



SCIENCE-Fiction Fanzine

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### **חדשות האגודה – ינואר 2015 The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy**

#### **פאנטום VOD**

אתר 'ישראלי' חדש למדע בדיוני ופנטזיה עלה לאוויר! באתר תמצאו מאות סרטים קצרים מישראל ומהעולם, סדרות רשת, סרטי חובבים, מבחר סרטים שצולמו במסגרת כנסי המדע הבדיוני והפנטזיה בישראל, בערוץ מוזיקה שכולו מדע בדיוני ופנטזיה, ואף לזכות בפרסים שווים: [vod.sf-f.org.il](http://vod.sf-f.org.il).  
**מועדון הקריאה** יעסוק באסופת הסיפורים "היה יהיה 5". בירושלים ביום ד', 28.1.15, 19:30, בבית הקפה "תמול שלשום", ברחוב יואל משה סלומון 5. מנחה: **גלי אחיטוב**. בת"א: ביום ה', 29.1.15, 19:30, ב"קפה גרג", אבן גבירול 71, גן העיר, קומת הכניסה. מנחה: **דפנה קירש**.

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

לקבלת עדכונים שוטפים על מפגשי מועדון הקריאה ברחבי הארץ ניתן להצטרף ל**רשימת התפוצה** או ל**דף האגודה**

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

#### **In this issue:**

- 1) Aharon's pick-of-the-month: Whether we should (or should not) speak up if we disagree
- 2) A very short review of the SF book "Hunter's Run" with a genial premise (at least I think so), and if that doesn't tickle your curiosity, it was 30 years in the making and took 3 writers to complete
- 3) We've let our poor Zombies rot long enough, and so it's time to start wrapping things up with installment #5 of the series.
- 3) **News:** We're here (too)! Year 2014+ issues now on-line at <http://fanac.org/fanzines/CyberCozen/>
- 5) Last month, I gave a (very) short lecture in Hebrew at the "Meorot" conference day at the Hebrew U, Jerusalem, (see link at: <http://meorot-program.sf-f.org.il/> at 19:00) entitled: "Yiddish, Wars, and Extra-terrestrials: What's the connection?". Due to lack of time (and space ☺) I'll present a summary next issue, and discuss some related topics too (p.s. This month I'm giving the same talk – in Yiddish – in Netanya).

– Leybl Botwinik (CyberCozen assistant editor).

## ***Sheer Science***

- submitted by Aharon Sheer

### ***To Disagree or not to Disagree – That is the Question!***

#### **Dare to Disagree**

Margaret Heffernan (Former CEO of five businesses, explores the all-too-human thought patterns — like conflict avoidance and selective blindness — that lead managers and organizations astray)

Most people instinctively avoid conflict, but as Margaret Heffernan shows us, good disagreement is central to progress. She illustrates (sometimes counterintuitively) how the best partners aren't echo chambers — and how great research teams, relationships and businesses allow people to deeply disagree.

One positive outcome was the discovery (from analyzing statistics), that X-raying pregnant women was a factor in infant deaths and how the medical world for many years avoided accepting this because it did not 'agree' with the accepted medical practice at the time.

See video (13 min.) at: [http://www.ted.com/talks/margaret\\_heffernan\\_dare\\_to\\_disagree](http://www.ted.com/talks/margaret_heffernan_dare_to_disagree)

## Book Review: Hunter's Run by George R.R. Martin, Gardner Dozois, and Daniel Abraham

– Reviewed by Leybl Botwinik

Subtitle: “Survival is the Only Law”

Harper Voyager 2008

287 pages (276 + 2pgs Afterword + 9pgs Q&A)

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**NOTE1:** Due to lack of time, I've made this review shorter than I normally would. Nevertheless, the book is highly recommended. You can find links to a better review on the Internet at the end

Everything about this book intrigued me: The fact that 3 writers took part in its creation (more about that later); and that after the story not only is there an Afterword, but also a Q&A; and ... most of all, the story premise itself.

Without going into the entire plot – which was well developed – let's take a brief look at the ‘Sci-Fi’ that is unique in this book.

A man wakes up to find himself a captive of a hidden and unknown alien race on a faraway mining planet. He is tasked (forced) to assist one of the captors to track down someone that the aliens are desperate to get their hands on. They are afraid that that man will divulge their whereabouts not only to the few humans, but also to the space-faring alien race that brought the humans to this planet in the first place. Ramon is a skilled tracker and knows the wilderness quite well. The person he is tracking is also very skilled, even though wounded in the initial escape from the Aliens.

As the search progresses, the main protagonist, Ramon, begins to understand the hidden Aliens and why they fear discovery, and their strong need to stop the person that has escaped them. At the same time, as Raoul and his captor begin to close in on the escapee, he abruptly realizes the truth of the situation.

As the old adage goes “...it takes one to know one...”, Ramon discovers that the reason he can even get close to the person he is tracking and that that person is as clever as he is – is because he is, in fact, tracking himself. He discovers that he is a newborn clone (created from the wounded escapee's blood), and that the Aliens have exploited his kinship with the person he is tracking in order to take down the real Ramon. Well, that idea literally blew me away! I thought it ingenious.

From the Afterword we finally uncover how and why it took 30 years and 3 writers to complete this excellent novel (whose original writer is Gardner Dozois).

**NOTE2:** It's interesting how Martin's name is listed first – particularly on the Spanish book cover

For a much better and more complete review than mine, see:

<http://fantasybookcritic.blogspot.co.il/2008/01/hunters-run-by-george-r-r-martin.html>

## UNDEAD Reborn – About Zombies – PART V

### 6.0 Zombies, Zombies Everywhere

There are certain myths, legends, heroes and anti-heroes whose stories have been told again and again, and have caught the attention of people in Western Society. We have well-known heroes like Hercules/Samson (ancient) or Superman/Spider-Man (modern), stories and fables, good guys and of course, bad guys.

Popular culture has indeed incorporated and adopted such individual 'monsters' as Dr. Frankenstein's creation or Dracula as anti-heroes. Rarely, however, does a theme or state of being like "Zombie-ism" become so widespread, adopted and adapted into and presented in popular culture as Zombies. The few that we can think of (other than vampires and werewolves) are possibly witches (and witchcraft), and maybe robots.

Even so, witches become so by being taught or by acquiring some book of magical spells, curses, potions, etc. (or magic wand), and robots are not more than constructs created by humans and rarely 'human'. Thus, vampires and werewolves remain the far second(s) to Zombies.

The reason for this is that whereas vampires and werewolves – according to the popular legends and stories – can propagate by a bite, this will only create single new ones at a steady, and rather slow rate. The Zombie – as a plague (as opposed to the traditional hypnotized/drugged or even supernatural Zombie) – is a result of experiments gone wrong, and will supposedly propagate at tremendous speed – until virtually no one will remain unaffected, worldwide, in a matter of months, if not days.

Ironically, we find a similar 'plague' of popular culture dealing with Zombies in every which way: films, books, comics – and other areas as well. Since we've already covered several dozen of the many films, let's take a look at what else is lurking out there in the world of Zombies.

### Comics, Books, Music and Other Areas of Popular Culture

Zombies are all over. You'll find the term to be quite universal (across languages and continents), and the concept has 'infected' and been integrated into many forms of popular culture. Below is just a sampling, and probably only the tip of the gravestone.

#### The Descriptive Term "Zombie"

The word "Zombie" ought to be copyrighted! I tried the Babylon online dictionary in several popular languages (Spanish, Italian, Hebrew, German, Russian, and French) and they all have that word, including the slang usage of a slow-moving person, or person that is apathetic to his/her surroundings (drunk, daydreaming, etc.).

Just for fun, I also checked the 1928 Harkavi Yiddish-Hebrew-English dictionary, the 1968 English-Yiddish/Yiddish-English dictionary by Weinreich,

as well as some other standard Yiddish dictionaries – none contained the word. Google-translate did result in a word spelled in Yiddish, but I suspect it may just be the exact transliteration (letter-by-letter equivalent). (**NOTE:** See below for a Yiddish-related surprise discovery)

The conclusion is that most people in the Western World probably know what the general meaning or usage is. I would suspect that Mandarin, Japanese, and other Far Eastern languages also have the term – particularly Japanese that is very 'Westernized' and has a vast literature of Fantasy and SF in comics and movies, etc.

#### Drink, Sing, and Walk Merry

Continuing my research, I found that there is a cocktail drink called a "Zombie" (see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zombie\\_\(cocktail\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zombie_(cocktail))), which makes sense (especially its alternative name: "skull-puncher"). This, of course, reminds me of the movie "Wasting Away" (2007) discussed in a previous

chapter. People who drink too much alcohol tend to talk slurred, and move/act in a Zombie-like manner.



Other than the 'Zombie' music created to set the mood for the many films (find 449 free related soundtracks at: [http://8tracks.com/explore/zombie\\_apocalypse](http://8tracks.com/explore/zombie_apocalypse)), there seem to be two directly related Zombie music connections.

In 1976, the Studio Album "*Zombie*" was released in Nigeria by Nigerian Afrobeat musician Fela Kuti. It was a social commentary/critique of the Nigerian government, particularly of the way the soldiers were behaving towards the populace. See: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zombie\\_\(album\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zombie_(album))

Back in the USA, musician, film director, screenwriter, and film producer Rob Zombie (a.k.a. "Mr. Zombie") was the founding member of the band "*White Zombie*" which formed in the mid-1980s and rose to fame in the early 1990s. See: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rob\\_Zombie](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rob_Zombie)

Apparently quite popular is the "Zombie walk". According to Wikipedia, "An early flash mob-type gathering of zombies was hastily put together at the Gen Con gaming convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA in August 2000" – and has continued to be popular as "... simply for entertainment or with a purpose, such as setting a world record or promoting a charitable cause." –

Who says Zombies can't be useful? Then again, there are also "Zombie pub crawls" which can't be very beneficial (except for the tavern owners)...

See:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zombie\\_walk](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zombie_walk)

### DC+Marvel Comics

Comics have been popular in American and Western culture for quite a few decades. Two of the USA's most popular comic publishers have little to show from the 'Zombie' perspective, with only some successful characters or runs. Other undead such as ghosts (e.g. Spectre, Deadman) or vampires (Dracula) have been much more popular.

Nevertheless, DC comics' super-powerful Zombie "Solomon Grundy" has crawled out of the grave on numerous occasions since his first appearance in a 1944 Green Lantern issue, and is considered a mainstay supervillain in their comics universe.



The main "Zombie" in the Marvel Universe, Simon Garth, never caught on, nor did "Brother Voodoo", Jericho Drum ([http://marvel.com/universe/Zombie\\_\(Simon\\_Garth\)](http://marvel.com/universe/Zombie_(Simon_Garth))) and [http://marvel.com/universe/Doctor\\_Voodoo\\_\(Jericho\\_Drumm\)](http://marvel.com/universe/Doctor_Voodoo_(Jericho_Drumm))) There was never anything particularly 'new', 'challenging', or 'different' in these Marvel characters.

On the other hand, there was a very interesting (and probably quite chilling for the fans) run of a very scary mini-series of comics (that spawned other mini-series and guest appearances) called "Marvel Zombies". This takes place in an alternate universe where the world's superhero population is infected with a virus, which turns them into Zombies.

All your favorite Marvel heroes (usually considered the "good guys": Spider-Man, Iron Man, Hulk, Captain America, etc.) are either dead or killing everyone else on Earth (actually eating, or being eaten)!





The series spun out of events of a "Crossover" story-arc of Ultimate Fantastic Four, where the Zombie Reed Richards tricked his Ultimate counterpart into opening a portal to the Zombie universe.

It's a very gory, disgusting and scary alternate universe – not for the queasy and faint of heart. Although Marvel has had other comics where in one way or the other, the world as we know it collapses, is destroyed, etc. and/or the 'bad guy' wins/is in charge, there is usually at least one good guy fighting back. In this Universe, all the good guys are either dead or doing the killing. See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marvel\\_Zombies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marvel_Zombies)

### Other Comics

Of course, Marvel and DC are not the only comic book publishers. There are others, including independents, and there are actually very, very, many Zombie comics lurching around. Some are based on movies. Others take different formats, from the scary/macabre, to the humorous, all catering to the many tastes of comic book readers.

Some sample titles are: "Zombie Tales", "G.I. Zombie", "The Last Zombie", "The Walking Dead" (based on the TV series), "Zombie Tramp", "Zombie Proof", "Zombie Fairy Tales", "Tales of the Zombie", "I, Zombie", "The Living Corpse".

Most are based on the 'infectious' Zombie, though some are just based on Undead or Voodoo/Magic based Zombies. For a sampling, see:

<http://www.comicvine.com/profile/caligula/list/my-top-25-zombie-comics/29177/>

An alphabetic listing with links can be found here:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Zombies\\_in\\_comics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Zombies_in_comics)

### Books

Wow! There are literally hundreds of books out there. Here is a compilation of someone's 10 recommended ones (+10 in 2<sup>nd</sup> place), touted as "worth their weight in rotting flesh..."

(<http://litreactor.com/columns/the-10-books-every-zombie-fan-must-read>) and for a more complete list see the "best" 949 listed here:

[http://www.goodreads.com/list/show/8997\\_Best\\_Zombie\\_Books](http://www.goodreads.com/list/show/8997_Best_Zombie_Books)

Voodoo related Zombie themes have also appeared in espionage or adventure themed works outside the horror genre. For example, the original "Jonny Quest" series (1964) and the James Bond novel and movie *Live and Let Die* that featured Caribbean villains who falsely claim the voodoo power of zombification in order to control others by instilling fear of them.

### Terry Pratchett's Discworld Zombies

Terry Pratchett's characters in general, and his Zombies in particular are quite unique. Playing on mythological, legendary, and or fairytale "essence", Pratchett gives his story characters new meaning and new life according to their unique makeup.

In the case of most of his Zombies (he does have a 'standard voodoo' zombie in one of his stories), he instills within them their 'human' character, based on their unique characteristics. Thus, one Zombie, Mr. Slant, is a lawyer, and has a dry and heartless personality (by the way, many Discworld Zombies – having lived several hundred years – are in fact 'dry' and fear fire). Another, Mr. Bendy, does obituaries. Being dead has its advantages. He was paid for doing his own ☺

See:

<http://wiki.lspace.org/mediawiki/index.php/Zombies>

### Hi-Tech Note

I was just at a presentation about Cyber security and the speaker mentioned in passing that a hacker wanted to crash a large corporation's system. He sent out a virus to control several million computers – these then became "Zombies" – and he exploited the combined computing power

and multiple communication lines to break through the security and fail-safes.

### Weird: University Courses

Yes, even Zombies have made the grade. There are several Academic courses in the US, and this is likely to spread like a contagion. In her article "*Feed Your Brain with Brains: Six Real Zombie College Classes*", Erica E. Philips listed Zombie courses in disciplines ranging from religion to economics to medicine. Universities include U of Pennsylvania and Harvard. There is even a summer/online course at Michigan State U:

"Michigan State University students will soon get the opportunity to take a seven-week summer course called "**Surviving the Coming Zombie Apocalypse: Catastrophes & Human Behavior**," which focuses on how humans behave in plagues and catastrophic events. It's not all fun and games: the course will cover events like the Great Plague and disastrous earthquakes, before moving on to a theoretical zombie invasion"

See:

<http://blogs.wsj.com/speakeasy/2014/03/04/feed-your-brain-with-brains-six-real-zombie-college-classes/> and <http://newsfeed.time.com/2012/03/12/walking-dead-101-university-to-offer-zombie-fighting-course/>

### ... and Weirder: Zombies, Yiddish, and Poetry

If Zombie studies are considered bizarre, then the following ad that I chanced on when I tried looking for any Yiddish-related references to the Zombie term – has got to take first prize. What, you may ask, is the connection between Zombies, Yiddish, and Poetry?

The following item as advertised for sale is a combo of two magnetic poetry word games. One for Yiddish and one for Zombies:

"This combo pack is perfect for fans of the film genre: *Yiddish Zombie Torture Family* Oy vey again with the brains and blood. I need some matzo. The Yiddish + Zombie Magnetic Poetry Sets contain over 500 Yiddish + living dead word magnets. Stick to your fridge or any steel surface. Includes a mini-dictionary of Yiddish words.



+



I think, the author of the ad was just funning ("film genre: *Yiddish Zombie Torture Family*").

After all, they haven't made my movie yet ("*The Zeyde and the Zombie*")... \*\*

At \$12.95 it must make a killer Khanuka present. However, it's currently out-of-stock.

I do like the box cover blurbs, though. Very profound.

The Yiddish one says "Words that will make your Bubbe Kvell [be proud]" (and the other set will make her turn in her grave?) and the Zombie one is especially catching (infectious?): "A box of ravenous yet slow-moving words".

See: [http://moderntribe.com/products/zombie\\_poetry](http://moderntribe.com/products/zombie_poetry)

**\*\* OMG! I just figured out the connection: They think Yiddish is a dead language...**

And since we're on the subject,

**Next time:** *Zombies: The Jewish perspective + Concluding remarks*  
[and maybe afterwards, a 'post mortem']

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

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