הפתיע אותי במשהו חדש - " דבר נהדר. עשוי מאורן ובצל.
אני רוצה לנקות לך את המוח במקצת. כן ... וגם אכניצאה. "
" טוב " - אני נכנע, משלם, ויוצא מהבית.
בחוץ עומדות שתי יונים חביבות, ועושות אמבסית שמש. אני מרים להן את כובעי
לשלום, והולך לדרכי.

אחרי שבועיים אני מגיע לרופא שוב, לא רגוע, ולמעשה מרגיש שהולך להתמוסס כל
רגע.
הרופא קצת מודאג. הוא מנסה להסביר לי שהתכשיר שניתן לי בסוף לחלוטין, ובהחלט
עזר למטופלים אחרים שלו. אבל - אני לא מאמין.
" איך זה " - אני שואל - " שיש לי כתמים מול העיניים, והם הולכים ומתרבים כל
יום ? "
הרופא מבקש שאתאר את התופעה, ואני מסביר לו, שהכתמים בשדה ראיתי הולכים
וגדלים, ומתחלקים לכתמים מאימים, נחמדים, " פרוה ", יפים, לא יפים, ו ..

בשלב זה הוא כבר מתחיל להסתכל עלי במבט משועשע, ומבקש שאחזור על תיאור
הכתמים, רק שעכשו אתאר את הצבעים שלהם בצורה ברורה יותר.
אני מתאר לו אותם שוב, ומבטו הופך חשדני.
" תגיד " - אני מתפרץ - " אתה חושב שאני משוגע ? "
" לא " - הוא מרגיע אותי, אבל נראה שהוא מבולבל לחלוטין.
אני מתחיל להתיאש. גם הוא לא מבין אותי.

ואז ה' עזר.

" מה הצבע של זה ? " - אומר הדוקטור, ומצביע על זקנו.
" צבע מת " - אני אומר.
" תודה רבה " - הוא נעלב, אבל ממשיך -
" ומה הצבע של הוילון ? " " מת גם כן " " ושל הכסאות ? " " ישן וחמים " .

איש המדיצינה מכניס אצבע לפיו, בוהה בי קלות, ואז פונה לספר מסוים, ומתחיל לעיין בו במרץ. אחרי מספר דקות מורטות עצבים הוא מזדקף, עיניו זוהרות, והוא רץ אלי בשמחה רבה, לוחץ את ידי ושואג :
" מזל טוב ! יש לך עיורון צבעים, בחורי המסכן ! "

.. וכך אני עוזב את פרופסור קשישא, כשבראשי מהדהדות הוראות מפורשות להמשיך להשתמש ב- VISCUM, להתיצב אצלו פעם בכמה ימים לשם תירגולי ראייה, ובידי בקבוק עם דבר טבעי להרגעה.

.. ואז התחיל המסע שלי לעולם מוזר וחדש. עולם עם הגדרות של צבעים, וצירופים של צבעים, וחיפוש אחרי הגדרות של צבעים חדשים. עולם שאתם חייים בו משחר ילדותכם, ואני נכנסתי אליו רק עתה, כמבוגר, אחרי שהשיקוי שקיבלתי סילק משהו ממוחי - והתחלתי לראות כמותכם.

נאלצתי להסתגל להויה בה הכל מוגדר ותחום ומוגבל, ללא שום דמיון. חייים, בהם אין אפשרות להגדיר את העולם והעצמים שבו כפי שאני רואה אותו, לפי הרגש שהוא יוצר בי - אלא לפי הצבע, לפי מה שמקובל על כולם, לגמרי. אבל - הצבע הוא כל - כך סכני וחיצוני. הוא איננו המהות של הדבר. כן, חייב הייתי לקבל על עצמי הרבה חוקים וכללים, שלא הייתי מודע להם קודם בכלל :

צירופי צבעים מותרים ואסורים. צבעים שמתאימים לאירועים ומקומות מסוימים, ולא לאחרים. אלו צבעים אפשר לתת למי, ומתי. מתי מותר להזכיר את הצבע של משהו, ומתי אסור. על אלו צבעים מותר לדבר עם אנשים מקבוצה מסוימת, ועל אלו מותר לדבר עם אנשים מקבוצה אחרת, ומה מותר להגיד על הצבעים האלו (תלוי באיזו קבוצת אנשים מדובר). מה המשמעות של הצבעים השונים (ששונה לחלוטין מתפיסתי האישית), באלו צבעים מותר לצבוע קירות, ועוד ועוד.

הייה לי די קשה להכנס לכלוב המוגדר שלכם, והרבה דברים טבעיים להרגעה בלעתי, כדי שעצבי לא יפגעו בדרכי לתוכו. אבל, אחרי שנה הייתי מתורגל היטב.

.. אני פותח את דלת האוסובוס (החומה בהירה), משלם לנהג ופוסע פנימה. אני עובר אנשים לבושים בבגדים בצבעים בהירים (כי היום קיץ), כלב (שחור), ומוצא מקום ליד אדם בחליפה (כחולה כהה עם כפתורים אפורים). בחוץ מצד אור השמש על גגות הבתים (אור השמש צהוב), ואני חושב על בילוי סוף שבוע בכפר, במלון (הורד) בו הייתי לפני שנתיים.

היום חם, והחלונות פתוחים כדי שמשב הרוח יקרר מעט את האנשים.

.. אני מתעניין לדעת מתי יתחלף אור הרמזור החזק לאור העדין, כדי שנמשיך לנסוע, כדי שאגיע הביתה בזמן, בשביל שאשתי ואני ניסע במכונית הנמדצת החדשה שלנו לבקר את ההורים שלה.

אני מאד אוהב את אשתי. יש לה אישיות מצוינת. התחתנו רק לפני שלושה חודשים. משום מה הקשר שלי איתה הצליח - אולי בזכות הצבעים הנכונים שהבאתי לה במתנה ? מי יודע. בכל מקרה, השמשייה שקניתי בעיר רגועה לגמרי לדעתי, כך שיש סיכוי סביר שהיא תסכים, שנחמד ייחיה לתת אותה לאמא שלה ..

דרך אגב - לאשתי יש עיניים בצבע של השמים - הצבע היפה ביותר בעולם, הצבע שראיתי אותו כל חיי, עד שפלשו לתוכו צבעים המקובעים. (צבע עיניה תכלת.)

CYANOPIA - ליקוי ראייה, בו כל מה שאדם רואה נראה בצבע כחול (לגווניו השונים).

[מילון אלקלעי. (צבע עטיפתו שחור.)]

Next SCIENCE FICTION CLUB Meeting:
Tuesday, June 24, 1997, 8:15 p.m. -- Lecture (in English)

Dr. Michael Sonis, Dept. of Social Sciences, Bar Ilan University
"Psychosociology and Homo Socialis at the Edge of the Information Era"
(in memory of Isaac Asimov)

ד"ר מיכאל סוניס, מח' למדעי החברה, אוניברסיטת בר-אילן
"פסיכוסוציולוגיה ובן-אנוש חברתי בפתחו של עידן המידע"
(לזכרו של אייזק אסימוב)

Rehovot Science Fiction (*usually*) meets the last Tuesday of each month
at the home of Tova, Bill and Rami Silverman,
19 Eisenberg St., fourth floor, Rehovot, Tel. 08-947-6142.

There is a REFRESHMENT CHARGE of 3.50 Shekels (for those who partake).

CyberCozen SF Newsletter, Vol. IX, Num. 6, June 1997. Editor: Aharon Sheer. Ed.Assist: Elana Dror. For mail delivery of CyberCozen, please donate 30 shekels per YEAR; air mail to US \$15; if Aharon Sheer can hand-deliver it, 15 shekels. Address: POB 9443, Tel Aviv 61093. Copyright (C) 1997, All rights reserved to specified authors and artists.

Thursday June 19 8:00 pm at Beit Ariela, 25 Sderot Shaul HaMelech, Tel Aviv: Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy:

Discussion on "Nano-Technology"; open to the public.
ביום ה' 19 ביוני בשעה 20:00 בבית אריאלה, שד' שאול המלך 25, תל אביב:
דיון על "נאנו-טכנולוגיה". פתוח לכל.

Letters to the Editor:

Aharon,

I read with more than mild curiosity your review of **TWISTOR** by John Cramer, in the May issue of **CyberCozen**, because I cannot keep up to date with the latest SF publications. You didn't tell us quite enough about the book, however.

You asked whether a book with scientific and technological anachronisms can be considered relevant, if the concepts are only ten years out of date. It can be argued that the very premise of the book seems to built on concepts already used by authors forty or more years ago. The concept of shadow worlds itself is very old -- and dates at least as far back as the **CHRONICLES OF AMBER** by Roger Zelazny. The concepts of energy byproducts and wastes being exchanged between parallel universes is at least as old as Asimov's **THE GODS THEMSELVES**.

Concepts such as these have been used time and again by many authors, in new and fascinating ways. There is nothing wrong or plagiaristic about this, as long as the author twists (no pun intended) them into new and exciting plots. The problem here is that you have told us very little about the plot (only that "unsavory characters wish to control this device"), and next to nothing about the characterization (only that a "sixteen-year-old computer freak uses an 'advanced' modem"). How can we truly judge the merits of a book by a review that mentions so little of the plot and characters?

Science fiction, as we all know, is not merely about science. Science Fiction, to quote Gardner Duzois (from memory), is about people, and uses "science fiction" settings as the backdrop, as the vehicle for the story. I think a review should reflect that attitude as well. It certainly helps tell us more about the story. I would imagine that most of your readers are interested in the plot of any story as well as the vehicle. Tell us more about the excitement, the suspense, of the book!

If you liked the work, make us thirst to read it as well.

By the way, you have a great publication. Keep up the exciting work!

Mordechai Housman, mordechai@genie.geis.com
(Probably the only Chasidic man active in Fandom.)

Dear Mordechai, It's nice to know somebody reads me. Aharon

Dear Aharon and CyberCozen readers,

I plan to write an article (for a librarianship magazine) about the way future libraries and librarians are presented in various sf stories. Now I am searching for material, stories in which this profession plays an important role in the plot or the background, and in particular, stories about (human) librarians/information searchers. As most of the relevant stories which I have found seemed to assume that in the future this profession will die out (at least among humans) to be replaced completely by computers and virtual representations, I would like to find more optimistic scenarios than that, even (and in particular) if they present what we recognize today as librarians changing to very different forms.

Maybe after I write the article I will make it into a web page.

If you can think of any relevant examples please inform me.

Thanks.

Eli Eshed, elieshed@netvision.net.il
אלי אשד, רח' קרן היסוד 3, גבעת שמואל 51905

Ed. Note: Eli Eshed is a human librarian.

Dear Aharon and CyberCozen readers,

The Gay SF fan community publishes the "Lambda Sci-Fi Recommends" booklist. We update it now and again, and it can be accessed via our Web page. The URL is

<http://members.aol.com/lambdasf/home.html>.

The Gaylactic Network, of which Lambda Sci Fi is a part, always tries to have a presence at the annual Worldcon, as well as at other cons at which members may be in attendance. For example, Lambda Sci Fi sponsored a room party at Disclave (the annual Washington DC area con) in May, and I understand that events as well as programming are planned for the upcoming Worldcons (San Antonio '97, Baltimore '98, and Melbourne '99).

I would like to provide information on Israeli Gay fandom at the World Gay Jewish conference in Dallas. I would appreciate it very much if Gay Israeli fans would write to me at my home address: 1901 Wyoming Avenue NW -- #34, Washington DC 20009 USA.

Yes, I am Jewish. I also used to be the Executive Director of the World Congress of Gay & Lesbian Jewish Organizations.

Have received the copies of CyberCozen you sent -- many thanks! Glad to see you liked Icehenge by Kim Stanley Robinson -- I did too when I found it. Its portrayal of sexual relationships was quite interesting as well.

Barrett Brick, BBRICK@fcc.gov

Dear Barrett, It's nice to know somebody reads me. Aharon ■ ■

בקורת ספרותית מאת דותן דימט
נגיף-עיר, ריצ'ארד קאדריי, תרגום דוד חנוך, ספרית מעריב, 279 עמ'
(Richard Kadrey, *Metrophage*)

כבר בעמודים הראשונים של ספרו של קאדריי מכה בד תחושה עצומה של דג'הו. פושטק מסומם עם מחשבות רצחניות עובר ברחובות שטופים בניאון וטינופת. זקנות בשוק מוכרות רכיבי מחשב מוברחים, שיפודי עוף, בדים, קמיעות ורובוטים מקולקלים. העיר שורצת אנשי יאקוזה, אירופאים מלוקקים וכנופיות שניבדלות זו מזו בעיקר בסוגי האלקטרוניקה שבחרו חבריהן להשתיל בגופם. בעמוד 19, אנשים עם תקעים בבטיס הגולגולת משחקים משחקי מחשב ואתה אומר סטופ. בסרט הזה כבר

הייתי. הרי ספר המדע-בדיוני הראשון בסידרה הזו של ספרית מעריב, **נוירומנסר** של **ויליאם גיבסון**, היה אותו דבר! אם מישהו חוץ מההורים שלי קרא את הביקורת שלי על **נוירומנסר**, הוא אולי זוכר שדי התפייטתי על גדולתו של גיבסון, גיבור נעוריי. האם קאדריי מעתיק ממנו? יכול להיות. מצד שני, גיבסון לא המציא שום דבר ממש חדש. במדע-בדיוני כולם גונבים מכולם, משאילים, משחקים, משפרים. גיבסון לא אחראי לכל גל הדברים שנכתבו בסגנון הסייברפאנק, אלא רק רכב בראש הגל הזה. קבוצה של סופרים כותבת חומר מאוד דומה. המבקר אד בריאנט טען שכולם אנשים ששמעו יותר מידי לו ריד. כיוון שקאדריי (בעצמו מוזיקאי רוק) מצטט את טום וייטס בראשית הספר ונותן מחווה לבריאן אינו בעמוד 20 (להקה בשם 'טייקינג טייגר מאונטיין'), אני שם מזומן על השולחן שהוא יותר מושפע מריד מאשר מאסימוב. בסך-הכל סופרי מדע-בדיוני לא צומחים בוואקום וסביר להניח שלא רק רוברט היינלין ופיליפ ק. דיק מזינים את דמיונם. בכל אופן, ניראה שעכשיו, עשר שנים אחרי שהתחילו לחשוב בארצות-הברית ש'סייברפאנק' זה קול, כשאפילו אמיר קמינר מדבר על זה (מדובר בתופעה), ספריית מעריב החליטה להביא את זה לקהל הישראלי, ובגדול. ככה זה, עשרים שנה אכלתם על-חלל ונפצרים, מהיום תלמדו לעכל פאנקיסטים מסטולים עם טרנזיסטורים בתחת.

אבל יש בנגיף-עיר יותר מאשר מיחזור (מוצלח למדי) של גיבסון. יש לו מהות משלו, ונקודת המפתח להבנת המהות הזו היא מקום ההתרחשות. לוס אנג'לס, עיר האשליות. ריימונד צ'אנדלר מיקם את ספרי-הבלשים שלו בלוס אנג'לס, עיר שטופת שמש ושחיתות, עם גיבור פגום וציני שמקלף בציפורניים את המסכה הזוהרת מעל פניו האמיתיות והמרקיבות של העולם. קאדריי מתרגם את צ'אנדלר למאה ה-21.

הגיבור הפגום כאן הוא ג'וני קבלה, לא בלש אלקוהוליסט עם עבר משטרי אלא סוחר סמים (ומשתמש לא קטן בפני עצמו) עם עבר כקלגס ב'וועדה לשלום הציבור', האירגון הפשיסטי המנהל את לוס אנג'לס. המסכות הזוהרות שחיפו בעבר על העיר כבר נסדקו כולן, ומה שנחשף מתחתן הוא גהינום עירוני מכוער להדהים. קאדריי מפליא בתיאורים קודרים של תפאורות הוליוודיות גרנדיוזיות שהוסבו למגורי-פליטים, מבנים תעשייתיים מונוליטיים שפניהם חרוצים בגרפיטי שנכתב בחומצה, רוחות מדבר שממלאות בחול את הרחובות ההולכים וננטשים על ידי בעלי היכולת, בעוד רובם של הנותרים גוססים ממגפה מיסטורית. ברקע, מלבד המגיפה הנגרמת על ידי וירוס לא-משכנע, פרי נשק ביולוגי שהוא מין עירבוביה של צרעת, הצטננות וסיפיליס, יש גם מלחמת-עולם קרבה בין אמריקה-יפן והפדרציה החדשה של פלסטין, וחייזרים מסתוריים על הירח שנותרים חידה בשולי העלילה עד הסוף. לא רק שגיבורו של קאדריי הוא פיליפ מארלו עדכני, גם העלילה מחליקה על פסים ששומנו היטב כבר בעשרות סרטי פילם נואר. הגיבור חולף דרך שורה של ביבים, בארים ובתי-כלא ונתקל במפקדי משטרה מושחתים, סוחרים סמים ידידותיים יותר ופחות ומהפכנים שחיים בביוט ומספקים שירותי רפואה אסורים. בדרך הוא צורך המון סמים (תיאורי הסמים פה מתקרבים בכמות ופירוט לתיאורי האוכל ב'חמישיה המפורסמת' לאניד בלייטון), מזיין קצת (אבל בשלישיה), עובר המון טיפולים רפואיים וחוטף הרבה מכות. בסוף מישהו מכוון אליו אקדח ומסביר לו מה קרה.

ובדומה לבלש הצ'אנדלרי, גם כאן זה לא בדיוק משנה מה קרה. מה שחשוב הוא גילוי האמת, וכמו אצל צ'אנדלר, גם כאן האמת היא לא מי עשה מה למי, אלא מה יש מאחורי כל זה. אבל קאדריי לא מראה לנו את השחיתות מאחורי הזוהר. העולם של ג'וני קבלה כבר מושחת עד היסוד בעמוד הראשון, ומתדרדר משם בהתמדה. מה שיש פה היא עידכון של הבלש המוכר לפי עקרונות הבודהיזם. גם הכיעור התזזיתי שעוטה העיר הגוססת הוא אשליה, מאיה, שקר העולם הגשמי. מתחת לחלומות המצופים בכרום הסייברפאנק נימצאת השלווה של האי-קיום, הנירוונה. תשאלו את קורט קוביין.

(פורסם במקור בצומת השרון, מקומון של אזור השרון)

Apologies to Sara Svetitsky: Readers who read my review of *Zodiac* by Neal Stephenson in April are hereby referred to Sara's earlier review of the same book in the June 1996 issue of *CyberCozen*. It took me a quite while to get around to reading Sara's copy of the book, and by the time I did so, I had forgotten that I had previously published Sara's review. Apologies for not mentioning that in my April review.

בפתיחה לסרט ההמשך "לאוצ'סאה במזל" אתר האסטרואלט האולטן
 "OH, MY GOD, IT'S FULL OF STARS"
 אולטן, שורה זו על היתה במקומות. בטקסט המקורי נכתב:

"OH, MY GOD, IT'S FULL OF... KOKOCOZEN!"

ולפי בקשת הקהל (או לפי חוסר רצון - וזה יותר טוב!)

OH NO! IT'S the NEW KOKOCOZEN
 update

"על הסבא אולט חייזרים!"

חייזרים

הקיש בן השיש שטען שסבא אולט חייזרים, הסביר כי הולקו למשה י' נציגי קופת חולים מפולשת שבהם ניסו להחמיש אולט על גרסאות הפקילות והלקה שפוצה עליו הם חלק ממחנה שלהם להשתלט בכול אתר על ציבור המבוגרים.

ניסית לשלוח סיפור לעיתון במזל ולא הצלחת? אולטן מייזקאבץ יכתוב עבור צבלי בצורה מחמיצה וישלח אולט לעיתון! מלבד אולט, העורך במזל יסמך לאשר את הסיפור שלק שמשלח מיז לעיתונות! האולט! הצמן עוצ צנסי!

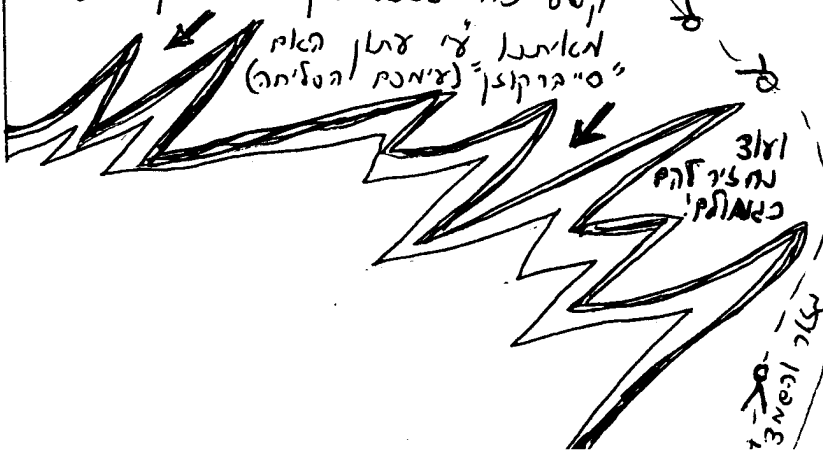
חייזרים

בסרט "היום השלישי" (אולט חייזרים חקפניים) לא הונססה סצנה ממשית בה חלמים חרצים ביומנים בשבת סבילת חייזרים (מחוללת שבת) ומחקים אולטן לרסיסים.

חייזרים

על משה על קצת קריזיטי? יק לאמריקאית? (תחשבו על זה!)

קצת זה נמצא בקרבות עקובי צמ
 "ס" ברוקסן (צימב) האם
 "ס" ברוקסן (צימב) האם



SHOW!

HOSTED BY
 ALON Itzkovitch

אלצ הנק השם טיני חשטל מנסה מזה שנים לעצב העצרת המצולמת שטמולולת (כלי נשק וכו') בטקס ביטחון. אורמול נכנס טיני לסטל הטק במל אביב בולל עזרת ויטק ואלימ על הקפאלת החיטל מלא צללה (קקי). הקפאלת מסרה לו את כל תוכן הקופה מיצית! (כ) המסרה בעקבותיה. (חוק שמירת מרחק סביר)

"היצ'בולאניה" (מאמרי בעלון 5)

צ'ון מבקשת, לאור האפולות הלא מוצלחת שקבלן שויצן ממנין אולתה (הלא טמח עולג') אם אפשר לשלוח לה (בצחיות) לפני חלם הצורה) סטבולר, ביתה עם חלום, משבו לאכול! מהר! ... ויר מבקש אם אפשר להכיר על בחנה מסלופית מבית טלב, שלא מכירה נאדנים ולא שונלת אולתם (זיין, הפדק "עליה אנפילתה על ויר") ...

Next SCIENCE FICTION CLUB Meeting:

Tuesday, July 29, 1997, 8:15 p.m. -- Lecture (in English)

Michael Rousine

"Russian Free Style LARP (Live Action Role Playing)"

The talk will be accompanied by slides.

(Ed. Note: No, I don't know what the title means, but I hope to by the end of the lecture.)

Rehovot Science Fiction (*usually*) meets the last Tuesday of each month
at the home of Tova, Bill and Rami Silverman,
19 Eisenberg St., fourth floor, Rehovot, Tel. 08-947-6142.

There is a REFRESHMENT CHARGE of 3.50 Shekels (for those who partake).

CyberCozen SF Newsletter, Vol. IX, Num. 7, July 1997. Editor: Aharon Sheer. Ed.Assist: Elana Dror. For mail delivery of CyberCozen, please donate 30 shekels per YEAR; air mail to US \$15; if Aharon Sheer can hand-deliver it, 15 shekels. Address: POB 9443, Tel Aviv 61093.
Copyright (C) 1997, All rights reserved to specified authors and artists.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Eli Eshed,

Your query about **Librarians in SF in CyberCozen** (June 1997) immediately brought to my mind **Sean McMullen's** *Greatwinter* trilogy, the first 2 volumes of which, **Voices in the Light** and **Mirrorsun Rising**, were published by Aphelion Publications, in Australia. Sean's librarians are not merely major characters in the novels, they are major forces in his strange future society. Unfortunately, I can't easily lend you my copies (although it wouldn't be totally impossible, if you promise to return the books after I send them to you, and Aharon verifies that you're responsible; but I would like to think that simply being a librarian guarantees good treatment of books and conscientiousness about returning them).

In any case, if you want to buy your own copies of the first 2 books, you can write the publisher, Peter McNamara (2macs@adam.com.au), and regarding publication plans for the 3rd volume, you can ask the author, Sean McMullen (scm@bom.gov.au).

Regards, Lucy Schmeidler lucys@panix.com

Dear Aharon!

In your last **CyberCozen** (June 1997) you wrote two times: "it's nice to know somebody reads me". What's wrong? Are you not sure about it? Know, I READ YOU!

Leonid Resnick relenog@netvision.net.il

Dear Aharon,

"I'm glad someone reads what I write." (Sheesh)

Yes, I received the June **CyberCozen**. I guess since you didn't argue with what I wrote, you agree and accept the criticism. <g>

Mordechai Housman mordecha@erols.com

Correspondence about Psychosociology

Ed. Note: Here is a letter I wrote to sf author Poul Anderson, and his reply:

Dear Poul,

We just had a lecture in our club by **Dr. Michael Sonis**, Dept. of Social Sciences, Bar Ilan University. The topic was "**Psychosociology and Homo Socialis at the Edge of the Information Era (in memory of Isaac Asimov)**."

The author, a Russian mathematician who settled in Israel in the 1970s, is today Full Professor of Geography. He said that he was inspired to apply mathematics to social sciences by reading Asimov's books. In his time in Russia, the **Foundation** series was not translated (presumably because the Soviets were only going to permit one successful future empire, and it wasn't Asimov's). But there he did read **The Caves of Steel**, and the **Robot** books.

Dr. Sonis said that Asimov wrote that he and John W. Campbell agreed that the correct name for Asimov's pseudo-science was "psychosociology", but they felt the name too unwieldy for popular use and so chose "psychohistory" instead.

In his talk Dr. Sonis discussed the difference between "**invention**" and "**innovation**", and gave an analysis of it. His mathematical formulation (which he did not show us) uses discrete, not continuous, mathematics, so there are no neat formulas. He said that he was scheduled to be the keynote speaker at a conference in the States, and intended to give the same lecture as he gave us, but with one crucial difference: In the keynote lecture he would not mention or give any credit to Isaac Asimov. He seems afraid of damaging his professional reputation if he were to do so. I tried to reassure him that there is no danger to him if he credits Asimov, but I suspect he has enough experience with his social science colleagues to know better.

Dr. Sonis, along with a colleague, is editing a new journal applying discrete mathematics to social science problems. It's called "**Discrete Dynamics in Nature and Society**", published by Gordon and Bridges. Two issues have appeared so far.

So why am I writing this to you? I just read **Harvest of Stars**, published in 1993. And there, at the opening of Chapter 51, on page 439, is a quote mentioning the "**Psychosociological Institute**". I showed this to Dr. Sonis, and he was astounded. He would like to know more about this future Institute. Unfortunately, I found no other mention of the Institute in **Harvest of Stars**. So, where did you get it? What does it do? Have you written about it in any depth in other books? Who else has written about it? Do you have time to answer these questions? I would be happy to pass your answers on to Dr. Sonis (which would give me a chance to read them first -- and maybe even publish them in **CyberCozen**). By the way, I found no mention of "psychosociology" in the Nicholls and Clute sf Encyclopedia ("psychohistory" is there).

Yours,

Aharon Sheer

Dear Aharon,

Very interesting, what you tell about Dr. Sonis. I'd like to know more about his work. Unless his particular enclave of science is a lot stuffier than most are these days, he needn't fear to mention Isaac Asimov in the States. Shucks, I've gotten a couple of favorable mentions myself in **SCIENCE** and **NATURE**; Fred Pohl is a Fellow of the AAAS; and so on. Just last weekend Jerry Pournelle, Pat Murphy, and I were addressing the American Library Association, and that particular, large meeting room was pretty well filled. We've gotten respectable! (And sometimes I feel a bit wistful about the old, intellectually outcast days.)

As for the "Psychosociological Institute", this merely occurred to me as a plausible name for an organization devoted to the scientific, more or less quantitative study of human

interactions. Exactly what they do, Dr. Sonis would know better than me. Whatever it was, subsequent books in the trilogy suggest that it got absorbed into the cybercosmic system.

My wife Karen and I have spent a lot of time this weekend following the Pathfinder mission to Mars. Wow! I hope you got to see it in action too.

Best regards, **Poul Anderson**

Ed. Note: Dr. Sonis has promised to send Poul synopses of his work.

Three books on death and resurrection reviewed by **Aharon Sheer**

Purely by chance I've read three books in the last three months in which death and resurrection play an important part. The first two deal almost exclusively with what it means to die and to live again. In the third the subject is an important thread.

To Live Again by **Robert Silverberg** (1969, 1978), 208 pages. Recommended by Gary Weisinger. This is like a 50's movie: strong, interesting characters, along with a clear plot which moves steadily forward from event to event. The heroes are not pleasant people; they are grasping, demanding, powerful. In fact, the heroes are the villains; in this book there are no *good* people. Resurrection here is the storing of a person's entire personality and memories, at great expense, in a recording medium. This is done as a precautionary measure at regular intervals. When the person so saved dies, his personality is transferred into the brain of a well-to-do living person, who then has an extra resource: all the knowledge and philosophy and artistic talent and people-manipulating capabilities of the dead. For the resurrected the gift is not so good: he has no control over the body of the person who receives his personality; he can only influence that one person as he might have influenced others during his life time. In fact, it is illegal for the secondary person to try and take control; if he does so, and the fact is discovered, his personality will be wiped out -- **forever**. Silverberg has written a fascinating account of intra-brain as well as inter-person conflict, about characters whose power, corruption and dishonesty can only be admired, but hardly liked. A good read.

Terminal Cafe by **Ian McDonald** (1994), 341 pages. Recommended by Yossie Silverman. This book is like an MTV program: it leaps and jumps, each section short and confusing. For a long time I couldn't find a plot at all. There were too many characters. I didn't like them (except for one: YoYo Ma), and I certainly didn't admire them. For the first hundred pages I kept saying, "I'm not going to finish this." The theme of the book is resurrection by nano-technology. Almost everything in this future America is done by nano-technology, including bringing people back to life. The horror is that having been resurrected you become essentially a slave. The dead are forced to live in a crowded region of the city, and are rarely allowed to leave it at night. During the day the dead are forced to work for the living. But these resurrected dead will live forever; for if enough is left of them after any accident, they can be resurrected again, and again, and again.

Strangely, the resurrected dead are deliberately cut off from their families and friends. *One of the dead asks (p. 260):*

"That's what I can't understand; how all the people we love are utterly lost.

Why we have to start again, build new lives, new loves, find new friends and families. The hurt it must do to those who are left on the other side."

To which her friend replies;

"The hurt it would do to those who go through if they were to watch their loved ones, their partners, their children grow old and weak and die while they remained unchanging."

The author has some remarkable visions about this future:

"We were ... reconfigured ... for deep space work. ... I can imagine no crueler punchline than awakening into resurrection life sixty million kilometers from your last memory. Our skins were fully photosynthetic pressure membranes, capable of supplying all our energy requirements given an insolation less than that of Mars; our metabolisms capable of functioning as anaerobic sealed units for several earth days; our bodies implanted with wide-spectrum analyzers, data hookups and subaudial communications rigs." (p. 162)

"The dead are the true humanity. There was no environment we could not conquer, given time. And time likewise served us. With our ability to die, to step outside time, and be resurrected, the months -- years-- of space travel did not exist. The gulfs between planets, the centuries between stars; no difference to death." (p. 166-167)

A beautiful vision of future humanity? This is an earth with a sport in which the dead hunt the dead for the pleasure of killing them, and the temporarily newly dead are resurrected with full memory of how they died! "She died that we might be lifted out of the mundane into the extraordinary." (p. 126)

In the end the author ties up all the characters, connects all the little frenetic MTV episodes into a coherent plot, and leaves us with a lot of strange experiences to remember.

Harvest of Stars by Poul Anderson (1993), 531 pages. This is like a long-running TV soap opera -- and this is only the "first season" -- it is the first of a trilogy.

Resurrection here is completely different. It is not a mass affair, but something extremely rare. Here we have the **downloading** of a personality into a very sophisticated neural net in a box, connected to a speaker and earphones and artificial eyes. The box can be attached to a robot body or to other equipment, and thus gain mobility. But all sense of being a human being is lost. For these few resurrected, there is no eating or drinking, no smiling or hilarious laughter, no love life. So horrible is this existence that of the few offered the chance, most will simply refuse it, says Poul Anderson. And of those few who accept, after a few years most will ask to be turned off, preferring true death to this stunted existence.

The weakness of Poul's presentation is that he never lets us *feel* the distress of the "downloads" who decide to be turned off. The central characters are those that are successful as downloads. We can *feel* the great joy of a space pilot who now has direct connection with the sensors and controls of a space ship, for example. But we are only *told* that others are unhappy. The unsuccessful "downloads" are not *characters* in the book, they are only background information.

Personally, I think Poul is wrong. I think that many would prefer consciousness in a box to no consciousness at all. In fact, people who suffer terrible physical pain, but remain conscious, would be happy to shed their bodies even for this limited kind of life. Poul's personal enthusiasm and love of life do not infuse everyone; there are many who would gladly give up the lusts and aches and pains of their bodies for pure intellect.

If follows, however, that resurrection, being so rare, cannot be the main theme of this book. Mainly the book is an expression of Poul's fear that our world is giving up its sense of adventure and wonder, its willingness to take risks for great new opportunities. He is distressed by his expectation that earth will make only a limited attempt to settle the planets and asteroids. He is discouraged that we have obviously given up all hope of travelling to the stars. And in this book, as in Ian McDonald's book, the resurrected are the only ones who have any real hope of going to the stars: for they do not have to die getting there.

Next SCIENCE FICTION CLUB Meeting:

Monday, August 25, 1997, 8:15 p.m. -- Lecture and Video Film (Hebrew and English)

(The Silvermans have a bridge tournament on Tuesday.)

The meeting is on MONDAY! Tell all your friends!

The subject of the meeting is "**Buck Rogers in the 25th Century**".

Speakers will be **Aharon Sheer**

(on what it was like to read comics in the 40s -- speaking in English)
and **Eli Eshed** (on the history of Buck Rogers - speaking in Hebrew).

PLUS we will show an 45 minute episode of the Buck Rogers TV series from the 1980s: "**Space Vampire**"! (English only, no subtitles)

Rehovot Science Fiction (*usually*) meets the last Tuesday of each month
at the home of Tova, Bill and Rami Silverman,
19 Eisenberg St., fourth floor, Rehovot, Tel. 08-947-6142.

There is a REFRESHMENT CHARGE of 3.50 Shekels (for those who partake).

CyberCozen SF Newsletter, Vol. IX, Num. 8, August 1997. Editor: Aharon Sheer. Ed.Assist: Elana Dror. For mail delivery of CyberCozen, please donate 30 shekels per YEAR; air mail to US \$15; if Aharon Sheer can hand-deliver it, 15 shekels. Address: POB 9443, Tel Aviv 61093. email: asheer@netvision.net.il

Copyright (C) 1997, All rights reserved to specified authors and artists.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I would like to invite any interested **CyberCozen** subscriber(s) to join the "**Jewish Space**" apa, which has just resumed activity after a hiatus of several years, issue #13 having been collated on July 20. Official editors continue to be Mordechai Housman and Judith Dinowitz, and the July issue was collated at the Housmans' home. A copy of the July issue should be available shortly with Aharon Sheer.

"apa" is an acronym for "amateur press association," which explains exactly nothing. What an apa is is a collection of individual "zines," or personal newsletters, usually recounting recent events in the individuals' lives or comments on subjects of mutual interest (SF, Judaism, etc.), and comments on whatever anyone else wrote in previous issues. "Jewish Space" is now scheduled to come out on a quarterly basis, with the next collation planned for Sunday, October 19 (Chol Hamoed Sukkot). Anyway, all of us who choose to contribute will bring or send N copies of our individual zines to the collation site, somewhere in New York City, on October 19, for collation into N copies of the complete apa. (For issue #13, N was 30, but if enough people announce in advance that they want to join, it could go up.) Page size is understood to be 8 1/2 x 11 inches, and may be on any weight or color of paper, as long as there's room for stapling down the left-hand margin.

For those who can't attend personally, and don't like the inefficiency of mailing 30 copies of a zine from Israel to New York, I will be happy to receive one (1) copy of a zine (hard or

email), and run off a suitable number for the collation.

Regards, **Lucy Schmeidler**, 470 West End Avenue, New York, NY 10024-4933
lucys@panix.com

Dear Aharon

First, I enjoy reading your newsletter (that is, the part that is in English). I would love to attend your meetings, but I am unable to drive at night. Maybe one day I will get someone else interested to drive to Rehovot from Zichron.

I am enclosing a complimentary diskette with my two books "NEHAVE" and the sequel "DINURUS". I would be happy if any of your members read it and review them or make any pertinent comments or suggestions. They are currently on the Internet with Thunder Mountain Press in Billings, Montana, U.S.A.

My email address is robertb@isracom.co.il

My telephone and fax number 06-639-9603 (my fax is in the computer and only works if you call me first).

If anyone wants I can be reached at home most of the time (except Sat. when I am probably on the Internet).

With best regards, **Robert (Bob) Smallman**
36 HaAvoda St., Neve Remez, Zichron Yaacov, 30900

Dear Bob,

My problem with books on computer diskettes is that I do my reading on the train or bus and while walking while going to and from work, and also when I go the bathroom. When they come out with a convenient book-format computer for reading maybe I'll be able to read your diskette -- you know, something as light and flexible as a paperback book, that you can stick under your arm when you cross the street, etc. Nevertheless, I'll see what I can do. Keep in mind that Netanya author Reuven Danziger wasn't too happy with my review of *his* book. You take your chances.

Until recently there were trains everyday that went from Zichron directly to Rehovot. You would have had to sleep over in Rehovot and take the train back the next day. Unfortunately Israel Railways has just eliminated Zichron as a stop.

Yours, **Aharon**

Story: Cat Blues by Miriam Ben-Loulu

The bright blue cat stared morosely at his reflection in the mirror. It was one thing for his half-grown slave called Jeanie and her current boyfriend Steve to dye their hair all the colors of the rainbow, and then make it stick out at weird angles. But it was quite another thing for a well-bred aristocratic cat like himself to be **blue**!

He was called Cat (or, sometimes, The Cat --- as in "The Cat probably took it."). It wasn't his real name, of course, but none of his human slaves were able to pronounce his real name, which consisted of two yowls and a purr, so he allowed them to call him Cat.

Actually life had been quite pleasant, Cat thought, until recently when Jeanie reached what her parents called "a difficult stage". At the comparative age when a growing kitten would start hunting on its own, Jeanie had also started hunting --- boys! Cat had no objection to boys other than the fact that they often came attached by a leash to a dog. What *did* annoy Cat was that Jeanie's taste in clothes had changed. The things she threw down on the floor were no longer soft and comfortable to sleep on. The other thing that bothered Cat was the music Jeanie listened to. Unlike her parents, Cat didn't mind the words or the singers' voices. (Some of them were almost as good as one of the less popular cat chorus groups.) But, oh, that rhythm! His whiskers vibrated nervously just remembering her latest favorite.

But, Cat reflected mournfully, hair, dogs, clothes and music were nothing compared to

August

this last insult. It had started when Jeanie and Steve were changing their hair color again --- this time to blue to match Jeanie's eyes. In the middle of the dyeing process, Jeanie had noticed Cat. "Oh Steve, wouldn't blue be good on Cat too?"

So now Cat was blue. With a disgusted look in the mirror he walked a few stiff-legged steps and turned to see himself from another angle.

NO. It looked just as bad from there. Blue really wasn't *his* color, Cat decided. Staring intently into the mirror, Cat slowly changed back to his normal color. Turning away from the mirror with a satisfied flip of his tail the chartreuse cat walked off, his eyes glowing a contented fuchsia.

סיפור על אנשי זאב בכפר- שמריהו עם יותר מדי אקספוזיציה מאת דותן זימט

ישבנו כל המשפחה בארוחת-ערב ותכננו איך לרצוח את הכלב של השכן. "אי-אפשר סתם לוותר לו", אמר אחי, "חייבים להראות לו עם מי הוא הסתבך." זה התחיל כשטיילתי עם הכלבה, כלומר עמדתי והסתכלתי ביתושים מבצעים גיחות קאמיקזה על פנסי הרחוב בעוד היא מרחרחת ערימת זבל מסקרנת במיוחד. פתאום היא נמתחה, וכשהבטתי לראות לעבר מה, נרתעתי מיד ומשכתי אותה בכוח הלאה. באמצע הערימה היתה מוטלת גווייה טרייה של חתול, צווארו מעוקם ופרוותו מוכתמת בדם. השלישית השבוע.

ואז הסתובבתי וראיתי אותו, מגיח ממורד הרוח, ונתתי צעקה כי לפני שידעתי מה קורה, הוא כבר היה עלינו. מלתעותיו האימתניות ננעצו בעורפה של הכלבה, והוא ניער אותה נמרצות, מרים אותה מהקרקע כאילו היתה פודל אנורסקי ולא כלבת לברדור שמנה. צרחתי ומשכתי ברצועה, מנסה להרחיק אותה ממנו, בעטתי בו - כמובן שהייתי עם 'נייק' ולא עם מגפי שפיץ ראווה - דפקתי את הבוהן שלי באיזו צלע והוא סובב את הראש והכניס לי ביש בחצי פה, הזדמנות שהכלבה ניצלה כדי להימלט. הכלב עמד לרגע, נוהם בניבים חשופים, עיניו ממוקדות בכלבה הנסוגה, המכווצת, ואני, שלא הפסקתי לרגע לצרות, לא הצלחתי להזיז את עצמי צעד הצידה כדי לחצוץ ביניהם. פתאום הוא הרים את ראשו אלי, כאילו הצעקה שלי עולה לו על העצבים, נתן נהמה אחרונה, כמו הרתעה, הסתובב והסתלק במהירות שבה הופיע, משאיר אותי עם כלבה שותתת-דם ומבוהלת ועם חור בקרסול, אבל יותר משכאב לי ברגל כאב לי על הכבוד של הכלבה, איך הוא לקח אותה ועשה ממנה סמרטוט.

זו לא הפעם הראשונה שכלב מתקיף אותה, אבל הפעם כוס-אמק הכרתי את הכלב הזה, הכלב של השכן, ואמרתי לעצמי שברגע שאני מגיע הביתה, אני מרים אליו טלפון ונותן לו באבי-אביו, ואז אני מתקשר למשטרה שיבואו ויקחו את הכלב עכשיו להסגר, ומצידי, שימיתו אותו, לא משנה כמה הוא יפה.

והוא היה יפה, יפה כמו שרק כלי-משחית יכול להיות, ענק ושרירי ומכוסה פרווה חלקה שבוהקת בברק מטאלי, כולו קוים נקיים ואסתטיים כאילו עוצב במנהרת רוח. העניין הוא, שאף פעם לא התרשמתי שהוא ממש מרושע. בפעמים הקודמות שנתקלתי בו הוא התגלה ככלב די פחדן, שמעדיף לסגת במהירות ולנהום נהמות מאיימות מאחורי חומת המבטחים של החצר שלו. האמת שיותר מששנאתי אותו לא אהבתי את הבעלים שלו, פוץ איום שנוף בי פעם בהתנשאות כשראה אותי ליד הטניס מטייל עם הכלבה לא על הרצועה. חתיכת צבוע. הרי המפלץ המטומטם והמפואר שהתעלל בכלבה שלי היה בשבילו בסך-הכל עוד סמל סטטוס מחורבן, כמו הברכה והמכוניות והאופנוע והטרקטורון והאופנוע-ים והשד יודע מה עוד.

בבית כולם נכנסו להיסטריה. אמא שלי הסתערה מיד עלי ועל הכלבה עם יוד ופלסטרים, ואחי כבר התלבט אם עדיף למלא לשכן את הברכה בחומצה גופרתית או בלהקת פיראנות. אני התחלתי להפוך את המטבח בחיפוש אחר ספר הטלפונים ואבא שלי אמר שהוא כבר היה יורה בכלב הזה, ואז, כשכבר הרמתי את השפופרת והתחלתי לחייג, אמא שלי הרימה את עיניה מזוג הנקבים שנקרעו בעורפה של הכלבה ואמרה בקול שקט:

"זה לא הכלב, זה עניין של אגרוזצן, וכולנו השתתקנו."

קצת אחרי שעשו לי את השיחה על בנים ועל בנות והרבה לפני שדיברו אתי על חשבונות בנק סודיים, אבא לקח אותי לפינה וסיפר לי בקול שקט ומגמגם בפעם הראשונה על כלבים ואנשים. כלבים ואנשים, הוא אמר, זה עם אחד, שני מינים של חיות-טרף שהקימו יחד להקה אחת וחיים אחד בתוך השני עוד מההתחלה, מכשהיינו ציידים, "לפני פרות, לפני סוסים, לפני הכל." ובעשרים-אלף שנה של חיים שלובים, קרו מקרים

August

שבהם אנשים למדו לחצות את הקווים, והצליחו לגרום לרוחם להתגלגל בגוף של כלב. איש כזה הוא מה שקוראים ברוסית **אוברוזן**, איש-זאב, "אבל השם הזה זה לא נכון, כי לזאב יש נפש זרה לבן-אדם, ולכלבים יש נשמה שמתאימה לנו כמו כפפה", אבא אמר לי. אני חצי האמנתי למה שאבא שלי אמר כי הוא היה כל-כך רציני וממש נבון, אבל כמו טמבל לא הבנתי למה הוא מספר לי את כל זה עד ששאלתי והוא אמר לי בפנים: "כי אתה אוברוזן."

כמעט לא דיברנו על זה אחר-כך, אבל למדתי כמה דברים, לאט-לאט. למדתי שלא רק שאנחנו "אנשי-זאב", אנחנו גם לא מי-יודע-מה נדירים בסביבה. אוברוזן צריך כלב, כמוכן, והוא צריך לגור במקום שבו הכלבים יכולים להסתובב חופשי, אבל לא יהיו בסכנה בגלל כלבת ומחלות כאלה. אז איש-הזאב גר בפריפריה, במקום מתורבת אבל בלי פיקוח עירוני מפותח, שם יש לו קצת שדות פתוחים ובית עם חצר גדולה ופרטיות מלאה מאחורי החומות האטומות של שלוש מטר שהוא מקיף בהם את מלונתו. למדתי גם שיש חוק כזה אצלנו שסכסוכים בין אוברוזן אחד לשני סוגרים בתוך העדה, בלי להוציא דברים החוצה. זה אומר שאם השכן שלך הוא אוברוזן והוא מתקיף לך את הכלב, אתה לא תובע אותו לפי תקנות-עזר של המועצה, אתה מביא לו ביש בגרון. שזה קל יותר להגיד מלעשות, אבל אין ברירה, אי-אפשר לתת לו לחשוב שאנחנו משפחה של נמושות רק כי יש לנו לברדור ולא רוטוילר.

עשינו תצפיות מוקדמות. עד סביבות 8-9 בערב, הכלב של השכן היה הטמבל המוכר שאוהב לנהום מבעד לשער הנועל. בסביבות מבט, היו מכניסים אותו הביתה וכשהיה יוצא חזרה לחצר, היה לו ריח של משחת שיניים מהפה. ב-12 הכלב היה פותח לבד את השער ויוצא לטייל בכפר. הנחנו שאז כבר יש בו את רוחו של האוברוזן, גם אם הוא לא נתן לכך סימוכין משמעותיים מעבר לכך שלא התקרב בכלל לערימות זבל ולא הפך פחים, התנהגות שכשלעצמה נראתה לי חשודה ביותר בכלב.

שאר הדברים שעשה היו כלביים למדי - הוא היה רודף אחרי חתולים, וחוף מכך שהיה עושה זאת בקור-רוח שטני ולא באובדן-העשתונות ההיסטרי שמאפיין את הכלב הטיפוסי, קשה היה לראות בכך התנהגות אינטליגנטית במיוחד. כשהיה מבחין בי בסביבה, היה עושה כמה פוזות מאיימות בסגנון **כלבים של בני באסקרוויל**, אבל כשלא ידע שצופים בו, הוא ניראה כאילו סתם הלך לאיבוד. הרושם הכללי שהתקבל היה שאיש הזאב המסוכן של הכפר הוא סתם איזה מתלהב, שגילה את היכולת הזו שלו ממש לאחרונה. הוא עוד היה שבוי במיתוסים לפיהם להיות איש-זאב זה הכל דם ואקשן, ולכן היה מחפש כל הזמן משהו לרצות. הוא לא ממש הכיר את ההטאות הקטנות שהיו העיקר בלהיות איש-זאב, הכושר האדיר לספרינטיס, חוש הריח המדהים שמאפשר לך להנות מאוכל בצורה אורגזמתית ממש, ההזדמנות ללמוד להעריך ריחות שבני-אדם מחשיבים כסירחונות, האפשרות להשתפשף ברגליים של בחורות. וזו היתה נקודת התורפה שלו.

כבר הכרתי טוב את המסלול שהיה עושה השכן כל לילה. חיכיתי לו ליד ערימת הזבל, שם היה זורק כמו יקה את כל גוויות החתולים שהיה הורג. הייתי בגוף של הכלבה, אפילו שכאב לי הלב לעשות לה את זה, אבל הכבוד שלה היה מונע כאן על הכף, והפעם הייתי מוכן. השכן ראה אותי ונהם, וכשלא זזתי פתח בהסתערות. עמדתי במקום, בלי לזוז, בלי לנשום, וראיתי את היאפי הפוף מהטניס מבעד לעיני הרצחניות של הכלב. הוא התקרב עד שהייתי יכול להריח את הבל-פיו, חזית חמה ולחה של קולגייט מעורב בשום, ואז הוא נירתע פתאום כאילו נתקל בקיר והתחיל להקיא את הנשמה שלו.

ניגשתי אליו בצעד רגוע, מהוסס בעצם, פרוותי מסריחה מגוויות חתולים בשלות, רקבובית של דשא ושאר בשמים כלביים פופולריים, וידעתי שעם חוש הריח הכלבי המפותח שהיה לו עכשיו הוא בטח מקלל את הרגע שהחליט לטרוף ארוחת שחיתות איטלקית לפני שיצא. בלסתות נרגשות תפסתי בגרונו המתוח והפעלתי לחץ מתון על העורק. הוא הבין את הרמז.

למחרת שמענו במכולת שהשכנים נסעו לבליה לפנות בוקר בחתרעה של שעות ספורות. שבועיים אחר-כך, דיברו על זה שהווילה שלהם מוצעת למכירה. חסר לדיירים החדשים שיביאו איתם משהו גדול יותר מציוואווה. בגנים הציבוריים, המסר היה כתוב בכתמי שתן, ריחו חזק וברור. כלב מי שמתעסק אתנו.

פורסם במקור ב**צומת השרון**, מקומון של אזור השרון)
הערת המערכת: סופר הספור למעלה, דותן דימט, גדל בכפר-שמריהו. הוא יודע!

האנדרה הישראלית למדע בדיוני ולפנסיה

אשתתפים:
מלפ' דניס סלנר
מלפ' מורי רייזל
ד"ר צמחאל אלדס

יתקיים כיום א', 24 באוגוסט 1997 בשעה 20:00
בבית הסופר
רח' קפלן 6 תל-אביב

כנושא:
"סופרות וזסויות"
האשה בספרות הטזע הנזיוני

Next SCIENCE FICTION CLUB Meeting:

Tuesday, October 7, 1997, 8:15 p.m. -- Lecture (in English)

**Amnon Stupp, Dept. of Astrophysics, Tel Aviv University, on
"The Sun and its Effects on the Earth"**

Rehovot Science Fiction (*usually*) meets the last Tuesday of each month
at the home of Tova, Bill and Rami Silverman,
19 Eisenberg St., fourth floor, Rehovot, Tel. 08-947-6142.

There is a REFRESHMENT CHARGE of 3.50 Shekels (for those who partake).

CyberCozen SF Newsletter, Vol. IX, Num. 9, September 1997. Editor: Aharon Sheer.
For mail delivery of CyberCozen, please donate 30 shekels per YEAR; air mail to US \$15; if
Aharon Sheer can hand-deliver it, 15 shekels.
Address: POB 9443, Tel Aviv 61093. email: asheer@netvision.net.il
Copyright (C) 1997, All rights reserved to specified authors and artists.

שנה טובה ומבורכת !! Happy New Year

Commentary by Miriam Ben-Loulu: *Many science-fiction writers have based stories on sentient computers. Are computers already sentient? And will a sentient computer necessarily have **human** characteristics? In the following commentary I have suggested some of the possibilities. If your opinion differs or if you have discovered other characteristics give them to Aharon for the next issue!*

Man or Beast

To some people a computer is just "that damn machine" or "a very versatile invention". But if you have spent any amount of time with a computer you are probably aware that it can develop a certain personality.

My problem is that I haven't been able to decide whether my computer is a man or a beast. Many times it seems almost human. There are pleasant sounds when it is satisfied with what I am doing. It makes rude noises whenever I make a mistake. It also makes mistakes occasionally and is so embarrassed by them that it refuses to continue any action ("To err is human"!!!). When it feels the work load is too heavy it slows down and takes it easy. It can play chess or Backgammon with me.

On the other hand, it also reminds me of a member of the cat family. Like all cats it cooperates better with people who like it, yet it still retains an independence of action that can have even experts biting their fingernails. It insists on being treated gently and if it feels you are not behaving properly toward it will refuse to have anything to do with you. Definitely feline characteristics! Time is not important to it. When challenged to a game of wits (for example chess) it will play with you like a cat with a mouse allowing you to think that this time you might actually win.

Of course it might be some other type of animal. Some of the noises I have heard it make do not seem to be either human nor feline. Could it be a stubborn mule, a rooting pig, or Tinker Bell? What do the rest of you computer users think?

Bob Smallman's books:

Last month Bob asked for comments on his two Internet published books "NEHAVE" and "DINURUS". I looked over the books but was very put off by a formalistic concern: The physical appearance of a page of text does not look like the kind of genre fiction that I like to read. It looks heavy and difficult.

The reason is that the paragraphs are too long, and there appears to be very little dialog. Most sf and fantasy today rely very much on dialog to carry the story. I'm going to try to prove that by providing some arbitrary statistics (for two full pages) from some sf and fantasy novels, and then give similar figures for Smallman's novels.

Title	Author	Year	Number of paragraphs on pages 52-53	Number of paragraphs containing dialog on pages 52-53
Marco Polo and the Sleeping Beauty	Avram Davidson and Grania Davis	1988	11	5
Throy	Jack Vance	1992	17	11
The Lord of the Rings	Tolkien	1954	27	25
Permutation City	Greg Egan	1994	(p. 51-52) 15	8
Chess with a Dragon	David Gerrold	1987	(p. 50-51) 19	19
Beyond the Blue Event Horizon	Frederik Pohl	1980	14	11
The Time Ships	Stephen Baxter	1995	(p. 53-54) 22	10

Now let's compare that with Smallman's books. Here I checked ten consecutive pages, then divided by 5 for comparison with the above figures:

Book	Number of paragraphs on pages 41-50, divided by 5	Number of paragraphs containing dialog on pages 41-50, divided by 5
Nevahe	7	1
Dinurus	9	2

What's my conclusion? Smallman's paragraphs are much too long. They are so unwieldy that it is a real burden to read them. Furthermore, Smallman uses too little dialog and too much first-person narration. Chopping long paragraphs into several short ones would be easy to do, and would certainly help to make the formal appearance of the book better to my eyes. Replacing narrative with dialog would be a good bit more work, but would be more helpful.

Aharon Sheer

Notes from the Editor:

Jewish Space:

I have been asked me for more information about **Jewish Space**, which was discussed last month by Lucy Schmeidler. Here are some examples of science fiction "zines" in the latest

Jewish Space: Mordechai Housman wrote on halachic (Jewish Law) complexities of time travel (Mordechai explains that "this article grew out of E-mail correspondence ... with Dotan Dimet of the Rehovot Science Fiction Club in Israel."). Judith Solomon brought excerpts from an email discussion on folk singing. Somebody sent in a summary of a many-years-old discussion lead by Rabbi Shlomo Goren (at that time Chief Rabbi of the Israeli Army) on Jewish halacha for Jewish astronauts stationed on the moon -- in those days people believed that a permanent colony would soon be established there.) Steven Silver provided a Jewish Science Fiction bibliography. Etc.

One of the most important characteristics of an apa is feedback: In each issue most people use part of their zine to comment on other people's zines in previous issues. This is in contrast to **CyberCozen**, where, sadly, authors often get no response whatsoever to the things they publish, neither positive nor negative.

Quote of the Month:

"Any science fiction which depicts the future as good would make it impossible to suspend disbelief, and thus be unreadable or unviewable or unlistenable."

Dr. Stephen Davis (email correspondence)

Short Reviews: by Aharon Sheer

Ringworld Throne by Larry Niven (1996), 349 pages, plus a glossary and technical information at the end. This is the long-awaited sequel to **Ringworld** and **Ringworld Engineers**. Remember that Ringworld has three million times the surface area of the earth. The unknown builders transplanted beings from many worlds to Ringworld, and a large area of Ringworld is devoted to *hominids*, intelligent *almost* human beings whose evolution is parallel to that of humans. **Ringworld Throne** is mainly a book of "anthropology" (although "anthro" means "man" and the hominids are not exactly men). The intelligent hominids consist of many species, some evolved for very specific environments. Consider the following conversation:

*"The Marsh People cannot flee, for only the marsh gives them life."
... "We know species like that. Marsh, desert, one side of a mountain, a forest that is all one kind of tree. Their bellies have changed to accept only one food, or they cannot survive cold or hot, or too little moisture in the air, or too much." (p. 49)*

The various species have evolved a method of interaction which is based on the fact that they cannot mate and produce children. Called "*rishathra*", the author says:

"Mating is a matter of order. Eons of evolution have shaped many hominid's mating responses: approach, scents, postures and positions, visual and tactile cues. Culture shapes more: dances, cliques, styles, permitted words and phrases.

"But evolution never touches sex outside one's species, and rishathra is always an art form. Where shapes don't fit, other shapes might be found. Those who cannot participate can watch, can give ribald advice ..." (p. 45)

Thus the numerous hominid species get along with their hominid neighbors by enjoying *rishathra* with them, a harmless method of entertainment and peace making.

Of course this book also has the standard thread: **Louis Wu with his Kzinti friend Chmee, and his puppeteer friend Hindmost**. Then there are **protectors**, for better and for worse (mostly worse) It has all of Niven's love of complications, and his pride in his own

superior intelligence. It's a good humored book, and if you are biologically inclined and interested in Niven's speculations on parallel "human" evolution (most of them probably developed in conversation with biologist Jack Cohen, although he is not credited), you might even enjoy it.

Einstein's Bridge by John Cramer (1997), 313 pages, plus an Afterword of another 40 pages discussing the physics and politics that form the background for this book. This is physicist Cramer's second novel; the first, **Twistor** (1989), was reviewed here in May 1997. This is a "novel of hard science fiction", based on the Superconducting Super Collider (SSC) high energy physics project, which was cancelled after a investment of billions of dollars. As the author points out in his Afterword, "About 12 percent of physicists involved in basic physics research in the U.S.A. work in [high-energy physics], which is supported by about 50 percent of the non-NASA and non-DOD basic research funding, a fact that generates some resentment in other subfields of physics."

In the parallel world of this book the SSC project was *not* cancelled. The author then proceeds to tell us (in a rather too didactic way) about this project, and in a rather more dramatic way, about why the SSC project was dangerous to humanity and in fact might have resulted in the destruction of all life on earth!

Well! The author's descriptions of *high-energy physics personalities* is cut from real life, and frankly I didn't care much for them. In fact I think the author's biggest problem is that as a high-energy physicist he's not really interested in anybody except high-energy physicists, and high-energy physicists aren't really very interesting to anybody except to other high-energy physicists. (Astrophysicists, on the other hand, are wonderful, delightful people, who make marvelous sf authors as well as conversation companions.) I enjoyed the author's first novel, **Twistor**, much more, perhaps because, the subject being outside his own field of high-energy physics, he could let his imagination roam more freely. But if you want to learn some physics, this is a fun way to do it.

Quote of the Month:

"Newton's law of gravity explains some features of planetary motion -- such as elliptical orbits -- in a transparent way. Einstein's relativistic version of that law explains other observations, such as the bending of light by a star and slow changes to the orbit of Mercury. In practice, science uses both laws, and with good reason.

"Cosmologists may tell you that Einstein has superseded Newton. That's only partly true. There are many problems that we can solve in a Newtonian model, but can't even state within general relativity. The motion of binary stars (pairs of stars held close together by gravity) is an example. A Newtonian model predicts that the stars will move in elliptical orbits -- the mathematical problem is the same as that presented by Mars and the sun. In general relativity nobody even knows how to set up the equations for a binary star, let alone solve them. It is simply not true that relativity can explain everything that Newton can, and more.

"... Newton's and Einstein's are models for human brains, not ultimate truths. Rather good models, to be sure, but few scientists nowadays seriously believe that their laws are true. (Only cosmologists and particle physicists do, perhaps, and both ought to know better, since they work in precisely those fields in which the perceived laws have changed most dramatically in the last fifty years.)"

From **The Collapse of Chaos**, by Jack Cohen and Ian Stewart, p. 285.

Next SCIENCE FICTION CLUB Meeting:
Tuesday, November 4, 1997, 8:15 p.m. -- Lecture (in Hebrew)

Guy Eldar, student, on
"Future Society as Portrayed in sf Films - חברה עתידית בסרטי מד"ב"
Short excerpts from several sf films will be shown

Rehovot Science Fiction (*usually*) meets the last Tuesday of each month
 at the home of Tova, Bill and Rami Silverman,
 19 Eisenberg St., fourth floor, Rehovot, Tel. 08-947-6142.

There is a REFRESHMENT CHARGE of 3.50 Shekels (for those who partake).

CyberCozen SF Newsletter, Vol. IX, Num. 10, October 1997. Editor: Aharon Sheer. For mail delivery of CyberCozen, please donate 30 shekels per YEAR; air mail to US \$15; if Aharon Sheer can hand-deliver it, 15 shekels. Mailing Address: POB 9443, Tel Aviv 61093. email: asheer@netvision.net.il. Tel: Aharon Sheer 08-947-1225. Copyright (C) 1997, All rights reserved to specified authors and artists.

Help! Rehovot sf needs lecturers! We are interested in any topic that might interest sf and fantasy readers -- that includes sf and fantasy books, authors, and ideas, as well as topics in psychology, economics, sociology, linguistics, astrophysics, etc. ... Contact Aharon Sheer (see address/phone/email above).

Short update: sf films coming in Fall:

"Starship Troopers" - based on the 1959 Robert Heinlein novel, about a war against giant bugs. (The book is available now in Hebrew as "חיילי החלל".) Directed by Paul Verhoeven, who also directed "Robocop" and "Total Recall".

"Gattaca" - about a future in which people have designer children.

"The Game" - participants in the game find their private world has become a nightmare.

All three films got overall positive reviews in Newsweek.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Aharon,

I am writing this letter in response to your **CyberCozen** of September 97.

First, your review of **Einstein's Bridge**. I thank you for your kind description of Astrophysicists, but I know some interesting high-energy-physicists (at least they sit in the high-energy-physics department) as well. However, I think that you are on to something when you point out that the author writes less well in his own field. The didactic impulse probably overcomes his novelist's instincts and the book turns into an introduction to physics. I myself noticed during my B.Sc. studies that when the instructor taught his or her personal subject, the lesson suffered.

Second, I would like to respond to your quote from Jack Cohen and Ian Stewart's book **The Collapse of Chaos**. Personally I don't like general relativity, and indeed I doubt many of the uses it is put to. Saying, however, that "nobody even knows how to set up the equations for a binary star" in general relativity is somewhat mis-leading.

General relativity can be turned into Newtonian gravity by assuming a weak gravity field. That is one of the features required of any new physical theory: that it is reduced under previously assumed conditions into the previous theory, which gave a good explanation of the behaviour under these conditions. We can't have a new theory claiming, for example, that apples fly upwards into the clouds, because we know that is not true. The new theory must give the same results with the same or better accuracy as the old theory.

I am not an expert on general relativity, but I remember from my under-graduate days that in the weak field approximation you can calculate anything you can with Newtonian gravity.

Regards, **Amnon Stupp**

*Editor's note: I apologize to any high-energy physicist readers who may have been offended. The remarks were intended to be humorous. Wasn't that clear?. I asked Jack Cohen to comment on the above with respect to **The Collapse of Chaos**. Here is Jack's reply:*

Dear Aharon,

Our point was not that Relativity is Rong or Right. It is that philosophers of Science, and others who should know better, claim that Relativity (or Quantum Theory, or both) has supplanted Newtonian physics, and that this isn't so.

When orbits for Moon rockets are calculated, we use Newton, successfully. But for some more esoteric purposes, eg for short-lived particles in accelerators, speed/time/bent space must be taken into account. So physicists happily use both, despite the incongruencies of world-view.

That's all. The "weak field approximation" is a cheat, and everyone knows it; but if it's the way you live with Einstein and use Newton, fine...

jack

Short Review: by Aharon Sheer

The World at the End of Time by Frederik Pohl (1990), 407 pages. At first it seems to be a novel for teenagers. It contains two main elements: cosmology (astrophysics), and men settling a new planet. It's the kind of book which a boy can read and say, enthusiastically, "I'm learning some science!" A typical quote (such material is scattered throughout the book):

"He was also far from happy. For the first time in his life Wan-To began to feel trapped. His jolly little stellar home had become a prison, and his cell became less comfortable every day.

"It wasn't getting smaller. Far from it. In fact, the star was entering its red giant phase. It had spend most of its young life turning hydrogen into helium, but now the central core was all helium ash, doing nothing at all but sitting there and waiting for the day when it could fuse into higher elements....

"Wan-To had never stayed inside a star as it left its main sequence before. He didn't like it." [p. 191-192]

There are two heros/anti-heros: 1) Wan-To, a capricious, super-powerful intelligent being who inhabits stars. 2) Victor Sorricaine, settler, who starts as a twelve year old boy, then is fourteen years old, then twenty, then thirty-five, but he always behaves like a teen-age boy (my wife would say that I also behave like a teen-age boy -- the truth is that any decent man behaves like a teen-age boy).

The book alternates chapter-chapter between the two. Thus we have the serious problems of men establishing a new society on a new world, using the best future technology that Pohl can dream up, facing unknowingly the side effects of the games that a being that inhabits stars happens to play.

A strange book indeed, part didactic, part cynical, part hopeful.

שר הטבעת, והאופים שלו

לפני המון שנים חי בארץ אורנילוליאנדר יצור שקט ונחמד מגזע הבוביט, ששמו בליבו בוגינס. כמו כל בוביט מצוי, הוא נראה בדיוק כמו בן אדם (עם שפם), ועם נטייה חזקה לאכילת עוגיות. בנוסף, הוא הייה עורך את ההסטריות המשפחתית שלו, במיוחד של הסבא המכובד שלו - פוורדו בורדו.

יום אחד קם בליבו בבוקר, והחלים שצריך לעשות משהו מעשי, לשם שינוי. כלומר - למצוא עבודה. אבל - לפני שעלה בראשו הרעיון (ההגיוני) ללכת ללשכת העבודה, צלצל הפעמון החשמלי בדירתו.

בליבו פתח את הדלת, ומצא מולו ברנש קטן, רזה, לבוש חליפה מחויטת, כובע אופנתי, ועם עיניים נוצצות מחימה. הברנש נכנס לדירה ללא בקשת רשות, הפך את כולה, וכשלא מצא את מה שחיפש, נכנס למסבך של בליבו, פתח את המקרר, הוציא בקבוק מיץ, שתה מחצית ממנו, והודיע לבליבו (ההמום לגמרי) -

" אני, גונדולף אורנילוליאנדר, אשף הבורסה, מודיע לך, שאתה יוצא למסע, כדי להביא את המנייה החסירה ! "

" אה - " אמר בליבו המופתע.

"ואתן יוצאים הבלשים החמודים שלי - אוגי בוגי גוגי ועוגי - בע' - כדי לשמור עליך שלא תברח לי ! "

" אה - " נדהם בליבו.

" ועכשו לך לארוז את חפצך ! "

" או ? "

" והפסק לדבר שטויות ! "

ואז התברר לבליבו, שהדודה המנוחה שלו ברנולינדה היתה בעלת מנייה שמקנה שליטה על חברה גדולה, ובנוסף הייה לה חוב מסוים לגונדולף, סוכן הבורסה שלה. הדיוידנדים של אותה מנייה היו מכסים את החוב, אבל אחרי מותה גנב אחד הפקידים את המנייה, והחביא אותה אצל ידידו - הדוקון בהר האש. ועכשו בליבו, יורשה החוקי, צריך לצאת ולהביא את המנייה, כדי לקבל את הדיוידנדים, ולשלם לגונדולף את שכרו. לשוא טען בליבו, שכל מה שהשאירה ברנולינדה אחריה הייה זוג מסרגות וכמה כלי מטבח ראויים לשימוש - סוכן הבורסה תפס אותו בגרונו, גרד אותו לחדרו, ופיקד על מלאכת אריזת חפציו (על ידי אקדחו הפרטי).

בליבו המסכן - כל כך רצה למצוא עבודה, ועכשו נאלץ לצאת למסע מפרך וקשה, עמוס תלאות ותלאובות, חמסינים וסערות, צרות ואסונות, צעקות ודחיפות (וכו' וכו' וכו') ...

לא פלא, שהוא כתב מיד שיר בנושא -

" שהדודה ברנולינדה תלך לעזאזל

שהדודה ברנולינדה תלך לעזאזל

שהדודה ... "

.. וכך יצא גיבורנו, מלווה בחבורת שומרים, ועם טבעת על פרק אמת ידו (כדי שניתן יהייה לזהות אותו בכל מקום, אליו ינסה לברוח), וכאשר מהדהדות בראשו שאגות הפרידה של גונדולף - " או המנייה, או .. "

ואכן, החבורה המופלאה הזו עברה הרפתקאות רבות עד להר האש. הם הלכו ברגל (גונדולף לא הסכים לשלוח אותם במכונית, בגלל שזה יקר), חצו נהרות, עלו הרים וירדו לעמקים, פגשו ביצורים מוזרים, ובליבו נאלץ מיד פעם להלחם בסרולים, בעצים,

בשדים, מפלצות, גלומים, גמדים, מלכים, דבורים (וכו' וכו' וכו'), כדי שיוכלו להמשיך הלאה, בשביל שבליו יגיע להר האש וילחם בזרקון הנורא, כדי להוציא ממנו את המנייה החסירה. (מובן שהבלשים לא עזרו לבליו במלחמותיו - הרי תפקידם הייה לשמור עליו שלא יברח !)

אחרי חודשים רבים הגיעו החברה האמיצים למרגלות הר האש. בליבו - במצב הרוס לחלוטין. הבלשים - במצב תקין ועירני, כדי שיוכלו להמלט מהזרקון כמה שיותר מהר (אם משהו ישתבש) .

הם עלו בהר, ועלו ועלו ...
והגיעו שני מטרים מדלת הכניסה לאולם בו ישן הזרקון.

.. ואז צלצל הפלאפון של הבלש עוגי (בע') .
" עוגי " נשמע קולו ההיסטרי של גונדולף " תשאל את הברנש שנמצא אתכם מה שם המשפחה של הדודה שלו ! "
בליבו המסוחרר הצליח (אחרי זמן ניכר) להגיד " ברנולינדה צפלינובסקי "
" מה אתה אומר , פרץ גונדולף בבכי (דרך הפלאפון) " הרי אני מחפש את ברנולינדה צפלינובקי! חברה, זה אינו האדם הנכון ! אתם מזמינים מיד מסוק וחוזרים לכאן, כדי לגמור עם המשימה של החזרת המנייה האבודה, חמדתי חמדתי חמדתי ... "

הדרישה של הבוס התבצעה מיד. אוגי, בוגי, גוגי ועוגי (בע') נפרדו ביטולות מבליו (שנשאר על הר האש) , לא לפני שהתנצלו, על שהם אינם משלמים עבורו את הנסיעה במסוק, ולכן הוא יחזור - חופשי, בכיף, ובכוחות עצמו - הביתה.

וכן חזר בליבו לבדו את כל הדרך בחזרה. אבל - הוא עבד מדי פעם במקומות שונים, ובכסף שרכש הוא ביצע שני דברים, מיד כשבא הביתה -
א. לקנות אקדח, כדי לירות בכל מי שיעז לזפוק אי פעם על זלתו.
ב. לקנות מחשב ולכתוב את סיפור סבלותיו, למען יראו אחרים, וילמדו לא להתחייב בשום דבר כלפי דודות זקנות.

למזלו הפך סיפורו - " שר הטבעת " - לספר נמכר ביותר, ולכן הוא הוציא המשכים, שנחטפו מיד, והם :
שר הטבעת והחבורה המוזרה
שר הטבעת והבית שלו
שר הטבעת והמטבח שלו
שר הטבעת והאופים שלו (את הספר הזה כתב, כאשר עבר לארמון קטן עם משרתים ומרצדס צמודה, מכספי התגמולים של הספרים.)

ובנוסף :
שר הטבעת חלק א'
שר הטבעת חלק ב'
שר הטבעת חלק ג'
שר הטבעת חלק ...

(נא להמשיך את המשפט האחרון עוד 1000 עמודים, לכרוך הכל לספר שמן בעל עטיפה מזוהה ושם מסתורי, ולמכור עוד ספר פנטזיה ...)

J.TELP

Next SCIENCE FICTION CLUB Meeting:
Tuesday, November 25, 1997, 8:15 p.m. -- Lecture (in English)

**Gil Biderman, on
 "Future Tech in 40's cartoons"**

Gil says: "This will give some perspective on technology as expected to be in the near future..."

"I'll show some wonderful Tex Avery cartoons about '**Future Television**', '**Future Houses**', '**Future Cars**' ... they are all funny cartoons.

"In addition, I'll show some looney toons like

Daffy Duck's '**Duck Dodgers in the 23 and 1/2 century**'

- this cartoon shows phaser, transporter, view screen a few years before 'Star Trek' - it's a classic Sci-Fi cartoon."

Rehovot Science Fiction (*usually*) meets the last Tuesday of each month
 at the home of Tova, Bill and Rami Silverman,
 19 Eisenberg St., fourth floor, Rehovot, Tel. 08-947-6142.

There is a REFRESHMENT CHARGE of 3.50 Shekels (for those who partake).

CyberCozen SF Newsletter, Vol. IX, Num. 11, November 1997. Editor: Aharon Sheer. For mail delivery of CyberCozen, please donate 30 shekels per YEAR; air mail to US \$15; if Aharon Sheer can hand-deliver it, 15 shekels. Mailing Address: POB 9443, Tel Aviv 61093. email: asheer@netvision.net.il. Tel: Aharon Sheer 08-947-1225. Copyright (C) 1997, All rights reserved to specified authors and artists.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Aharon, Some of the comments on general relativity in the last **CyberCozen** were absolute nonsense. Amnon Stupp was absolutely right, and the pompous (and wrong) response he got is undeserved.

Ben Svetitsky, Dept. of Physics, Tel Aviv University

Ed. Note: Thanks, Ben. I guess it's time to drop the subject.

The Klingon Language -- More Than You Really Wanted to Know

I didn't expect to deal with the Klingon Language, but a series of emails put it right in front of my nose. I think I'll share this with you all.

*It started when I wrote my old friend, Dr. Victor Golla, a university lecturer on Linguistics. I invited him to come to Israel for the **Star Trek** Convention which was to be held during the Succot vacation. Here was Victor's reply:*

Dear Aharon,

A **Star Trek** convention in the land of militant orthodoxy boggles the mind, but so does Israel generally. I guess I never had the opportunity to tell you that, while I lived in Washington, I was good friends with another linguist from California -- in fact, we shared an apartment for about a year. **Marc Okrand**. Klingon has changed his life, poor man, and not necessarily all for the good (although the royalties on his dictionary allowed him to buy a new car).

Best,--**Victor**

So I wrote Victor back, and asked him a few questions:

Question: *Your friend actually wrote a dictionary of Klingon?*

Answer: It's in its 2nd edition. I am a proud owner of the original Pocket Books edition of 1985. The UC Berkeley and Davis libraries have copies too: call number PM 8415/O47. (There are also Conversational Klingon tapes. And Klingon summer immersion camps. And chat rooms on the Internet. Never underestimate the frivolity of the American consumer.)

Question: *Which family of earth languages does Klingon belong to?*

Answer: Marc's earthly expertise is on the Penutian languages of central California, in particular Mutsun Costanoan (the language of the Indians of the San Juan Bautista mission). Klingon is probably not a member of the same family of languages, but there are some interesting borrowings from Mutsun and other Penutian languages. Also, oddly from Yiddish...

Klingon shows its unearthliness, however, by rather consistently providing exceptions to a number of otherwise universal generalities about human language structure, like the order of subject, object, and verb. Most languages have SOV or SVO syntax; Klingon has OVS.

--Victor

English is usually SVO: "My sister bought this house". You can get OSV in questions with a strong "borrowed-from-Yiddish" flavor; for example, "This house my sister bought?" But I don't think English ever has OVS.

Hebrew is usually SVO, but allows everything, even OVS. Consider the sentence:

"את הבית הזה קנתה אחותי"

The object is "את הבית הזה", the verb root is "קנה", the subject modifier in the verb is "תה" (which comes at the end of the verb), and the subject is "אחותי". OVS, just like in Klingon.

I thought Victor's email was the end of Klingon, but yesterday I got this email from Leybl Botwinik. Leybl, remember, is perhaps the only Yiddish language sf writer in the world. (We've reprinted a couple of his short sf stories in English translation in CyberCozen.):

Subject: [Fwd: Translation Request]

For Your Info...I'll be sending him the translation next week or two. Anyone like to proof-read the Yiddish?

Far ayer informatsye: ikh vel im shikn di iberzetsung in a vokh/tsvey fun mayn nayem arbetsort (un nayem i-adres). tsi vil emetser iberkukn dem yidish?

- leybl

Subject: Translation Request

Dear Dr. Leybl Botwinik:

I am sending you this letter because of a common bond. We are both involved with less commonly taught languages. You of course speak and teach **Yiddish**; while I work with a language without any native speakers at all, **Klingon**.

In English speaking countries where the **STAR TREK** television series and films have worked their way into popular culture it would not be surprising that most people have heard of Klingons. But most of those who know the name don't know there is actually a constructed language for these fictional characters, and fewer still know anything about the language at all.

The organization I represent, the **Klingon Language Institute**, was created to promote and foster the use and study of Klingon. We publish a quarterly journal, provide a postal course, maintain a discussion list on the internet, and publish translations of public domain literature. For the past twenty years my own academic work has been in the area of psycholinguistics, and I have to admit I find it terribly exciting to be in the middle of a new and growing language community. Unlike most other constructed languages which traditionally appeal only to language

buffs and political scientists, Klingon reaps the benefits of the popularity of STAR TREK, and so we lure people who might otherwise never study another language (i.e., most Americans) into the larger world of language exploration. A noble side-effect of our pursuit of Klingon.

Although I hope you will have some interest in this language and visit our website to learn more, I actually have a specific request for you. One of the features on our website is a page containing links to translations of our basic information page. We are beginning an attempt to have this text translated into some of the many LCTL that exist, and so I turn to you for help. Would you consider providing us with a translation of the following text into Yiddish?

I realize this is quite a bit to ask, but as I'm sure you know, there are a limited number of people teaching Yiddish, and so in typical Klingon fashion all I can do is present my request and hope you will find merit in it. I thank you for any assistance you can provide, and I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely, **Lawrence M. Schoen**

-----BEGIN=TEXT-----

Founded in January 1992, the **Klingon Language Institute** continues its mission of bringing together individuals interested in the study of Klingon linguistics and culture, and providing a forum for discussion and the exchange of ideas. Our membership is diverse, including Star Trek fans with curiosity and questions about Klingon language, RP gamers wishing to lend some authenticity to a Klingon character, as well as students and professionals in the fields of linguistics, philology, computer science, and psychology who see the Klingon language as a useful metaphor in the classroom or simply wish to mix vocation with avocation. Though based in the USA, the Institute is actually an international endeavor, presently reaching forty countries, and all seven continents.

The Klingon language is something truly unique. While there have been other artificial languages, and other languages crafted for fictional beings, Klingon is one of the rare times when a trained linguist has been called upon to create a language for aliens. Add to this thirty years of the Star Trek phenomenon, a mythos that has permeated popular culture and spread around the globe. These factors begin to explain the popularity of the warriors' tongue.

If you're just getting started with the Klingon language the place to begin is with Marc Okrand's *The Klingon Dictionary* published by Pocket Books (ISBN 0-671-74559-X). Dr. Okrand invented the language for Paramount Studios and has been a consultant on several Star Trek films and for episodes of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. I also encourage you to purchase copies of *Conversational Klingon* (ISBN 0-671-79739-5) and *Power Klingon* (ISBN 0-671-87975-8), two audio cassettes (also by Marc Okrand, with narration by Michael Dorn) which can help you learn the sounds of Klingon and instruct you in some useful phrases. If you cannot obtain these items locally, they can be ordered from the KLI by credit card, elsewhere on this website.

The main vehicle of the Klingon Language Institute is *HolQeD*, our quarterly journal. Each issue includes artwork, feature articles, and regular columns discussing Klingon linguistics, language, and culture. In addition, members' letters examining, commenting, and debating ideas and arguments raised in previous issues also appear, supporting an atmosphere of mutual respect and open discussion. More than simply a newsletter, *HolQeD* is an academic journal utilizing blind peer review, registered with the Library of Congress, and catalogued by the Modern Language Association.

Whether you're a rank beginner or completely fluent, whether you've never studied another language or can read and write more than a dozen, if you have an interest in the Klingon language I invite you to join us in our exploration of the galaxy's fastest growing language.

Qapla'

Lawrence M. Schoen, Ph.D., KLI Director

:::: The Klingon Language Institute :::

:: POB 634, Flourtown, PA 19031 USA ::

DaH Huchllj'e' ghonob ::

:: lawrence@kli.org :: http://www.kli.org :: 215/836-4955 ::

-----END=TEXT-----

בקורת ספרותית מאת דותן דימט

המשחק של אנדר, אורסון סקוט קארד, הוצאת אופוס, תרגום: בועז וייס, 308 עמודים.

(Orson Scott Card, Ender's Game)

לאחרונה קוננתי שההוצאה הגדולה והמכובדת "כתר" מתעלמת מסופרי מדע-בדיוני עכשוויים, וזאת לאור בחירתם להוציא דווקא את **לוחמי החלל**, ספר של **רוברט היינליין** הוותיק והמוכר שנכתב ב-1959 - ושעוסק באימוניו של חייל, המשתתף במלחמה נוראה בין המין האנושי וגזע חייזרים המכונים "ג'יקים".

נישאר בידיה של הוצאת ה"אינדי" "אופוס" לפצות את החסך ולהביא לנו משהו מהמדע-בדיוני המודרני יותר. אורסון סקוט קארד הוא בין סופרי המדע-בדיוני הבולטים שהופיעו בשנות השמונים והיה הראשון אי-פעם שלקח שנתיים ברציפות (85' 86') את שני הפרסים היוקרתיים ביותר בענף (הדונו והגבולה). הוא עשה את זה (85') עם הספר שיש לנו כאן, **המשחק של אנדר**, שהוא ספר מרתק על ילד מחונן שמאומן כמצביא, כדי להשתתף במלחמה נוראה בין המין האנושי וגזע חייזרים המכונים "ג'יקים". טוב, לא אמרתי שקארד מקורי. אפשר לראות אותו כאנטי-תזה במידה מסוימת של הסייברפאנקיסטים, שעושים הרבה רושם חיצוני של בעיטה במוסכמות, ושזכו ליחסי-ציבור הרבה יותר טובים ממנו אבל אולי לפחות אהדה בקרב חובבי הז'אנר. קארד לא מנסה למכור חידושים, אלא נותן לקוראיו את החומרים המוכרים והאהובים, חלליות וחייזרים, מלחמות בחלל, ילדים גאונים שמתפקדים כסופרמנים אינטלקטואליים. מה שקארד מצטיין בו היא ההגשה. הוא מביא לנו את העומק המיתי שקבור בקלישאות, וחושף את הרובד הרגשי העשיר שבהן. הוא מספר לנו עוד פעם סיפורים מוכרים, ועושה את זה טוב מספיק כדי שאנחנו נהיה שוב מוקסמים.

בשביל קארד, מורמוני אדוק, המדע-בדיוני איננו שביל בריחה לעולם אגדי או במה להפגנת רעיונות מגניבים, אלא כלי לבחינת שאלות פילוסופיות. כמו היינליין, גם קארד משתמש בסיטואציה השחוקה של המלחמה בחלל כדי להגיד כמה דברים מעבר לסיפור ההרפתקאות, אבל אצלו לא מדובר במישנה פוליטית מנג'סת. קארד מתעניין במישור היותר אנושי, ברמה המוסרית האישית. האם כל האמצעים כשרים כדי להפוך ילד בן שש למהדורה משופרת של נפוליאון ויוליוס קיסר? מה המחיר המוסרי שצריך לשלם עבור ניצחון? ולמה בכלל מצביא צריך מצפון?

אנדר, הגיבור של קארד, הוא אסטרטג מבריק שיכול לכסח כל מה שזז נגדו, אבל יש לו מצפון, ויש לו בעיה לחיות עם כל הקורבנות שהוא נאלץ להשאיר מכוסחים בעקבותיו. קארד נותן לקורא את הפנטסיה המתוקה של הגיבור הבלתי-מנוצח, אבל הוא מוהל אותה במוסרניות, ובכך מציל אותה מהפשטנות המאפיינת כל-כך הרבה סיפורי אקשן בהם מחוסלים הרעים בפחות אמפטיה משאנו רוחשים ליתוש. בכך הוא מתעלה על היינליין הקשות, שלא מאפשר לקורא שום רגש מלבד תיעוב כלפי החייזרים שבהם נלחם הגיבור שלו. קארד לעומתו מביא לנו סיפור הרפתקאות צבאי וכוחני שאפילו נוער מרצ יכול להנות ממנו. אחלה ספר.

לצד השבחים ל"אופוס" על שהביאו את הספר הזה לקורא הישראלי, יש מקום לרטינה קטנה על העטיפה, דוגמה טובה לכל הדברים הרעים בעיצוב העטיפות של ספרי המדע-בדיוני בארץ. אם התמונה נחסכה מקוראי הביקורת, אציין רק שמדובר בחללית שמועתקת ישירות מ"מסע בין כוכבים", שאין לה שום קשר לתוכן הספר. "אופוס" מצטרפת כאן ל"עם-עובד", ההוצאה המובילה בקו המעצבן של עיטור עטיפות מדע-בדיוני בקולאז'ים דוחים. אני מבין שההוצאות בארץ מתקמצנות לשלם לציירים או לקנות תמונות עטיפה נורמליות מחו"ל, אבל הייתי רוצה שתמצא אלטרנטיבה אנושית לפשעים הללו כנגד הגרפיקה, אפילו אם מדובר בנקיטת קו אלק אליטיסטי, כמו ששימש את "כתר" בעטיפות לספרי **המוסד ולאקי סטאר** של אסימוב, לעומתן ניראית עטיפת דו"ח מבקרת המדינה צעקנית.

(פורסם במקור בצומת השרון, מקומון של אזור השרון)

Advertisements Advertisements Advertisements Advertisements

פתח תקווה חוג מד"ב --תצלצלו לאלון איצקוביץ, 03-922-3171 Petah Tikva SF Club

HALPER's Book Store, many new ENGLISH-LANGUAGE SF Books, 87 Allenby, Tel Aviv.

Next SCIENCE FICTION CLUB Meeting:
Tuesday, December 30, 1997, 8:15 p.m. -- Lecture (in English)

**Dr. Moshe Podolak, Dept of Planetary Sciences, Tel Aviv U., on
 "What We Know About Titan's Atmosphere,
 and Why We Think We Know It"**

Rehovot Science Fiction (*usually*) meets the last Tuesday of each month
 at the home of Tova, Bill and Rami Silverman,
 19 Eisenberg St., fourth floor, Rehovot, Tel. 08-947-6142.

There is a REFRESHMENT CHARGE of 3.50 Shekels (for those who partake).

CyberCozen SF Newsletter, Vol. IX, Num. 12, December 1997. Editor: Aharon Sheer. For mail delivery of CyberCozen, please donate 30 shekels per YEAR; air mail to US \$15; if Aharon Sheer can hand-deliver it, 15 shekels. Mailing Address: POB 9443, Tel Aviv 61093. email: asheer@netvision.net.il. Tel: Aharon Sheer 08-947-1225. Copyright (C) 1997, All rights reserved to specified authors and artists.

Why are we interested in Titan? by Aharon Sheer

Titan is a *large* moon. It is Saturn's largest, with a diameter of 5,140 km. In comparison, Mars has an average diameter of 6,780 km, while Mercury's diameter is 5,120 km. So Titan is the size of a planet, where men might someday want to live. Titan has a thick atmosphere, about 1.6 times denser than the atmosphere of Earth, and consists mostly of nitrogen, with 6 percent methane, a trace of hydrogen, and possibly a small amount of argon. The cold is so great that water is probably always frozen out. Since methane is considered the simplest organic molecule (CH₄), more complex organic molecules may well exist there too. This suggests that perhaps Titan has some kind of organic life, but if it does, it will not be "life as we know it". ("Facts" above taken from "New Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia", 1993 -- Dr. Podolak may not agree.)

Time Travel

January will be devoted to *Time Travel*. CyberCozen will have material on it, and the club's monthly lecture, on **Tuesday, January 27**, will be on that subject. I'm publishing *now* the outline of lecturer Avi Chami so that participants can prepare for a lively discussion. **Warning:** Avi's lecture will be in **HEBREW** (the audience may comment in English, however).

An outline of the January lecture by Avi Chami

1. Travelling in time, using today's technology

The definition of time

- **A Brief History of Time** - Stephen Hawking

Present, past and future

- The wandering Jew

Alternative definitions of time

- **Einstein's Dreams** - Alan Lightman

Examples -

The origin of time
 "Sticky time"
 Discontinuous time

2. Traveling to the future

Relativity - Speed and time, gravity and time, space and time.
 Mass and speed - Tachyons

- "The Endochronic Properties of Resublimated Thiotimoline" (article) - Asimov
- **Speaker for the Dead** - Orson Scott Card
- **The Time Machine** - Wells
- "The Pusher" (short story) - John Varley
- **The Restaurant at the End of the Universe** - Douglas Adams

3. Travelling to the past

Time travel paradoxes and problems
 "Free lunches" and closed loops
 Killing your own mother and other contradictions of history
 Conservation of mass

- **The End of Eternity** - Asimov
- **What Mad Universe** - Fredric Brown
- "Intelligent elevators" and other uses of time travel by Douglas Adams
- "A Sound of Thunder" (short story) - Ray Bradbury
- **Back to the Future** (film)

Letter to the Editor

Aharon!

Just received the November issue of **CyberCozen**, which I enjoyed very much. Keep up the good work!

Washington, DC is hosting the 1999 **Gaylaxicon** convention October 8-11, 1999, with Guest of Honor **Diane Duane** and Artist Guest of Honor **Nancy Janda**. 1998's will be in Troy, Michigan July 3-5, with Guest of Honor **Anne Harris** and Artist Guests of Honor **Kurt Erichsen** and **Frank Gembeck, Jr.**

Cheers, **Barrett Brick**, BBRICK@fcc.gov

*Ed. Note: In case you didn't guess, the **Gaylaxicon** is a convention organized by the **Gaylactics**, the **gay sf fan community**. It's interesting that there are enough gay sf fans in the U.S. to organize their own annual sf convention. If you figure one in every forty Americans is gay, there are about 6 million gays in the U.S. -- about the same as the number of people in Israel. Yet you can count on the fingers of one hand the number of sf conventions organized in Israel in the last*

50 years. Let's hope the Israeli Society of sf and Fantasy will be able to get an annual convention going here. *The first one is planned for Succot, 1998, so reserve that date NOW.*

Is there such a thing as Internet email ethics? by Aharon Sheer

What rights do I, as editor of **CyberCozen**, have to use material sent to me by email? I've had some discussions about this recently -- not all of them pleasant.

Colleague O at Motorola tells me that anything sent to anyone via email is public domain, unless the sender specifies otherwise. The email custom is, he says, that anything you receive by email may be passed on to others, provided that the sender has not explicitly prohibited it.

Colleague A at Motorola, who sits next to Colleague O, disagrees vigorously. Anything sent or received is to be kept completely confidential, she says, unless the sender specifies otherwise.

Both of my colleagues can't be right, can they?

SF Fan L once emailed me comments on something I published in **CyberCozen**. I asked if I could reprint those comments. As I understood the reply, the general principle is that any comments sent to me about published material are also intended for publication, unless the sender specifies otherwise. SF Fan L's principle is narrower than Colleague O's since it refers to comments on publicly distributed material only. For example, if you sent a letter to the editor of **Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction** magazine commenting about something they had published, wouldn't you assume that the editor could reprint those comments in the magazine, unless you specified otherwise?

In contrast, Contributors B say that nothing submitted to me may be assumed publishable, unless it is submitted on a diskette. In any other form -- printed, handwritten, emailed -- specific permission to publish must be given. Contributors B admit however, that *SF Fans* freely pass email material around. There's a "cultural difference" between SF Fans and Everybody Else.

However, SF Fan B disagrees. In his opinion the only email material which may be freely distributed is News Group material. Anything else must be considered confidential.

Reader K once emailed me an sf story and suggested I publish it. Did you write this story? I asked him. No, he replied, a friend of mine sent it to me. Well, I asked, did your friend write it? What is the name of the author? Does the author agree to publication? Reader K checked back with his source, and who checked with his source, etc.. In the end they discovered that the story had originally been published in **OMNI** magazine! (I did not reprint it.)

The problem with email is that it is very easy to use. In one minute I can enter the In Basket in my email program, mark and then Copy some text, switch to my **QTEXT Windows** word processor, open the next issue of **CyberCozen**, and Paste the emailed material. If I have to ask permission to use the material, I may wait days before I get a reply. What about my deadline?

This discussion is in reaction to an experience I had recently. Reader Q (not his real name) emailed me something. I edited it and placed it in **CyberCozen**. Reader Q was furious, for I did not ask his permission first. Since then he has refused to talk to me, apparently out of fear that I will quote him in **CyberCozen** (and here I am, *almost* quoting him in **CyberCozen**...).

I apologize to Reader Q, and others, for using emailed material without asking permission. I certainly have no intention of using anything without the approval of the author. But I hope you will appreciate that there are considerable differences of opinion in this area. Email is new to most people (I've only been using it for about a year), and I don't think that people have yet fully established correct ground rules. Thanks for your criticisms -- even if they hurt.

Short Review: by Aharon Sheer

Blue Mars by Kim Stanley Robinson (1996), 761 pages. This is the completion of Robinson's wonderful series on the settlement and terraforming of Mars. The first in the series, **Red Mars** won the 1993 Nebula Award for best sf novel. (**Red Mars** was reviewed in **CyberCozen**, in July 1994.) Its sequel, **Green Mars**, won the 1994 Hugo award for best novel. This novel, **Blue Mars**, the conclusion of the series, also won the Hugo award for best novel (1996). The whole series is a wonderfully detailed description of the developing Martian society, economy, politics, ecology, biology, weather, etc. Mars' complex relationship with earth is an important feature, with Mars being used as a dumping ground for earth's excess and unwanted population. I found the early part of this novel very draggy -- especially the long and detailed visit of a group of the heroes to earth. Too much of the book is devoted to the innermost thoughts of some of the major characters, and much of the rest to overly detailed descriptions of their activities year after year.

One of the major threads of the book is the subject of longevity. The Martians have developed a process for extending life span dramatically. People remain young in spirit and physical ability. Many of the heroes enjoy activities we associate with the young and reckless, decade after decade. Lives are so long that some of the heroes of **Red Mars** are still alive in **Blue Mars**, 150 years later. Ten years of a person's life is just enough to try something new, really get into it deeply, and then give it up and go on to try something completely different. It seems that only accidents will end these peoples' lives. But then side effects of aging begin to appear. The real limit of the extended life span finally becomes apparent. Dealing with aging's effects on memory becomes a desperate problem. It's interesting that a much earlier book by Robinson, **Icehenge** (1984, reviewed in **CyberCozen** in April 1997), which is a sort of continuation to this series (although written long before), also has loss of memory as a major topic.

Here is a quote (p. 642) in which Sax, one of the first 100 settlers on Mars, thinks about his sudden losses of train of thought, when a whole topic he was thinking about suddenly vanishes:

"So, well; these incidents were just one of the many conditions they had to adapt to in their unnaturally prolonged old age. It was very inconvenient, even irritating. No doubt the matter ought to be investigated, although memory was a notorious quagmire for brain science. And it was somewhat like the leaky-roof problem; immediately after such a lost train of thought, with the absent shape of it still in his mind, and the emotional excitement, it almost drove him mad; but as the content of the thought *was* forgotten, half an hour later it did not seem much more significant than the slipping away of dreams in the minutes after waking. He had other things to worry about."

Work on the memory problem wraps up the book, and provides the emotional basis for its moving conclusion.

Help! Rehovot sf needs lecturers! We are interested in any topic that might interest sf and fantasy readers -- that includes sf and fantasy books, authors, and ideas, as well as topics in psychology, economics, sociology, linguistics, astrophysics, etc. ... Contact Aharon Sheer (see address/phone/email above).

Tolkien Birthday Party -- מסיבת יום הולדת לטולקין

We invite everyone to celebrate Tolkien's 106th birthday, at 10:30 am, Friday 2 January 98 at the **Holon Center for Technological Education -- המרכז לחינוך טכנולוגי**. People who come in costume will feel better. Our URL: <http://www-win.kulichki.com/antimiry/igra/>
Contact **Oleg Sverdlov**, 03-579-6318 (English) or **Michael "Manwe"**, 03-6491884 (Hebrew)

Best regards, **Oleg Sverdlov** sverdlov@aquanet.co.il