



SCIENCE-Fiction Fanzine

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DOROT (<http://dorot-con.org.il/>) – HAIFA SF&F FEST March 12



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

מועדון הקריאה בת"א יתקיים בהתחלת חודש מרץ: יעסוק ב"אחיות הגורל" מאת טרי פראצ'ט, ביום ה', 23.3.17, ב-20:00, ב-"קפה גרג", ויצמן 2. מנחה: שרה גבאי

מועדון הקריאה בירושלים יעסוק ב"מלחמה למען האלונים" מאת אמה בול, ויתקיים ביום ג', 28.2.17, ב-19:30, בבית הקפה "נגילה", משיח ברוכף 5, ירושלים. מנחה: שרה מולדובן

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 – Lots of stuff here!:

- 7 New Earth-Sized Planets + The Jewish connection
- News from SPACEIL – Israel's space exploration society
- **Purim and Marvel's Thanos**
- POWERLESS by Keith Braithwaite (Montreal SF and Fantasy Association)
- AI / Robotics updates
- Sheer Science section by Dr. Doron Calo about sending superbug diseases out to space for testing

– Your editor, Leybl Botwinik

Real Reader Remarks:

Don't worry about delays. Whatever you can do; whenever, is just fine.

– RBF

From the editor: Thanks for the thumbs up, I try to do my best, but I could use some more help, with people doing more write-ups ... I even had to resort to importing from overseas/offshore (see Keith's "Powerless" review, below) ... Just joking. I really appreciate all the help I can get, though.

Amazing - the 3D bioprinting, and I like your proposed terminology! It was neat having book reviews from outside sources -- alas, if only they were as detailed as the usual CC fare. I had no idea that autonomous cars were already on the road -- thanks for sharing the info!

Gary

Guy Gillian periodically reviews SF fanzines.

This is what he had to say about us (from **Zine Dump TZD #39**), followed by my comments to him:

CyberCozen Vol. XXIX, Nos. 01-02 / Leybl Botwinik, leybl_botwinik@yahoo.com / Monthly publication of the **Israeli Society for SF and Fantasy**; I love the beautiful Hebrew script, enjoy the frequent colorful underscoring ... and the text is fine, too. The January issue, for instance, offers a thoughtful piece on *Westworld* and its morality – which could stand more discussion in the fannish press – a discussion on animal and robot rights, and even a paragraph on a truly hovering

hoverboard. The February issue teases and links to articles on self-driving cars and movies set in 2017, reprints 2015 Hugo nominee reviews from the wonderful Cathy Palmer-Lister, and adds a piece on 3D bioprinting that is quite informative. One wonders, though ... **is there a club behind this pub? Do they do stuff?**

From the editor: This is my response, to set the record straight and it should appear in his upcoming **TZD #40** issue:

...And the answers to your questions are as follows:

The publication, CyberCozen, was created in 1988 by Aharon Sheer as the voice of the Rehovot (a city just south of Tel Aviv) SF club.

The all-encompassing Israeli Society for SF and Fantasy came into being in 1996 and the Rehovot SF club soon dwindled away (some of the members becoming active in the larger group) - but the publication continued to be merrily and mirthfully produced by Aharon. I took over as Assistant Editor in June 2014 when Aharon became ill, and then took over as Editor when he passed away in May 2015.

The Israel Society has its own publication and multiple activities, cons, etc. - and works in close cooperation with multiple smaller clubs, such as fans of Pratcher, Gaming, Manga, etc. This is their English webpage: <http://english.sf-f.org.il/index.htm> Their official quarterly publication is "haMeimad haAsiri" [The Tenth Dimension]: http://english.sf-f.org.il/act_meimad.htm

NASA Finds 7 New Earth-Sized Planets

WOW! This must be the most exciting news in a while. Lots of articles and write-ups, but the following 2 articles seem just up our alley (or Milky Way) – 1st from **PCMAG**, 2nd from **AISH**.

1) NASA Finds 7 New Earth-Sized Planets

BY [ANGELA MOSCARITOLO](#) FEBRUARY 22, 2017 02:54PM EST

The quest for life outside Planet Earth just got a lot more interesting.



NASA on Wednesday **revealed** it has discovered a "treasure trove" of Earth-sized planets. Dubbed TRAPPIST-1, the system consists of seven Earth-sized planets orbiting around a single, nearby star. Three of these planets are located in what NASA calls the "habitable zone," meaning the area around the parent star where a rocky planet is most likely to have water.

While NASA has identified Earth-like planets before, this discovery sets a new record for the largest number of habitable-zone planets found around a single star outside our solar system. The space agency said all seven planets in TRAPPIST-1 could have liquid water under the right atmospheric conditions, but the three in the habitable zone are most promising.

Read full article here: <http://www.pcmag.com/news/351901/nasa-finds-7-new-earth-sized-planets>

They also include a short 2 minute clip, also on YouTube here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bnKFAS30X8>

This 10 minute film covers the "**Top 10 Recently Discovered Earth Like Planets**": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3ApaabcgMc>

AND HERE'S A RELATED ARTICLE OF INTEREST:

2) Judaism and Life on Other Planets

NASA's earth-shattering announcement has many Jews asking: Does Judaism entertain the possibility of alien life?

by [Rabbi Benjamin Blech](#)

Hello... Anybody else out there?

For us here on Earth it is certainly one of the most intriguing and far-reaching questions imaginable. Are we alone in the cosmos or are there others - perhaps like us or perhaps totally different - somewhere in the universe?

And for those of us who believe the account of creation as recorded in the Torah, are the opening words - "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" - meant as full disclosure of the creation of life by the Almighty or is this merely the information granted to Earthlings as necessary for our relationship with God but not purporting to reveal other manifestations of divine power and creativity?

In short, can religious Jews believe in the possibility of alien life?

Read full article here: <http://www.aish.com/ci/s/Judaism-and-Life-on-Other-Planets.html?s=mm>

MORE UPDATES FROM PCMAG.COM

MORE ON 3-D Printing:

Are You Ready to Hop a Ride on a 3D-Printed Spaceship?

BY [TOM BRANT](#) FEBRUARY 3, 2017
01:11PM EST



Boeing's Starliner spaceship has more than 600 3D printed parts that can withstand extreme temperatures.

To read more:

<http://www.pcmag.com/news/351541/are-you-ready-to-hop-a-ride-on-a-3d-printed-spaceship>

Can't get enough SciFi? NETFLIX Screamin' streamin' list is a lot to chew on:

Best Sci-Fi on Netflix Streaming

BY [K. THOR JENSEN](#) 02.04.2017 :: 9:15AM EST



Being able to press a button and get a movie instantly sent to your TV is sort of the stuff of science fiction anyways, so it's not surprising that Netflix has a pretty solid selection of sci-fi to stream.

To read more: <https://www.geek.com/movies/the-best-sci-fi-on-netflix-streaming-1670615/>

Hear ye, Hear ye – Read all about it! (From SPACEIL – Israel's space exploration society):

Israeli Team Clinches Finalist Spot in International Moon Race Competition!

SpaceIL, the non-profit Israeli organization in the Google Lunar XPRIZE international competition has qualified for the final stage of this Modern Moon Race. The competition is slated to end in late 2017 when the team is expected to launch Israel's first-ever spacecraft to the Moon.

See the rest at: <http://www.spaceil.com/news/israeli-team-clinches-finalist-spot-in-international-moon-race-competition/> **[LB: Is the next step, to go visit those 7 planets we mentioned earlier...?]**

PURIM and Marvel's Thanos By Leybl Botwinik



Artwork by: Tsirl Waletzky

What with the upcoming festive Jewish Holiday of Purim (festival of mirthful masks and merry-making) coming up on the 12th of March, I thought it would be a fun change of scenery to link that up with the upcoming (and previous hints from) Marvel movies linked to THANOS and the INFINITY GAUNTLET.

For those who don't know the story of Purim, here's a very quick, very short – related – synopsis. Please excuse the side-comments in brackets "[...]":

Back in the day when King Ahasuerus [sounds better in Yiddish – or Hebrew, for that matter] of Persia – lording over 127 nations [today Iran only has terrorist outposts in about that number of countries] executed his queen Vashti [they still do that a lot in Iran], he ordered a beauty contest to choose a new queen. The winner of the Beauty pageant was Esther, secret niece of Mordechai the Jew. No one knew that Esther was Jewish. The king's minister Haman was a notorious anti-Semite and wanted to wipe the Jewish people from the face of the Earth [what else is new...?]. To make a long story short, as the joke goes: He wanted to destroy us, was defeated, let's feast. You can find many links for the full story. For example here:

http://www.chabad.org/holidays/purim/article_cdo/aid/645995/jewish/The-Basic-Purim-Story.htm .

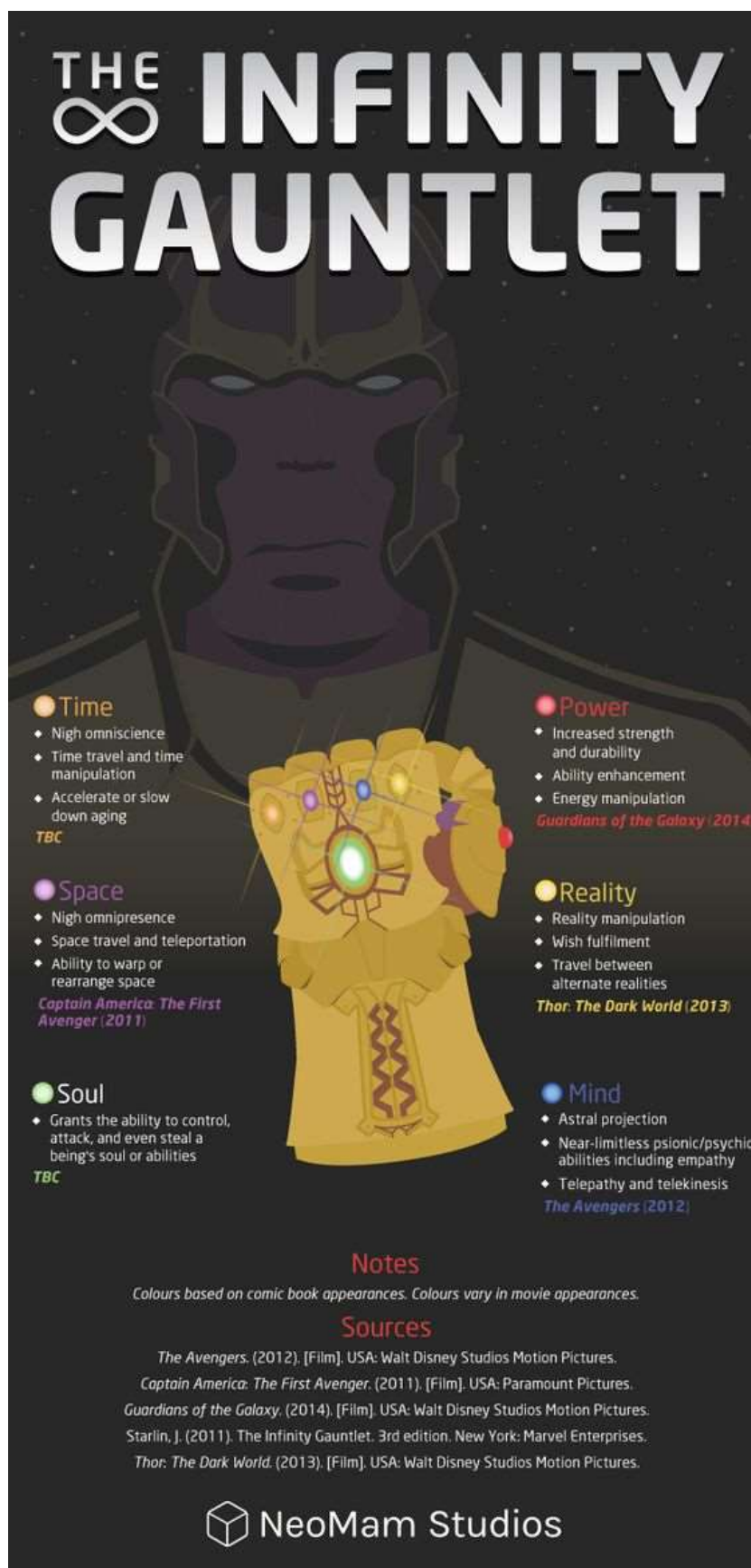
The feasting (and drinking to the point of drunkenness that one cannot discern between the evil Haman and the saintly Mordechai) and Purim merry-making, includes wearing masks and costumes and also presenting "shalakh-mones / mishloakh-manot" trays of food and sweets to neighbours, friends, and family – and donating money to the poor. The costume/dress-up and the evil crazy guy angles are (briefly) what's coming up next:

Thanos, in the Marvel universe, is an immensely powerful super being from Titan. His dream is to destroy the entire Universe and then join his beloved "Death" as her prince powerful consort. You can read more about Thanos here: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thanos>

The ties-in with Purim are not all that obvious, or are they: evil person, wants to destroy human lives, etc. In any case, when I saw the following poster about the INFINITY GAUNTLET, I thought that Thanos and his gauntlet would make an awesome Purim costume – (maybe I'll dress up as him next year).

Anyway, the following and many other interesting 'posters' and infographics can be found here:

https://www.pinterest.com/pin/68732549983/?utm_campaign=category_pp&e_t=d938f721eae743ba85c969d96f2defe2&utm_content=68732549983&utm_source=31&utm_term=3&utm_medium=2012



Short review of the new DC TV series from our friends at MonSFFA – Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association, Feb 2017 *Impulse* bulletin:

Powerless Brings Humour to DC's On-Screen Universe

- By Keith Braithwaite, Montreal



The newest superhero television series doesn't focus on superheroes at all! A light sitcom, NBC's *Powerless* brings much needed humour to DC's on-screen universe. The show stars Vanessa Hudgens (*Sucker Punch*) and Alan Tudyk (*Firefly*, *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*). Hudgens is Emily Locke, who is thrilled to have been hired as the new R&D director at the Wayne Enterprises subsidiary Wayne Security, a company that makes products for average folk, providing them a measure of safety in a world in which superheroes and supervillains regularly clash in and around Charm City. Tudyk plays Bruce Wayne's wastrel of a cousin, Van, who heads Wayne Security.

The residents of Charm City must constantly deal with the fallout of superheroes battling supervillains: smashed buildings, wrecked transit systems and the like, and have become weary of it all, even resentful that yet another superhero incident on the way to work is going to cause them to be late for a meeting or some such inconvenience. Emily has yet to grow so jaded and remains star struck when encountering superheroes.

When Bruce Wayne decides to shut down Wayne Security because it isn't turning out any worthwhile products, Van makes no effort to save the company, seeing an opportunity to move back to Gotham City and climb the corporate ladder. Emily, on the other hand, motivates her motley crew of R&D personnel into developing a highly effective wrist-worn supervillain detector, impressing Bruce Wayne, who decides to keep Wayne Security operational.

Gently poking fun at the absurdity of the comic book superhero trope, the humour is quiet, unforced, and delightfully silly. The premise is the winner, here, something of a cross between the Steve Carell sitcom *The Office* and the 1994 comic book miniseries *Marvels*. The show also offers comic book fans obscure DC references and inside nods, like having Adam West provide an introductory voice-over in the pilot.

If the series remains true to itself, and its talented cast are permitted to develop their quirky characters, *Powerless* has a lot of potential.

More on "*Powerless*" here: <http://screencrush.com/dc-powerless-trailer-extended-batman-references/>

Some tidbits from **IMPULSE**:

- ▶ Born just down the road in Trois-Rivières, Canadian director Denis Villeneuve is fast becoming a star Genre filmmaker. His acclaimed 2016 SF film *Arrival* is up for eight Oscars, including Best Director and Best Picture. He is currently finishing work on *Blade Runner 2049*, scheduled for an October 6 release this year, and will follow up with a reboot of *Dune*!
- ▶ *Battlestar Galactica*'s original Captain Apollo, Richard Hatch, has died. He was 71. The actor passed away on February 7 after a lengthy illness.
- ▶ Peter Capaldi is leaving *Doctor Who* later this year! The Scottish actor who has interpreted the Doctor's 12th incarnation since 2013 recently announced that the modern series' tenth season will be his last. Also departing the series at the conclusion of season ten is showrunner Stephen Moffat.

UPDATES on AI and ROBOTS – and various random thoughts

As we all know, there is a lot of investment going on in the field of AI and robotics.

For simple robotics, technical issues of performance, balance, mobility are advancing quite favorably as can be seen (for better or for worse) in the article, with accompanying video clip about “*Handle*” here: <http://www.pcmag.com/commentary/351505/boston-dynamics-robot-is-a-nightmare-of-a-different-kind>

Although some of the more practical concerns deal with how they will affect the labor force, the short and long-time impact on our daily lives and social interaction should also be considered (for example, touched on in the “Humans” BBC TV series I very briefly covered in the December 2015 CyberCozen issue – Maybe it’s time for a fuller review, including the new season...).

Let’s say, for example you have a robot housekeeper/butler/maid at your house. Will your guests be comfortable with that hanging/moving around? It will take society some getting used to. On the other hand, lots of people are uncomfortable when visiting a person with a dog: barking loud and scary – or even super-friendly (jumping all over you and licking you all over – including exploring your various bodily parts).

Usually, a host will take the dog outside or tie it up, or move it into a different room. A robotic housekeeper/butler/maid on the other hand, is expected to always – or at certain moments – be hanging around: serving, clearing the table, cleaning spilled wine, etc... It will take a while for society to adjust, just at that level, let alone shifts in work force and ethics, and workspace culture...

AND, ... Talking about the work force: 5 Jobs Robots Will Take First

Here’s an interesting speculation on LinkedIn, by Shelly Palmer:

Oxford University researchers have estimated that 47 percent of U.S. jobs could be automated within the next two decades. But which white-collar jobs will robots take first?

He lists the following:

- 1 – Middle Management**
- 2 – Commodity Salespeople (Ad Sales, Supplies, etc.)**
- 3 – Report Writers, Journalists, Authors & Announcers**
- 4 – Accountants & Bookkeepers**
- 5 – Doctors**

I don’t agree with #3 and 5, but 1, 2, and 4 look about right...

See: <https://us-mq5.mail.yahoo.com/neo/launch?.rand=dt352vh3526h6#2187675966>

Sheer* Science: “Gesundheit” – Space Style

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

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

Superbugs in Space



The **Falcon 9** rocket was launched last week, propelling the **Dragon** capsule on its way to the **International Space Station (ISS)**. Apart from the supplies for the space station, it was carrying a diverse scientific payload: a device to **track lightning**; a **prototype navigation system** for spacecraft; interesting experiments by **high schoolers**, aimed to test the effect of microgravity on a variety of materials, cells, and organisms. However, the one payload item that caught my eye was **MRSA**, short for **methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus***... a deadly, antibiotics-resistant **bacterium**, commonly known as a "**superbug**" that can potentially **wipe out humanity**.

This superbug is actually really scary. The phenomenon of resistance to antibiotics has spread so much, that close to **100,000 Americans** are infected every year, and if nothing is done to stop these fellas, the resistant germs might kill **hundreds of millions** globally in the coming years. So, the race is on to find a **cure** – in reality, fighting superbugs requires the discovery of **multiple cures**, one for each new permutation that the bacteria undergoes. This means chasing our tails continuously: a new antibiotic is found and works for a while, the bug becomes resistant, and we need to start the quest all over again.

This cycle obviously needs to be broken somehow, and that's where **Space** comes in. We've known for quite some time, that living in Space has **strange effects on organisms**, most of them harmful (in

humans a prolonged stay in microgravity can cause **eye problems, headaches**, and **neurodegeneration**, to name a few examples).

In microorganisms, however, Space affects something else: it significantly **accelerates the mutation rate** of their genomes. In theory, this can provide us a glimpse of things to come, and with it, a chance to prepare ahead for the bug's next tricks, and possibly make the **right drug just when it's needed**.

There's another cool thing about this whole business: the fast-tracked mutations accumulated at the ISS will be evaluated using **Gene-RADAR**, a novel mobile scanner that detects gene mutations in real-time (sounds SciFi, huh? This gizmo actually competed in the **X Prize**, a competition for building a **real, working tricorder!**).

So, although blasting a superbug into space may sound like the beginning of a cliché space horror opera (e.g. **reverse ANDROMEDA STRAIN***), this may just as well turn out to be a good thing for humanity...

LINKS:

SpaceX is about to launch a deadly superbug into space

<https://www.businessinsider.com.au/spacex-launching-lethal-bacteria-february-2017-2>

Gene-RADAR

<http://tricorder.xprize.org/files/team-nanobiosym-gene-radar-qualcomm-tricorder-xprize>

***"The Andromeda Strain", is a 1971 SF movie (based on Michael Crichton's book) where a strange disease wipes out a town and scientists are called in to discover what it is and how to combat the disease. The assumption was that it came from Outer Space. See: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Andromeda_Strain_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Andromeda_Strain_(film))**

***** and a final note from the Editor:**

We're looking for volunteers to catalogue our 28+ years of publication.

It's quite simple actually:

Open up a monthly issue and fill in some fields in an Excel sheet:

Issue month and year, author, title, review/article, etc.

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

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 And <http://cfanzines.com/CyberCozen/index.htm>

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