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EDITORIAL

Speculative Horizons

As we look at the world around us, what do we see? Mostly the walls of the room we are sitting in, in our own houses, contenting ourselves with whatever these walls may represent to us of the world outside our houses. We might turn on our television and watch something explode, or whatever the fare is for the day in whatever we commonly watch, or get a crackling bit of information from the radio, making us wonder whether the information is accurate or not, or perhaps someone calls us on our cell phones, preferably someone we know. We're practically in the middle of what Bill Gates calls the "information highway", or if we choose to view it as a river or other waterway, we're mainly awash in information, letting the current take us where we may, "surfing" as it is called (the term seems to be less in use now than it once was).

Science fiction always was a literature highly encouraging of speculation, urging its readers to go beyond the commonly accepted horizons, through use of the mind or the imagination, going on what material information we have accumulated or seen photographed or filmed, our minds ranging out from the world we know directly into realms without actual limits. It is good for our souls and spirits thus to range. It lets us know we are not exactly finite ourselves, and we gain a broader sense of existential identity. We feel more real, more with it, a part of things including a part of things unknown, which, if we are a part of it, is more ourselves and relates to larger selves. Why content ourselves with only those things which can be useful to us in whatever we

consider our past-times? There is more of the soul to be had in things which are less utilitarian, as I think Ray Bradbury once pointed out in a fanzine. The more we range the more we are, as Albert Camus has said.

True, faraway places have their dangers, but we are rather safe from these as we are merely visualizing them while holding onto the hearthstone. We can let science fiction and fantasy be our guides, or we can venture forth by ourselves, without guides, possessing as we do the facility of imagination, which begins in the self, and finds its way through what is other than the self. As we journey and forward our excursions, we may wish to avoid war and politics, which at the present time are preoccupying most of us, I think, but which have little to offer us that is of any personal benefit. We should turn our minds to higher things. By higher I am not referring to hierarchies or chains of command, nor to pyramids of prestige and power. I mean loftier things, which are more pleasant to the senses than that which goes on in either war or politics, in both of which the opportunity for self-expression or meaningful participation is small. We should think of ourselves and perhaps not become obsessed with considering the pitfalls and dangers around us, which we likely have thought out as well as we can. The world of the mind, so much a feature of the literature in which we are involved as we take part in science fiction's progressions in thought and knowledge. We may get more exercise if we "run with a gun" but we lack the exercise that is close to nature, so much a part of what is around us, and we lack also the exercise which is found in using our minds.

Of what gain is speculation and visualization? Let us measure gain in terms of what we feel rather than in what we are told we have. There is little reward for what we do in this world of constant strife, and monetary rewards are quickly spent. Again, let us look to the self. We need not be so other-directed that it becomes a fault in our flight from egocentricity. True rewards are on-the-spot matters coming from within the self when we are doing things that are actually pleasing to us. Let's not be deceived by all the action there is. That is not the way to expansive consciousness and contentment with the self. And that last is a large part of what it takes to be human, rather than a hanger-on to what's going on in this violent world. Isn't it better to be faring well? Why always look for things that worry us?

I'd say the same thing to writers of science fiction and fantasy. Create what appeals to us and to readers. Aim for what is outside the usual world of circumstances. Find your way in the literature we have.

Of course, there is also a satisfaction and a progress in interacting with others, and in

this too we need improvement. While being speculative and looking beyond the horizons, we want not to lose our connection with the things of this world, the work in which we have been engaging. This, I think, is the case in the N3F, in fact especially the case, so that my definition of what science fiction is worth in our world might have gone beyond the bounds of the National Fantasy Fan Federation and what it is doing. But I have been proposing that we improve our own personal outlooks, not talking so much about our organization. Now, returning to consideration of the N3F, and not just finding our place in it but becoming active in it, I suggest that we want to progress from self-considerations to other-orientation *as well*, and consider what we can do in the organization that would be generally beneficial. As Kennedy said (somewhat disagreeably), "Ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country". As an abstract consideration, this statement is sound. Our researches here in Origin have discovered that the National Fantasy Fan Federation was organized to further the interests of science fiction, not just gather appreciators of it together. They were looking for projects in which members could engage which would be beneficial to science fiction and science fiction fandom. Earlier in this editorial I was suggesting that it should also be beneficial to the individuals involved, should be something they liked doing and wanted to do. In this respect, as the name of the organization suggests, it has a similarity to the government. In a previous issue I was recalling an NFFF project called THE SF LINE, which was using telephone calls and other media to familiarize the general public with science fiction. That was genuine science fiction work beneficial to the field in general and originating with the N3F. The reason it was less successful than it should have been was that it was not reporting its doings and results back to the N3F. When an article in Ionisphere described it, that was the first time the N3F had gotten real information about that project. However, I had not been able to afford to send IO to the entire membership, and the organization didn't have sufficient funds in its treasury to help me out. The N3F was limping at the time, trying but not succeeding in any way that would benefit the N3F. It's only now that I make it clear what the SF Line was doing. What we need to do is have feedback and have such a project fully in sync with the N3F.

In a smaller way than that ambitious project, I am trying to make this bureau one which will do some generally beneficial work and retain its identity here. That's why I call our zine ORIGIN…we would be originating things we do and claiming them as our own projects. The N3F should be in full command of its own doings and in full communication with its entire membership to be a perfectly functioning organization.

Fantasy and Science Fiction by Judy Carroll

How are they the same? How do they differ?

I love science fiction. I have loved it since I first discovered it, and I'm not even sure when that was.

I started off with fantasy. I loved Peter Pan. The first dream I can remember was about Peter Pan. I was about six years old. I remember I was on a ship (probably Captain Hook's). I was standing on the deck with Peter (on whom I had a major crush) and Wendy was with us. I was jealous. I woke up mad because, obviously, Peter preferred Wendy over me.

I feel that fantasy can prepare one for science fiction. Fantasy starts off slowly (especially if you start with the Disney version of fairy tales rather than the versions collected by the Grimm Brothers) and takes you on a journey of the imagination, something most children are a part of anyway; some are living there most of the time. Young children are open to just about anything—a talking rabbit, a dancing giraffe, eating honey from a jar with a friendly bear. Anything is possible when you are a child.

You can make a wish and instantly be transported to a world of fairies and princesses or cast a wizard's spell and vanquish the fire-breathing dragon that is threatening your kingdom. By the power of imagination you can have a conversation with animals, visit an underwater kingdom, or fly, with a little bit of pixie dust. With fantasy we learn to expect the unexpected and to accept the dreams of others.

Science fiction is fantasy grown up. By the power of imagination you can fight for a galaxy, save an alien race, or be from an alien race.

Science fiction offers wonders and adventures of the kind not offered in other genres. Everything is possible within the limits provided by the author, who has created a vision previously known only to him. Where else can you find a glimpse of wondrous things to come in the future—things you hope will happen in your lifetime? Is science fiction just a fairy tale for adults, something we shouldn't take seriously? What about the "science" in science fiction? It opens our minds to new worlds of possibility—to "what if's"—or is that word there so we can feel like a grownup and not someone who hasn't outgrown the fairy tales of our childhood?

Many things have come to pass that first appeared in a science fiction story. Don't believe me? Take the following quiz:

Which of the following first appeared in a science fiction story before they were developed in reality?

1. Submarine
2. Helicopter
3. Rocket
4. Atomic Power
5. Combat Information Center
6. Remotely Operated Mechanical Hand
7. Cellphone
8. Taser
9. Multi Media Programs
10. Online Community

Are you ready for the answer? All of them. Each of these inventions was inspired by a science fiction story.

1. The submarine was invented by Simon Lake after reading 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA by Jules Verne.

2. The helicopter was invented by Igor Sikorski after reading "Clipper of the Clouds" by Jules Verne.
3. WAR OF THE WORLDS by H.G. Wells inspired Robert H. Goddard to invent the rocket.
4. Atomic Power was invented by Leo Szilard after reading THE WORLD SET FREE by H.G. Wells.
5. The Combat Information Center was developed by a naval officer after reading the "Lensmen" novels by E.E. "Doc" Smith.
6. Waldo F. Jones, a physically infirm character created by Robert Heinlein, was the inspiration for remotely operational mechanical hands named "Waldos".
7. The communicator on the original Star Trek TV series created by Gene Roddenberry, was Martin Cooper's inspiration for the design of the first mobile phone.
8. The Taser, an acronym for Thomas A. Swift's Electric Rifle, was created by NASA physicist Jack Cover, from the Tom Swift books he read as a child.
9. Steve Perlman, an Apple scientist, developed the multimedia program Quick Time after watching an episode of STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION, a TV series created by Gene Roddenberry.
10. SNOW CRASH by Neal Stephenson inspired inventor Philip Rosedale to invent an online community called SECOND LIFE.

Science fiction is not just about fiction. It never has been. It's about adventure and unknown experiences and the power of imagination.

Science Fiction is the future and it's here to stay.

Note: the information on the quiz questions were taken from "Ten Inventions Inspired by Science Fiction" by Mark Strauss from **The Smithsonian Magazine,** March 15, 2012.

Science Fiction by Jeffrey Redmond

what makes up a science fiction story?

comic strip by Tom Gauld

The Elements of Science Fiction

Take a scientific fact or theory, add a futuristic or other-worldly setting, stir in an imaginative plot and fascinating characters, and a science fiction novel emerges from the cosmic mix.

Definitions of Science Fiction

Science fiction is a *genre* of fiction in which the stories often tell about science and technology of the future. It is important to note that science fiction has a relationship with the principles of science. These stories involve partially true and partially fictitious laws or theories of science. It should not be completely unbelievable, because it then ventures into the genre of fantasy.

The plot creates situations different from those of both the present day and the known past.

Science fiction texts also include a human element, explaining what effect new discoveries, happenings and scientific developments will have on us in the future.

Science fiction texts are often set in the future, in space, on a different world, or in a different universe or dimension.

The classic elements of a science fiction novel include:

1. Time travel
2. Teleportation
3. Mind control, telepathy, and telekinesis
4. Aliens, extraterrestrial life forms, and mutants
5. Space travel and exploration
6. Interplanetary warfare
7. Parallel universes

The best authors of science fiction turn a "what if" into a "why not?"

If, after reading one of the following selections, your present world starts to look a bit different to you, then the author has succeeded.

Some of you will be reading HADDIX AMONG THE HIDDEN by Margaret Peterson, others will read CITY OF EMBER by Jeanne duProu or THE GIVER by Lois Lowrey.

Five Elements of Writing About Science Fiction

The science fiction genre, along with fantasy, can easily be considered to be more demanding, in terms of world building, than other genres. Science fiction demands that everything in your story is scientifically based, if not confirmed, especially if you're

writing a story about teleportation or space travel. Compared to fantasy, in which the world building depends completely on your creativity and how you choose to explain the magical aspects of the world, in science fiction everything needs an explanation that will make complete rational sense. This is why you need to keep some things in mind when you're writing a science fiction story. Below are five such things:

1. Authentic World

The readers of science fiction will be ready to accept the impossible, as long as it's properly explained, and if that explanation makes sense. This means that the world the story takes place in needs to be authentic—original in every sense of the word. Of course, you don't need to avoid writing about portals or, for example, teleportation simply because someone else has told a story about it before. The readers would want to know, in this example, how a person could teleport—what are the mechanics behind it—and how this technology would be used. And this is where you come in as the writer to offer a new perspective on something that is already familiar.

2. Unfamiliar elements

Science fiction deals in parts of our world that, while familiar, are taken to a level that is unfamiliar to the readers of the present day. This is why world building plays such an important role in science fiction—the setting becomes part of the plot, the action and everyday lives of the characters. An action-packed chase scene is always fun, but when it happens in a world that is so unlike our own, it becomes ecstatic. It increases the escape from everyday life and transports the reader into a world that is totally unrecognizable, and, therefore, more exciting.

3. Plausible Foundation

The world that you are building has to be plausible. You cannot take shortcuts and introduce futuristic technology, which would appear magical to the average reader of today, without giving a plausible scientific explanation of how that technology works. This means that you have to do a lot of research into the technology you would like to use. Also, if you're writing about a futuristic world, you need to create a timeline of events that will describe how that world came to be, starting from the present day and age. Alternatively, the timeline of events that shaped your world could begin from a certain point in the future, if you're writing a story that is set in a period that is further than 100 years from today.

4. The Laws of Science

Laws and rules can be broken, but it's not preferable to do so in science fiction. If you're going to break a rule, then there must be a scientific discovery to back it, therefore making it into a new scientific law that works specifically in your world. However, even that needs a basis that is scientifically plausible, which means you cannot get too unrealistic. So stick to the laws of science, of physics and chemistry, and ensure that whatever you create, while it cannot be completely proven by today's cutting edge science, it can, at least, be explained in theory.

5. Character's Attitude

One of the best ways to show, instead of tell, in science fiction, is the character's attitude towards their world. Usually, to the reader, everything would be unfamiliar, strange, new and exciting. But to your characters, this doesn't necessarily have to be that way. For example, if teleportation has been around for more than thirty years in your world, then your protagonist and the other characters would be familiarized with it and will not be goggle-eyed at it. The characters' attitudes towards your world is a great way to describe what's normal, and what's new, especially if what's new is part of the greater plot of your story.

Be careful. You just might become "hooked" on the endless possibilities of science fiction.

Forrest J. Ackerman

James V. McConnell: Science and Science Fiction

By Jon D. Swartz, N3F Historian

James McConnell

A science fiction recollection with a personal viewpoint

James Vernon McConnell (October 26, 1925—April 9, 1990) was an animal psychologist and biologist who is best known for his research on learning and memory transfer in planarians (flatworms). He spent almost his entire professional career at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. During 1954-1955, he studied at the University of Oslo in Norway on a Fullbright Scholarship.

An unconventional scientist, McConnell created his own refereed journal, **The Journal of Biological Psychology (JBP),** and a Planarian-themed humor magazine, **The Worm Runner's Digest (WRD).** McConnell began JBP in 1967 when some readers said they were confused as to whether or not certain articles in his WRD were fact or fiction. Subsequently, the two journals were bound together, back-to-back, giving the reader two publications in one, similar to the old Ace Double Novel paperbacks.

Science Fiction Bibliography

There were two collections published from material in the **WRD: The Worm Returns** (Prentice-Hall, 1965) and **Science, Sex, and Sacred Cows** (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovitch, 1971), the latter edited with the help of his friend Marlys Schutjer. Both books were collections of science fiction (SF), fantasies, parodies, spoofs, verse, and cartoons that had been published in the Worm Runner's Digest.

As far as I can determine, McConnell published nine SF stories in the prozines: "Life Sentence" (January, 1953 **Galaxy**), "The Game of White" (July, 1953 **Other Worlds**), "All of You" (July, 1953 **Beyond**), "Grandma Perkins and the Space Pirates" (May, 1954, **Planet Stories**), "Phone Me in Central Park" (Fall, 1954 **Planet Stories**), "Hunting License" (April, 1955 **Imagination**), "Avoidance Situation" (February, 1956 **If**), "Nor Dust Corrupt" (February, 1957 **If**), and "Learning Theory" (December, 1957 **If**). McConnell was one of the founders of the Science Fiction Writers of America in 1965.

At least three of these stories were reprinted later in SF anthologies, with "Learning Theory" included in Groff Conklin's popular anthology, GREAT SCIENCE FICTION BY SCIENTISTS (1962).

McConnell and McAllister

There's an interesting story about the genesis of "Hunting License." While in college an anthropology professor, Dr. J. Gilbert McAllister, told McConnell that he'd never amount to anything. Since a student is essentially powerless in such a confrontation, McConnell waited until he could put "Dr. Mac" in his story "Hunting License" –as a murder victim. McConnell sent his former professor a copy of the magazine in which his story was published. McConnell later told me that he enjoyed "killing" Dr. Mac in this

manner.

Rather than being upset by the story, however, Dr. Mac (my wife Carol's favorite professor and a real curmudgeon—who announced every day to all who would listen that he was dying, during the last 20+ years of his life) was proud of it and even autographed copies of the magazine for people who knew the story of his former relationship with McConnell. My wife and I still have the copy of **Imagination** that he autographed for us.

McConnell and I

Although he was ten years older, McConnell and I had a lot in common. I didn't realize this, however, until years later. To begin with the obvious, both of us were psychologists and received our doctorates from the same university. More surprising, however—at least to me—is that our first professional research articles were published in **The Journal of Comparative and Physiological Psychology,** his in 1955 and mine in 1958. This seems particularly strange, as my specialty was human psychology while his was animal psychology. The main things we had in common, however, and the common interests that later brought us together, were our training in psychology and our love of SF.

McConnell graduated with a Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Austin in 1956, the year I received my B.A. from the same institution. We didn't know each other at the time. I don't recall that he attended any of the meetings of the University's SF club where we would have met. Of course, we may not have been active in the club at the same time.

It turned out, however, that he and I had several friends—both students and professors—in common. I don't remember now exactly how I became the book review editor for his journals, but I do recall sending him a proposal outlining the way in which I'd handle book reviews.

One of the things I remember suggesting was a "Re Reviewers and Reviewed" section in which I'd describe briefly the authors of the books being reviewed and the people doing the reviewing. I later used this same title and procedure as part of my Reviews Section in issues of N3F's The National Fantasy Fan.

MY curriculum record shows that I had book reviews in the WRD/JBP during the early 1970s, and from 1972 to 1980, I was the Book Review Editor for both titles. McConnell even paid me to do so, the only time in my life that I've been paid to review books—even though over the years I've reviewed hundreds of books for many other publications. Of course, like most other book reviewers, usually I was just happy to get

the free books.

McConnell could easily afford to pay me—and others who worked on his publications—because he had made more than one million dollars on his psychology textbooks. His UNDERSTANDING HUMAN BEHAVIOR, an introductory psychology textbook, went into several editions. His other psychology books included PSYCHOLOGY: THE HUMAN SCIENCE, READINGS IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY TODAY, and CLASSIC READINGS IN PSYCHOLOGY.

On reflection, I believe my becoming his Book Review Editor was first discussed when we met and talked at the meetings of the Southwestern Psychological Association (SWPA) in Houston in 1967. I was there to read a research paper and he was there as part of a panel honoring a former chairman of the University of Texas' psychology department. We chatted about SF, our mutual friends, and his journals (plus my possible involvement in them); but we didn't spend all that much time together.

Cassius Clay and Howard Cosell

I think this Houston meeting was also the one in which the heavyweight boxing champion, Cassius Clay (later Muhammad Ali), refused induction into the Army. His press conference was in the same hotel in which the SWPA meetings were being held, but on another floor. Some friends of mine and I heard about the televised press conference and hurried to the appropriate floor. This was the telecast, broadcast on all three of the major TV networks at the time, in which Howard Cosell made his famous statement: "The champion refused induction" (as only he could say it). When I went up to meet Clay, I was surprised to find that I could almost look him in the eye. I had assumed he was much taller than I, but maybe I was wearing my cowboy boots at the time.

McConnell's Applied Psychology

In my search for McConnell's SF stories, I came across an article he wrote for the "Mind" section of an issue of the SF and science magazine, **Omni**, in 1986. His article was titled "Making the Blind See" and appeared in the December issue for that year. I assume he wrote other articles for SF/science fact magazines like Omni, and I know that he published "Psychoanalysis Must Go" in 1968 for **Esquire** and "Criminals Can Be Brainwashed—Now!" in 1970 for **Psychology Today.**

McConnell was one of the targets of Ted Kaczynski, the Unabomber. In 1985, McConnell suffered some hearing loss when a bomb—disguised as a book manuscript—was opened at his house by a research assistant, Nicklaus Suino, who

suffered burns and shrapnel wounds from the explosion. It has been speculated that McConnell's willingness to cooperate with the popular media—to show how psychology can be applied to real-world problems—may have been why he was targeted by Kaczynski.

Some Concluding Comments

The wide acceptance by students of Jim McConnell's UNDERSTANDING HUMAN BEHAVIOR and his other textbooks led to his being awarded the American Psychological Foundation's Gold Medal for Distinguished Teaching in 1976.

A 1996 article in **American Psychologist** that reviewed his life and work concluded that McConnell deserves to be remembered, not only for his scientific creativity, but also because he was one of our field's great popular writers.

McConnell died of a heart attack in Ann Arbor in 1990. He was sixty-four at the time of his death, and had never married. Obituaries appeared in the June, 1990 issue of **Locus** and in the June, 1991 issue of The American Psychologist.

Note: This article was originally written for my fanzine, **The Ultraverse,** many years ago and has been revised slightly for publication in Origin. Dr. McAllister died in 1993, and my wife in 2009. As far as I can determine, the rest of this article is still accurate.

SOME CREATIVE PIECES to garnish off the issue

ONE MAN AND THE NIGHT by Will Mayo

Take me into that long black night.
Set my soul all ablaze with wonder.
Help me to find myself at last.
And let me be me. No one else.
That's really all I ask of the night.
No man should walk without his shadow.

*

BEING GONE by Will Mayo

I hope to disappear some day.
Back into the earth and sky.
Back into books and data streams,
back to pastures once green,
a mother's womb.
Back to all the love that was known
and back to none of the love as well.
Away, rages, barroom drunks,
and emptiness of thought.
Back to who and what I really am.
The silent forethought that is nothing at all.
As the wind blows silently ever more.

THE LOST ART OF TALK by Will Mayo

Not many people seem to know how to talk any more. It's a lost art, for sure. Oscar Wilde long ago perfected his talk into an art form. So did Groucho Marx in the last century. And so for that matter did Robin Williams. But these days the art of talk seems a bygone rarity. Even in these stay-at-home days of the plague all the conversation seems turned to doing this, that and the other, and hardly ever to just staying put and letting loose with that good talk. Whatever happened to "the mouse that roared"? Gone long ago to graves buried deep in the sand. I tell you, folks, I would give just anything to hear a word or two of that talk again. Not that there's anyone left to bother, of course.

*

LORDS OF TUESDAY NIGHT by Cardinal Cox

Dining room table, drinks, snacks (potato and corn chips)
You have tried to explain that it's a bit like chess
Here is where firm friends are magically reborn
For all this long evening more is never less

There's a bowl of treacherous dice of many sides
Together they embark upon a noble quest
Wizard in cloak asks, "Can I detect that which hides?"
Alone average, together become the best

There's a good thief who only steals goblin treasure
Bearded dwarf armed with mighty iron battle-mace
Warrior whose bravery is without measure
Elf who is not typical of their ancient race

In this they learn consequences spring from actions
An imaginary world's heroic faction

ETERNAL SLEEP by John Polselli

Midnight moves among the beams
Of moonlight while the silence seems
To summon every wraith in mist,
Slinking where two lovers kissed
Long beneath the drifting clouds
Undulating like dark shrouds
Soundless in the dead of night
Far below a moon of white.
Once, you held your sweetheart close
When the wind was bellicose.
You fled together, hand in hand,
Running swiftly on the sand,
Passing rows of open tombs
Like unsheltered naked wombs
That beckoned steadfast that you lay
Within your chamber of decay
While the wolves came forth to creep
Round your grim eternal sleep.

Issue’s end