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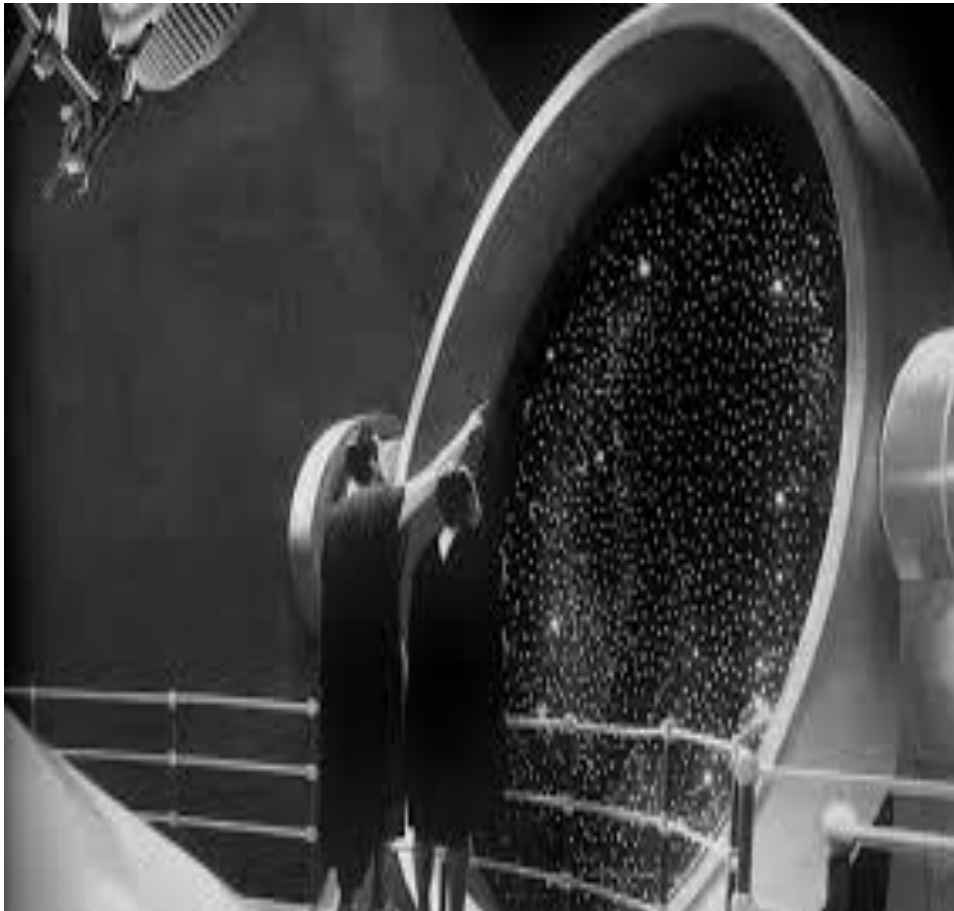
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EDITORIAL



A Mixed Blessing by John Thiel

Being in science fiction fandom is a mixed blessing. One is pleased and proud to have found and entered it and to have made one's way in it, but then it has a lot of faults and one is apt to have become immured in them before too long if one is not careful of the many pitfalls, which are seldom described, although they are mentioned in "The Enchanted Duplicator", that piece of fan-fiction which recalls "Pilgrim's Progress".

In this issue we can have a look at some of those things which make fandom a thing of both "fun" and "frustration", as Gertrude M. Carr put it. We take a retroactive look at fandom and at science fiction, finding many of the things that we liked so well when we first encountered them. For instance, Jon Swartz has been bringing back early magazines and paperbacks and in his piece on the Avon science fiction books we have a look at some of the exciting covers Avon used, as Swartz lists some of the titles that would really rev the readers up back in those days when the science was not as congested as it so often is nowadays, with spaceships always needing impossible repairs or confused space situations which are on the point of being unsurvivable. The characters cruise about freely in those stories, encountering and fighting BEMS, but in these days they're parleying with them and finding it a difficult and complicated matter indeed, although it may be more mature than those earlier stories. Much of the old sense of wonder is missing in today's sf writing, but the photos and title listings in the Avon column bring this sense of wonder back into being. One problem with modern sf is that when the fantasy element is brought up at all you see fantasy being mauled, but back then fantasy was a real part of the stories. Science seems squeezing fantasy out more recently.

Jeffrey Redmond examines one of the most controversial elements there has been in science fiction, the presence of sex in stories, which was fine with John Carter and Dejah Thoris, but for some reason the science fiction approach mauls sexuality as it has been doing with fantasy, making sex more of a medical matter than something which sustains a good story. The scientific approach points out that when you have sex you run the risk of venereal infection and might run into an unwanted pregnancy, and sexual mutation has also become a preoccupation, due from the scientific perspective to inadaptability to sexual togetherness due to the disparity between the sexes, emphasized by modern conditions and sociological upheavals and degraded by the presence of warfare and world strife. Science fiction is pushing at the grim "facts of life". I recall science fiction stories where the guy gets the girl, and these were much more pleasant. Story seems getting lost in what is being written nowadays, a loss of the old storytelling tradition, or the contribution from fantasy of stories being told by leprechauns taking the place of the storytelling that once could enthrall people listening to them rather than making them squirm uncomfortably.

We find things criticizable in going over the history of science fiction, as well as recalling what we liked so well—but there has always been a tremendous controversy going on surrounding science fiction. It insists on going to extremes, being cognizant of things along the way. Its authors always seem to be drawn to pontificating about the way things are in these times. But then, that is one of the appeals science fiction has had—an active and interpretive look at what there is to be seen and experienced. That's what we can point out that we like about science fiction to people who do not like science fiction (often they do not like science as well), and then they will have some idea of what our viewpoint is.



Science Fiction—Pluses and Minuses by Judy Carroll



As most of you know, I love science fiction. But sometimes I have issues with the way it is presented.

I watch movies rated G, PG, PG-13 and occasionally R, such as *SOLDIER*, *THE THING* (both with Kurt Russell), and *VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED* (Christopher Reeve).

With movie ratings you get an idea of how far the movie will go trying to get a point across to the audience. You can check the content and reviews online or in the newspapers or magazines or watch the trailers on TV and YouTube. I don't like graphic anything whether it be violence, profanity or love scenes. I don't think it is needed.

Movies have a way of warning you if something is about to happen—lights are dimmed, the music changes, the characters are truly happy. If there is something going on you don't like you can avert your eyes, plug your ears, or leave the theater.

Books, on the other hand, are a different story. They are not rated. You can still read the reviews in newspapers and magazines and online, but that doesn't always tell you what to expect in the way of violence, profanity and love. If some poor soul is getting his skin peeled from his body—telling me that is enough. I get the picture. It's making me live through each agonizing moment of the skin tearing while the victim's screaming, and the villain's gleeful attitude is pounded into my head, that I can't handle. If a story has a character using foul language, I feel it's unnecessary. Less graphic language intertwined with his actions gives the book a pretty good idea of what kind of a person he is. The same idea goes for love scenes. If the writer has done his job well, the reader will know what comes after a soft touch to the cheek, and a slight squeeze of a shoulder while a couple is staring into each other's eyes.

So, how do we react to a book that has objectionable scenes? This is what I do. If I discover a scene at the beginning of the book, I flip forward a few pages and quickly scan for key words that will give a clue as to what is about to happen. I do this a few

times, and if I discover another questionable scene I close the book. If an objectionable scene appears only at the beginning of the book I pass it over and continue to the next scene. If the objectionable scene appears in the middle of the book, and I am “hooked” on the story, I flip forward several times, and if there are no more displeasing scenes I finish the book.*

If we know ahead of time which authors are prone to graphic scenes, of any kind, we can avoid that author. I believe some authors include graphic scenes depending on which genre they are writing for, such as romance novels or war novels, and do not carry over into other genres. This is only “hearsay” on my part because I don’t recall where I got that information.

I like books that have memorable characters that I love to interact with, book after book, such as Sira, in Julie E. Czerneda’s series, THE CLAN CHRONICLES...books that explore ideas new/original to the time they were written, such as the BECOMING ALIEN series by Rebecca Ore. Books that catch my attention and make me care from the very first page to the last page. Books that treat me as a somewhat intelligent adult and don’t talk down to me as if I were in middle school. Books that tell a great story.

As fans of science fiction we love to talk about books we’ve read and the impact that may have had on our lives and our views of the world in which we live. Some of us may love a certain book to the point that it becomes so personal to us that we take offense if others don’t agree with our viewpoint. Others may disagree so strongly about a book that they insult not only the book’s author, but the person with whom we are having the conversation—be they Family, Friends, or Foes. We need to remember that not everyone will agree with us and we won’t always agree with everyone else. Don’t ruin a relationship or introduce negative feelings because of a disagreement over a book. We have a saying in my family that has been passed down for three generations—People are more important than things.

*(I would like to explain why I may finish a book if the objectionable scene is at the beginning. A few years ago I was critiquing screenplays for a very small company. I did this at home. One of the staff would bring boxes of screenplays which would be picked up when I had finished critiquing them. One of the screenplays was missing the cover and the first few pages. I read the screenplay, commented on it and set it aside. Later, when I had gone through the entire box, I found the missing pages and the cover page. The opening scene was a “love” scene. It was totally inappropriate and didn’t fit in with the rest of the story. I told the writer how much better it was without that opening

scene. I don't know if he took my advice. He apparently felt he needed to open with that scene to get someone's attention. But this was a poor choice, especially since the story was science fiction and based on the creatures from the PREDATOR movie with Arnold Schwarzenegger ((released in 1987). Because of this screenplay I give writers with an objectionable opening scene a second chance to impress me.



Sexuality in Science Fiction by Jeffrey Redmond



Plenty of influential books studied here

Sexual themes are frequently used in science fiction or related genres. Such elements may include depictions of realistic sexual interactions in a science fictional setting, a protagonist with an alternative sexuality, a sexual encounter between a human and a fictional extraterrestrial, or exploration of the varieties of sexual experiences that

deviate from the conventional.

Science fiction and fantasy have sometimes been more constrained than non-genre narrative forms in their depictions of sexuality and gender. However, speculative fiction (SF) and soft science fiction also offers the freedom to imagine alien or galactic societies different from real-life cultures, making it a tool to examine sexual bias, heteronormativity, and gender bias and enabling the reader to reconsider his or her cultural assumptions.

Prior to the 1960s, explicit sexuality of any kind was not characteristic of genre speculative fiction due to the relatively high number of minors in the target audience. In the 1960s, science fiction and fantasy began to reflect the changes prompted by the civil rights movement and the emergence of a counterculture. New Wave and feminist science fiction authors imagined cultures in which a variety of gender models and atypical sexual relationships are the norm, and depictions of sex acts and alternative sexualities became commonplace. There is also science fiction erotica, which explores more explicit sexuality and the presentation of themes aimed at inducing arousal.

As genres of popular literature, science fiction and fantasy often seem even more constrained than non-genre literature by their conventions of characterization and the effects that these conventions have on depictions of sexuality and gender. Sex is often linked to disgust in science fiction and horror, and plots based on sexual relationships have mainly been avoided in genre fantasy narratives. On the other hand, science fiction and fantasy can also offer more freedom than do non-genre literatures to imagine alternatives to the default assumptions of heterosexuality and masculine superiority that permeate some cultures.

In speculative fiction, extrapolation allows writers to focus not on the way things are (or were), as non-genre literature does, but on the way things could be different. It provides science fiction with a quality that Darko Suvin has called "cognitive estrangement": the recognition that what we are reading is not the world as we know it, but a world whose difference forces us to reconsider our own world with an outsider's perspective. When the extrapolation involves sexuality or gender, it can force the reader to reconsider their heteronormative cultural assumptions; the freedom to imagine societies different from real-life cultures makes science fiction an incisive tool to examine sexual bias. In science fiction, such estranging features include technologies that significantly alter sex or reproduction. In fantasy, such features include figures (for example, mythological deities and heroic archetypes) who are not limited by

preconceptions of human sexuality and gender, allowing them to be reinterpreted. Science fiction has also depicted a plethora of alien methods of reproduction and sex.

URANIAN WORLDS, by Eric Garber and Lyn Paleo, is an authoritative guide to science fiction literature featuring gay, lesbian, transgender, and related themes. The book covers science fiction literature published before 1990 (2nd edition), providing a short review and commentary on each piece.

Some of the themes explored in speculative fiction include:

Sex with aliens, machines and sex robots

Reproductive technology including cloning, artificial wombs, parthenogenesis, and genetic engineering

Sexual equality of men and women

Male and female dominated societies, including single-gender worlds.

Polyamory

Changing gender roles

Homosexuality and bisexuality

Androgyny and sex changes

Sex in virtual reality

Other advances in technology for sexual pleasure

Asexuality

Sexual taboos and morality

Sex in zero gravity

Birth control and other, more radical measures to prevent overpopulation

In some proto-SF works, sex itself, of any type, was equated with base desires or "beastliness", as in GULLIVER'S TRAVELS (1726), which contrasts the animalistic and overtly sexual Yahoos with the reserved and intelligent Houyhnhnms. Early works that showed sexually open characters to be morally impure include the vampire story "Carmilla" (1872) by Sheridan Le Fanu (collected in IN A GLASS DARKLY). The 1915 utopian novel HERLAND by Charlotte Perkins Gilman depicts the visit by three men to an all-female society in which women reproduce by parthenogenesis.

The covers of **Weird Tales** in the 1920s depicted a scantily-clad young woman. During this pulp era, explicit sexuality of any kind was not characteristic of genre science fiction and fantasy. The frank treatment of sexual topics of either literature was abandoned. For many years, the editors who controlled what was published, such as Kay Tarrant, assistant editor of **Astounding Science Fiction**, felt that they had to protect the

adolescent male readership that they identified as their principal market.

Although the covers of some 1930s pulp magazines also showed scantily clad women manacled by tentacled aliens, the covers were often more lurid than the magazines' contents. Implied or disguised sexuality was as important as that which was openly revealed. In this sense, genre science fiction reflected the social mores of the day, paralleling common prejudices. This was particularly true of pulp fiction, more so than literary works of the time.

H.P. Lovecraft's short story, "The Call of Cthulhu", first published in the pulp magazine *Weird Tales* in 1928, launched what developed into the Cthulhu Mythos, a shared fictional universe taken up by various other writers and considerably affecting the entire field of Fantasy. Bobby Derie's 2014 book *SEX AND THE CTHULHU MYTHOS* treats extensively the various sexual aspects of this Mythos: "H.P. Lovecraft was one of the most asexual beings in history—at least by his own admission. Whether we accept this view of his own sexual instincts or not, there is no denying that sexuality—normal and aberrant—underlies a number of significant tales in the Lovecraft *oeuvre*."

The impregnation of a human woman by Yog-Sothoth in "The Dunwich Horror" and the mating of humans with strange creatures from the sea in "The Shadow Over Innsmouth" are only two such examples. *Sex and the Cthulhu Mythos* examines the significant uses of love, gender and sex in the work of Lovecraft, moving on to some of his leading disciples and noting that "The work of such significant writers of the Lovecraft tradition as Robert E. Howard, Clark Ashton Smith, Ramsey Campbell, W.H. Pugmire, and Caitlin R. Kiernan, features far more explicit sexuality than anything Lovecraft could have imagined". Finally, Derie goes on to study sexual themes in other venues, such as Lovecraftian occultism, Japanese manga and anime, and even Lovecraftian fan fiction.

In Aldous Huxley's dystopian novel *BRAVE NEW WORLD* (1932), natural reproduction has been abolished, with human embryos being raised artificially in "hatcheries and conditioning centers". Recreational sex is promoted, often as a group activity, and marriage, pregnancy, natural birth, and parenthood are considered too vulgar to be mentioned in polite conversation.

One of the earliest examples of genre science fiction that involves a challenging amount of unconventional sexual activity is *ODD JOHN* (1935) by Olaf Stapledon. John is a mutant with extraordinary mental abilities who will not allow himself to be bound by many of the rules imposed by the ordinary British society of his time. The novel strongly

implies that he has consensual intercourse with his mother, and that he seduces an older boy who becomes devoted to him, but also suffers from the affront that the relationship creates to his own morals. John eventually concludes that any sexual interaction with “normal” humans is akin to bestiality.

WAR WITH THE NEWTS, a 1936 satirical science fiction novel by Czech author Karel Capek, concerns the discovery in the Pacific of a sea-dwelling race, an intelligent breed of newts—who are initially enslaved and exploited by humans and later rebel and go to war against them. The book includes a detailed appendix entitled “The Sex Life of the Newts”, which examines the Newts’ sexuality and reproductive processes in a pastiche of academese. This is one of the first attempts to speculate on what form sex might have among non-human intelligent beings.

C.L. Moore’s 1934 story “Shambleau” begins in what seems a classical Damsel in distress situation: the protagonist, space adventurer Northwest Smith, sees a “sweetly-made girl” pursued by a lynch mob intent on killing her, and intervenes to save her. But once he takes her to his room, she turns out to be a disguised alien creature who spreads her inhumanly long tendrils of hair, trapping Smith in a kind of psychic bondage and drawing out his life, and but for his partner arriving and killing her, it would have ended with his death. The story has little explicit sex, and no other physical contact than that of the hair of the “girl” with Smith’s body; yet the story clearly explores sexual themes in a way highly daring for its time.

In C.S. Lewis’ THAT HIDEOUS STRENGTH, a prominent place is given among the cast of villains to a monstrous woman named Miss Hardcastle, Security Chief of the satanic “Institute” which quite literally intends to take over the world. Hardcastle is presented as an inveterate sadist who takes pleasure in torturing “fluffy” young women and inflicting on them burns with a lighted cigarette.

As the readership for science fiction and fantasy began to age in the 1950s, writers were able to introduce more explicit sexuality into their work. William Tenn wrote in 1949 VENUS AND THE SEVEN SEXES, featuring the Plookhs, natives of the planet Venus, who require the participation of seven different sexes in order to reproduce and who get corrupted by human film director Hogan Shlesterap. The rather satirical story might be the first case of an author speculating of creatures having more than two sexes, an idea later taken up by various others.

Philip Jose Farmer wrote THE LOVERS (1952), arguably the first science fiction story to feature sex as a major theme, and STRANGE RELATIONS (1960), a collection of five

stories about human/alien sexual relations. In his novel *FLESH* (1960), a hypermasculine antlered man ritually impregnates legions of virgins in order to counter declining male fertility.

Theodore Sturgeon wrote many stories that emphasized the importance of love regardless of the current social norms, such as *"The World Well Lost"* (1953), a classic tale involving alien homosexuality, and the novel *VENUS PLUS X* (1960), in which a contemporary man awakens in a futuristic place where the people are hermaphrodites.

Robert A. Heinlein's time travel short story *"All You Zombies"* (1959) chronicles a young man (later revealed to be intersex) taken back in time and tricked into impregnating his younger, female self before he underwent a sex change. He then turns out to be the offspring of that union, with the paradoxical result that he is both his own mother and father.

When Heinlein's *THE PUPPET MASTERS* was originally published, it was censored by the publisher to remove various references to sex. The opening scene, where the protagonist is called urgently to HQ on an early morning hour, was re-written to remove all mention of his being in bed with a girl he had casually picked up. The published version did mention that the book's alien invaders cause human beings whose bodies they take over to lose sexual feeling—but removed a later section mentioning that after some time on Earth the invaders "discovered sex" and started engaging in wild orgies and even broadcasting them on TV in areas under their control. Thirty years later, with changing mores, Heinlein published the book's full, unexpurgated text.

In *TIME ENOUGH FOR LOVE* (1973), Heinlein's recurring protagonist Lazarus Long—who never grows old and has an extremely long and eventful life—travels backward in time to the period of his own childhood. As an unintentional result, he falls in love with his own mother. He has no guilt feeling about pursuing and eventually consummating that relationship---considering her simply as an extremely attractive young woman named Maureen who just happens to have given birth to him thousands of years ago (as far as his personal timeline is concerned). The sequel, *TO SAIL BEYOND THE SUNSET*, takes place after Maureen had discovered the true identity of her lover—and shows that for her part, she was more amused than shocked or angry.

Poul Anderson's 1958 novel *WAR OF THE WING-MEN*, centers on a species of winged intelligent creatures and sexual preferences are central to its plot. Of the two mutually hostile societies featured in the book, one practices monogamous marriage, while in the other there are every spring several days of a wild indiscriminate orgy—and

a complete celibacy for the rest of the year. Ironically, both societies alike consider themselves chaste and the other depraved: "We keep faithful to our mates while they fornicate indiscriminately—disgusting!"; "We keep sex where it belongs, to one week per year where you are not really yourself. They do it all over the year—disgusting!" Humans who land on the planet intervene in the centuries-long war, by showing members of the two societies that they are not all that different from each other.

Another Poul Anderson novel of the same period, *VIRGIN PLANET* (1959), deals in a straightforward manner with homosexuality and polyamory on an exclusively female world. The plot twist is that the protagonist is the only male on a world of women, and though quite a few of them are interested in sex with him, it is never consummated during his sojourn on the planet.

A mirror image was presented by A. Bertram Chandler in *SPARTAN PLANET* (1969), featuring an exclusively male world, where by definition homosexual relations are the normal (and only) sexual relations. The plot revolves around the explosive social upheaval resulting when the planet is discovered by a spaceship from the wider galaxy, whose crew includes both men and women.

Until the late 1960s, few other writers depicted alternative sexuality or revised gender roles, nor openly investigated sexual questions. More conventionally, A. Bertram Chandler's books include numerous episodes of freefall sex, his characters (male and female alike) strongly prone to extramarital relations and tending to while away boring months during long Deep Space voyages by forming complicated love triangles.

By the late 1960s, science fiction and fantasy began to reflect the changes prompted by the civil rights movement and the emergence of a counterculture. Within the genres, these changes were incorporated into a movement called "the New Wave", a movement more skeptical of technology, more liberated socially, and more interested in stylistic experimentation. New Wave writers were more likely to claim an interest in "inner space" instead of outer space. They were less shy about explicit sexuality and more sympathetic to reconsiderations of gender roles and the social status of sexual minorities. Notable authors who often wrote on sexual themes included Joanna Russ, Thomas M. Disch, John Varley, James Tiptree, Jr., and Samuel R. Delany. Under the influence of New Wave editors and authors such as Michael Moorcock (editor of the influential *New Worlds* magazine) and Ursula K. Le Guin, sympathetic depictions of alternative sexuality and gender multiplied in science fiction and fantasy, becoming commonplace.

In Brian Aldiss's 1960 novel *THE INTERPRETER* (in the US published as *BOW DOWN*

TO NULL), Earth is a backwater colony planet in the galactic empire of the Nuls, a giant, three-limbed, civilized alien race. The plot, dealing with complicated relations between humans and their Nul rulers, touches among other things on Nul sex. The Nul wear no clothes, but their equivalent of hands and arms are wide membranes which are normally held in a fixed position before the body, not moving even when the “fingers” are manipulating a tool. Only in a sexual context are the hands moved aside, to reveal the genital organs behind—the equivalent of humans undressing. In one scene, the human protagonist is able to tune to an erotic (or pornographic) Nul sensory device, made for internal Nul consumption and not intended for humans, which replicates the wild ecstasy felt by Nuls when daring to move aside their membrane hands and reveal their bodies to each other—similar in some ways to human sexual arousal but also very different.

Robert A. Heinlein’s *STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND* (1961) and *THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS* (1966) both depict heterosexual group marriages and public nudity as desirable social norms, while in Heinlein’s *TIME ENOUGH FOR LOVE* (1973), the main character argues strongly for the future liberty of homosexual sex. Heinlein’s character Lazarus Long, travelling back in time to the period of his own childhood, discovers, to his surprise and (initial) shame, a sexual desire of his own mother—but overcoming this initial shame, he comes to think of her simply as “Maureen”, an attractive young woman who is far from indifferent to him.

Samuel R. Delany’s Nebula Award-winning short story, “Aye, and Gomorrah” (1967) posits the development of neutered human astronauts, and then depicts the people who become sexually oriented toward them. By imagining a new gender and resultant sexual orientation, the story allows readers to reflect on the real world while maintaining an estranging distance. In his 1975 science fiction novel entitled *DHALGREN*, Delany colors his large canvas with characters of a wide variety of sexualities. Once again, sex is not the focus of the novel, although it does contain some of the first explicitly described scenes of gay sex in science fiction. Delany blurs the line between science fiction and gay pornography. Delany faced resistance from book distribution companies for his treatment of these topics.

In 1968, Anne McCaffrey’s *DRAGONFLIGHT* launched the *DRAGONRIDERS OF PERN* series, depicting the lives of humans living in close partnership with dragons. In a key scene the young golden Dragon Queen takes off on her mating flight, pursued by the male dragons—until finally one of them catches up with her and they engage in

passionate mating high up in the air, their necks and wings curled around each other. On the ground the woman and man who are these dragons' riders share their passion telepathically—and inevitably wildly embrace and kiss, embarking in parallel human mating.

Ursula K. Le Guin explores radically alternative forms of sexuality in *THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS* (1969) and again in "Coming of Age in Karhide" (1995), which both imagine the sexuality of an alien "human" species in which individuals are neither "male" nor "female", but undergo a monthly sexual cycle in which they randomly experience the activation of either male or female sexual organs and reproductive abilities; this makes them in a sense bisexual, and in other senses androgynous or hermaphroditic. It is common for an individual of that species to undergo, at some moment of life, pregnancy and birth-giving, while at another time having the male role and impregnating somebody else. In the novel, the Gethian political leader, who appears externally male, becomes pregnant.

Le Guin has written considerations of her own work in two essays, "Is Gender Necessary?" (1976) and "Is Gender Necessary? Redux" (1986), which respond to feminist and other criticism of *THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS*. In these essays, she makes it clear that the novel's assumption that Gethenians would automatically find a mate of the gender opposite to the gender they were becoming produced an unintended heteronormativity. Le Guin has subsequently written many stories that examine the possibilities science fiction allows for non-traditional sexuality, such as the sexual bonding between clones in *NINE LIVES* (1968) and the four-way marriages in *MOUNTAIN WAYS* (1996).

In his 1972 novel *THE GODS THEMSELVES*, Isaac Asimov describes an alien race with three sexes, all of them necessary for sexual reproduction. One sex produces a form of sperm, another sex provides the energy needed for reproduction, and members of the third sex bear and raise the offspring. All three genders are included in sexual and social norms of expected and acceptable behavior. In this same novel, the hazards and problems of sex in microgravity are described, and while people born on the Moon are proficient at it, people from Earth are not.

Similarly, Poul Anderson's *THREE WORLDS TO CONQUER* depicts centaur-like beings living on Jupiter who have three genders: female, male and "demi-male". In order to conceive, a female must have sex with both a male and a demi-male within a short time of each other. In the society of the protagonist, there are stable, harmonious three-way

families, in effect a formalized Menage a Trois, with the three partners on equal terms with one another. An individual in that society feels a strong attachment to all three parents—mother, father and demi-father—who all take part in bringing up the young. Conversely, among the harsh invaders who threaten to destroy the protagonist's homeland and culture, males are totally dominant over both females and demi-males; the latter are either killed at birth or preserved in subjugation for reproduction—which the protagonist regards as a barbaric aberration.

In Anderson's satirical story "A Feast for the Gods", the Greek god Hermes visits modern America and has casual sex with an American woman, who tells him that she is "on the pill" and does not take seriously Hermes telling her that "The Embrace of a God is always fertile". She ends up pregnant and destined to give birth to a modern demi god.

Feminist science fiction authors imagined cultures in which homo-and bisexuality and a variety of gender models are the norm. Joanna Russ's award-winning short story "When It Changed" (1972), portraying a female-only society that flourished without men, was enormously influential. The bisexual female writer Alice Bradley Sheldon, who used James Tiptree, Jr., as her pen name, explored the sexual impulse as her main theme. THE GIRL WHO WAS PLUGGED IN (1973) is an early precursor of cyberpunk that depicts a relationship via a cybernetically-controlled body. In her award-winning novella "Houston, Houston, Do You Read?" (1976), Tiptree presents a female-only society after the extinction of men from disease. The society lacks stereotypically "male" problems such as war, but is stagnant. The women reproduce via cloning, and consider men to be comical.

In Robert Silverberg's novelette "The Way To Spook City" the protagonist meets and has an affair with a woman named Jill, who seems completely human—and convincingly, passionately, female human. Increasingly in love with her, he still has a nagging suspicion that she is in fact a despised member of the mysterious extraterrestrial species known as "Spooks", who had invaded and taken over a large part of the United States. Until the end, he repeatedly grapples with two questions: is she human or a Spook? And if she is a Spook, could the two of them nevertheless build a life together?

In the centuries-long, futile space war described in Joe Haldeman's THE FOREVER WAR, the protagonist's increasing feeling of alienation is manifested, among other things, when he is appointed as the commanding officer of a "strike force" whose soldiers are exclusively homosexual, and who resent being commanded by a

heterosexual. Later in the book, he finds that while he was fighting in space, humanity has begun to clone itself, resulting in a new, collective species calling itself simply Man. Luckily for the protagonist, Man has established several colonies of old-style, heterosexual humans, just in case the evolutionary change proves to be a mistake. In one of these colonies, the protagonist is happily re-united with his long-lost beloved and they embark upon monogamous marriage and on having children through sexual reproduction and female pregnancy—an incredibly archaic and old-fashioned way of life for most of that time’s humanity.

Elizabeth A. Lynn’s science fiction novel *A DIFFERENT LIGHT* (1978) features a same sex relationship between two men, and inspired the name of the LGBT bookstore chain *A Different Light*. Lynn’s *THE CHRONICLES OF TORNOR* (1979-80) series of novels, the first of which won the World Fantasy Award, were among the first fantasy novels to include gay relationships as an unremarkable part of the cultural background. Lynn also wrote novels depicting sadomasochism.

John Varley, who also came to prominence in the 1970s, is another writer who examined sexual themes in his work. In his “Eight Worlds” suite of stories and novels, humanity has achieved the ability to change sex quickly, easily and completely reversibly—leading to a casual attitude with people changing their sex back and forth as the sudden whim takes them. Homophobia is shown as initially inhibiting the uptake of this technology, as it engenders drastic changes in relationships, with bisexuality becoming the default mode for society. Sexual themes are central to the story “Options”: a married woman, Cleo, living in King City, undergoes a change to male despite her husband’s objections. As “Leo” she finds out what it means to be a man in her society and even becomes her husband’s best friend. She also learns that people are adopting new names that are historically neither male nor female. She eventually returns to female as “Nile”. Varley’s *Gaea* trilogy (1979-1984) features lesbian protagonists.

After the pushing back of boundaries in the 1960s and 70s, sex in genre science fiction gained wider acceptance, and was often incorporated into otherwise conventional science fiction stories with little comment. Female characters in science fiction films, such as *Barbarella*, continued to be often portrayed as simple sex kittens.

In 1968 Jack Vance introduced the Planet of Adventure, inhabited by four different alien races, each with its own distinct society and culture. One of these—the predatory, part feline, part bird-like *Dirdir*—are described as having a very complex sexuality, with many different genders that leads to many different combinations of gender-

compatibility when it comes to sex and breeding, though each breeding still seems to involve only two individuals.

Jack L. Chalker's *Well World* series, launched in 1977, depicts a world—designed by the super science of a vanished extraterrestrial race, the Markovians—which is divided into numerous “hexes”, each inhabited by a different sentient race. Anyone entering one of these hexes is transformed into a member of the local race. This plot gives a wide scope for exploring the divergent biology and cultures of the various species—including their sex lives. For example, a human entering a hex inhabited by an insectoid intelligent race is transformed into a female of that species, feels sexual desire for a male and mates with him. Too late does she discover that in this species, pregnancy is fatal.

In a later part, a very macho villain gains control of a supercomputer whose power includes the ability to “redesign” people's bodies to almost any specification. He uses the computer to give himself a “super-virile” body, capable of a virtually unlimited number of erections and ejaculations—and then proceeds to transform his male enemies into beautiful women and induce in them a strong sexual desire towards himself. However, a computer breakdown restores to these captives their normal minds. Though they are still in women's bodies, these bodies were designed with great strength and stamina, so as to enable them to undergo repeated sexual encounters. Thus, they are well-equipped to chase, catch and suitably punish their abuser.

In Frederik Pohl's *JEM*, humans exploring the eponymous planet Jem discover by experience that local beings emit a milt which has a strong aphrodisiac effect on humans. Characters who were hitherto not at all drawn to each other find themselves suddenly involved in wild, uncontrollable sex. At the ironic ending, their descendants who colonize the planet and build up a distinctive society and culture develop the custom of celebrating Christmas by deliberately stimulating the local beings into emitting the milt, and then taking off their clothes and engaging in a wild indiscriminate orgy—their copulations accompanied by a chorus of the planet's enslaved indigenous beings who were taught to sing “Good King Wenceslas”, with the song's Christian significance long forgotten.

Also set on an alien planet, Octavia E. Butler's acclaimed short story “Bloodchild” (1984) depicts the complex relationship between human refugees and the insect-like aliens who keep them in a preserve to protect them, but also to use them as hosts for breeding their young. The story won the Nebula Award, Hugo Award, and Locus Award. Others of Butler's works explore miscegenation, non-consensual sex, and hybridity.

In Robert Silverberg's 1982 novella "Homefaring", the protagonist enters the mind of an intelligent lobster of the very far future and experiences all aspects of lobster life, including sex: "He approached a female, knowing precisely which one was the appropriate one, and sang to her, and she acknowledged his song with a song of her own, and raised her third pair of legs for him, and let him plant his gametes beside her oviducts. There was no apparent pleasure in it, as he remembered pleasure from his time as a human. Yet it brought him a subtle but unmistakable sense of fulfillment, of the completion of biological destiny, that had a kind of orgasmic finality about it, and left him calm and anchored at the absolute dead center of his soul". When finally returning to his human body and his human lover, he keeps longing for the lobster life, to "his mate and her millions of larvae".

Quentin and Alice, the extremely shy and insecure protagonists of Lev Grossman's fantasy novel THE MAGICIANS, spend years as fellow students at a School of Magic without admitting to being deeply in love with each other. Only the experience of being magically turned into foxes enables them at last to break through their reserve: "Increasingly, Quentin noticed one scent more than the others....he had known all along, with what was left of his consciousness, that what he was smelling was Alice. Vulpine hormones and instincts were powering up, taking over, manhandling what was left of his rational human mind."

When resuming their human bodies, they are initially even more shy and awkward with each other, and only after going through some harrowing magical experiences are they finally able to have human sex.

Lois McMaster Bujold explores many areas of sexuality in the multiple award winning novels and stories of her Vorkosigan Saga (1986-ongoing), which are set in a fictional universe influenced by the availability of significant genetic engineering. These areas include an all-male society, promiscuity, monastic celibacy, hermaphroditism, and bisexuality.

In the Mythopoeic Award-winning novel Unicorn Mountain (1988), Michael Bishop includes a gay male AIDS patient among the carefully drawn central characters who must respond to an irruption of dying unicorns at their Colorado ranch. The death of the hedonistic gay culture, and the safe sex campaign resulting from the AIDS epidemic, are explored, both literally and metaphorically.

Sex has a major role in Harry Turtledove's 1990 novel A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE, taking place on the planet Minerva (a more habitable analogue of Mars). Minervan

animals (including the sentient Minervans) are hexameristically radially symmetrical. This means that they have six eyes spaced equally all around, see in all directions and have no “back” where somebody could sneak on them unnoticed. Females (referred to as “mates” by the Minervans) give birth to litters that consist of one male and five females, and the “mates” always die after reproducing because of torrential bleeding from the places where the six fetuses were attached; this gives a population multiplication of five per generation if all females live to adolescence and reproduce.

Females reach puberty while still hardly out of childhood, and typically experience sex only once in the lifetime—leading to pregnancy and death at birth-giving. Thus, in Minervan society male dominance seems truly determined by a biological imperative—though it takes different forms in various Minervan societies: in some females are considered expendable and traded as property, in others they are cherished and their tragic fate mourned—but still their dependent status is taken for granted. The American women arriving on Minerva and discovering this situation consider it intolerable; a major plot element is their efforts, using the resources of Earth medical science, to find a way of saving the Minervan females and letting them survive birth-giving. At the end, they do manage to save a particularly sympathetic Minervan female—potentially opening the way for a complete upheaval in Minervan society.

In the far future human colony of Frederik Pohl’s *THE WORLD AT THE END OF TIME*, the common way to produce new humans is for a geneticist to take DNA samples from two or more “parents”—regardless of their being male or female. The DNA is then combined in a laboratory, and the parents arrive to pick up the baby nine months later. The few couples who prefer to do it in the old fashioned way, a man sexually impregnating a woman, are considered strange but harmless eccentrics.

GLORY SEASON (1993) by David Brin is set on the planet Stratos, inhabited by a strain of human beings designed to conceive clones in winter, and normal children in summer. All clones are female, because males cannot reproduce themselves individually. Further, males and females have opposed seasons of sexual receptivity; women are sexually receptive in winter, and men in summer. This unusual heterogamous reproductive cycle is known to be evolutionarily advantageous for some species of aphids. The novel treats themes of separatist feminism and biological determinism.

Elizabeth Bear’s novel *CARNIVAL* (2006) revisits the trope of the single-gender world, as a pair of gay male ambassador-spies attempt to infiltrate and subvert the predominately lesbian civilization of New Amazonia, whose matriarchal rulers have all

but enslaved their men.

The fantasy world of Scott Lynch's 2007 *RED SEAS UNDER RED SKIES*, offers a new variation on the long-established genre of pirate literature—depicting a pirate ship which is run on the basis of complete gender equality. The pirate crew is composed of a roughly equal number of men and women, and crew members may freely engage in sex when off-duty. Since shipboard life offers little chance of privacy the sound of people having a noisy orgasm is a normal part of nighttime routine on board the *Poison Orchid*.

However, any attempt at a sexual act without the other person's sexual consent is punished immediately and severely. The formidable Captain Zamira Drakasha is raising her two children aboard, and is well able to combine being a deadly fighter and strict disciplinarian with her role as a loving and doting mother—but having children aboard is a privilege reserved to the Captain alone; other female pirates who get pregnant must leave their children on shore.

The plot of *THE TAMIR TRIAD* by Lynn Flewelling has a major transsexual element. To begin with, the protagonist, Prince Tobin, is to all appearances a male—both in his own perception and in that of others. Boys who swim naked together with Tobin have no reason to doubt his male anatomy. Yet, due to the magical reasons which are an important part of the plot, in the underlying, essential identity Tobin had always been a disguised girl. In the series' cataclysmic scene of magical change this becomes an evident physical fact. And Prince Tobin becomes Queen Tamir, shedding the male body and gaining a fully functioning female one. Yet, it takes Tamir a considerable time and effort to come to terms with her female sexuality.

In another twist of today's society, "Nontraditional Love" by Rafael Grugman (2008) puts together an upside-down society where heterosexuality is outlawed, and homosexuality is the norm. A "traditional" family unit consists of two dads with a surrogate mother. Alternatively, two mothers, one of whom bears a child. In a nod to the always progressive Netherlands, this country is the only country progressive enough to allow opposite sex marriage. This is perhaps the most obvious example of cognitive estrangement. It puts the reader in the shoes of the oppressed by modelling an entire world of opposites around a fairly "normal" everyday heterosexual protagonist. A heterosexual reader would not only be able to identify with the main character, but be immersed in a world as oppressive and bigoted as the real world has been for homosexuals and the queer community throughout history.

The 2018 Fantasy novel *STONE UNTURNED*, set in Lawrence Watt-Evans' magical

world of Ethshar, begins with the young wizard Morvash of the Shadows discovering that some of the statues in his uncle's house were real people turned to stone, and sets out to do the right thing. What Morvash considered the most disturbing of these statues "was hidden away in a sort of marble grotto in the garden behind the house, and depicted a young man and a young woman in what might politely be called an intimate embrace, or a compromising position.

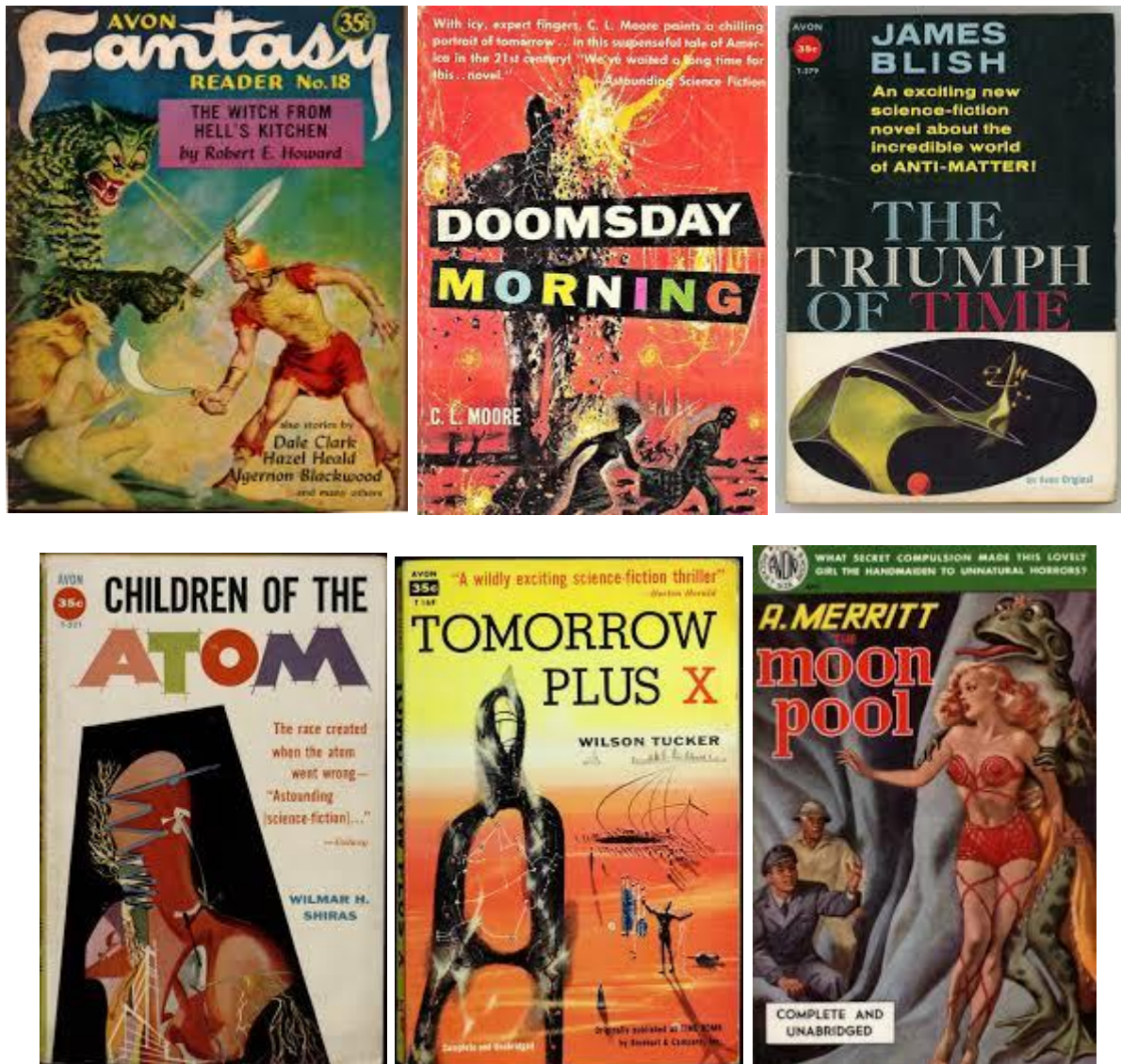
"They were not in the sort of elegant pose that artists use for erotica, with graceful lines displaying the female's curves and the male's muscles. They were in an earthier position.... Neither wore any clothing whatsoever, nor were there any artfully-placed draperies or fig leaves to obscure the details. Had the wizard responsible for the petrification timed it deliberately, or had he caught them in this position by accident?"

Eventually, it turns out that the couple were Prince Marek of Melitha and Darissa the Witch's Apprentice, who had fallen deeply in love with each other during a war that threatened their kingdom and who sought to celebrate victory with a bout of intensive love-making in the privacy of the Prince's bedchamber—but were surprised and turned into stone by a wizard in the employ of the Prince's envious sister, who sought to seize the throne.

Afterwards, the couple spent forty petrified years, dimly conscious, perpetually caught in their sexual act and forming a prized item in Lord Landessin's sculpture collection. When the wizard Morvash finally manages to bring them back to life, they find themselves lying on the floor in a big hall, surrounded by various other people who were also revived from petrification, and hasten to disengage and look for something to cover their nakedness. After various other adventures, they finally get married, and fully clothed mount the throne of Melitha as King and Queen.



EARLY AVON SCIENCE FICTION PAPERBACKS by Jon D. Swartz, N3F Historian



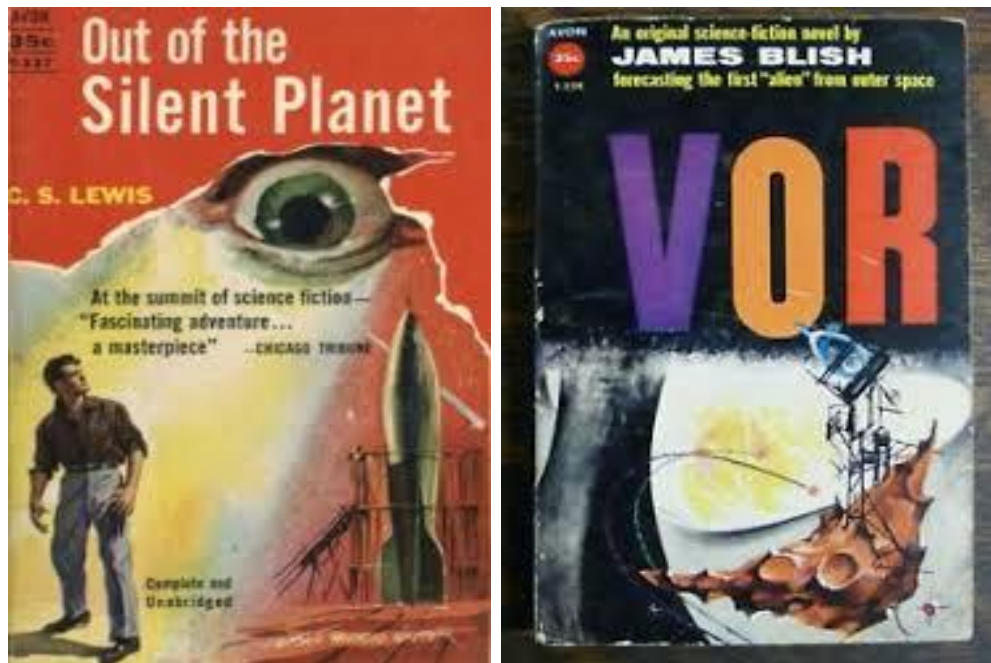
Avon Books was founded in 1941 by the American News Corporation (ANC) in order to create a rival to Pocket Books. They hired a brother and sister, Joseph Meyers and Edna Meyers Williams, to establish the company. ANC bought out J.S. Ogilvie Publications, a dime novel publisher partly owned by the Meyers, and renamed it Avon Publications. Avon Books also published magazines and comic books.

"The early Avons were somewhat similar in appearance to the existing paperbacks of Pocket Books, resulting in an immediate and largely ineffective lawsuit by that company. Despite this superficial similarity, though, from early on they differentiated Avon by placing an emphasis on popular appeal rather than loftier concepts of literary merit."

The first forty titles were not numbered. First editions of the first dozen or so have

front and rear end-papers with an illustration of a globe.

The emphasis on popular appeal led Avon to publish ghost stories (H), fantasy novels (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fantasy_novels) (F), and science fiction (SF) in its early years, which were far removed in audience appeal from the more literary Pocket Books. Later, however, a bust of Shakespeare was used as a trademark.



Early SF/F/H Anthologies/Collections

GREAT GHOST STORIES (1941), or THE HAUNTED HOTEL by Wilkie Collins and 25 Other Ghost Stories.

Described as an "Avon Pocket-Size Book", this paperback was the sixth book published by Avon, and was the first in their SF/F/H category. It was referred to as a "double volume", and consisted of two separate books. In addition to Collins' "The Haunted Hotel", there were twenty-five stories by authors such as Edgar Allen Poe, Guy de Maupassant, S. Baring Gould, Eleanor F. Lewis, and Arnold M. Anderson. A separate book of the twenty-five ghost stories was also published.

AVON GHOST READER (1946), edited by Herbert Williams.

This early Avon anthology, billed as "eerie and terrifying stories," contained famous genre tales from authors who also wrote SF and F, including H.P. Lovecraft, A. Merritt, Bram Stoker, Mindret Lord, August Derleth, John Collier, and Stephen Vincent Benet.

THE GIRL WITH THE HUNGRY EYES (1949), anonymously edited by Donald A.

Wollheim.

This SF/Fantasy anthology consisted of stories by Fritz Leiber, Jr. (title story), William Tenn ("Venus and the Seven Sexes"), Stephen Grendon [pen name of August Derleth] ("Mrs. Manifold"), P. Schuyler Miller ("Daydream"), Frank Belknap Long ("Maturity Night"), and Manly Wade Wellman ("Come Into My Parlor"). This was a famous collection in its day, and the name of Tenn's story raised some eyebrows. Cover art was by Ann Cantor.

THE LURKING FEAR AND OTHER STORIES (1947), by H.P. Lovecraft.

This collection of Lovecraft stories contained his following tales: "The Lurking Fear", "The Colour Out of Space", "The Nameless City", "Pickman's Model", "Arthur Jermyn", "The Unnamable", "The Call of Cthulhu", "The Moon-Bog", "Cool Air", "The Hound", and "The Shunned House". Cover art was by A.R. Tilburne.

TERROR AT NIGHT (1947), edited by Herbert Williams.

Contents of this genre anthology included a brief introduction by the editor and the following stories: "The Haunter of the Dark" by H.P. Lovecraft; "The Judge's House" by Bram Stoker; "The Interruption" by W.W. Jacobs; "The Black Courtyard" by Thomas Burke; "The Seventeenth Hole at Duncaster" by H.R. Wakefield; "The Second Generation" by Algernon Blackwood; "The Phantom Bus" by W. Elwyn Backus; "Change" by Arthur Machen; "The Left Eye" by Henry S. Whitehead; "A Watcher by the Dead" by Ambrose Bierce; "The Two Bottles of Relish" by Lord Dunsany; "Lost Hearts" by M.R. James; and "Caterpillars" by E.F. Benson. Cover art was by George Mayers.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST FANTASY STORIES (1951), edited by Barthold Fles.

Stories were by Grace Amundson ("The Child Who Believed"), Noel Langley ("Scene for Satan"), Will F. Jenkins [Murray Leinster] ("Doomsday Deferred"), Gerald Kersh ("Note on Danger B"), Willard Temple ("The Eternal Duffer"), Conrad Richter ("Doctor Hanray's Second Chance"), Wilbur Schramm ("The Voice in the Earphones"), Paul Gallico ("The Terrible Answer"), and Rear-Admiral D.V. Gallery, USN ("The Enemy Planet").

Cover art was by William Randall, illustrating Grace Amundson's lead story, "The Child Who Believed".

Early Avon SF Novels

Several SF/F/H novels by A. Merritt (THE METAL MONSTER, THE MOON POOL, THE SHIP OF ISHTAR, *etc.*), three classic SF/F novels by C.S. Lewis (OUT OF THE SILENT PLANET with cover art by Ann Cantor, PERELANDRA, and THAT HIDEOUS STRENGTH),

Ray Cummings' THE PRINCESS OF THE ATOM, Jack Williamson's THE GREEN GOD, Stanton Coblenz's INTO PLUTONIAN DEPTHS, Philip Wylie's GLADIATOR, James Blish's THE TRIUMPH OF TIME, and Ralph Milne Farley's AN EARTHMAN ON VENUS (*aka* THE RADIO MAN) were some of the early genre novels from Avon.

Other Avon paperbacks in the 1950s were Aldous Huxley's AFTER MANY A SUMMER DIES THE SWAN (1952), A.E. Van Vogt's AWAY AND BEYOND (1953) [nine of his SF stories, almost all from **Astounding**], James Blish's VOR (1955), Nelson Bond's NO TIME LIKE THE FUTURE (1954), Wilson Tucker's TOMORROW PLUS X [*aka* TIME BOMB] (1957), and Jerry Sohl's THE TIME DISSOLVER (1957)—and twenty years later, MIND OF MY MIND (1977) by Octavia E. Butler.

Science Fiction Readers (1951-1952) edited by Donald A. Wollheim

There were three AVON SCIENCE FICTION READERS published during 1951-1952, all edited by Wollheim. The READERS were digest-sized and saddle-stapled, sold for 35 cents, and the first was described as a companion, pocket-priced anthology to the publisher's successful AVON FANTASY READER—eighteen of which were published during 1947-1952, also edited by Wollheim. In 1953, the Readers were combined into Avon Science Fiction and Fantasy Readers for two issues, both edited by Sol Cohen.

These were primarily reprint anthologies, and the Fantasy Readers sold better than the SF Readers. These Readers were considered by some to be magazines rather than books, but it seems clear to most researchers that they were intended to be paperback book anthologies.

Later READER Anthologies

In the 1960s Avon published two paperback anthologies of stories taken from these earlier F Readers: THE AVON FANTASY READER and THE 2nd AVON FANTASY READER. Both were credited as being edited by Wollheim and George Ernsberger. Ernsberger was the actual editor, of course, since Wollheim had long since left Avon. He had edited the earlier Readers, however, and so was given credit by Ernsberger for co-editing these later books as well.

The authors included in these two reprint Readers were such well-known SF and fantasy practitioners as Robert E. Howard, C.L. Moore, Clark Ashton Smith, Robert Bloch, William Hope Hodgson, and Manly Wade Wellman.

The cover art on both books was by Gray Morrow.

Donald Wollheim

Donald Allen Wollheim (1914-1990) was an SF fan, author, editor, and publisher. Wollheim was responsible for several publishing firsts in the field of SF. He was editor of the first SF paperback to use the term "science fiction" in its title. He also edited the VIKING PORTABLE NOVELS OF SCIENCE in 1945, the first hardcover book in the United States to collect SF novels in book form.

He and his wife, the former Elsie Balter, later founded DAW (from Donald Allen Wollheim) Publications, which published only SF/F paperbacks.

Ann Cantor

Cantor was a staff artist for Avon Books during the 1940s and 1950s. She did much of the "good girl art" on early Avon mystery paperbacks. In addition to THE GIRL WITH THE HUNGRY EYES, she has been credited with the covers for other early Avon genre paperbacks, including OUT OF THE SILENT PLANET and THE DAUGHTER OF FU MANCHU.

Gray Morrow



Dwight Graydon "Gray" Morrow (1934-2001) was an illustrator of genre magazines, paperback books, and comics. He did considerable work for **Galaxy** and **If** SF magazines, and was co-creator of the Marvel Comics' monster, the Man-Thing, and of DC Comics' western vigilante, El Diablo.

Morrow also worked as an illustrator, writer, and editor for other comic book companies such as MLJ (Archie), Gilbertson, Toby, and Warren.

A Few Conclusions

Avon began publishing SF/F/H in 1942 with their digest-sized "Avon Murder of the Month" series (later Murder Mystery Monthly, or MMM) of publications, nine of which were reprints of the SF/F/H novels by A. Merritt. These early digests had excellent cover art, and were later reprinted as regular Avon paperbacks. In addition to Merritt, these early Avon publications were by such popular genre writers as Thorne Smith and Sax Rohmer.

In the 1960s, Avon published several popular SF anthologies edited by William F. Nolan, including 3 TO THE HIGHEST POWER and MAN AGAINST TOMORROW.

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Note: This article was written years ago. It has been revised for publication in Origin.



An Historic Issue of a Fanzine: *Hyphen* 37 by John Thiel



The issue in which Walt Willis returned to fandom and found it largely gafiated and in a state of conflict. A high quality of fannish writing is to be seen in this issue.

Hyphen 37 seems misnumbered, since Walt Willis was doing Hyphen on a monthly basis in 1952, and was still doing it in 1959, making the issue I have recently gained access to (*via* Joe Siclari and the Fan History Project) a suspicious publication, but the cover is indeed the work of Arthur Thompson (Atom) and the two people to Willis' left in the cartoon look like Arthur C. Clarke and Bob Shaw, and the person sitting at the computer looks like Forrest J. Ackerman. The person standing behind the computer would seem to be Al Lewis (of the N3F).



Bob Shaw



Walt Willis

The issue has Willis' return to fandom after a twenty-two year hiatus which he explains as having other matters to attend to. He was one of the most successful fans there was in terms of having a place in fandom and being in active contact with numerous writers, editors and big name fans, so his absence from fandom involved giving up a lot. The issue shows a considerable amount of strife in fandom and desecrations of the sort that occur when the main people are off doing something else. In the editorial Willis apologizes for not being around very much, and he describes finding mimeograph equipment to be outmoded, but says he was able to find a workable machine to do this issue. The issue is very well done, but shows all the damages to science fiction fandom that have occurred.

The issue opens with fan fiction by Bob Shaw, called SFAN, which portrays fandom as a persecuted brotherhood. (The clubbishness of Willis' fandom is shown on the cover of the fanzine shown above.) A fan is running away from an armed manhunt, is captured and put in an arena. The person he fights says he is going to pretend to kill him but instead get him away from there and into "New Fandom". The fan says, "But the fans are

all dead." The other says "Nonsense, Willis and Hoffman and the others fan on yet." Both Ghu and Roscoe are invoked in the story.

This is followed by James White with a story called "The Exorcists of IF" in which the house in which Willis had resided becomes haunted by ghostly fans after he has moved into his new house. The ghostly fans are making puns and doing back cover quotes. Willis and people accompanying him convince them that they are not dead and they go to join the spirit of fandom.

John Berry writes a fictional report on the meeting of Irish fandom at the anniversary of their founding. It seems to describe the future of the haunts in the foregoing story.

Eric Meyer follows with "Babylon IF", where they are commencing a new fandom. Their respect for what has gone before is obvious, where little respect has been being paid for it in the fandom of the times in which this was written.

"Go For Your Goon" by Arthur Thompson is about an investigation of a fake fandom.

There is more material of a fannish nature and then a letter column with the prefatory notation by Willis, "I suppose there's no point in waiting any longer for letters of comment on the last issue. I'll just have to make do with what has come in so far, and a rum lot they are. Here, for instance, is somebody called Bob Tucker (March 6, 1965)". The letter is rife with hatred and vitriol, and Willis' answer says he doesn't recall anyone named Bob Tucker. William F. Temple writes an interpretation of fandom ending with a statement that he is going into gafiation. There's a letter from a neo showing suspicion of fandom. Pete Graham writes disparagingly of Dublin. Mal Ashworth and Dean Grennell write of the effects of warfare. Robert Bloch comments that he dined on Santa's reindeer, which were roasted when they came down his chimney. Other letters describe court litigations, mass uprisings, political warfare, and the possibility of atomic attack.

The issue ends with Willis deploring the inability of fans to get fandom started again and the lack of interest seen in so many of the fans.

All of this is historical in that it represents an epoch of warfare in which fandom is involved, and which led to many of the complaints which we have at the present time. But it recalls the fandom of the past well.

Willis (left)



Willis at Ghoodminton

LETTERS ALSO KNOWN AS CORRESPONDENCE

readers from all over and all walks of life express how things are with them



WILLIAM MAYO: Thanks for including me again. And that's a refreshing editorial on the state of things, *viz a viz*, science fiction. Myself, I go back and forth on whether things are getting better or worse as regards both humankind and the literature I read and I suppose my writing reflects this flux. In part this is the onset of indecision in a man rapidly approaching his 60th year and in part it's a reflection of the world in which we now live. But empires rise and fall all the time while new scientific and technological wonders continue to amaze me. One old saying from my youth stays with me—"Expect the unexpected." That, as always, remains the case.

Will, it's good to hear from you and nice to get a comment on the previous issue of Origin and to find therein an affinity with my editorial.

TALENT KORNER

Wherein we are able to note and research science fiction and fantasy writing of the present time and evaluate our present state of the arts, comparing it with the past.



SILENCE AND SHADE by John Polselli

Silence between leaves
Shadows perch on a harbor
I think of night approaching
A foreign sky above roofs
Emerald trees whose hands beckon silently
A ghost hovers above a threshold
where a door opens
into an invisible mind
moving among
silent pines

SELF EVIDENT by Neal Wilgus

In ancient times Pulzivar was popular
but those days are gone for bad
and a new dogma has come and gone
several times making it difficult to tell
the little ones as they struggle to escape us
and return to those days of Pulzivar the Great
whoever that was or will be
but who cares I suppose is the question—or answer.
of course. Not.

LIFE UNTO DEATH by Betty Streeter

We feel pain unto death
Sunshine we feel, Rain also we feel
Enjoy life unto death
We feel empty with joy
We fill our cups with waters.
Life, death, either smile along with the tears we cry.
Still life unto death.



Final Page