



SCIENCE-Fiction Fanzine

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חדשות האגודה – יוני 2017 The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy 2017

מועדון הקריאה לכבוד חגיגות 30 שנה לסרט "הנסיכה הקסומה" מאת ויליאם גולדמן (הספר: כתר, 2002):

בת"א ביום ה', 22/6 בשעה 20:00, ב"קפה גרג", ויצמן 2. מנחה: [דפנה קירש](#)

בירושלים ביום ה', 22/6 בשעה 19:30, במסעדת "נגילה", משיח ברוכף 5, מנחה: [גלי אחיטוב](#)

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 לדף האגודה בפייסבוק.

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

This month's roundup:

- DC movies and TV series – past, present, and future
- The Holocaust and SF – Part III
- Sheer Science section by Dr. Doron Calo about Parallel Universes

– Your editor, Leybl Botwinik

Real Reader Remarks:

[The following comments about our APRIL issue got lost in the paper shuffle ...sorry]:

Thank you for sending the latest issue, Leybl. As always, it is greatly appreciated. A couple of items leaped out at me for comment, the first one being that "**False Facts about Star Trek**" link. Things like this are always fun to read mainly because they reveal, more than anything, just how gullible mass mentality makes people. In the parlance of our times, this is how False News spreads misinformation so effectively.

When it is confined to a popular television show like Star Trek, this can be fun. Unfortunately, when major news networks and political parties embrace such line of reasoning, then it becomes dangerous, especially when used by the wrong people for their own purposes. You can read whatever you wish into that statement, Leybl, but I think you know Who and What I am referring to here.

Interesting question on page two about AI having rights like human beings. I guess this is getting into some serious existential philosophical debate about where does a constructed entity cross the line into "humanness." If Artificial Intelligence is capable of creating independent thought, does that mean AI has now become "human" in the sense of being a rational entity? It may not be biological in nature, but something along those lines may be coming in the not too distant future. Science fiction definitely has a bad habit of becoming reality, and when it does, SF creates some serious ethical dilemmas.

As for the articles about the Holocaust, I have always maintained that this must never be allowed to happen again. Sadly, such is the direction that a certain Western leader seems to be heading with the blessings of a significant chunk of his political affiliation. I fear for this world. It galls me to think that so many people - mob mentality again - have fallen under this spell and accept it. Yes, it definitely seems like Santayana was right. Too many people in power just never seem to learn from the past. Hate to end on a downer like that, so let me finish with a happy thought: next week is the TAFF voting deadline, so we will know who will be the North American TAFF delegate to the Helsinki WorldCon. Hope it's me!

Thanks again for the fanzine, and mayhaps our paths will cross one day very soon.
All the best,
John Purcell

[Editor's response]:

Thanks for the feedback, John.
I always appreciate hearing people's thoughts about the CyberCozen content.

I put in that Star Trek "false facts" on purpose - you caught it - exactly because so much false news and 'facts' are disseminated on a constant basis. Sometimes too little info is dangerous - some times, too much is.

What I like about SF, is that it preempts possible scenarios. We didn't know back when, if there was life on Venus (or the Moon for that matter), if an A-bomb would wipe out a city block, or a city, or set off chain reactions that would destroy half the planet (e.g. disruptive volcanic activity), if overpopulation would overrun the world (e.g. starvation or disease), etc. There are still unknowns like various "apocalypse" scenarios, alien invasions, etc. But it's good to be prepared (if only philosophically/mentally), as they teach you in the boy scouts...

As a student of Jewish History, I realize that the Holocaust is nothing new - only on a greater scale due to the technological possibilities. There were genocides before (e.g. Armenians) and after (e.g. Rwanda). Let's hope there are no more ... and yet the massacres in Syria, or planned mass-extirminations by Iran and ISIS and other crazy fundamentalists, only show that Mankind still has a lot to learn about living together and working together on this tiny planet of ours.

Hopefully, SF can contribute to expanding our horizons (- on the one hand), and deflating egos (- on the other hand), when we realize how tiny and insignificant a speck of dust our world is in the greater scheme of things).

All the best,
Leybl

MORE INTERESTING STUFF from the WWW

<p>Just for nostalgic fun: The Forgotten World of Teletype Computer Games <i>A glimpse of what computer gaming was like before the personal computer.</i> By Benj Edwards April 4, 2017</p> <p>When we think of computer games today, we almost always imagine a lushly illustrated game taking place on some form of fluid electronic screen like an LCD monitor or TV set. But few know today that many of the</p>	<p>And now for the good news: AI: The Ultimate Job Creator? <i>AI will undoubtedly disrupt the employment landscape; .. bring new kinds of jobs that make use of human innovation and creativity.</i> By Ben Dickson June 2, 2017</p> <p>For the past several decades (at least), we've heard about the looming threat of technological unemployment—the takeover of human jobs by automation. But these days, it seems especially imminent. Case in point: When earlier this year, Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin</p>
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<p>earliest computer games played out solely on a hardcopy medium—of ink struck on paper.</p> <p>In the land before video terminals were common, many computer users interfaced with computers via teleprinters—commonly called "teletypes"—which gained that name from the Teletype Corporation, creator of the most popular models.</p> <p>Read more here: https://www.pcmag.com/feature/352798/the-forgotten-world-of-teletype-computer-games?</p>	<p>dismissed the notion of robots putting humans out of jobs, the science and technology community responded with stats and charts slamming that assessment.</p> <p>.... The AI revolution is coming at a fast pace, and it is as good a time as any to start preparing our educational and economic infrastructure for a future in which humans will become less and less involved in performing certain tasks.</p> <p>Read more here: https://www.pcmag.com/article/354017/ai-the-ultimate-job-creator?</p>
<p>The future – NOW! 'Robocop' To Begin Patrolling Streets of Dubai <i>The artificial intelligence-powered, autonomous robotic policeman will roam the streets, using facial recognition software to help human police officers identify and catch crooks.</i> By Angela Moscaritolo May 22, 2017</p> <p>... Robocop ... has been designed to help us fight crime, keep the city safe and improve happiness levels,"</p> <p>Read more here: https://www.pcmag.com/news/353812/robocop-to-begin-patrolling-streets-of-dubai?</p>	<p>Why the Surge in Violence Against Robots Matters By Aaron Krumins May 4, 2017</p> <p>In the midst of fulminating about an approaching robot apocalypse, a strange and disturbing counter trend is taking place: the rise of violence <i>against</i> robots. While fears of robots often turn upon suppositions that are still largely unproven, such as whether robots will achieve super-intelligence or come to dominate the workplace, the latter phenomena is fast accruing a solid and tangible corpus of evidence. At least three important questions emerge from the consideration of violence against robots— is it a real trend, is it worth caring about, and what, if anything, should be done about it.</p> <p>Read more here: https://www.extremetech.com/extreme/248806-surge-violence-robots-matters?</p>
<p>On 'Year Million', Death Is Optional By Sophia Stuart May 12, 2017 <i>National Geographic's Year Million examines what the future holds for humanity;</i></p> <p>Read more here: See: https://www.pcmag.com/news/353620/on-year-million-death-is-optional?</p>	

DC Movies and TV Shows – What (not) to Watch



In the April 2017 issue, we presented an infographic with a list and timeline of the major Marvel comics Superhero movies and TV series. We couldn't find a similar list, but this is the next best online info:

<http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/lists/dc-movies-upcoming-timeline-release-dates-extended-universe-970619/item/wonder-woman-970597>

Note that the trailer for the upcoming Nov. 2017 "Justice League" movie (and particularly the Aquaman scenes) looks good. Just hope I won't be disappointed that the trailer is better than the movie...

Best-Bad-Worst

I recently saw the following DC movies – and here are my comments:

- **Suicide Squad (2016)**

Had some interesting points – but overall not worth the trouble. A much deeper movie on a similar scale and theme – taking 'bad-guys' and getting them to fight on the 'right side' of justice – is the classic "Dirty Dozen".

- **Superman vs. Batman: Dawn of Justice (2017)**

Trailer was great (e.g. special effects). The movie wasn't all that it was hyped up to be. In fact there were some really lame parts, such as the bomb that kills everyone in the courtroom and brings down the building where Superman is being tried. With his Super super-speed he could surely have contained the blast (erected an impregnable dome around the bomb) in the space of a microsecond – or at least evacuated everyone. In X-Men, Quicksilver evacuates the Mansion and his speed isn't even a fraction of Superman's speed. [see also about Wonder Woman, following]

- **Wonder Woman (2017)**

Just released – and I expect to see it tonight. It's had very good reviews. In fact, the Sups-Bat trailer has her debut in it, and from the clips alone, I would have renamed that movie: "**Wonder Woman outdoes Superman/Batman**". However, in truth, her participation in that movie was marginal at best, and quite unclear as to her motivations. She was just stuck on to give some better colour to the otherwise rather lame "Superman vs. Batman: Dawn of Justice".

** **Super-quick review:** YES! Go see it! Most of the movie's dialogue, plot acting is great – unfortunately, the bad guys are rather a bit lame. Lots of emotion and feel-good stuff, combined with a lot of pain and ugly moments/scenes of WW I suffering. Great special effect on the battle scenes, and of course Gal Gadot is great and worth seeing. A different Wonder Woman than we are used to (for those who used to see the Lynda Carter portrayal) – but a kick-ass Amazon, nevertheless.

I've been following these DC TV series – and here's how I rate them:

- **Arrow (2012-)**

If you cut out all the flashback scenes on the island (about 50% of each episode in the first seasons) – the series is OK. I preferred the first season over the 2nd – and then stopped watching.

- **Flash (2014-)**

I preferred the older series made in 1990's. Otherwise, it's not all that bad, including cross-overs with Arrow

- **Gotham (2014-)**

YES !! Follow this one! Most of the episodes are good, many really great to superb.

- **Supergirl (2015)**

I liked the actress who plays Supergirl – Melissa Benoit, as well as the Actor who plays the Martian Manhunter - David Harewood – but not the Jimmy Olsen character (not the actor), since they misrepresented the character. He should be much closer to the nerdy Peter Parker (Spiderman) – and not the romantic interest of Supergirl. Also didn't like that the "Red Tornado" was trashed,

- **Legends of Tomorrow (2016-)**

I stopped watching after about the 10th episode, hoping against hope that something good would develop

The Holocaust and SF – Part III

BY: Leybl Botwinik

Past, Present and Future – Does History Repeat Itself?

A) **Foretelling the Holocaust: The Armenian Genocide**



There seems to be a very direct link between the Holocaust (genocide of over six million Jews from 1939-1945) [see: <https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005143>], and the earlier genocide of about one-and-a-half million Armenians (1915-1923) [see: <http://www.armenian-genocide.org/genocidefaq.html>].

Although not Science Fiction, “*The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*” (about the ‘last stand’ of a group of Armenian resistance fighters in 1915, against the armies of the Ottoman empire that were hell-bent on murdering every last Armenian on their territories) is quite prophetic, vis-à-vis the upcoming war on Jews carried out by the Germans and their collaborators.

It is said, that Hitler [y”sh – may his name be stricken] stated that if the Christian world turned a blind eye to the death and suffering of the Armenians [who are Christians] at the hand of Islamic Turkey, then no one would remotely care what happens to the Jews.

Read more here:

<http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-arts-and-culture/books/199886/from-musa-dagh-to-masada>

B) **Foretelling the Holocaust: “Undzer shtetl brent”**

Mordkhe Gebirtig, one of the best known and best loved Yiddish folk-poets, wrote a chillingly shocking song depicting the destruction of the ‘shtetl’ [Jewish eastern European township] entitled "Undzer shtetl brent!" [Our town is burning] in 1936, following a pogrom in the Polish town of Przytyk. The song is considered a prophesy of the upcoming Holocaust conflagration that would wipe out two-thirds of European Jewry in less than six years.

Gebirtig himself was murdered in the Krakow Ghetto in 1942.

See: https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media_so.php?ModuleId=10005213&MediaId=2621.

C) **Allies knew + Could Going Back in Time to Kill Hitler Change Things?**

As we wrote in Part II, it seems that the Allies knew much earlier of the genocide that was taking place at the time – earlier, that is, than what was normally public knowledge, and only recently disclosed.

See: <https://worldisraelnews.com/allies-knew-of-holocaust-in-1942-years-before-earlier-assumed>

It is said, that the Allies could have done more to save Jews. For example, by destroying rail lines taking Jews to the known death camps – even bombarding and destroying them (that would have surely killed hundreds if not thousands of Jews – but that would also have slowed down, if not mostly stopped the daily killings and gassings of thousands of others).

There is, however a more controversial – SF-related – issue: What if Hitler had not been born, or killed as a young man, or just before the war, or even earlier during the war. Various scenarios have been presented by authors and others, about how things might have been different had Hitler been killed earlier. There are moral and ethical issues, such as killing a child-Hitler that should be considered, as well as warped-timeline issues.

For example, could I go back in time to change things? The fact that I am where and who I am, is because my parents, both Holocaust survivors but from countries very far apart, found each other after the war. If the war

had not happened, or turned out differently, then I probably couldn't exist to go back in time (complicated, but do the math ...).

All sorts of paradoxes are speculated at.

(- try a Google search on "Killing Hitler Time travel")

D) Holocaust Humour

Since we're on the topic of 'killing Hitler', I recently heard the following SF time travel joke:

Two old codgers, Jews, were selected to go back in time to kill Hitler. They were selected, because they were originally from that era, that area, and could easily fit in, knowing the languages and culture. Being elderly, they would also be less conspicuous as a danger to any German soldiers in the area – and as Jewish Holocaust survivors they would have the right motivation. They were given a short but thorough training on the light but deadly advanced weapons they would be taking along, and specific instructions on where to wait for Hitler's regular route to take him by the alley way they would be in. They were told to wait for a specific hour, and Hitler would drive by in his motorcade and entourage, and the ambush could be sprung. The two old Jews are time-whisked to their destination time and place, and wait for the moment to change history. They wait and wait, but Hitler does not appear/pass by. After about a half hour past the expected time, one fellow says to the other: "I hope nothing has happened to him ..."

Which only goes to show, that the Jewish heart is not made of cold steel. In fact, Jewish humour at the expense of our enemies is not new. Jews typically laugh at themselves and at their problems – even at the worst of times.

Apparently, there is a time-travel comedy series "Making History", that has an (upcoming?) episode on just this subject. See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPABBI8xdZE>

Satires on Hitler (and Mussolini) were also popular in thanks to two films (that, of course, were banned by the respective dictators): the Marx Brothers' "*Duck Soup*" (1933) and Chaplin's "*The Great Dictator*" (1940). Of course, and were produced before the Holocaust – or before the true scope of the Holocaust – was known to the world (and Chaplin wasn't even Jewish). We also have Benigni's (also not Jewish) "*La Vita e Bela*". True Holocaust humour – by survivors – however, is presented in the recent production "The Last Laugh".

See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8IOZ5N2sQ5s>

E) Yiddish SF: Fun nekhtn, haynt, un morgn

There isn't very much SF in the Yiddish language (this is a topic in and of itself – for some other occasion) – but in the SF stories that I've written, the Holocaust is often referred to – one way or the other. In my 1980 trilogy of Yiddish short stories "**fun nekhtn, haynt, un morgn**" [**From Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow**] – the major themes include the Holocaust, and specifically the numbered tattoo on concentration camp victims. I translated the first two parts to English in 1997, especially for CyberCozen, and the 3rd part just in 2012 – with a special report on an actual related topic. See the April and May 1997 issues, and the November 2012 issue, or about halfway down the following webpage for the 3 stories in English:

<http://www.leyblsvelt.co.il/lv-shprakhn-Eng.html>.

F) Passover 1944 – Warsaw is Judenrein

While on the subject of Yiddish, and following up on the Passover connection, there is a chilling Yiddish tale alleged to be by H. Leivick (known for other 'fantasy' works about the Golem, time travel, etc.) entitled "Seyder Nakht in Varshever Geto" [Passover eve in the Warsaw Ghetto]. Every year – carried out consistently for centuries – there is a traditional short ceremony (just after the Passover feast) where the door of the house is opened, and the mystical Elijah the Prophet is invited in to partake of a cup of wine. This is done in every Jewish house across the globe (*). This reminds one of Santa Claus visiting every Christian household around the world in one night.

(***NOTE: Outside of Israel, Elijah does it two nights in a row**)

In this story, Elijah comes to Warsaw, to the house of Yisroyl, the Jew, as he has done so many years in the past. Only this time, the year is 1944 (a year after the last Jews were liquidated

from the Warsaw ghetto), and he is confronted by the German Adolph Fritz, now living in the apartment. The scene, as you can imagine, is quite tragic and dramatic.

(*NOTE: We're still trying to track down the original story – We read about it second hand, in a recounting by another Yiddish writer, Alexander Shpiglbat)

Although more akin to “Fantasy” and not SF per se: can one imagine something similar happening in Bethlehem, or somewhere in Europe, where St. Nick comes to deliver his Christmas gifts as he has been doing for centuries, and there are no more Christians in town – only Muslims?

G) Planet Auschwitz

At the famous trial in Israel, in 1961, of the mass murderer, German Nazi SS-Obersturmbannführer Adolph Eichmann, one of the witnesses, a survivor of the notorious Auschwitz concentration camp, referred to his internment at the death camp, as being in “Planet Auschwitz”(*). His statement was that it could not be possible that such a place could exist on this planet Earth, in this dimension – therefore his sojourn there must have taken place somewhere else.

(* It is claimed, that Emil Fackenheim the philosopher, coined the phrase)



This witness, who was born in Poland as Yehiel Feiner, a Yiddish-Hebrew writer, adopted the pen name “Ka-Tzetnik” [i.e. “someone from the concentration camp”] after the Holocaust, or more precisely, “Ka-Tzetnik 135633” (the number tattooed into his arm), and also changed his name to Yehiel Dinur, after immigrating to Israel.

From *Tablet* magazine (See: <http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-arts-and-culture/books/97160/ka-tzetnik>):

When he was asked by Gideon Hausner, the prosecutor at the Eichmann trial, why he had “hidden his identity” behind a pseudonym, Ka-Tzetnik replied:

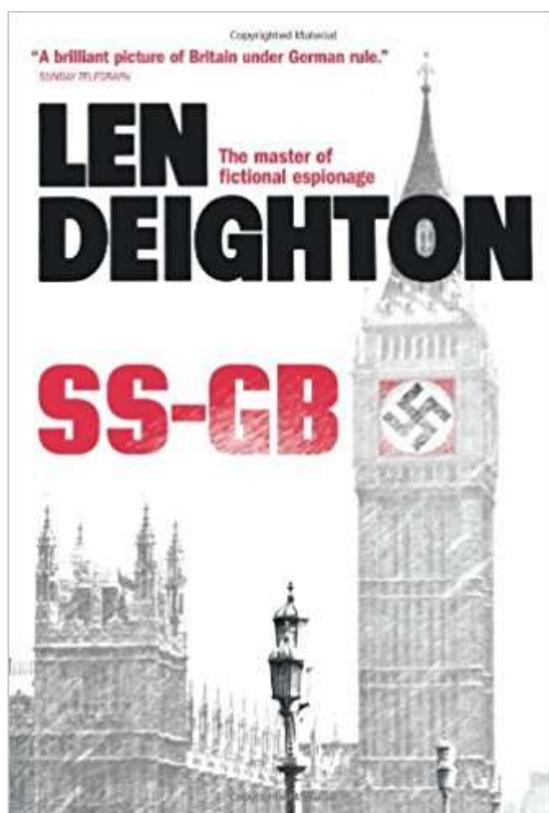
It was not a pen name. I do not regard myself as a writer and a composer of literary material. This is a chronicle of the planet of Auschwitz. I was there for about two years. Time there was not like it is here on earth. Every fraction of a minute there passed on a different scale of time. And the inhabitants of this planet had no names, they had no parents nor did they have children. There they did not dress in the way we dress here; they were not born there and they did not give birth; they breathed according to different laws of nature; they did not live —nor did they die — according to the laws of this world.

They were human skeletons, and their name was the number ‘Ka-Tzetnik.’

A concentration camp uniform was brought out and shown to Ka-Tzetnik, and he remarked, “Yes, this was the garb of the planet Auschwitz.” Ka-Tzetnik went on to say, a minute before he fainted, “I believe with perfect faith that, just as in astrology the stars influence our destiny, so does this planet of the ashes, Auschwitz, stand in opposition to our planet earth, and influences it.”

H) Len Deighton: SS-GB + TV Series (2017)

Which takes us to the second recent WWII-related TV series that I promised to write up: “**SS-GB**”, based on Len Deighton’s book of the same name (that I read many, many years ago – but can’t quite remember the plot). The British production is a one-shot mini-series of 5 episodes (unlike the American “Man in the High Castle” that will begin screening its 3rd season – after 20 episodes). It takes place near the beginning of the war, roughly from 10 July until 31 October 1940, and the German Blitz bombardment of the British cities.



Historically, Hitler wanted to gain air superiority over Britain before launching a naval and air attack followed by a full invasion of Great Britain. The opening scene of Episode one shows a British Spitfire plane roaming the skies of England. For those who are not aware of the historical significance, it was the tiny but powerful British Spitfire plane piloted by the greatly outnumbered brave British pilots that beat back wave after wave of the overwhelming German Luftwaffe airplanes that bombed the British night and day trying to break the nerve of the Brits and force them to surrender.

In this opening scene, the plane lands and a German pilot debarks. It was just a test flight of one of the last 6 remaining Spitfires left in England after Prime Minister Churchill had been eliminated, and the government folded. We now know that the British Isles have

indeed been invaded and almost all opposition crushed (there are some pockets of resistance in the north). Nevertheless, a resistance fighter manages to get close to this German pilot and assassinate him, point blank range.

The plotline of the series (and apparently – according to some write-ups – quite close to the 1978 novel) concerns a homicide detective, Douglas Archer working in Scotland Yard run by a German General. The setting is (mostly) London, 1941, less than a year after the German invasion.

Unlike “The Man in the High Castle” that is set in about 1960, WWII is still on – and even if nearly over in Europe – everything is still relatively unstable, in that the Germans have not yet established full superiority on the ground and particularly in society. Although Western Europe has fallen, Eastern Europe has not (totally). In fact, it would seem that a pact has been made with the Soviets, and foreign Minister Molotov has arrived in England for a special ceremony where the interred body of Carl Marx is to be transported from England to Russia in a formal celebratory ceremony with the Germans.

Other than this ‘peace’ between the European super powers (Germany and Russia) and the fact that the US is still neutral, there’s not much known about the rest of the world: Italy’s role (not really major, in any case), the Japanese role (historically, they join the war with an attack on the US’s Pearl harbor at the end of 1941)

Not much is said about the Jews in the series. For all intents and purposes, the Jews in England are not particularly singled out – though this is because the Germans are still in the early process of establishing full control. The German

murder machine vis-à-vis Jews is probably just getting gassed up, as the saying would go ...

In the very first episode, one of the main characters – Archer’s girlfriend from Scotland Yard, Sylvia Manning – is transferred to the “Genealogy” department to look up all the family histories and bloodlines of those in the Yard to “weed out any undesirables”.

She is disgusted by this and by Archer’s neutral stance, so she throws her

burning cigarette into a box full of Yellow Stars of David with the word “Jew” on them. She then steals a pack of special passes, and leaves the offices to join the Resistance.



All in all, the Len Deighton’s “SS-GB” is very believable. According to my British friend, Ivan – whose father lived through the period as a child – everything looks and feels very authentic. This is also, because the setting of 1941 takes place just near the turning point of several key events during WWII (Battle of Britain, US participation, Russian pact with the Nazis, beginning of the race for Atomic weapons, etc.) everything looks and ‘feels’ very real. In Philip K. Dick’s “The Man in the High Castle”, everything takes place in 1960, about 20 years later (15 years after OUR end of WWII, in 1945). Dick had a lot more to postulate and think up plausible scenarios for what happens in these 15-20 years, in an occupied US – by two victorious countries, Japan + Germany, as well as his additional ‘mystic’ cross-overs to parallel universes.

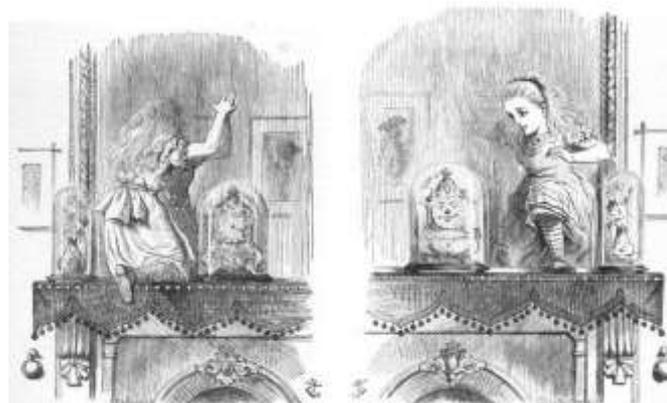
In “SS-GB”, the tide can still be turned – though Deighton’s mini-series ends here, after the 5th episode, and our own imagination needs to take it to the next level. In “The Man in the High Castle”, there’s not much left of the world as we know it/knew it. Dick’s story, however, has not run its course, with at least one more season in the making – so let’s see what else the conceivers of the series have in store for us.

Sheer* Science: Cold Spots and Big Bangs

(* In memory of Aharon Sheer (7"ט) – Founding Editor)

– Prepared by: **Doron Calo****, PhD (**our CC Sheer Science editor ☺)

When Parallel Universes Collide



The concept of parallel universes, or the multiverse, was dreamt up by a variety of SF writers, from Michael Moorcock to Terry Pratchett, and has been depicted widely on TV and the silver screen. Physics actually suggests that they are real: a multitude, perhaps an infinite number, of universes that may or may not be similar

to our own, each with a different set of natural laws. Looking at it another way, our own universe is just one happy coincidence where the right conditions converge to allow life on Earth.

Perhaps now, for the first time, we have evidence of the existence of a parallel universe. Back in 2004, scientists in NASA discovered what they called the "cold spot": a mysterious blob 1.8 billion light years in diameter, which was considerably cooler than its surroundings. Several explanations popped up over the years, which sounded plausible at the time: for one, it was noticed that that huge sphere, big enough to contain galaxies, actually contains less material than expected (about 10000 less galaxies than other chunks this size).

There was a fundamental problem with this explanation... the Big Bang theory, and the "inflation" (expanding) universe theory that follows, don't agree with the existence of such a "cold spot". An alternative way to explain this phenomenon is to see it as some sort of an optical illusion, again stemming from the small number of galaxies contained in that space. This actually held for a few years, but then 2017 came along and everything changed, as a team of astrophysicists showed compelling evidence that there probably is no illusion, and the "cold spot" is real.

So, if it's really there, what is it? the only plausible (yet fantastic) answer is that the spot is a parallel universe that bumped into our own (a universal car crash, if you will). The force of the collision pushes energy away from it, and this gets picked up by our scanners as a relatively cooler region of space. That will probably make SF fans happy and get them thinking about wormholes and finally finding a way to make this life better (by hopping to a neighboring universe with better specifications than the current one), but it can actually make physicists very unhappy.

Poor guys! doing their best with physics to explain the fundamental laws of nature, only to find out that there are no laws – or, more accurately, that there are endless variations of "laws" to explain an infinite number of universes. All those nice constants they spent so many years calculating may not mean anything after all, since parallel universes will have entirely different characteristics, and physics' precious quest to explain everything around us will never have any chance of being fulfilled. They'll need help from new sources. Perhaps from made-up theoretical physicists like Dr. Sheldon Cooper from TV's The Big Bang Theory? even better, I'm hoping a SF writer or two may be willing to offer some inspiration and cheer them up...

LINK:

Multiverse: have astronomers found evidence of parallel universes?

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/across-the-universe/2017/may/17/multiverse-have-astronomers-found-evidence-of-parallel-universes>

ONE MORE – FOR THE ROAD:



UK Engineers Develop Prosthetic Hand That Can 'See'

BY **ANGELA MOSCARITOLO** MAY 6, 2017
The bionic hand is fitted with a camera that 'instantaneously takes a picture of the object in front of it, assesses its shape and size and triggers a series of movements in the hand.'

We'd love to hear your thoughts on any of the above subjects and we may publish some of them!

For Comments: E-mail: leybl_botwinik@yahoo.com. Tel: Leybl Botwinik 054-537-7729
 Editor: Leybl Botwinik. Founding Editor: Aharon Sheer (ז"ל). Logo by: Miriam Ben-Loulu (ז"ל).
 For free email delivery (PDF format) write to leybl_botwinik@yahoo.com
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