

**חדשות האגודה – פברואר 2025 The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy**

**תל אביב:** מועדון הקריאה יעסוק בספר "מסכת תהום" מאת איל חיות-מן, ויתקיים בדירה בת"א. לקבלת המיקום יש להירשם במייל של דפנה קירש ([dafna1485@walla.co.il](mailto:dafna1485@walla.co.il)), **ובדף האירוע בפייסבוק.**

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1041913523811981>

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**כל האירועים של האגודה מופיעים בלוח האירועים (שפע אירועים מעניינים, הרצאות, סדנאות, מפגשים ועוד)**

**לקבלת עדכונים שוטפים על מפגשי מועדון הקריאה ברחבי הארץ ניתן להצטרף לרשימת התפוצה או בדף האגודה בפייסבוק.**

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

**This month's roundup:**

- **Special Wartime Issue (#17) – Some FINAL thoughts? Not YET!**
- **Reviews: Moview review "Bionic" (2024) – future of athletic sports**
- **Our usual tidbits from the Web – Xtra Large (because we missed a few months)**

– Your editor, Leybl (Leon) Botwinik

## **Special Wartime Issue #17**

Part I – UPDATE: It's quickly coming up on **almost 500 days** since Hamas treacherously invaded Israel and killed over 1200 people, young and old, male and female, Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and from a few other nationalities/ethnic groups/religions. Since our last writing, of the original 250 hostages they took (including corpses) 16 months ago, a few more of the living hostages have been released from their horrible ordeal. **There are still 76 hostages left to be freed.**

We hope and pray, that the rest will be released as soon as possible, because the conditions of those still alive are inhumane. In return for their release, Israel will have released – for each innocent hostage – **between 30-50 well-fed terrorists** (many serving multiple life sentences for their murderous sprees of violence). **Most will probably continue their terrorist activities.**

Someone said, that if you live in Israel and don't believe in miracles, then you are being unrealistic. I say this, regarding the earth-shaking statements of President Donald Trump last week, who said that he wants to pull out all the Gazans (close to 2 million) and resettle them elsewhere, while he (America) rebuilds the devastated area. The plan is still very sketchy. For example: Will they be permitted to return, or expected to stay in the 'temporary' resettlement countries?

The plan looks good at first glance but doesn't solve the main issue: the fact that the Gazan population – just like other Arabs in the Middle East and elsewhere – have been brainwashed for generations, to believe that Jews have no right to live in the Land of Israel (or even the right to live at all).

So, I'm still sceptic for both the short and the long run, but let's see what happens next.

Leybl Botwinik, Editor

**See also:** Alan Dershowitz discusses the Gaza plan immediately after Trump-Netanyahu press conference.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1FLImMM4KJE&t=941s>

and read this article too:

<https://freebeacon.com/israel/the-historical-case-for-trumps-riviera/>

## Movie: Bionic (2024)

– Review by Leybl Botwinik

This Portuguese language film (I saw it with dubbed English dialogue) is mostly about the possible future of athletics. The world of sports is, traditionally, not only competitive at the 'human' level (who is stronger, faster, etc.), but an entire industry with supporting 'tech' that is involved in aiding the athlete: better shoes, swim-trunks, more aerodynamic clothing, special diets that may include energy bars and drinks, special exercise regimes, etc.

Sports is big business/big money. Athletes in some sports (football, baseball, hockey) earn millions. Ads (on TV, billboards, etc.) during sporting events cost millions. Successful/popular athletes get millions for doing ads ... In the long run, it's (almost) all about money, power, and the spectator's demand for greater excitement, more challenges, etc. That's why we have races, team sports, sponsorships by big name companies, etc. That's how the rich and the poor were catered to in gladiator fights of ancient Rome, Spanish bullfights, football matches like the Super Bowl, big-bucks boxing matches, futuristic events like in the movie '**Rollerball**', drag races like in "**Death Race 2000**", or challenges like in "**Hunger Games**".

This film, "Bionics" takes place in 2035, in Brazil, in a near future dystopian world, where robotics technology has made great strides on the electro-mechanical side. This focus is primarily about how paralympic sports – with athletes having enhanced bio-electric prosthetics – has become the new 'in' thing among the sports-loving audience.

With the advent of advanced techniques and technologies, bio-electro-mechanical prosthetics have made the traditional athlete obsolete. This, at the expense of traditional sports and non-enhanced athletes who are now passé. Sportspersons who have trained their entire lives are now 'out of the race' because they cannot compete with the Paralympic athletes whose electro-mechanical prosthetic parts are far superior.



In this story, the two daughters of a former Olympic champion runner are the main characters. The better runner is the older daughter, but as good as she is, she cannot compete against her sister who is enhanced. Even if she was willing to give up a limb or two to meet the goal, she can't – some former athletes had willingly surgically replaced healthy legs or arms, but it's now against the law. She is, therefore, frustrated and angry.

One day, however, the hero of our story has a terrible 'hit-and-run accident' while riding her motorcycle and has one of her legs replaced – so now she can legally compete. The tragedy, however, was a setup. The hero is pulled into a criminal world and uses her new strengths and abilities to support crimes.

In addition to the strife of the normal sports men and women, Sports and Crime are intertwined. Even in our day – past and present, criminals tend to get involved in trying to control the outcome of games, and the athletes. The outcome of boxing matches or horse races, even team matches, have often been rigged so that one contestant/team or another will win – even to the number of points, etc., so that some criminals can cash in on bets and gambled winnings.

The movie has some great visual effects and is of cinematographic 'Hollywood' calibre. Acting is OK too. The story, however, could have been a bit more polished, and the ending was set up, so it seems, to prepare for a possible sequel. **Rotten Tomatoes**, gave it an overall low mark, though:

See: <https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/bionic#critics-reviews>

See: YouTube trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RTeuhVG7LXg>

## Fun from the Web

- Another Universe Hiding Behind the Big Bang (mirror of our own, going backwards in time)  
<https://futurism.com/the-byte/another-universe-behind-big-bang>
- Rats Wearing Tiny Vests Help Sniff Out & Catch Illegally Trafficked Wildlife  
<https://mymodernmet.com/rats-sniff-out-illegally-trafficked-wildlife/?ref=thefuturist>



- 'Beppo go home?' Astronaut monkey steals hearts in tear-jerking SNL skit  
<https://www.space.com/the-universe/beppo-come-home-an-astronaut-monkey-steals-hearts-in-tear-jerking-snl-skit>
- Einstein's Theory of General Relativity Faces Challenge – Newsweek  
<https://www.newsweek.com/einstein-general-relativity-gravity-space-time-dark-energy-1984667>
- Robot that watched surgery videos performs with skill of human doctor  
<https://hub.jhu.edu/2024/11/11/surgery-robots-trained-with-videos/?ref=thefuturist>
- Robot Bird Can Walk, Hop and Jump for Take-Off  
<https://www.newsweek.com/robot-bird-mimics-flight-1994975?ref=thefuturist>
- The ones who need little sleep  
<https://knowablemagazine.org/content/article/mind/2024/genetics-of-people-who-need-little-sleep?ref=thefuturist>
- Extraterrestrial life may look nothing like life on Earth – so astrobiologists are coming up with a framework to study how complex systems evolve  
<https://www.space.com/space-exploration/search-for-life/extraterrestrial-life-may-look-nothing-like-life-on-earth-so-astrobiologists-are-coming-up-with-a-framework-to-study-how-complex-systems-evolve>
- A super-Earth beyond Mars would have made Earth nearly uninhabitable  
<https://www.space.com/the-universe/solar-system/a-super-earth-beyond-mars-would-have-made-earth-nearly-uninhabitable>
- US Space Force 5 years later: What has it accomplished so far?  
<https://www.space.com/space-exploration/launches-spacecraft/us-space-force-5-years-later-what-has-it-accomplished-so-far-and-where-does-it-go-from-here>
- This 'AI Granny' Bores Scammers to Tears  
<https://www.pcmag.com/news/this-ai-granny-bores-scammers-to-tears>
- Israel Unveils Its First Domestically Built Quantum Computer  
<https://unitedwithisrael.org/israel-unveils-its-first-domestically-built-quantum-computer/>

- **AI Chatbots Can Be Jailbroken to Answer Questions Using Simple Loopholes**  
<https://gizmodo.com/ai-chatbots-can-be-jailbroken-to-answer-any-question-using-very-simple-loopholes-2000541157>
- **The Theory That Volcanoes Killed the Dinosaurs Is Officially Extinct**  
<https://gizmodo.com/the-theory-that-volcanoes-killed-the-dinosaurs-is-officially-extinct-2000541485>
- **'It's bananas:' Toy fruit becomes first zero-g indicator on SpaceX Starship**  
<https://www.space.com/spacex-starship-test-flight-six-banana>



SpaceX launched the sixth test flight of its Starship heavy-lift rocket Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2024, including its first physical payload: a toy banana. (Image credit: SpaceX/collectSPACE.com)

Back in the day, I used to hang a toy banana over my office desk – a great conversation starter/ice breaker 😊



## TV&MOVIES

- **Escape Planet Earth With These 10 Streaming Sci-Fi Films**  
<https://gizmodo.com/best-space-movies-streaming-netflix-max-prime-video-2000520245>
- **'Dune: Prophecy' review: The Bene Gesserit shine in this sci-fi showstopper**  
<https://mashable.com/article/dune-prophecy-review-hbo>
- **Amazon Quietly Added the Most Surprising Time-Travel Adventure of 2024**  
<https://www.inverse.com/my-old-ass-review-amazon-prime-aubrey-plaza>
- **29 Years Later, Star Trek's Most Political Episode Is Still Required Viewing**  
<https://www.cbr.com/star-trek-deep-space-nine-past-tense-required-viewing/>
- **Ira Steven Behr was told Star Trek: Deep Space Nine would always be overshadowed by Star Trek: Voyager**  
<https://redshirtsalwaysdie.com/posts/ira-steven-behr-was-told-star-trek-deep-space-nine-would-always-be-overshadowed-by-star-trek-voyager-01j633zne4wy>
- **First episode of Star Trek: Deep Space Nine season 8 was plotted in 2015**  
<https://redshirtsalwaysdie.com/the-first-episode-of-star-trek-deep-space-nine-season-8-was-plotted-in-2015-01jce7nzvx5y>
- **The Best Star Trek Memes of November 12, 2024**  
<https://cheezburger.com/37746437/the-best-star-trek-memes-of-the-week-november-12-2024>
- **Star Trek reboot coming up in 2026**  
<https://www.inverse.com/entertainment/star-trek-origin-story-movie-reboot-2026-toby-haynes>
- **Star Trek: Deep Space Nine 1993 Cast Then and Now 2022 | 29 Years After**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kE3fIY6b3IM>
- **What is Section 31? The 'Star Trek' spy organization explained**  
<https://www.space.com/entertainment/space-movies-shows/what-is-section-31-the-star-trek-spy-organization-explained>



- An explosive new 'Star Trek: Section 31' trailer just dropped  
<https://www.space.com/entertainment/an-explosive-new-star-trek-section-31-trailer-just-dropped-and-now-we-cant-wait-until-2025-video>
- Compelling Foundation Theory Reveals Another Sci-Fi Apple TV+ Project is a Prequel To The Isaac Asimov Space Opera  
<https://screenrant.com/finch-movie-sci-fi-asimov-rules-foundation-same-universe-theory/>
- New Zemeckis film used AI to de-age Tom Hanks and Robin Wright  
<https://arstechnica.com/ai/2024/11/new-zemeckis-film-used-ai-to-de-age-tom-hanks-and-robin-wright/?ref=thefuturist>
- 'Interstellar' returns from deep space to IMAX theaters for 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary  
<https://www.space.com/entertainment/interstellar-reappears-in-imax-theaters-starting-today-for-its-10th-anniversary>
- Where does 'Star Wars: Skeleton Crew' fit in the Star Wars timeline?  
<https://www.space.com/entertainment/where-does-star-wars-skeleton-crew-fit-in-the-star-wars-timeline>



From STAR WARS:

Mandalorian's  
Moff Gideon  
(one of the bad guys)

Thanks to Jose Sanchez

- A Guide to Every Upcoming Star Wars Project, Alive or Dead  
<https://gizmodo.com/every-star-wars-film-tv-show-announced-canceled-lucasfilm-disney-2000522180?ref=thefuturist>
- 'Galaxy Quest' blasts back with 25th anniversary 4K Blu-ray release  
<https://www.space.com/entertainment/galaxy-quest-blasts-back-onto-our-screens-with-25th-anniversary-blu-ray-release>

#### COMICS

- Star Trek Reinvents Dukat as a Legitimate Starfleet Hero  
<https://screenrant.com/star-trek-reinvents-dukat-starfleet-hero/>

#### BOOKS

- 'The Art of Futurama' by Matt Groening crash lands today  
<https://www.space.com/entertainment/good-news-everyone-the-art-of-futurama-by-matt-groening-crash-lands-today>
- Get a sneak peek at 'Star Trek' illustrated short story anthology (exclusive)  
<https://www.space.com/entertainment/star-trek-illustrated-short-stories-anthology-beams-onto-bookshelves-this-december-exclusive-exert>
- Learn how Pike and Number One met at Starfleet Academy in 'Star Trek: Strange New Worlds: Asylum' (exclusive)  
<https://www.space.com/entertainment/find-out-how-pike-and-una-met-at-starfleet-academy-in-star-trek-strange-new-worlds-asylum-exclusive>

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