



SCIENCE-Fiction Fanzine

Vol. XXVIII, No. 04; April 2016

Don't miss: OLAMOT 2016 – khol hamoed pesakh 26-27 April, 2016
 - <http://2016.olamot-con.org.il/>



חדשות האגודה – אפריל 2016 The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy 2016

מועדון הקריאה של חודש אפריל: יעסוק בספר "מרשעת" מאת גרגורי מגויר (הד ארצי, 1999, אוקיינוס, 2015).

• **בירושלים יתקיים באפריל 7/4, ב-19:30, בבית הקפה "תמול שלשום", רחוב יואל משה סלומון 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, we're taking a pause in our "Aliens" series – but in fact, it's actually all tied in.

PART I – In Memory of Leonard Nimoy (z"l)

A year ago, Leonard Nimoy (z"l) the actor who played one of TV's and Film's most popular 'Aliens' passed away at the age of 84. The date he passed away on was the 27th of February, 2015. According to the Jewish date – due to this year being a leap-year, his "yortsayt" (the annual date of remembrance) was on the 8th of Adar B' (the 18th of March), just a few weeks ago. In his memory, we have prepared several interesting items, as follows:

- 1) Miriam Hoffman: Leonard "Leybl" Nimoy, in Memorium (in Yiddish and English translation)
- 2) R.G. Graeme – Mr. Spock the Wonder Dog
- 3) I Dreamt I was Spock – A poem from the Jan 2000 issue by Elliot Lazerwitz

PART II – Star Trek – 50 Years Young

This month, we're also taking up the challenge of publishing articles, anecdotes, etc. related to the 50th year celebrations of Star Trek that debuted in late 1966.

In today's issue:

- 1) Eli Eshed – The future of Star Trek (in Hebrew and English translation)
- 2) Book review: *Redshirts* – by John Scalzi

And a special effort on the part of our Sheer Science editor, Doron Calo, PhD, to tie in to this month's theme with a Star Trek tie-in about the possibility of ... Sandy Silicon Species (!?!)

During the year, we'll present more related material on both Leonard Nimoy and on Star Trek. Enjoy!

– Leybl Botwinik (CyberCozen editor)

THIS JUST IN: Many updates on <http://www.spaceil.com/> – Israel's space faring site.

Also: <http://us2.campaign-archive2.com/?u=f3d4308be1b5a547f0e56038c&id=ecdb1b5e19&e=> (יש קישור גם לעברית): e.g. Moon news; space camera; Arabic language volunteers training to be Israeli space spokespersons; and more

PART I – To Leonard Nimoy (z"l)

“Leybl” Nimoy’s Visits to My Yiddish Class

By Miriam Shmulevich-Hoffman

Published March 06, 2015, issue of April 03, 2015.

<http://yiddish.forward.com/articles/185853/leybl-nimoy-s-visits-to-my-yiddish-class/?p=all#ixzz3iHwHkYte>

Translated by Leybl Botwinik

„לייבל” נימוי צו גאסט אין מיין יידישקלאס

פֿון מרים שמולעוויטש האָפּמאַן



A man lived out 83 years and by chance, during his lifetime, had fallen into a gold mine.

I'm talking about the famous cinema star Leybl (Leonard) Nimoy, who I knew and befriended, for who knows how many years.

I became acquainted with the tall, smiling actor in 1998, during a production of one of my Jewish theatre pieces “Songs from the Garden of Eden”, produced by John Papp, that was playing at the Shakespeare festival for “Public Theatre”. Since then, Leybl and I often met and chatted in Yiddish.

The truth is, that he began his acting career in Los Angeles with Maurice Schwartz in the Yiddish production of Sholem Aleichem's “Tevye der Milkhiker”. Afterwards, time went by looking for work where actors went through ups and downs until they found something. The truth is that it has always been, and has remained one of the most difficult professions in which to make a buck.

He wasn't especially successful as an actor until ... he was offered a three week stint in a TV episode for a series called “**Star Trek**”, a fantastic story that involved far-flung planets

א מענטש האָט אָפּגעלעבט 83 יאָר, און ביים לעבן דורך א צופֿאל אַרײַנגעפֿאלן אין אַ גאָלד־גרוב. איך רעד דאָ וועגן דעם באַרימטן קינאָ־אַקטיאָר לייבל (לענאַרד) נימוי, וועמען איך האָב געקענט און געווען באַפֿריינדעט מיט אים אַ קימאַל־ן ווער וויסט וויפֿל יאָר.

איך האָב דעם הויכן, שמייכלענדיקן אַקטיאָר באַקענט אין 1998, בײַ מײַנס אַ ייִדישער פּיעסע „לידער פֿון גן־עדן“, וואָס מ'האַט דעמאָלט געשפּילט אין שעקספּיר־פֿעסטיוואַל און „פּאַבליק־טעאַטער“, בעת דזשאָן פּאַפּ האָט עס פּראָדוצירט. לייבל און איך האָבן זיך אָפֿט באַגעגנט און געשמועסט אויף ייִדיש.

דער אמת איז, אַז ער האָט אָנגעהויבן אין לאָס־אַנדזשעלעס אויף דער ייִדישער בינע מיט מאָריס שוואַרצן אין „טובֿיה דער מילכיקער“. נאָך דעם איז די צײַט אַוועק, זוכנדיק אַרבעט אין האַליווד וווּ די אַקטיאָרן זײַנען אַדורך קאַלטס און וואַרעמס ביז זיי האָבן עפּעס געפֿונען. דער אמת איז, אַז ס'איז אַלעמאַל געווען און געבליבן אײַנס פֿון די שווערסטע פּראָפּעסיעס ווי צו מאַכן אַ קערבל. ווי אַן אַקטיאָר האָט

ער האָט זיך נישט ספּעציעל אויסגעצײכנט ביז... מ'האַט אים פֿאַרגעלייגט די דרייַ וואָכעדיקע עפּיזאָדן אויף טעלעוויזיע אין אַ סעריע, וואָס האָט געהייסן „סטאַר־טריק“, אַ פֿאַנטאַסטישע מעשה, וואָס האָט

and all sorts of fictional characters. After having played out three weeks and having earned about **35\$** ... and he was on his own again.

He again wandered around without work and was about to entirely give up the whole acting profession, when a producer popped who had seen in "Star Trek" a potential hit, and he rehired the same actors, and it was smooth sailing from that moment on.

When I got to know Leybl better, I invited him to my Yiddish classes at Columbia University. He accepted it with adulation. The entire floor of teachers and students came running as if to a county fair just to have a look at "Mr. Spock" that they knew so well from the films. When Leonard entered the packed classroom, he immediately commanded:

"Since I speak a pretty good Yiddish, I would like the questions to be put in Yiddish, because I won't answer them in English."

The first question was:

"What is the origin of the name "Vulcan" – the name given to the planet since it was shown on screen?"

Leybl smiled broadly and answered:

When they looked for a name for my planet, I suggested "Vulcan", from the Yiddish word "volkn = cloud". Everyone was pleased.

"And where did the spread fingers that you use in the films come from?"

Leybl revealed that this came from the "Cohanim" [Jewish priest sect] during their special blessings.

I asked him the origin of his own family name "Nimoy". He answered that he had no idea.

Here I remembered my Russian, and offered that this was a Russian word that means "a mute". Imagine his surprise and the laughter of the assembled students in class.

I explained to him, that when the census-takers went from town to town to register the inhabitants, some distant relative of his probably had no clue as to what they wanted, so he remained silent. So he was deemed a "nimoy" a dumb-mute – my conjecture.

געהאט צו טאן מיט פליענדיקע פלאנעטן און אלערליי פיקטיווע כאראקטערן. אפגעשפילט דריי וואכן, באקומען דערפאר פינף און דרייסיק דאלער געהאלט און משה זוך מיד.

האט ער זיך ווידעראמאל ארומגעדרייט אן אן ארבעט און געהאלטן ביי אויפגעבן די גאנצע אקטיאָרסקע פראָפעסיע בכלל, ביז ס'האט זיך געפונען א פראָדוצענט, וועלכער האט דערזען אין „סטאר טרעק“ א שלאגער, און אָנגעשטעלט די זעלבע אקטיאָרן, און ס'איז אַוועק ווי געשמירט.

נאָכן באַקענען זיך נעענטער מיט לייבלען, האָב איך אים פֿאַרבעטן אין מיניע קלאַסן אין קאָלומביע־אוניווערסיטעט. ער האָט עס מיט אהבה אָנגענומען. דער גאַנצער שטאַק לערער און סטודענטן זיינען זיך צוזאַמענגעלאָפֿן ווי אויף אַ יריד בלויז אָנצוקוקן דעם „מיסטער ספּאַק“; אלע האָבן אים געקענט פֿון די פֿילמען. ווען לענאַרד איז אַרײַנגעקומען אין מיין געפֿאַקטן קלאַס, האָט ער באַלד באַפֿוילן:

„אַזוי ווי איך רעד אַ נישקשהדיקן ייִדיש, וויל איך, אַז די פֿראַגעס זאָלן געשטעלט ווערן אויף ייִדיש, ווײַל אויף ענגליש וועל איך זיי נישט ענטפֿערן.

די ערשטע פֿראַגע איז געווען:

„פֿון וואָנען איז געקומען דאָס וואָרט 'וואָלקן', מיט וועלכן עס איז באַצייכנט געווען דער פלאַנעט פֿון זינט ער האָט זיך באַוויזן אויפֿן עקראַן?"

לייבל האָט זיך צעשמייכלט און געענטפֿערט:

„ווען מען האָט געזוכט אַ נאָמען פֿאַר מיין פלאַנעט, האָב איך פֿאַרגעלייגט 'וואָלקן', פֿונעם ייִדישן וואָרט 'וואָלקן'. אלע האָבן הנאה געהאַט.

„און פֿון וואָנען זיינען געקומען די צעשפּרייטע פֿינגער, מיט וועלכע איר באַנוצט זיך אין די פֿילמען?"

„האָט לייבל זיך מודה געווען, אַז ס'איז געקומען פֿון אַ פּהנס דוכנען."

איך האָב אים געפֿרעגט פֿון וואָנען קומט דער נאָמען „נימוי"? האָט ער געענטפֿערט, אַז ער האָט נישט קיין אַנונג. דאָ האָב איך זיך דערמאָנט אין מיין רוסיש און צוגעגעבן, אַז דאָס איז אַ רוסיש וואָרט, וואָס מיינט „אַ שטומער". שטעלט אייך פֿאַר זיין איבערראַשונג און דאָס געלעכטער פֿון דער חברה סטודענטן אין קלאַס.

איך האָב אים מסביר געווען, אַז ווען די צענזאָרן זיינען אַרומגעגאַנגען איבער די שטעט און שטעטלעך רעגיסטרירן די איינוווינער, האָט זיין ווייטער קרוב מסתמא נישט פֿאַרשטאַנען וואָס מען וויל פֿון אים, האָט ער געשוויגן. האָט מען אים באַצייכנט ווי „נימוי", אַ שטומען, מיין סברה.

When I taught Yiddish during my winter break at UCLA in Los Angeles, Leonard invited me to lunch at his home in Beverly Hills.

Let me divulge another secret, he was a very modest person. His house was simple, nothing like the hype about Hollywood's famous actors. His wife Susan, was a Jewish daughter, and was also modest and gentle, with no pretenses. We spent a warm and cozy evening.

From that moment on, we met on occasion, and kept up a correspondence via e-mail. Every Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) we wished each other well, and he always wanted to know how the Yiddish program at Columbia was going.

About 10 years ago, when the wonderful professor Rachmiel Peltz had his tenure rejected and his job renewal was refused, the Yiddish program started to flounder. I told Leybl about this loss, and that we should have a stable department chair to guarantee the future of Yiddish at Columbia University, and that we should hire more professors with good Yiddish knowledge to replace Rachmiel Peltz.

Upon hearing this, Leonard Nimoy promptly took out his checkbook and wrote out a sum of nearly one million dollars and pledged it on condition that a second millionaire should be found to match the amount.

At that point, one of the fundraisers at Columbia grabbed me and asked:

"How do you think we can get a matching sum to the amount Leonard Nimoy put in for a Yiddish chair at Columbia?"

I was surprised at the fundraiser, that she didn't know how to raise funds, so I said to her:

"Quite simple, Columbia will organize a big reception and banquet for Leonard, and he'll invite his close friends from Hollywood like Mel Brookes, Carl Reiner, Neil Simon, Barbara Streisand... and you'll have more than enough".

I was elated, and as I was running up the steps in Columbia I bumped into a professor of East-European History. With delight I called out:

ווען איך האָב געלערנט יידיש אויף מיין ווינטער-וואַקאַציע אין „יו. סי. על. איי.“-קאָלעדזש אין לאָס-אַנדזשעלעס, האָט מיר לענאַרד פֿאַרבעטן אויף וועטשערע אין זײַן הויז אין בעווערלי הילס.

לאָמיר אײַך אויסזאָגן נאָך אַ סוד, ער איז געווען זייער אַ באַשיידענער מענטש. דאָס הויז איז געווען פשוט, גאָרנישט ווי ס'רעשט וועגן די האַליוודער באַרימטע אַקטיאָרן. זײַן פֿרוי, סוזען, איז געווען אַ ייִדישע טאַכטער, ווידעראַמאַל באַשיידן און געלאַסן, אָן שום פרעטענזיעס. מיר האָבן פֿאַרבראַכט אַ היימישן אָונט.

פֿון דעמאָלט אָן, האָט מען זיך פֿון צײַט צו צײַט באַגעגנט, אָנגעהאַלטן קאָנטאַקט דורך בלייז-פּאָסט, יעדן ראש-השנה זיך געוואונטשן אַ גוט און געזונט יאָר, און ער האָט כסדר געוואָלט וויסן, וואָס עס טוט זיך אין קאָלומביע לגבי דער ייִדיש-פּראָגראַם.

ווען מען האָט מיט איבער צען יאָר צוריק אָפּגעזאָגט די חזקה (טעניאָר) פֿונעם פרעכטיקן פֿראָפֿעסאָר רחמיאל פעלצן און נישט געוואָלט באַנײַען זײַן שטעלע, האָט די ייִדישע פּראָגראַם גענומען הינקען. איך האָב זיך דעמאָלט געטיילט מיטן פֿאַרלוסט מיט לייבלען, אַז מיר דאַרפֿן אַ סטאַבילע קאַטעדערע (טשעיר) צו פֿאַרזיכערן דעם קיום פֿון ייִדיש אין קאָלומביע-אוניווערסיטעט. און אַז מיר דאַרפֿן אָנשטעלן נאָך ייִדישע פּראָפֿעסאָרן, מיט ייִדיש וויסן, וועלכע זאָלן פֿאַרטרעטן רחמיאל פעלצן.

האַט לענאַרד נײַמױ אַרויסגענומען זײַן טשעק-ביכל און אויסגעשריבן די סומע פֿון קרוב צו אַ מיליאָן דאָלער און עס אײַנגעלייגט מיטן באַדינג, אַז עס מוז זיך געפֿינען אַן אַנדער מיליאָנער און דעקן די זעלבע סומע.

דערווייַל האָט מיר אָנגעכאַפט אײַנע פֿון די געלט-זאַמלער אין קאָלומביע און געפֿרעגט:

„ווי אזוי שטעלסטו זיך פֿאַר קען מען באַקומען די זעלבע סומע וואָס לענאַרד נײַמױ האָט אײַנגעלייגט אויף אַ ייִדיש-קאַטעדערע אין קאָלומביע?“

האַב איך זיך געוואונדערט וועגן דער געלט-זאַמלערין, וואָס זי הייבט נישט אָן צו וויסן ווי אזוי צו זאַמלען געלט. זאָג איך איר:

„זייער פשוט, קאָלומביע וועט מאַכן אַ גרויסע אויפֿנאַמע און באַנקעט פֿאַר לענאַרדן, און ער וועט פֿאַרבעטן זײַנע נאָענטע פֿרײַנד פֿון האַליווד, ווי מעל ברוקס, קאַרל רײַנער, ניל סײַמאָן, באַרבראַ סטרייזאַנד... וועט זײַן איבערגענוג.“

איך בין געווען איבערגליקלעך און אזוי, לויפֿנדיק אויף די טרעפלעך אין קאָלומביע, האָב איך באַגעגנט דעם פּראָפֿעסאָר פֿון מיזרח-אייראָפּעיִשער געשיכטע. מיט גרויס גליק האָב איך אויסגערופֿן:

"Have you heard of our great joy?
Leonard Nimoy has pledged almost a million
dollars for a Yiddish chair.
It hasn't been renewed since Uriel
Weinreich"...

She looked at me crookedly and answered:
"In the meantime, I'll use the money to take
trips to Europe and give lectures in my field".

As soon as I heard this tune, I contacted
Leybl and informed him of this gruesome
activity, and Leonard immediately withdrew
his pledge from Columbia, and call me what
you like.

We were both dismayed over the fate of our
language that had fallen into the hands of
strangers and greedy hands. Nevertheless,
we remained good friends until the end, and
continued our conversations in Yiddish.

A gentle "Mentsh", a fine actor, who was
willing to be highly supportive when it came
to his Jewish heritage, has departed into
eternity.

האָסט כאָטש געהערט פֿון אונדזער גרויסן פֿרייד?
לענאַרד נִימֹי האָט אַינגעלייגט כּמעט אַ מיליאָן דאָלער
אויף אַ ייִדישער קאַטעדראַ, מען האָט עס נישט באַניצט
זינט אוריאל וויינרײַכך..."

יענע האָט מיך אָנגעקוקט קרום און געענטפֿערט:
„דערווייל וועל איך זיך באַנוצן דערמיט אויף רײַזעס
קײן אײראָפּע מיט רעפֿעראַטן אין מײַן פֿעלד“.

ווי נאָר איך האָב דערהערט דעם פיזמון, האָב איך צו
וויסן געטאָן לײבלען וועגן דעם גרויזאַמען שריט, און
לײבל האָט גלייך אָפּגענומען זײַן געלט פֿון קאַלומביע
און רופֿ מיך קנאַק־ניסל.

מיר האָבן בײדע באַדויערט איבער דעם גורל פֿון
אונדזער לשון וואָס איז אַרײַנגעפֿאַלן אין פֿרעמדע און
הײַשעריקע הענט. נישט געקוקט אויף דעם, זײַנען מיר
פֿאַרבליבן גוטע פֿרײַנד ביזן סוף און זיך געטײלט מיט
אונדזערע שמועסן אויף ייִדיש.

עס איז אַוועק אין דער אײביקײט אַן אײדעלער מענטש,
אַ פֿײַנער אַקטיאָר, וועלכער איז געווען גרײט צו זײַן
בײַהילפֿיק ווען עס איז געקומען צו זײַן ייִדישער ירושה.

ברוך דיין האמת

זאָל דער אײדעלער לײבל, לענאַרד נִימֹי, האָבן דעם ליכטיקן גן־עדן.

Borekh Dayen Hoemes,

zol der eydeler leybl, leonard nimoy, hobn dem likhtikn gan-eyden.

Blessed is the Judge of Truth

[Traditionally said upon hearing or speaking about the departed]

May the gentle Leybl, Leonard Nimoy, have a bright Heaven.

[Translated from the Yiddish: Leybl Botwinik]



Mr. Spock the Wonder Dog or: How Silly Can A Science Officer Be?

By R. Graeme Cameron

With permission to reprint from the author – Originally published at:
<http://amazingstoriesmag.com/2013/12/mr-spock-wonder-dog-silly-can-science-officer/>

I loved the original Twilight Zone and The Outer Limits, but I was horrified when they were replaced by Lost in Space, a kiddie show I took as a personal insult (being a young teenager I took EVERYTHING as a personal insult).

Fortunately Star Trek came along, an 'adult' series that took science fiction seriously. Even better, it expressed the 1960s modernity craze with eye-catching details like beehive hairdos, sky-high hemlines, and a bridge layout so advanced the US Navy sent ship designers to study the set. Today people forget how innovative all this seemed when the show first aired. It had quite an impact. No less an authority than Isaac Asimov called Star Trek "the first good television science fiction." As a science fiction fan I felt both thrilled and vindicated.

I was never a Trekkie. But I was grateful. Star Trek salvaged my faith in SF.

Of course my favorite character was Science Officer Spock. His calm, logical approach to absolutely everything, be it needling Kirk or confronting the latest alien menace, struck me as utterly fascinating. I wanted to BE Mr. Spock.

How did Spock strike the critics on first exposure? They didn't know what to make of him.

TV critic Joyce Dingman wrote:

"The only really appealing character on Star Trek is Leonard Nimoy as the slant-browed Spock, a creature from a planet where they've done away with emotion."

Spock explains, in the tones of a calm, loyal, helpful dog:

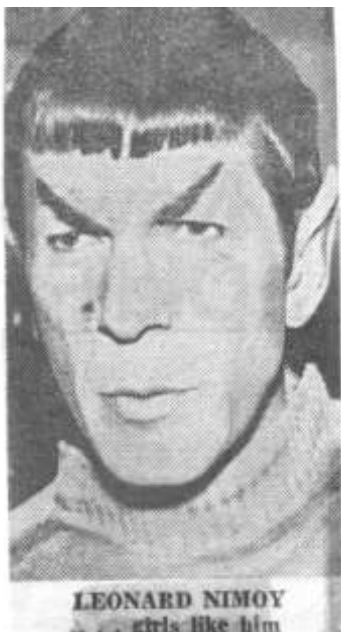
"Where there is no emotion, there is no violence,"

I guess on his planet, having done away with adrenal glands, they've also done away with both public and private affairs. What do you suppose THEY have for television programs?"

Hmmm, good point. I don't think the show ever revealed the nature of Vulcan media.

UPI focused on Spock's ears as the source of his appeal:

"Leonard Nimoy is the Vulcan with pointed ears in television's Star Trek with whom half the female population has fallen in love. Is it his ears that throttle up feminine hearts? ...If it is the sharpened ears that bring in 5,000 letters a week from aggressive dames, plastic surgeons may find long lines of hopeful males pounding on their doors for surgery."



Possibly a tad exaggerated. Correcting the shape of my ears in order to attract girls never occurred to me. Sadly, I settled for wearing Stanfield brand turtlenecks for that sexy 'come hither' Trekman look. Wasn't all that effective. Nobody wanted to beam me up, let alone fondle the points of my ears.

In truth, I suspect the real reason I identified with Spock is related to the result of a network survey conducted to discover the reason for his popularity:

"He is rejected and doesn't dig Earth-type girls."

Evidently women considered this an enticing challenge and were attracted to him in determined droves. Subconsciously I emulated him, feigning indifference (extreme shyness helped), but with zero effect. Maybe I should have adopted the ear style after all.

Gene Roddenberry had his own explanation:

"We're all imprisoned within ourselves. We're ALL aliens on this strange planet. So people find identification with Spock."

True enough as far as it goes, but Spock's popularity appeared to be fueled by more than mere angst and self-doubt on the part of viewers, it seemed to be based on something as all-consuming as a massive black hole.

Leave it to Isaac Asimov to discover the truth. He asked his twelve year old daughter:

"Mr. Spock is dreamy," she said.

For Asimov this was a paradigm shift, an epiphany, an overwhelming revelation:

"It hadn't occurred to me that Mr. Spock was sexy. I had never realized that such a thing was possible; that girls palpitate over the way one eyebrow goes up a fraction; that they squeal with passion when a little smile quirks his lips. And all because he's SMART. It's SEXY to be smart!"

No wonder no one mistook me for an interplanetary Casanova. I was never able to memorize the times tables. I can't quote the periodic table. I can't even MAKE a table. Sigh.

Nimoy himself stated:

"The kids dig the fact that Mr. Spock is cool."

Yes, Spock was most definitely cool. His persona rather resembled that of a Beatnik, and everybody knew that Beatniks were intellectually cool (as opposed to the up-and-coming Hippies who were emotionally cool).

"I grok Spock?" No.

More like, "I dig Spock."



The show aired in September 1966. Not long after, in March of 1967, Nimoy was Guest of Honour at the National Space Club in Washington whose members included NASA administrators and engineers. One of them told him:

"Cape Kennedy practically shuts down when Star Trek is on."

I believe it. While not especially popular with the general public, Star Trek appealed to them as liked to think seriously about Space.

Or as Isaac Asimov nailed it:

"I had been watching Star Trek since its inception because I like it, because it is well-done, because it is exciting, because it says things (subtly and neatly) that are difficult to say in 'straight' drama, and because science fiction, properly presented, is the type of literature most appropriate to our generation."

Some modern fen may find it hard to take the above comment seriously. Didn't fans back in the 60s sneer at Star Trek for its cheap effects, its silly plots, its archaic sexism, its ludicrous, overly-colourful sets? Wasn't it obvious it was just trashy space opera? Something to disdain? To laugh at for all the wrong reasons?

Critic Bob Blackburn of the Toronto Telegram had this to say in February of 1967:

"It's a technically well-made show, with good colour and special effects... It's far above its two competitors this season – Time Tunnel and the Invaders, both of which merely use a science fiction gimmick as a spring-board into trite action-adventure shows. And it has been the only consistently good piece of escape entertainment to be launched in this sorry season."

The reality is Star Trek hit the airwaves like a breath of fresh air and struck viewers like me as intoxicatingly futuristic, amazingly intelligent, and cleverly balanced in its mixture of action, comic relief, and nifty concepts. Plus it looked real cool, a visual treat.

To understand this you have to dredge your memory to rediscover how you felt when you first saw it back in the 1960s. Only those who witnessed the arrival of Star Trek can truly appreciate what it was in its time.

For SF fans like me it was refreshing and stimulating. Modern fans born long after will just have to take my word for it.

Even non-fans took notice when it was new. People who NEVER watched Star Trek nevertheless accepted Spock and Kirk as contemporary icons, knew the appropriate catchphrases, and recognized references, all because numerous critics, commentators and stand-up comics repeatedly brought the show to their attention. Any satire of Trek, therefore, appealed to an audience greater than that of Star Trek itself.

I present as Exhibit A:



A photo of Canadian comedians Wayne and Shuster spoofing Star Trek on one of their comedy specials.

Older American fans may remember seeing their skits on the Ed Sullivan show. Their most famous line, in a spoof of Julius Caesar, took place in a Roman bar. The bartender asks:

"What'll you have? A Martini?"

And Wayne replies "If I wanted two I'd ask for two." (It helps to know Latin.)

For decades they did an annual special for the CBC. Unfortunately I can't remember any of the lines from their Trek spoof, but I assume it was a mixture of very broad humour sprinkled with bits of sharp satire, their trademark technique.

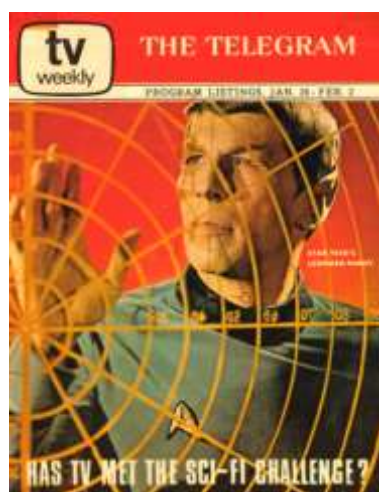
Exhibit B: Mad Magazine:

The panel with Spock and Kirk, from a TV guide article about Mad Magazine (and its infamous TV parodies) published in October of 1968, was taken from Mad's first Trek spoof "Star Bleccch," which appeared in issue #115 sometime in 1967.



I believe I still own that issue, buried somewhere in my closet in a mound of magazines and comic books. Someday I'll dig it out.

I love the way the artist Mort Drucker depicted how ill-fitting and uncomfortable the Starfleet uniform tunics actually were. Mad Magazine was noted for its attention to subtle details, often gags in themselves.



To sum up – The cover of the Toronto Telegram's TV guide asks the question:

"Has TV met the sci-fi challenge?"

The answer was a resounding "yes!"

Because Star Trek wasn't "sci-fi", it was science fiction, GENUINE science fiction, and that, whenever and wherever it appears on television, is never less than a miracle. And cause for celebration.

Oh, and Mr. Spock wasn't silly at all. A rather admirable chap actually. Bit of a role model. At least to me.

From the January 2000 issue of CyberCozen – a poem:



Poem:

I dreamt I was Spock by Elliot Lazerwitz

Last night I dreamt I was Spock
lizard hindbrain, reptilian features
yet feeling from within,
half-human.

I took a lover and,
cleaved in two,
phasered her out of being.

I felt the sheer terror
of not knowing how to feel.

And, feeling,
married the ship for my bride
foregoing my issue for years to come.

They tell me
human women used to swoon over me
but that is not what I recall.

It is illogical
for a woman to love
a lizard man such as I.
I refuse to believe this.
Yet, I must admit
I feel delight.
Indeed, it frightens me.

Best to wait
for my Amok Time
when I can wildly court
with no fear of betrayal ...

I awoke
gripped as by a vise.
I missed my lover so
knowing that, to her,
I must seem sometimes very Vulcan.

The author welcomes feedback and comment at:

email: ELLIOT@NewMail.Co.il



PART II – 50 Years of Star Trek



ה"עתיד" של מסע בין כוכבים – The "Future" of Star Trek

[From the editor, LB: Eli Eshed is perhaps Israel's foremost expert on popular fiction

His Hebrew website is always interesting and chock full of write-ups on topics ranging from Tarzan to comics to SF and pulp fiction and lots more (see his website at: <http://www.yekum.org/>)

NOTE: Since this article deals with the various time periods of the multiple "Star Trek" series and films, a useful reference might be the following timeline chart:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_Star_Trek

This is not really related to the terrorist attacks in Paris (and elsewhere), waves of immigrants to Europe, ISIS, and the Third World War that people have been talking about... but then again, it probably is related. Very related.

It was recently announced, that there will be a new "Star Trek" TV series in 2017 – a subject which I have a special interest in (my thesis dealt with "Star Trek" and its literary incarnations and I published many articles on the series). Prior to that, the third film in a series of films of the "rebooted" Star Trek, dealing with the adventures of Captain Kirk and his crew in the 23rd century will be released – But this is less interesting (both films screened so far from this new reboot were only average, and even less than that.)

On what exactly, and at what point in the long and detailed futuristic history of the universe (as mapped out in several television series and several films, stories, comic books, and numerous computer games), the new series focus will on – they did not mention. At this stage, we can only guess, and perhaps the new writers themselves have not yet decided on the matter. In my opinion, there are only two interesting periods that they should make into a series.

זה לא באמת קשור למתקפת הטרור בפרז (ועוד מקומות), לגלי המהגרים לאירופה, לדאע"ש, ולמלחמת העולם השלישית שמדברים עליה... אבל כנראה כן קשור. קשור מאוד.

לא מזמן הודיעו שב-2017 עומדת להיות **סדרה חדשה** של "סטאר טרק" מסע בין כוכבים – נושא שעליו **יש לי עניין מיוחד**. (עבודת התזה שלי עסקה ב"מסע בין כוכבים" וגילגוליה הספרותיים, ופירסמתי על סדרה זאת מאמרים רבים). לפני כן יהיה סרט שלישי בסדרת סרטי הקולנוע של "האיתחול מחדש" של מסע בין כוכבים" העוסק בהרפתקאות קפטן קירק וצוותו במאה ה-23. אבל זה מעניין פחות (שני הסרטים שהוקרנו עד כה מהאיתחול החדש הזה היו בינוניים ומטה מזה).

על מה בדיוק ובאיזה שלב בהיסטוריה העתידינית הארוכה והמפורטת של יקום זה (שמופה בכמה וכמה סדרות טלוויזיה בכמה וכמה סרטי קולנוע ובספרים ובסיפורי קומיקס ומשחקי מחשב מרובים מספור) תעסוק הסדרה החדשה, הם לא ציינו.

אפשר בשלב זה רק להעלות ניחושים, ואולי היוצרים החדשים עצמם עוד לא החליטו בעניין. לדעתי, יש רק שני תקופות מעניינות שכדאי שהם יעשו עליהן סדרה.

Not the 22nd century of the TV series "Enterprise" and of Captain Archer. This has already been covered. (Although it might be interesting at some point, to see how to build a future interplanetary federation in a separate series that takes place in the 22nd century).

Nor of the 23rd century of the original Captain Kirk series. We've already seen two of those universes – Thank you.

Not the 24th century of "Star Trek - The Next Generation" "Deep Space Nine", and "Voyager" they've been exhausted, exhausted – Thank you. And according to the order of the years since "Next Generation" began in 1987, that century was over or almost over, in any case. So what will it be?

There are two options :

Move up to the "Future" of the 25th century, to the year 2409 or 2423 (or something like that), with new enemies and new galaxies to explore.

Or another option – which is preferable in my opinion: Go back, back in time, even to before the 22nd century of "Enterprise" — to the period in the history of the "Star Trek" universe of which we know little of, even though its importance is quite unparalleled.

– Onto the middle of the 21st century, about fifty years from now, to around the year 2067, to the time of World War III!

Al Zefram Cochrane invents flight at speeds greater than that of light (remember the eighth "Star Trek" film?).

We also return to that monstrous war criminal Colonel Greene whose name is infamous even in the 23rd and the 24th centuries due to horrific war crimes he committed.

לא על המאה ה-22 של הסדרה "אנטרפרייז" ושל קפטן ארצ'ר. זה מוצה. (למרות שאולי יהיה מעניין בעתיד לראות איך בונים פדרציה בין כוכבית בסדרה נוספת המתרחשת במאה ה-22).

גם לא המאה ה-23 של הסדרה המקורית על קפטן קירק. מיצינו בשני יקומים – תודה.

לא המאה ה-24 של "מסע בין כוכבים – הדור הבא" ו"חלל עמוק תשע" ו"וויאג'ר" מיצינו, מיצינו – תודה. ולפי סדר השנים שחלפו מאז החלה "הדור הבא" ב-1987 המאה הזאת כבר הסתיימה או קרובה לסיימה בכל מקרה. אז מה כן?

יש שתי אפשרויות:

לעבור ל"עתיד" של המאה ה-25, לשנת 2409 או 2423 (או משהו מעין זה), עם אויבים חדשים וגלקסיות חדשות לחקור.

או אפשרות אחרת – וזה עדיף לדעתי: לחזור אחורה, אחורה בזמן, אפילו אל לפני המאה ה-22 של "אנטרפרייז" – אל תקופה בתולדות היקום של "סטאר טרק" שעליה אנו יודעים רק מעט מאוד, למרות שהיא בעלת חשיבות שאין למעלה ממנה.

— אל אמצע המאה ה-21, בערך חמישים שנה מהיום, אל סביבות שנת 2067, אל הזמן של מלחמת העולם השלישית !!!

אל זפרן קוקראן ממציא הטיסה הגבוהה ממהירות האור (זוכרים את הסרט השמיני של "מסע בין כוכבים"?).

וגם חוזרים אל פושע המלחמה המפלצתי קולונל גרין ששמו זכור לדיראון עולם גם במאה ה-23 ובמאה ה-24 בגלל פשעי מלחמה נוראים שביצע.



— And onto the "Optimum" ideological terrorist movement that conquered entire countries in the middle of the 21st century in an attempt to "upgrade" those "who are worthy" in the book "Federation".

— אל תנועת "האופטימום" תנועה אידיאולוגית טרוריסטית איומה שכבשה ארצות שלמות באמצע המאה ה-21 בניסיון "לשדרג" את "מי שראוי", בספר "federation".



— To the "Eugenics Wars" and the enhanced human, the terrorist and conqueror Kahn, well remembered in both universes of the 23 century in accidentally as a result of a mix-up in historical documents, was thought to have lived at the end of the 20th century. But in that period, there were no murderously ideological wars known as the "Eugenics Wars".

It is now clear to all, that Kahn and his super-terrorists and their murderous fanatic ideology belongs to the middle of the 21st century.

So what will it be? Zafran Cochran and his ideology of star travel against the opposing murderous ideologies. Who will win? Cochran who will have been instrumental in establishing the Federation, or Colonel Green of the Optimum movement and Kahn the murderous super-ideologue and terrorist?

I think the new series creators should also think about this possibility. If they do so, they will have created a futuristic series which is very relevant in terms of the issues we will face in this decade and the next.

[Translated from the Hebrew: Leybl Botwinik]

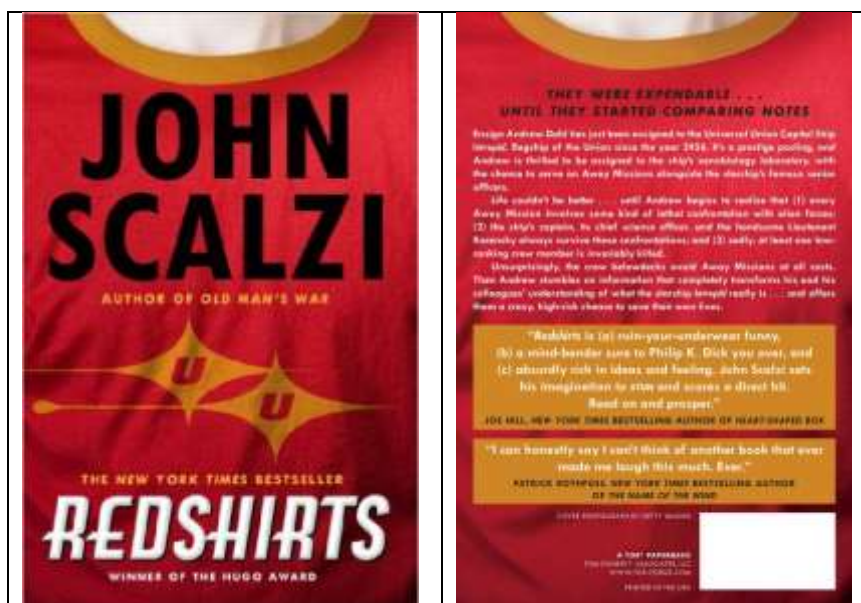
אל "המלחמות האאוגניות" אל קאן הטרוריסט וכובש הארצות המשודרג ששמו זכור היטב גם במאה ה-23 בשני יקומים שבטעות כתוצאה מבלבול במסמכים כנראה חשבו פעם שהוא חי בסוף המאה ה-20. אבל בתקופה זאת לא התרחשו מלחמות אידיאולוגיות רצחניות כמו "המלחמות האאוגניות". כעת ברור לכל שקאן ואנשיו הסופר-טרוריסטים והאידיאולוגיה הפנאטית רצחנית שלהם, שייכת לאמצע המאה ה-21.

אז מה זה יהיה? זפרן קוקראן ואידיאולוגית היציאה לכוכבים שלו כנגד אידיאולוגיות רצחניות מתנגדות. מי ינצח? קוקראן שבעקבותיו תוקם הפדרציה או קולונל גרין של תנועת האופטימום וקאן הסופר טרוריסט האידיאולוג הטהרני הרצחני? נראה לי שראוי ליוצרי הסדרה החדשה לחשוב גם על האפשרות הזאת. עם יעשו זאת, יצרו סידרה עתידנית שהיא רלבנטית מאוד מבחינת הנושאים שיעסיקו אותנו בעשור הזה ובעשור הבא.

Book Review: Redshirts – John Scalzi

Reviewed by Leybl Botwinik (and others)

Scalzi, John. *Redshirts*. USA: TOR Books (2012). 317 pages (this includes 80 pages of 3 “Codas” or appendixes + one “Acknowledgments” section – that should all be read).



A friend and fellow SF lover Yosi S., grabbed me and said – “Leybl, you’ve got to read Scalzi’s “Agent to the Stars” – Come over later and you can borrow it – it’s hilarious.” – and it truly was very funny. That was my first intro to John Scalzi’s unique sense of humour. Next up, my friend handed me John Scalzi’s “Redshirts”.

What I didn’t know, as I started reading the book, was that the title had a special significance that I was unaware of. Sure I’ve seen the original Star Trek episodes. Sure I’ve seen the coloured costumes of the different ship’s personnel – but it still didn’t ring a bell: that “redshirts” were the crew members – security personnel – who were inevitably and invariably hurt or killed on the various missions whereas other personnel wearing other coloured uniforms usually survived (see: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Redshirt_\(character\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Redshirt_(character))).

My excuse is, that in my formative years I grew up watching TV in **Black and White**. The first Star Trek episodes I watched were not in colour – and only years later would I see the coloured costumes, and so it never rang a bell that

mostly red-shirted men and women were always getting maimed or killed.

The book spoofs the way SF shows like Star Trek had certain unwritten rules (or templates) vis-à-vis the characters, and one such was that officers – i.e. main characters – no matter how badly they were poisoned, beat up, maimed or near death, they would always bounce back – or at least be back on their feet with no scars, etc. either in the same episode, or in the following episode.

This actually reminds me of a specific Star Trek episode, where this actually happened. Might the author of that story have been spoofing the very program he was writing for – or was this entirely coincidence?

In "Day of the Dove" there is an evil spirit who has instigated a non-stop fight on board the Enterprise, by arming a small group of Klingons and cutting off the majority of the crew, so that Captain Kirk and a handful of his men are in constant face-to-face combat with them (all modern weapons have been turned into swords – but no one thinks that this might be strange...).

No matter how badly some of the crew members are hurt – mortally wounded

In any case, for a great review of "Redshirts" and more pertinent info – plus plenty of pictures of redshirt crew members from the original Star Trek seasons (the living, the dead, and those in-between), see:

<http://io9.gizmodo.com/5913022/john-scalzis-star-trek-spoof-funnier-and-more-moving-than-you-expect>

You can read the first four chapters of *Redshirts* [over at Tor.com \(registration required.\)](http://www.tor.com/stories/2012/03/redshirts-prologue-chapter-1-a-2-excerpt) or here: (<http://www.tor.com/stories/2012/03/redshirts-prologue-chapter-1-a-2-excerpt>)

=====



A 'down-to-earth' note from one of our readers (and past contributors):

For what it's worth, a friend once told me that George Takei (Mr. Sulu from the original Star Trek series) wanted a jogging partner during a break in a Star Trek convention. My friend was the one to win out, and that was quite a few years ago. It's nice to know that some of the star (Star?) actors are down-to-earth (no pun intended) enough to engage the public in such a private act.

Gary Roth

Sheer* Science: Silicon-based Aliens!

(* In memory of Aharon Sheer (א"ה) – Founding Editor)

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

But first a word from our sponsor:

One of my favorite episodes of Star Trek is "*The Devil in the Dark*" [see:

[http://memory-alpha.wikia.com/wiki/The_Devil_in_the_Dark_\(episode\)](http://memory-alpha.wikia.com/wiki/The_Devil_in_the_Dark_(episode))].

Leonard Nimoy, as Spock, carries out one of his finest roles when he mind-melds with the wounded alien creature and cries out to us in its voice, of the pain of the wound and also of its dying race. I asked Doron Calo, our Sheer Science editor to write something up related to Star Trek and he selected this – discussing the possibility of non-carbon based life.

[LB, editor]

And here are some related pics to liven it all up:



The Fabulous Star Trek: Devil in the Dark, Oh yes

In a classic episode from the first season of Star Trek ("The Devil in the Dark"), the crew of the Enterprise explores the underground tunnels in a mining planet and makes the startling discovery of a **silicon-based species** called the Horta. The creature is nothing like anyone had ever encountered before, because its biochemistry is fundamentally different from our own carbon-based biology.

The very existence of such organisms is difficult to prove at first, and further, deeper questions also arise, such as the right of this totally alien life form to exist. In real life, silicon-based life forms will probably not crop up in the near future, but recent scientific advances suggest that we may be able to create such alien processes in the lab.

A groups of researchers from CalTech has recently shown that it is possible to modify an enzyme so that it could use **silicon instead of carbon**, and incorporate it into living cells. This enzyme was originally found in a **thermophilic bacterium**, that is, a type of bacteria that thrives in high-temperature environments (like hot springs or hydrothermal vents). The researchers used a powerful method called **directed**

evolution that harnesses the principle of natural selection (albeit in much faster rates) to vastly improve the existing (and rather weak) capacity of the **Cytochrome C** enzyme to handle silicon. This was accomplished by incubating the bacteria with silicon, letting it produce hydrocarbons, and then select the bacteria that most efficiently incorporated silicon into the hydrocarbon chains.

Similar methods of directed evolution become more and more common today as tools for scientist who wish to improve the existing attributes of existing enzymes, for example by allowing them a wider choice of starting materials, improving the efficiency of the chemical reactions facilitated by the enzymes, or by exploring new and interesting end products. And why would we want to

fiddle with these enzymes in the first place?

Well, this opens up a wealth of possibilities, for instance, by creating enzymes that can naturally manufacture silicon-based **industrial materials** such as adhesives and sealants. Modified enzymes could also aid the **biofuel** industry and assist in the manufacture of **novel pharmaceutical drugs**. And there is always the remote possibility of using silicon-utilizing enzymes to **create silicon-based life in the lab**.

The latter, obviously, is still a long way off, and we're unlikely to see any lab-grown Hortas any time soon. The very existence of alternative life forms is still in the firm grip of science fiction.

I remember that several years ago several scientists claimed to find evidence of **arsenic-based life**. I was greatly saddened to later hear that their claim was refuted (and by scientists from the Weizmann Institute, of all people!).

Still, the prospect of non-carbon-based life is important, especially when looking at the bizarre environment on other planets and moons in our solar system, such as the methane/ethane atmosphere of Saturn's moon, **Titan**. If life is ever found there, they will probably be very different from what we know here on Earth. And if Star Trek has taught us anything, it is to treat these species with respect once we finally encounter them, so we better be ready...

Links:

Article in Science magazine:

<http://www.sciencemag.org/news/2016/03/researchers-take-small-step-toward-silicon-based-life>

Article in Nature about the (probably non-existent) arsenic-based bacteria:

<http://www.nature.com/news/arsenic-life-bacterium-prefers-phosphorus-after-all-1.11520>



NEXT MONTH: Special Memorial issue

– One year since Aharon Sheer's passing away!

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

For Comments: E-mail: levbl_botwinik@yahoo.com. Tel: Leybl Botwinik 054-537-7729
 Editor: Leybl Botwinik. Founding Editor: Aharon Sheer (ל"ה). Logo by: Miriam Ben-Loulu (ל"ה).
 For free email delivery (PDF format) write to levbl_botwinik@yahoo.com
 Copyright © 2016 — Archives at: <http://www.kulichki.com/antimiry/cybercozen>
 Also (archived issues from 2014+) at: <http://fanac.org/fanzines/CyberCozen/>
 And <http://efanzines.com/CyberCozen/index.htm>

All rights reserved to specified authors and artists © כל הזכויות שמורות למחברים וליוצרים