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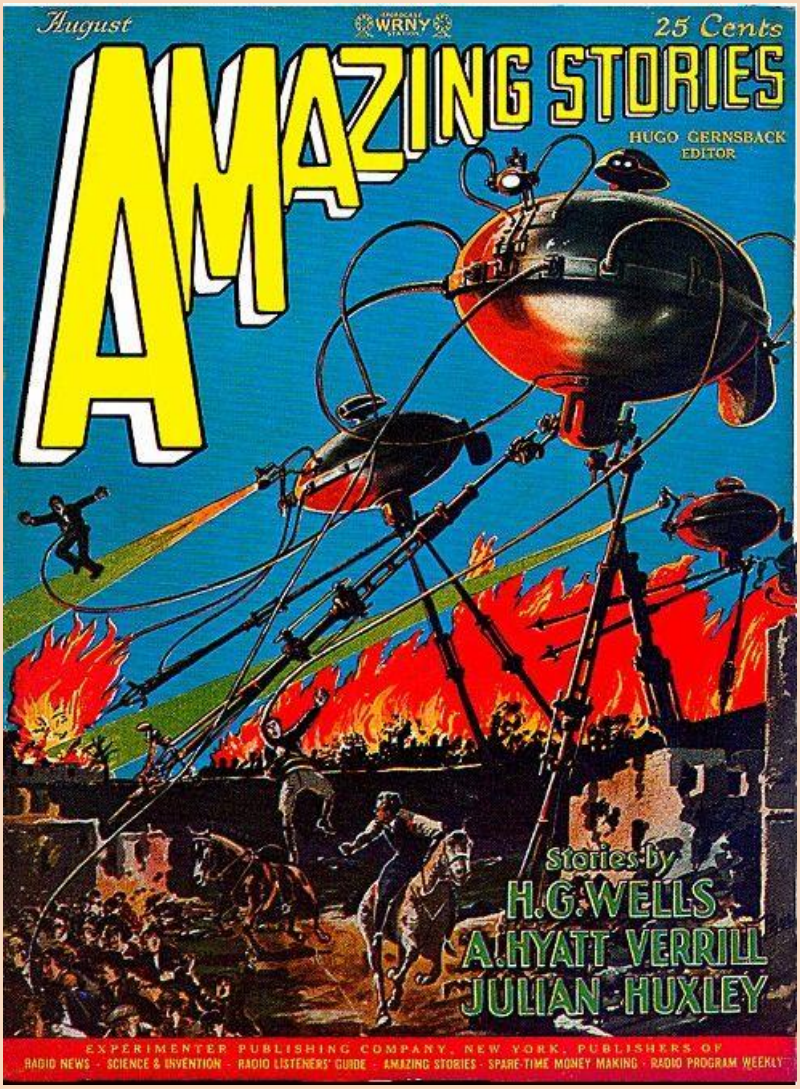
Edited by Samuel Lubell



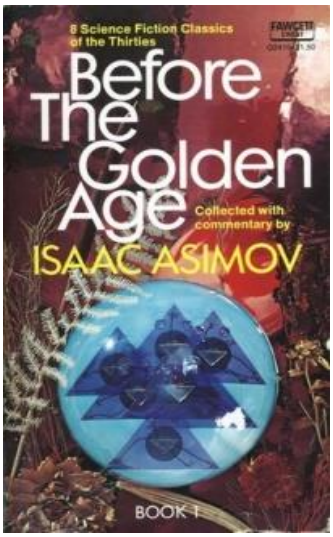
Editorial Note

Welcome to my second issue of *Origins*, a National Fantasy Fan Federation (N3F) publication of N3F's Historical and Research Bureau. *Origins* covers the history of science fiction/fantasy, fandom, and related science focusing on pre-21st century content. I urge people to send in articles, letters, reviews of older SF, and anything relevant to SamJLubell@gmail.com. I'd be interested in stories on how people discovered fandom and what they did.

Please support N3F by joining and paying annual dues, which are only $6 (for Electronic Members, $18 for a Regular Membership that gives you a mailed paper version of *The National Fantasy Fan*). Paid members can vote for the Neffy Awards and N3F officers. Visit https://tnfff.org/to-join/

Literary SF: Review of Isaac Asimov's *Before the Golden Age: Book 1*

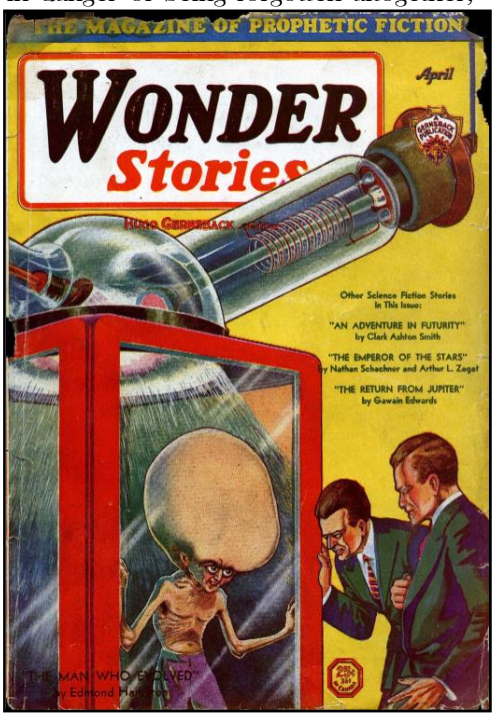
Reviewed by Samuel Lubell



Before the Golden Age: A Science Fiction Anthology of the 1930s by Isaac Asimov was originally published as one massive 900+ page hardcover in 1974. The 1975 paperback edition split the book into three volumes (although I have seen evidence of a four book version). Asimov, in his introduction, asserts that the Golden Age of Science Fiction (in capital letters) began when John Campbell became editor of Astounding Stories. So this book covers stories from before that date. Book 1 has six stories from 1931 and two from 1932.

But the book is more than just a collection of stories. It is also the deeply personal story about how Isaac Asimov first encountered science fiction and became a fan. In fact, the first story in the volume does not even start until page 37. Isaac Asimov, the author of *I Robot*, the *Foundation* series, and more books than most people read in their lifetime, started off as a precious kid, reading these stories in magazines in his father's newsstand/candy store. The anthology is Asimov's way of sharing the stories he loved as his child and still had stuck in his memory 40 years later.

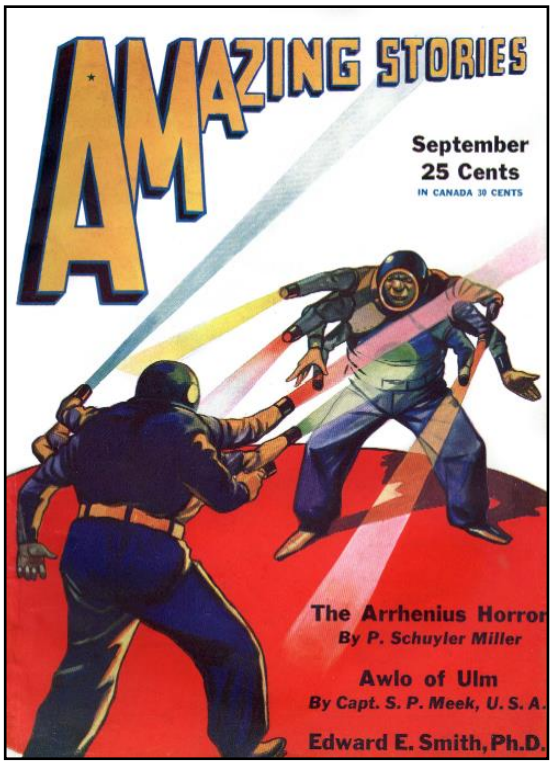
At one point, Asimov writes "And aside from my personal involvement, the stories form an essential part of the history of science fiction, a part that has been unfairly neglected and is in danger of being forgotten altogether, since virtually no important anthologies have dealt with pre-1938 science fiction." However, based on my reading of these stories (which Asimov considered the best of the period), there is a good reason why the stories of this era are neglected – by today's standards most of these stories are not very good. One has to approach most of these as historical artifacts, evidence of how science fiction grew and improved.



"The Man Who Evolved" by Edmond Hamilton. This story was originally published in *Wonder Stories* April 1931. Three former friends meet up because the scientist needs their help for an experiment in advancing his own evolution through the use of cosmic rays to see what man will be like 50 million years in the future (and beyond in 50 million year intervals). He advances to a superman, to a pure brain, and ultimately to pure protoplasm. There is no action, but the different forms hold the reader's interest. I think this story holds up well. Hamilton is remembered today mainly as the author of the Captain Future "novels" but was an early pioneer of space opera.

"The Jameson Satellite" by Neil R. Jones. This story was originally published in *Amazing Stories*, July 1931. Professor Jameson, seeking immortality, sends his body in suspended animation into Earth orbit. Machine-men called Zoromes from the planet Zor discover the capsule 40 million years into the future and turn Jameson into a machine man too. He visits the long-dead Earth and

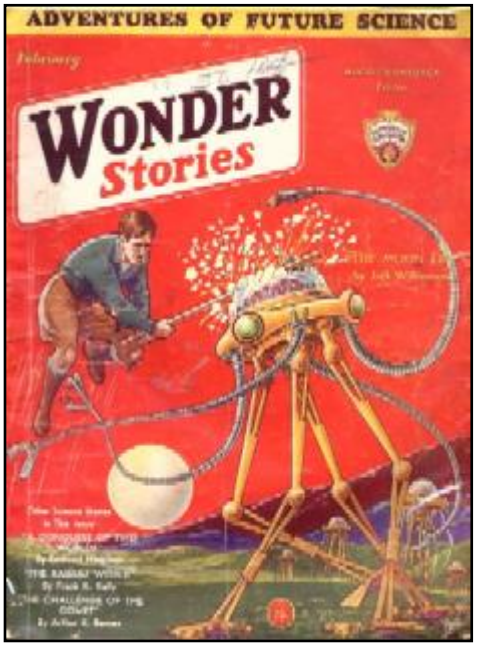
decides to go with the Zoromes to explore the universe. This reads more like the start of a series than a complete story in itself (and it is, 12 more stories appeared in this series). In his afterword, Asimov sums up the flaws his adult self sees in the story as well as what his 11-year old self saw in it (and how the Zoromes helped inspire his own version of robots).



"Submicroscopic" by Capt S. P. Meek. This story was originally published in *Amazing Stories*, August 1931.A scientist invents a size changing machine (decades before this becomes common in comics) and shrinks to microscopic size. He sees a white girl chased by black men/beasts (yes, 1930s levels of racism here). He uses his rifle and size machine to save Awlo from the Mena. Naturally she turns out to be a princess and by marrying her, he becomes heir to the kingdom. But when he goes full-size (with Awlo and her former suitor), to get more weapons to fight against the Mena, he is betrayed. The story ends with the hero vowing to find Awlo even if he has to fight everyone to do so. The story reminds me of Edgar Rice Burroughs' Barsoom stories that the science is really only used to get the Earthling into a situation where he has to fight. The hero does not express much surprise at finding humans (white like him) in a microscopic world.

"Awlo of Alm" by Capt S.P. Meek. This story was originally published in *Amazing Stories*, September 1931. This is the sequel to the above. The narrator has returned to the microscopic world to find that his people have been conquered and enslaved. Everyone believes him to be a traitor. Only his love, Awlo, believes in him. He manages to regain most of what he lost, including Awlo, when, in a ruinous ending, a full-size prospector crushes the microscopic world with a bit of rock, and only the narrator and Awlo escape to the full-size world. Neither story strikes me as interesting to a 21st century reader, except maybe for Burroughs fans, and the second one lacks the novelty of the first one. Asimov writes an afterword explaining the racism, saying "The trouble is that racial stereotypes, unfavorable to everyone but white men of northwest European extraction, were completely accepted , and indeed, scarcely noted in those days of only forty years ago (except perhaps by members of the groups victimized thereby).

"Tetrahedra of Space" by P. Schuyler Miller. This story was originally published in *Wonder Stories*, November 1931. Pilot with supplies for explorers in the rain forest of Brazil sees alien tetrahedral and gets involved in the effort to save Earth from aliens. Again, there is lots of stereotyping of the natives. It has good non-human aliens. It can be read today with a lot of historical perspective.



"The World of the Red Sun" by Clifford D. Simak. This story was originally published in *Wonder Stories*, December 1931. Inventors of a time machine find it going far faster than planned and wind up sometime around 750,000 with a dying sun (yet somehow the primitives are still speaking English). They are forced to fight as gladiators and then challenge the ruler who has mind control powers. But instead of going back to the 20th century, they wind up even further in the future as the last men on Earth. The author, Simak lived to 1988 and became known for major novels like City, Way Station, Time and Again, and others that are still read today. Of all the writers in the book, he is probably best remembered today. He got much better as a writer as this story is notable only for its unexpectedly bleak ending.

"Tumlthak of the Corridors" by Calres R. Tanner. This story was originally published in *Amazing Stories*, January 1932.In this story Earth has been conquered by aliens and for generations humans have hid in tunnels. It is presented as written many years after the events of the story as "the life of that semi-mythical, semi-historical character Tumlthak of Loor, who, legend tells us, was the first man to rebel against the savage shelks." Much of the story focuses on the internal fighting among tribes of humans in the Corridors and how Tumlthak is able to unify them by actually killing one of the invaders. But Tumlthak is not a typical super confident hero of most 1930s sf as he has doubts and questions. The narrative voice of someone looking back on events in the voice's past (but our future) helps elevate the story and makes it worth reading today.

"The Moon Era" by Jack Williamson was originally published in Wonder Stories, February 1932. The narrator is paid to take an experimental ship to the moon. Something goes wrong and he winds up in the moon's past, when it had jungles and was inhabited. The narrator is captured by various alien creatures and is saved by one called "The Mother" who can communicate mentally. The two save each other's' lives as The Mother is the last of her race and is hunted by the Eternal Ones. This is an exciting story with excellent characterization. I think that, with a bit of editing (mainly changing the setting from a younger moon) it could be publishable today. Jack Williamson, the first "Dean of Science Fiction" wrote from age 20 to 96. He is the oldest writer to win the Hugo and Nebula. He is best known for his collaborations with Frederick Pohl, especially the *Starchild* trilogy, his *Legion of Space* series, his *Humanoids* series, and the horror novel *Darker Than You Think*, as well as many short stories.

Literary SF: Author Spotlight: Edmond Hamilton
By Samuel Lubell

Author Edmond Hamilton was born in Youngstown, Ohio on October 21, 1904 and died at age 72. He graduated high school at age 14, but quit college at 17 without finishing. He published his first story, "The Monster God of Mamurth" in *Weird Tales* in August 1926. He soon appeared in multiple science fiction pulp magazines where his explosive brand of space opera adventure stories gave him the nickname, "The World Wrecker." With E.E. "Doc" Smith and Jack Williamson, Hamilton was one of the early creators of pulp space opera. He wrote hundreds of stories, some under pseudonyms that have been lost to history. His work includes the first descriptions of a spacesuit, a spacewalk, and a lightsaber (as well as a very early Artificial Intelligence).

He wrote most of the Captain Future pulp adventures, although the character was actually created by Mort Weisinger and Leo Margulies for Better Publications, which put out the Captain Future magazine in 1940-44. These were aimed at a young audience as sort of a cross between superhero and science fiction adventure. Allen Steele rebooted Captain Future (with the permission of the Hamilton estate) in 2017 with *Avengers of the Moon: A Captain Future Novel* and has written a few others since then.

In 1946, Edmond Hamilton married SF writer Leigh Brackett. Their sole collaboration, "Stark and the Star Kings" was not published until 2005. His work matured in the 1940s with novels like The Valley of Life (1946), The Star Kings (1947), The Star of Life (1947), The Valley of Creation (1948), City at World's End (1951), and The Haunted Stars (1960) and stories like "What's It Like Out There?" (1952).

While known as a science fiction writer, Hamilton was a frequent contributor to *Weird Tales* with 79 stories. In the 1930s, he wrote mystery and crime fiction. He also wrote early issues of Superman, Batman (co-creating the original

Batwoman), and the Legion of Super-Heroes (co-creating Timber Wolf, the Time Trapper, and the Legion of Substitute Heroes).

Aside from *Captain Future*, he may be best known for his *Interstellar Patrol* series (collected as *Crashing Suns* in 1965) and his *StarWolf* series. Haffner Books published a five volume deluxe hardcover "The Collected Edmond Hamilton", although copies are expensive at $45 each. (They also have "The Collected Captain Future."

Those interested in Hamilton should seek out "The Best of Edmond Hamilton" (1977) edited by Leigh Brackett at used bookstores (or on Kindle). Project Gutenberg has 31 of his stories (https://gutenberg.org/ebooks/author/26787), including "The Universe Wreckers," "The Door Into Infinity," and "The World with a Thousand Moons." Some of his earliest stories from the 1920s and 1930s can be found at http://famous-and-forgotten-fiction.com/writings/hamilton.html including "Crashing Suns," "The Man Who Evolved," and his very first story, "The Monster-God of Mamurth."

Fandom: First Science Fiction Conventions

By Samuel Lubell

For purposes of this article, I am defining a science fiction convention as a group of fans who have an organized gathering with planned events. So, a club meeting, even one with multiple speakers, is not a convention.

There is some debate over the first science fiction convention.

Americans generally credit the First Eastern Science Fiction Convention (later called the first Philcon) of October 22, 1936 as the first SF convention. This involved a trip by the New York Branch of the International Scientific Association to visit fans in Philadelphia's Science Fiction League (which later evolved into the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society). The exact number of fans is debated (Milton Rothman says 11 met in his father's house). Prominent fans in attendance included David Kyle, Bob Madle, Fred Pohl, Milt Rothman, and Don Wollheim.

Some say that was just a visit of NY fans to fans in Philadelphia and it lacked activities and organization. (But, they called it a convention (admittedly, not before the fact), elected a chair, had activities (a tour of Philadelphia), and conducted business (voted to have a second convention in NYC)). These fans point to a January 3rd, 1937 meeting of 20 fans in Theosophical Hall in Leeds, UK as the first convention. Notables in attendance included Arthur C. Clarke, Eric Frank Russell, and editor Walter Gillings. The convention formed the Science Fiction Association.

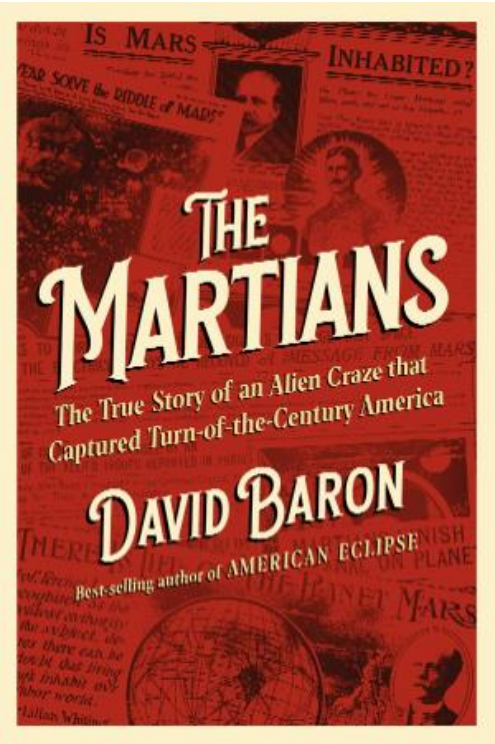
By 1939, conventions were popular enough that the first World Science Fiction Convention in New York City over July 4th weekend had approximately 200 people. The convention was chaired by Sam Moskowitz and the Guest of Honor was illustrator Frank R. Paul. Prominent members included Forrest J Ackerman, Isaac Asimov, Otto Binder, Ray Bradbury, John W. Campbell Jr., L. Sprague de Camp, Harry Harrison, David Kyle, Robert A. Madle, Milton A. Rothman, Julius Schwartz, Manly Wade Wellman, and Mort Weisinger. This convention had the first fan feud as Sam Moskowitz's supporters ousted the New York Futurians (led by Donald A Wolfheim with Fred Pohl).

There was an earlier event that a few people point out has some resemblances to a science fiction convention – the Vril-Ya Bazaar and Fete held in London's Royal Albert Hall in March 1891. This was more of a festival or fair than a convention, but was based on a work that could be called science fiction, the novel *Vril, the Power of the Coming Race* by Edward Bulwer-Lytton (about a race of underground superhumans). People dressed in costumes based on the book, watched performances, and shopped at booths. In many ways it was more similar to ComiCons than the more academic sf conventions of the early 20th century. But the fete lost money and the organization that ran it went bankrupt. It also wasn't the product of an organized fandom and did not directly lead to anything.

Science History: Review of *The Martians* by David Baron

Reviewed by Samuel Lubell

In this book, scientists discover evidence of aliens on Mars. This is covered by major newspapers leading to articles on what life on Mars is like and what they think about Earthlings. This even leads to the Martians getting a Broadway show, a dance craze, and a vaudeville act featuring Mrs. Tom Thumb. However, this is not a work of science fiction, but actual history.



The book covers earlier views on inhabited planets. Benjamin Franklin wrote "It is the opinion of all the modern philosophers and mathematicians\, that the planets are habitable worlds." In 1891 a French widow, Anne-Emiolie-Clara Goguet Guzman, left 100,000 francs to any astronomer who can communicate with any planet." French astronomer Camille Flammarion insisted that this was possible. So, it was not unbelievable when astronomers began claiming to see evidence of intelligent life on Mars, starting in 1892.

Much of *The Martians* focuses on Percival Lowell, a rich dilettante from a prominent New England family (his brother was president of Harvard University) who reinvented himself as an astronomer who claimed to see canals on Mars that were evidence of intelligent life there. While the original claim of canals on Mars was due to a mistranslation when Italian astronomer Giovanni Schiaparelli wrote of "canali" Italian for channels, Lowell claimed to see actual canals carrying water from the polar ice caps (as part of an irrigation system). He built the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona, wrote articles and books, and gave lectures promoting his ideas.

By 1909, respected scientists and businessmen believed in life on Mars. Alexander Graham Bell stated that the evidence showed "Mars is inhabited by a highly civilized and intelligent race of beings." J. P. Morgan financed an interplanetary radio transmitter to learn the Martians' wisdom. Even Tesla got involved, saying he had invented devices that could send electronic signals to Mars and receive signals from that planet.

Still, as more evidence accumulated that the canals were not there, Lowell developed increasingly elaborate explanations, saying that the canals were invisible sometimes because they carried water from the polar ice caps that only melt under certain conditions. So, this is evidence of a superior culture, more advanced than Earth humans. The newspapers picked up this vision of a superior race with artists making their own depictions of Martians.

H.G. Wells' War of the Worlds, originally appearing in 1897 took advantage of this Mars mania in describing an invasion of Martians who are more advanced than us Earthlings. The book briefly mentions the public response to the 1938 radio adaption by Orson Welles. Listeners' belief that the broadcast is real makes a lot more sense in light of earlier news coverage of claims by Lowell and others. David Baron even quotes one listener who said she believed the broadcast, since science had proven that there is life on Mars and that their canals show they might be more advanced than us.

The book concludes with a discussion on how children who absorbed these ideas about Mars grew up to become scientists like Robert Goddard and inventors of science fiction like Hugo Gernsback. The author writes, "Many twentieth-century writers of science fiction also traced their inspiration to childhood fervor about Mars." The book especially cites Edmond Hamilton "a pioneer of the subgenre known as

space opera, the spark came at age four when he stumbled on H.G. Wells's winged, angelic Martians in *Cosmopolitan Magazine*." H.P. Lovecraft even attended one of Lowell's lectures.

Comics Fandom: Early Legion of Super Heroes (Part 2)

The Legion of Superheroes (LSH) is a team of teen-age superheroes published by DC Comics. While many comic book superheroes are aliens, scientists, or have other science fictional connections, the LSH, set in the 30th century, are of special interest to many SF fans. They appeared in Superman family comics published by DC Comics starting in 1958. This article covers their 11th through 20th appearances. For most of these the LSH acted as guest stars for Superman, Superboy, or Supergirl who are the main stars of the comic. In some of these stories, they act as the deus ex machina while in others the super character goes into the future for an adventure. The LSH finally get a consistent series (although not their own book) with regular appearances in Adventure Comics starting with issue 300 (September 1962), through 380 (May 1969) while still making occasional appearances in other Super titles.

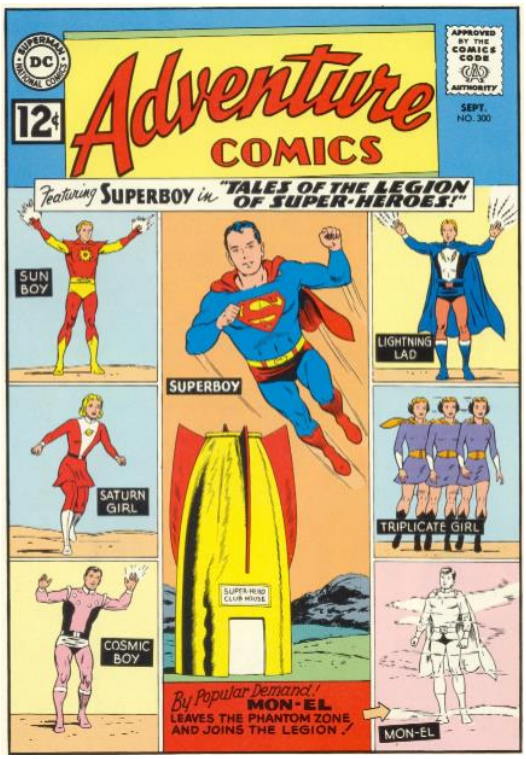
11 – *Superman* 152 (April 1962). The LSH is not on the cover. The LSH (comprised of Lightning Lad, Cosmic Boy, Saturn Girl, Brainiac 5, Chameleon Boy, and Sun Boy) visit Superman and Supergirl to celebrate the anniversary of Supergirl's arrival on Earth. For completests only.

12 – *Action* 287 (April 1962). The LSH is not on the cover. Supergirl has a model of the LSH clubhouse with a signal device. The LSH needs Supergirl's help against the Positive Man since "You have many super-powers while we have only one power each." But when radiation removes the LSH's powers (despite their different origins), Supergirl (with help from a descendent of her super-powered cat) uses her powers to make it appear that the LSH still have their abilities. But it turns out the LSH really has been replaced by chameleons who trick Supergirl into the Phantom Zone. This is a good story that still holds up today, except for the cat having exactly the right powers to save Supergirl.

13 – *Action* 289 (June 1962). Supergirl tries to find a love interest for Superman and decides a grown-up Saturn Girl would be perfect. So she has Superman follow her a bit further into the future than they normally visit to encounter an adult LSH (first appearance of the adult LSH, which causes problems in future issues as glimpses of the characters' future constrained writers). But Saturn Woman is already married to Lightning Man.

14 – *Superboy* 98 (July 1962). First appearance of Ultra Boy. (The Cover says introducing the Boy with Ultra Powers". Ultra-Boy and an adult with a similar costume visit Smallville to track down Superboy's secret identity using his penetra-vision as a test to join the LSH. Ultra-Boy is really Jo-Nah (yes really) from the planet Rimbar who was swallowed by an energy beast which gave him penetra-vision powers (at this date, he doesn't yet have other powers). Superboy makes the obvious reference to Jonah from the Bible. The adult LSH advisor (I don't think ever mentioned again) gives Clark Kent's friend Pete Ross a pass to the LSH headquarters for keeping Superboy's secret identity.

15 – *Superman* 155 (August 1962) Two members of the adult LSH – Lightning Man and Cosmic Man appear in disguise for most of the story (only two panels of them using their powers). For completests only.

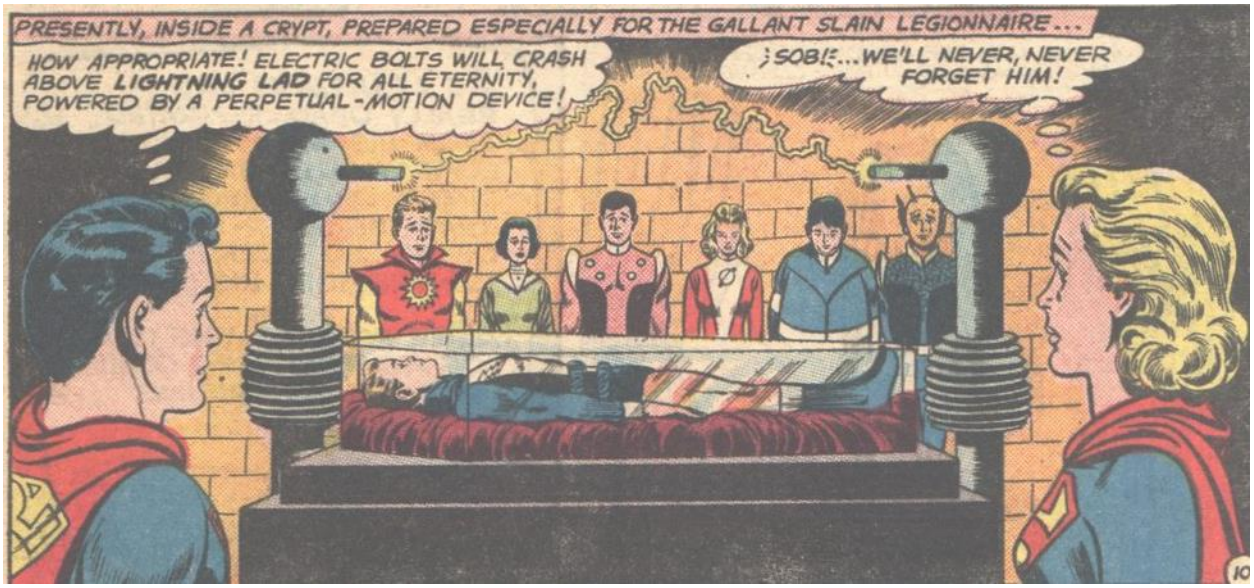


16 – *Adventure* 300 (September 1962). This is the start of the LSH as a regular feature of Adventure. The LSH has the whole cover, which says "Featuring Superboy in Tales of the Legion of Superheroes." Each LSH member has a tent card with their name and superpower. In this story members of the LSH lose control of their powers (causing them to say how they acquired them). They summon Superboy to help. New villain Urthlo in a lead mask says he used a power-nullifying gadget to control their powers and kryptonite vision to stop Superboy. The LSH bring Mon-El out of the Phantom Zone and give him a serum that temporarily protects him from lead (his weakness). Urthlo is not prepared for Mon-El who smashes him, revealing that Urthlo is a robot created by Lex Luthor (whose name is Luthor scrambled). Mon El is voted into the LSH but has to go back to the Phantom Zone until they find a cure. This is another strong story that would still work today.

17—*Adventure* 301 (Oct 1962). This is the secret origin of Bouncing Boy, who probably has the worst origin of all time. Bouncing Boy was an assistant to a scientist who invented a super plastic fluid and tells him to take it to the science council to analyze. But on his way to the council, Bouncing Boy stops to see a robot gladiator tournament where he accidently drinks the fluid because he didn't want to take his eyes off the fight and forgot which bottle had his soda (interesting, a letter issue has a letter asking about the soda that cost 50 cents "Isn't that kind of expensive?" The reply teaches about inflation, but then says this soda was especially expensive since it was imported from another planet). He gains the power to turn into a ball and bounce. The LSH reject him for membership, saying his power is not useful in fighting evil. But when a crook protected by a rubber suit uses electricity to shock the police, Bouncing Boy is able to stop him (since he isn't grounded when bouncing in air). The LSH change their minds and let him in. Note that this is the first LSH adventure without Superman/boy/girl.

18—*Adventure* 302 (November 1962). LSH on cover. When a statue of Sun Boy almost falls on some spectators Sun Boy saves them by melting the statue (even though Cosmic Boy with magnetism powers is right next to him). After that Sun Boy cannot use his sun powers. He tries various ways to recharge, but fails. So he has to resign from the LSH. He finally comes up with a way to use a flame-beast to restore his powers, allowing him to save the LSH (which he rejoins). Note that even after losing his powers, he continues to wear his Sun Boy costume. There is a sub-plot involving Superboy and Ultra-Boy sending robot duplicates to the LSH meeting because they are at a party in the past (once again showing the authors' lack of understanding of time travel since there is no reason why they couldn't have traveled in time to the meeting after the party since the two times are not simultaneous).

19—*Adventure* 303 (December 1962) – This issue introduces Matter Eater Lad to the LSH. He can eat anything. The story is a mystery in which there appears to be a traitor in the LSH since criminals steal objects protected by LSH members. Brainiac 5's guilt detector points to Matter Eater Lad as the traitor, but it turns out to be a ruse thought up by Brainiac 5 to expose that a doctor working for the bad guys had implanted a capsule with a shrunken spy into Sun Boy, and the spy was sending messages to the criminals about the LSH's missions.



20—*Adventure* 304 (January 1963). Saturn Girl, on her way to a LSH meeting reads a message (not shown to the readers) and destroys it. She uses her power to be unanimously elected Legion leader. She makes all members wear medallions with her picture on it (which secretly copy LSH's members' powers and feed them to her). She then grounds each legionnaire for various failings, forbidding them to use their powers, and flies off to confront that issue's villain alone. Lightning Lad disobeys her, fights the villain, and is killed. It turns out that Mon-El in the Phantom Zone read the message Saturn Girl saw which said that one of the LSH members fighting the villain would die. So, by preventing the other Legionnaires from fighting, Saturn Girl was trying to save their lives at the expense of her own. The story ends with Lightning Lad still dead and a panel at the end saying "Is Lightning Lad really dead... or is it possible that the super-science of the 30th Century can restore his life? See forthcoming issues of *Adventure* Comics for the surprising answer." It was probably a big shock in 1963 to have a superhero killed (and stay dead in the next issue and few after that) in any comic, let alone in what was until then a fairly lighthearted kid's comic. This story was written by Jerry Siegel, one of the co-creators of Superman. It still holds up today. I'd argue that this is the first really important LSH story.

TV Fandom: Star Trek Fandom

By Samuel Lubell

Star Trek was not the first science fiction TV series. In the U.S., that honor goes to *Captain Video and His Video Rangers*. The first episode of *Captain Video* aired June 27, 1949 to April 1, 1955 on the DuMont network (with roughly 1,500 episodes). This was followed by *Tom Corbett, Space Cadet* (August 1950 - June 1955), originally on CBS, and *Space Patrol* (March 1950 - February 1955) on ABC. But, unlike *Star Trek*, these shows were aimed at children. But in the 1950s TV stations rarely saved footage so only a handful of episodes of *Captain Video* survive. Note: Some claim that the anthology series *Lights Out* (based on the radio show of the same name) predates *Captain Video* as it ran four episodes in 1946, but that was not intended as a series. The TV series version of Lights Out began July 19, 1949 on NBC.

While anthology shows like *Tales of Tomorrow* (ABC 1951-53) and *The Twilight Zone* (1959-64) had adult audiences, the very nature of anthologies precluded fan attachment to a group of continuing characters and setting. *Lost in Space* aired September, 1965 - March, 1968 on CBS, so predated *Star Trek*, but it quickly grew too campy and silly for serious science fiction fans.

Star Trek was arguably the first U.S. science fiction TV series to acquire a fan following and traditional print

science fiction fans looked down on these media upstarts (especially since many were, gasp, female). Still, in 1968, when NBC threatened to cancel *Star Trek*, fan Bjo Trimble used existing fan groups, including the National Fantasy Fan Federation, to organize a letter writing campaign that successfully convinced NBC to keep the show on the air. Star Trek conventions began in the 1970s. There was also a lot of fan fiction, much of it centered on the Kirk/Spock relationship (which is the origin of the term slash fanfiction).

The British *Dr. Who* (whose original run was 1963-1989, and whose 2005 revival still produced episodes into 2025, also gained fan attention (mainly in the U.K. although many PBS stations ran it in the U.S.)

The first episode of *Star Trek* (now known as the Original Series to distinguish itself from later series) was "The Man Trap" airing on September 8, 1966. Kirk, Dr. McCoy, and a crewman beam to a planet to provide a medical check for a professor and his wife, an old girlfriend of McCoy. The crew faces a shape-changing alien that needs salt to survive. It kills those it embraces by sucking salt out of their bodies. Of course, it doesn't kill the main characters, only the extras. If I wasn't told this was the first episode, I never would have guessed it. There is nothing in the episode that suggests starting or beginning. It felt like a mid-season episode and a rather mediocre one at that. This was not the first filmed episode.

In "Charlie X" (September 15, 1966), the Enterprise rescues a teenager who survived alone for 14 years and has little knowledge of civilization or proper behavior. The first time he sees Yeoman Rand he asks, "Is this a girl?" He starts showing strange powers, including the ability to make people vanish and tries to take over the ship. He is also obsessed with Yeoman Rand and asks about male-female relationships. It seems to me strange that the second episode would spend so much time on a guest character, although there is a nice scene where Kirk beats Spock in 3D chess. And the final resolution is not the result of anything the crew does.

In "Where No Man Has Gone Before" (September 22, 1966) the Enterprise attempts to travel beyond the edge of our galaxy and a barrier knocks out Lt Commander Gary Mitchell, an old friend of Kirk. This gives him ESP powers which he says make him like a god. When he tries to take over the Enterprise, Kirk and Spock knock him out and take him and the ship's psychiatrist, Elizabeth Dehner who has started developing feelings for Mitchell, to a nearby planet. He escapes and Kirk pursues. Dehner has been developing similar powers and Kirk convinces her to help him. Dehner and Mitchell neutralize each other's powers so Kirk and Mitchell get into a fist-fight including, yes, the two-handed punch. I was struck at how similar this episode was to "Charlie X". They couldn't have been running out of ideas so early, the show had just started.

"The Naked Time" (September 29, 1966) has the crew facing a disease that brings usually suppressed sides of people's personalities to the front. So Sulu becomes a swashbuckler, Spock expresses regret that he can never show his emotions, Nurse Chapel says she's in love with Spock and Kirk talks about how being Captain means he can have no love other than his ship. This provides insight into the characters. The episode has suspense since a crewmember has shut down the engines and the ship will crash into the planet unless they can bypass the normal startup procedures and mix antimatter in a way never done before. Spock regains enough control of himself to calculate the right formula. I rather liked the episode (and it is clear that Sulu, at least the unrepressed Sulu is bisexual.) Uhura has the best line in the episode. When Sulu calls her a "fair maiden," she says, "Sorry, neither."

Literary SF: From Wizard to Scientist: Changing Views toward the Scientist From Hawthorne to Twain (Part 2)

By Samuel Lubell

I printed this excerpt from my 1989 undergraduate History and Literature thesis in my personal zine, Samizdat, in Ish 21. So if you read it there, I apologize for the duplication. But it fits here as it has to do with what I was careful ***not*** *to tell Harvard was 19th century science fiction.*

Hawthorne's scientists function as modern-day wizards; only a very thin line, if any, separates their science from sorcery. Aylmer of "The Birthmark" has a "love of science," but his accomplishments and inventions all have a magical tinge to them: his poison is called an "elixir of immortality," and in his final effort to cure Georgiana he concocts a potion indistinguishable from that which a wizard might brew. Similarly, the scientist's daughter Beatrice in "Rappaccini's Daughter," though supposedly created through science, may also be the deadly "poison maiden" of Baglioni's fable. Hawthorne's story describes Beatrice and her poison in the language of the spiritual and supernatural, not that of the physical and scientific. Also, Chillingworth, in the course of *The Scarlet Letter*, transforms himself into a fiend, almost a Devil, through his manipulation of Dimmesdale's soul.

With this emphasis on the supernatural, the magic in Hawthorne at times overwhelms the science. Prudence Steiner, in her dissertation *Rappaccini's Family* makes the point that the reader of Hawthorne's stories sees very little of the science itself. The science is just a stage setting, a disguise to hide the magical doings of the characters. She writes, "The science is confined to a few pieces of apparatus. Of the activity itself, the hypotheses, the analyses, the failures, we know practically nothing."[1]

Although Hawthorne calls these characters scientists, their actions are more appropriate to sorcerers than to scientists and doctors. In all these stories the scientist first gains knowledge and then, like a wizard, applies his knowledge to rule over others. In a day when science was seen as a harmless diversion, Hawthorne used magic to show that science too could be misused in human hands.

. . .

Aylmer in "The Birthmark," first published in *The Pioneer* in March of 1843, is possibly the most explicitly scientific of all of Hawthorne's characters. The narrator specifically states in the very first sentence, "There lived a man of science, an eminent proficient in every branch of natural philosophy."[1021] The bulk of the story takes place in Aylmer's lab, where his efforts to remove his wife's birthmark and thereby render her perfect result in her death. Aylmer is a perfectionist, both in his work and his love. Not content with "the best that the world has to offer," [1032] he uses his science to dissect his wife's "earthly imperfection," thereby showing his superiority over God, the creator of flawed Nature. Through "The Birthmark," Hawthorne suggests that this quest for perfection is a scientific trait, and the story's unhappy outcome warns of the results when science claims too much power- the power to control and alter nature.

Although the story hints at a magical explanation for the mark, on Georgiana's cheek, which would suggest a story of science struggling against magic, this is not the case since Aylmer himself is drenched in magic. Hawthorne does not linger long on Aylmer's researching days, when he limited himself to the scientist's role of learning about nature, but instead concentrates on Aylmer fulfilling the sorcerer's role of twisting and perverting nature to achieve his own ideal of perfection. When the scientist trespasses beyond a doctor's curative role for his own personal motivations he performs magic and not science. The pale, bookish Aylmer is disturbed by Georgiana's birthmark which represents vitality, force, and everything in her beyond his control. He desires to remove it to gain total mastery of his wife.

Aylmer's shift from scientist to wizard is a result of coveting this control. Early in the story, the narrator sets out Aylmer's scientific achievements, showing Aylmer acting within a scientific framework, pursuing and adding to mankind's learning:

> [Aylmer] investigated the secrets of the highest cloud region and of the profoundest mines; he had satisfied himself of the causes that kindled and kept alive the fires of the volcano; and had

[1] Steiner, *Rappaccini's Family: The Mad Scientist Figure in the Writing of Charles Brockden Brown. Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne* (Harvard Doctoral Thesis 1980) p.31

> explained the mysteries of the fountains.... Here too, at an earlier period, he had studied the wonders of the human frame... [1024]

Significantly, the scientist stops an investigation into "the very process by which Nature assimilates all her precious influences from earth and air, and from the spiritual world" [1024] when he recognizes his trespass on the secrets of Nature. But when the scientist resumes this line of investigation to try to remove the birthmark, he moves beyond the domain of science into that of wizardry. The text even makes a direct conflation "He was confident Sin his science and felt that he could draw a magic circle round her within which no evil might intrude."[1026] His attempts to control nature are blasphemous intrusions on God and nature, while his learning had been more innocent legitimate science. But, to Hawthorne, once knowledge is gained, man's nature will always tempt him to move over the border. So ultimately, scientific knowledge itself becomes a temptation and a threat.

Much of the story is an allegory where the science and the magic stand for one another, since, to Hawthorne, they both have the same danger. The objects of Aylmer's labor, the practical applications of his science, are indistinguishable from products of enchantment. He shows Georgiana "airy figures, absolutely bodiless ideas, and forms of unsubstantial beauty" [1026] which, although optical phenomena generated by science, create an illusion "almost perfect enough to warrant the belief that her husband possessed sway over the spiritual world."[1026] His records of his past researches into alchemy and the elixir of life are kept in "sorcerer's books," Even his final attempt to cure Georgiana is through a "potion", like a witch's brew. Hawthorne constantly mixes scientific and magical terms to point towards the similarities between scientific and magical motives. This symbolism is not just the narrator's, but the author's as well: He has Georgiana cry, "It is magical!"[1026] when her husband grows a plant in seconds, another meddling into nature.

. . .

The plants in "Rappaccini's Daughter," originally published in the *Democratic Review* in 1844, are similarly created through science. But, despite the presence of two scientists, the science in this story is less explicit than in "The Birthmark." In this story, Giovanni falls in love with Beatrice, Rappaccini's beautiful daughter, despite evidence that she is poisonous. When he himself develops a poisonous breath, he gives Beatrice an antidote which, like Aylmer's final potion, kills instead of curing. But in the story, Hawthorne never reveals any of Rappaccini's scientific methods, just the results credited to them. It is this vagueness in the story, the added mystery, that brings it closer to magic.

Hawthorne increases the story's nebulous aspect by opening it with a framing device, claiming to have translated the story from the work of M. de l'Aubepine. This further breaks down the barrier between the magical legend and the story of science, since the reader encounters both second-hand. The narrator carefully establishes Rappaccini as a scientist, calling him a "scientific gardener" [1045] in the text, and Baglioni says that Rappaccini "has as much science as any member of the faculty - with perhaps one single exception - in Padua, or all Italy,"[1048] Beatrice too, tells Giovanni that her father "...is a man fearfully acquainted with the secrets of Nature."[1062]. Rappaccini carefully observes the plants in his garden, analyzing the results of his experiments that have created them. Even Baglioni, Rappaccini's scientific rival admits that his unique methods, curing through poisons, occasionally produced marvelous cures.

However, there exists a darker side to Rappaccini's ardent desire for scientific knowledge. He allows nothing to stop his zeal for science, and would even sacrifice his own life. Baglioni asserts:

> He cares infinitely more for science than for mankind. His patients are interesting to him only as subjects for some new experiment. He would sacrifice human life, his own among the rest, or whatever else was dearest to him, for the sake of adding so much as a grain of mustard seed to the great heap of his accumulated knowledge. [1048]

Although Baglioni may be unreliable on the subject of his rival, the story validates this statement. Rappaccini, without hesitating, experiments on his daughter and her lover, but takes no human interest in Giovanni as a future husband for his daughter; they never even

talk. The narrator's description of Rappaccini's garden also shows the evils of Rappaccini's science. The plants have an appearance of artificiality, revealing "that the production was no longer of God's making, but the monstrous offspring of man's depraved fancy, glowing with only an evil mockery of beauty."[1054] Once again, as in "The Birthmark," man's attempt to challenge the Creator results in evil.

In Hawthorne, this "rivalry with God is a sign of the scientist as wizard. Rappaccini's use of poisons places him in the world of the supernatural, with witches who were often accused of poisoning enemies. Nothing in the text proves that the poisonous plants could not have been produced by magic. Moreover, there is no difference between the scientific and magical origins of Beatrice's poison. Beatrice tells Giovanni that she had been born at the same time as the poisonous plant and nurtured on its breath. [1062] This is exactly the same as the fantastical explanation for the poison woman in the legend told by Baglioni: "That this lovely woman.., had been nourished with poisons from her birth upward."[1058] Similarly, Rappaccini transforms Giovanni without the direct use of science. He claims, "My science and the sympathy between thee and him have so wrought within his system that he now stands apart from common men," [1064] but even in Hawthorne's day, this would not qualify as a scientific explanation. While in "The Birthmark," Hawthorne links science and magic through results, here he links their methods as well. The story makes no fundamental distinction between its science and its magic.

Not only does science in "Rappaccini's Daughter" destroy life, but it also acts to strip away the characters' humanity. Rappaccini's science effectively dehumanizes Beatrice, turning her into a poisonous "horrible thing... a world's wonder of hideous monstrosity."[1063] But science isolates the scientists as well. When Rappaccini finally cites a personal motive for transforming her, aside from his interest in learning more science, his explanation only proves Rappaccini's own isolation from the world. He tells Beatrice that he made her poisonous in order to give her a power with which to defend herself, to "quell the mightiest with a breath," [1064]. But the dying Beatrice, in reaffirming her humanity with the words, "I would fain have been loved, not feared," [1064] exposes her father's own separation from the human race. Even the other scientist, Baglioni, distances himself from his fellow man. At the end, after his scientific rivalry has destroyed the innocent Beatrice, his voice has a tone of triumph. While Beatrice and Giovanni are forcibly removed from humanity, the scientists themselves voluntarily reject their own humanity as a hindrance to their experimentation on nature.

Fans: Letters to Origins

Dear Sam,

Congratulations on restarting *Origins*. I'm looking forward to future issues under your direction. The combination of fannish history and the history of pre-21st century SF covers two topics that I'm interested in.

I remember watching *The Six Million Dollar Man* and *The Bionic Woman* when they were broadcast in the UK. I don't remember thinking that these shows were science fiction, though probably in the mid-1970s I hadn't heard the phrase "science fiction". I was already familiar, and enjoyed, *Star Trek: The Original Series* and *Dr. Who*, so I was already a fan of science fiction - even if I didn't know it was called science fiction.

<I was a fan of the two bionic shows too, although I think I saw them in syndication. *The Six Million Dollar Man* was actually based on a print science fiction book, *Cyborg* by Martin Caidin, although that book was much more serious than the TV how became -- SL.>

Hands up. I am a member of the Melbourne Science Fiction Club. I joined a couple of years ago so that I could receive their fanzine in the post. I've never visited the Club, and perhaps never will. If you tell me where the Melbourne Science Fiction Club claims to be the second oldest continuously active Science Fiction Club then I will put them right on the issue. (I suggest that you email *Origins* 71 to the editor of their fanzine.)

Although the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society "formed in 1935", it can trace its origins back to whichever of the two clubs that formed it was started. I've seen this "trick" used by universities which want to claim that they are older than they are.

Is the N3F a club or an organisation? What's the difference? Is the difference only semantic or is it more profound? I don't have a strong opinion as I can see arguments in both directions, but I lean more towards calling it an organisation than a club.

<An organization is a group of people who are organized in some fashion. So, there are nonprofit organizations like hospitals and churches, businesses that are for-profit organizations, etc. Clubs, including N3F, are a type of organization. – SL>

An interesting article could be written about clubs which have their own building, and how these were obtained.

I have often seen *Frankenstein* identified as the first science fiction novel. Sloan De Forest includes the 1931 movie as one of her must-see "SCI-FI" movies, a list of 50 SF movies "that are out of this world". For many years I had no interest in reading *Frankenstein*, partly because I didn't consider it SF. But I'm beginning to soften up on the idea of reading it because I have softened up on the idea that it's SF. I've come to the unoriginal conclusion that if the phrase "science fiction" existed in 1818 then *Frankenstein* would have been described as SF.

<I agree, Frankenstein was the first SF and the first Gothic Horror. – SL>

It's interesting to read how the contribution of Lee Hawkins Garby to *The Skylark of Space* was reduced, until now she is not mentioned at all. I have read the *Lensmen* series. I was introduced to science fiction writing at the age of 14 but a boy who was shocked that I considered myself a fan of science fiction, based upon my liking of TV shows and movies, without ever having read any SF novels. I'm pretty certain that the first SF novels that he lent me were the *Lensmen* series. Not much later I bought them for myself. Those books didn't make the trip to Australia when I moved here. Am I interested in rereading them? No. I'd rather spend the time reading some of the books you've recommended in *Samizdat*.

Cheers,

Mark.

--
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Thanks Mark. You have the first letter in the revised Origins. I hope to see more for future issues. Please send letters to SamJLubell@gmail.com.

Please send me articles on fan activities, science, fiction etc. that are or deal with science fiction/fandom before the year 2001. I don't want this to be the Samuel Lubell fanzine. See you in two months!

Note:

Origins is edited by Samuel Lubell for the National Fantasy Fan Federation. Articles without a named author are by the editor. Opinions in articles are those of its author. Nothing here should be taken as the views of any current or former employer, client, or organization. This zine was produced during Samuel Lubell's non-work time.