



SCIENCE-Fiction Fanzine

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חדשות האגודה – יולי 2020 The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy

תל אביב: המועדון יעסוק בספר "הנערה עם כל המתנות" מאת מ.ר. קרי (יניב, 2016), ביום חמישי, 23.7, בשעה 19:30, בתוכנית זו. מנחות: איילת גרשוביץ ודפנה קירש. קישור יתפרסם סמוך לאירוע בדף האירוע בפייסבוק. מועדון אוגוסט יעסוק כנראה בספר "מצוקה" מאת גרג איגן.

ירושלים: לפרטים על המפגשים הבאים ניתן להצטרף לקבוצת הפייסבוק מועדון הקריאה הירושלמי של האגודה. ניתן גם ליצור קשר במייל עם מרכזת המועדון בירושלים - גלי אחיטוב, ולהצטרף לקבוצת הוואטסאפ של המועדון.

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 בדף האגודה בפייסבוק.

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

This month's roundup:

- Part XII of the Time-Space series: Review of Hugh Howey's trilogy of books: Wool + Shift + Dust
- Our usual, interesting tidbits from various websites – En masse!
- Your editor, Leybl Botwinik

A word from you editor (that's me...LB):

Hello my good friends,

We have a nice backlog of short intros to many fascinating items from the Web. We've some stuff that didn't make it into the April and May issues of *CyberCozen*, and last issue we had enough other great material to fill our periodical, so I put it all off for this current issue.

However, before we start, some feedback from our readers:

Reader #1:

Would you REALLY like to live for several hundred years?

All your friend and relatives and contemporaries would die off and the Future Shock would be intense and immense.

Consider wisely what you ask for. You might just get it.

Thanks again for this month's issue.

-Reuven

Editor's response:

Hey Reuven, thanks for the quick feedback :

A) I'd love for my friends, family members, and contemporaries to be with me. Life has its twists and turns, Good friends and family members leave us unfortunately on a regular basis. At the same time, new ones are formed or born. So stay 'young' and make new friends all the time. Don't be afraid of taking younger people under your wing – friends or family. Your experiences will be useful to new generations – after all, you've already 'done it all' (and if you haven't yet, then go to it) – and maybe, with your help, they will be lucky and avoid some of your mistakes, or the mistakes of others.

B) No "future" shock - We're taking it one day at a time, and getting shocked all the time :)

Of course one would want to continue living for a few hundred years with good health - primarily; and financial independence - secondarily.

I'm ready for the future. Is the future ready for me...?

Reader #1:

Dear Leybl,

I hope you and yours are all well.

I have to take issue with something you wrote in the last issue of *CyberCozen*. You may print in in the next issue if you like. Here it is:

Any fan of science fiction who reads only *CyberCozen* could readily be excused, if they formed the impression that SF is exclusively a movie and television genre. So let me inform them that there are also science fiction books, and lots of them, too.

I had noticed this exclusivity in CC some time ago, but was only moved to react when I read this in the June 2020 issue:

*And in Heinlein's "immortal" words, from the movie *Starship Troopers*: Do you want to live forever?*

(Did H, write that? A US Marine said it in 1918. [link])

Well, RAH was not a screenwriter, and never wrote the script of this movie. In fact, I have a strong suspicion that he would have disapproved of the mess Verhoeven made of it, had he been alive to see it. What Heinlein wrote was a *novel* called *Starship Troopers*, in which this quote appears as the motto for Chapter I, where it is attributed to an "Unknown platoon sergeant, 1918".

Reading books is fun. Movie and TV SF fans should try it sometime.

Best regards,

Emanuel

Editor's response:

Thanks Emanuel, good to hear from you.

CyberCozen is not only about TV and movies, but I'm glad you brought that up.

In my own defense, I have to say that I'd really love to see more reviews of books in CyberCozen.

The truth is, that I have 7 (trilogy+4 more) books sitting on my desk – waiting to be reviewed (thanks to your letter I've been motivated to at least do one review this issue – see below). I also did not entirely abandon book reviews, having done a series of short story reviews from "Zion's Fiction" over a period of 17 months (January 2019-May 2020) – which I'm sure you saw.

But yes, there's nothing like a good book, and so I'll do my best to present more reviews of books in the upcoming issues.

Of course, it would be helpful if our readers would send in some reviews of their own.

Thanks again. Be well, and I hope you enjoy the review in this issue.

Time and Space # XII:

Wool + Shift + Dust – Hugh Howey's Trilogy



Published by Arrow books (Random House), 2013

Book I: Wool – 562 pages

Book II: Shift – 578 pages

Includes:

- a 1-page time-chart covering key episodes of 3 silos from 2052-2550

- a 3-page section for reading groups – *Questions for discussion*
- a 4-page excerpt from book III, *Dust*

Book III: Dust – 407 pages

Includes:

- a 1-page note to the reader (** worth reading **)
- a 2-page section for reading groups – *Questions for discussion*
- a 1-page Acknowledgements section

A review of the trilogy - by Leybl Botwinik

A good friend of mine lent me the books, and I'm glad he did.

Now, no book is perfect, and of course the following critique is my own – someone else may have a different opinion and I fully respect his/her right to be wrong ☺ (just joking... I'm in a great mood because I'm finally getting around to reviewing this great set of books).

First impressions

Cons:

- The hero of the trilogy, Juliette, doesn't appear until around page 90!
- Three key characters of the first 100 or so pages are killed off and barely overlap with the main character, Juliette.
- It would have been nice to see a schematic (image) of a silo.

Pros:

- In Book II: There's a 1-page time-chart covering key episodes of 3 silos from 2052-2550
- A-not-really-Spoiler: A key part of the puzzle/mystery is hinted at in pages 14-19 of Book I

Publishing background

It would seem that my first impressions (above) are due to the nature of the way the books were published. From [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silo_\(series\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silo_(series)) I've garnered that the three books are really a series of ongoing and interconnected novellas that began with the first part "Holston" in Book I. This 39-page part was originally a short story called "Wool" that Hugh Howey wrote in 2011 that kicked off the series, also known as the "Silo" series. And that's why the first two of my 'Cons' didn't make sense to me (and why the second of the 'Pros' contained key info, right at the start). In other words, the real flow of the series kicks in in Book I starting with Juliette. Book II, then, contains a series of prequels that give the background to the interconnected stories in

Book I. Our hero, Juliette from Book I is also only mentioned in the final pages of Book II – I guess, to prepare you for Book III that brings everything together.

Main plot of Book I

The story takes place about 500 years from now. Civilization as we know it, has been all but wiped out. The last survivors – at least in the US (not sure how many, but probably 5-8 thousand) – live in a gigantic silo, underground. It's death to leave the silo and go aboveground. The silo itself is made up of three sections of about 48 floors each. Each floor has its purpose. For example living quarters, a floor for the admin and computer control center, another floor is a hydroponics farm for growing the fresh fruits and vegetables, and so on. The Sheriff's office and children's center is way up on top, and the entire infrastructure and mechanics of the silo (air conditioning, boilers, electrical generators) is at the very bottom.

There are no elevators. To go from one floor to the next, you have to walk up/down a steel staircase. The steps are not too wide, and there is constant traffic up and down. People going to 'work' or to get supplies, and porters that carry heavy stuff up and down, as delivery personnel. The distance between each floor is not like in our modern office building – it's much greater. Thus, to go from the very top to the very bottom of the silo, it takes about a day and a half by foot, with a rest-stop (or two) somewhere in-between.

Hierarchically, there is a mayor, one sheriff with a deputy, and some security people in the control center, that are independent, and can be considered a private police force.

Because of the limited resources, there is a control over family planning – women have some contraceptive device placed into their reproductive area, and they are removed only for a period of one year – if you and your partner win a ‘lottery’ that gives you the once-in-a-lifetime chance to try to conceive a baby.

The control over the people is more than just about family planning. The population is brainwashed to believe that ‘one day’ they will be able to return to the surface, but they must not ever talk about taking any initiative and try to leave via the one airlock. It is dangerous to even talk about that. The punishment for such scandalous/illegal behavior, is to be sent outside, in a special hazmat suit, with two WOOL pads, and to clean the video cameras that are on the ‘roof’ of the entrance to the underground silo. These cameras are the precious single contact with the world outside, and need to be periodically cleaned. They typically show a grim grey-clouded foggy sky with rarely a clear view of the sky and stars at night. The people who are sent outside, never make it back alive.

This is probably the reason that the book is called “Wool” – with a subtle implication of “the wool being pulled over your eyes”...

The main hero of the entire story is Juliette, who is a tough, independent young lady who was mostly brought up and worked in the silo bottom, among the machinery and the rough-and-tumble mechanics, and workers who respect her and love her greatly. She is selected by the mayor and her deputy to replace the Sheriff and also to be groomed to eventually become the next mayor of the Silo. The director of the computer/admin center is not pleased. He wanted his man to be chosen.. This causes intrigues and trouble for all.

The “Time travel” angle – Book II

This review is under the heading “*Time and Space # XII*” for a reason. As mentioned in “Pros” above – “*A-not-really-Spoiler: A key part of the puzzle/mystery is hinted at in pages 14-19 of Book I*” – there’s more to the story than just people who happen to be in the silo for many generations and trying to survive until the day when they will be able to regain the surface – when the world will be cleared of the dangerous substances in the air.

Holsten was the Sheriff that Juliette is to replace. He decided to undertake a suicide mission to the surface, to follow in his wife’s footsteps – because she was punished and sent to ‘clean’ the video cameras on the outside. Her punishment was because, as a computer person in the Silo, she discovered that the history of several revolts against the admin/computer people during the many generations that the survivors have been living underground – has been consistently erased. In other words, that someone is manipulating history and their totalitarian society, in order to control the masses. Juliette is determined to investigate Holsten’s death wish, and is herself punished and sent to the surface to ‘clean’. Of course she survives (read the book, to find out what she finds!).

The “Time travel” angle is only revealed in Book II. What we discover there (without getting into too many spoilers), is that some people from the get-start of the Silo survival history had a very intricate plan for the survivors to follow. The thoroughly well thought out plan included a multi-generation control mechanism, where key personnel in the admin/computer center would be secretly manipulating and overriding things in order to fulfill the plan’s objectives.

In order to increase the chances of the multi-generational plan to be fulfilled, one more factor needed to be implemented: Supervising these supervisors. In order to do that best – who would be the optimum supervisor, if not the creators of the whole deal: the original planners. They would be placed into suspended animation, and would periodically revive – or during ‘emergencies’, and take over control – as required. In this way, they could continue to manipulate society according to the original agenda.

Book III – Where it all comes together

Book III is, basically, a continuation of Book I – with a 2 page reference and connection at the end of Book II. Here, everything falls into place, and we (and Juliette, and the people around her) find out exactly what the plan of the silo society was, and moreover what is expected of the current and next generations. Of course, Juliette has plans of her own.

I highly recommend the series/trilogy, notwithstanding the apparent lack of flow between the first two parts of the story (roughly the first 90 pages) and the parts where Juliette begins her saga.

Get the first part free, from Hugh Howey's website (<https://hughhowey.com/the-value-of-reading/>):

"Five years ago, I made the novelette WOOL available for free. Permanently. This is the short story that launched my career as a writer, and I wanted to make it available to as many readers as possible."

**** NEXT TIME, A SIMILAR METHOD OF "TIME-TRAVEL", FOR A DIFFERENT PURPOSE ****

Loads of Fun from the Web:

As if you were there...

Escape Pandemic Dread by Experiencing the Apollo 13 Mission in Real Time

BY George Dvorsky (Apr 2020)

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of Apollo 13, NASA has launched an online experience in which you can relive the events of this harrowing mission as they happened in real time.

It was supposed to be the third lunar landing, but famously it was not to be.

The crew of Apollo 13, after launching to space on April 11, 1970, had to forgo their lunar jaunt after their service module was badly damaged by an exploding oxygen tank.

The calm and heroic actions of James Lovell, John Swigert, and Fred Haise prevented catastrophe.

Guided by NASA mission control and support team, the crew returned safely to Earth on April 17 after looping around the Moon.

Continue reading at:

<https://gizmodo.com/escape-pandemic-dread-by-experiencing-the-apollo-13-mis-1842776645>

Wish you were there...

Newfound planet may be most Earth-like yet

BY Mike Wall (Apr 2020)

It's not Earth 2.0, but scientists are getting closer.

NASA's planet-hunting Kepler spacecraft may be dead, but its discoveries keep rolling in.

Scientists analyzing data gathered by Kepler, which NASA retired in November 2018, just found a hidden gem: an Earth-size world that may be capable of supporting life as we know it.

The exoplanet, Kepler-1649c, circles a red dwarf star that lies 300 light-years from Earth, a new study reports. Kepler-1649c completes one orbit every 19.5 Earth days, putting the alien planet in its host star's "habitable zone," the just-right range of distances where liquid water could exist on a world's surface. (Because red dwarfs are so dim, their habitable zones lie quite close.)

"This intriguing, distant world gives us even greater hope that a second Earth lies among the stars, waiting to be found," Thomas Zurbuchen, associate administrator of NASA's Science Mission Directorate, said in a statement.

Continue reading at:

<https://www.space.com/earth-size-exoplanet-habitable-zone-kepler.html?>

Parental discretion advised

Star Trek Episodes That Were Banned

BY Adam Clery (Apr 2020)

Being a family-friendly show that usually tries to instill values of hope, cooperation, and goodwill to all species, Star Trek doesn't tend to court too much controversy.

Indeed, the show's more notorious moments tend to arise in pursuit of pushing a noble social cause, or society simply not liking what's reflected back at it through the mirror of an episode.

Continue reading (and see the 10 minute video) at:

<https://whatculture.com/tv/10-star-trek-episodes-that-were-banned>

Humble Hubble

Celebrate Hubble's 30th, by gazing into this shimmering stellar expanse

BY George Dvorsky (Apr 2020)

...

Few telescopes in history are as easily recognizable as Hubble, and for very good reason. As one of the first space-based telescopes, Hubble fundamentally altered our view of the cosmos, giving us unprecedented views of planets, galaxies, nebulae, comets, supermassive black holes, and even colliding asteroids in a star system far, far away.

Continue reading at:

<https://gizmodo.com/celebrate-hubble-s-30th-birthday-by-gazing-into-this-sh-1843043257>

Hmmm Chris' list is not bad – What do you think?

10 Best Science Fiction Short Stories of All Time: From Golden Age to the Modern Era

BY Chris Telden (Nov 2019)



These are the best science fiction stories of all time, according to somebody who spent much of her life thinking that science fiction sucked.

...

When I compiled this reader's list of the best science fiction short stories of the 20th century (which is the same as "all time," as the genre became full-fledged only in the 1900s), I noticed I was markedly favoring stories published from the 1940s through the 1960s.

I tried to like modern speculative fiction — I really did. And I will again, when writers and publishers once again start turning out science fiction stories that actually give me the same sense of wonder as those old tales from the Golden Age did.

...

1. Alfred Bester, "Fondly Fahrenheit"
2. William Tenn, "Time in Advance"
3. Connie Willis, "Daisy in the Sun"
4. Lewis Padgett, "Time Locker"
5. Isaac Asimov, "Nightfall"
6. Anson MacDonald (Heinlein), "By His Bootstraps"
7. Cordwainer Smith, "The Lady Who Sailed the Soul"
8. Henry Bates, "Farewell to the Master"
9. Murray Leinster, "Pipeline to Pluto"
10. Daniel Keyes, "Flowers for Algernon"



Read the entire article at:

<https://hobbylark.com/fandoms/Best-Science-Fiction-Short-Story>

Some are good, some are better, one is a bomb...

TEN Best Sci-Fi Shows Returning This Year

A lot of great sci-fi television is slated to return, from Star Trek:

Discovery to Supergirl, here are the best shows coming back in 2020

BY KATH LEROY (Mar 2020)

The year 2020 hasn't started in the best way possible. Many countries are going through a health crisis these days and they're struggling to get the situation under control. People are in quarantine, isolated from their friends and acquaintances. That said, there are still a lot of things to look forward to.

The quarantine means people also have more time to catch up on their hobbies, whether that means reading, playing video games, or watching movies and TV shows. Plus, there are a lot of upcoming TV sci-fi shows which will return this year with a new season, a fact which will no doubt be good news to any sci-fi fan out there.

10 Future Man

- 9 Star Trek: Discovery
- 8 Supergirl
- 7 Titans
- 6 Red Dwarf



- 5 Doom Patrol [1st season was terrible...]
- 4 The Twilight Zone
- 3 The Boys
- 2 Westworld
- 1 The Mandalorian



Continue reading at:

<https://screenrant.com/best-sci-fi-shows-returning-2020-future-man-star-trek-discovery/>

Deja VirUs

Coronavirus feels like something out of a sci-fi novel. Here's how writers have imagined similar scenarios.

BY **Silvia Moreno-Garcia & Lavie Tidhar** (Feb 2020)

The coronavirus outbreak feels like something out of a science fiction — or horror — novel. Indeed, novelists have been imagining scenarios like this for centuries. It was none other than the godmother of goth, Mary Shelley, who wrote one of the first plague novels. In "The Last Man" (1826), Shelley envisions a post-apocalyptic Earth ravaged by plague at the end of the 21st century. American survivors invade Europe, and humanity all but goes extinct. In the end, the "last man" is seen floating away from Britain in a small boat.

Pandemic novels, like pandemics, come and go in waves. The '60s had Michael Crichton's "The Andromeda Strain." The '70s saw the mega-success of Stephen King's "The Stand." Robin Cook gave us "Outbreak" in the '80s. By the 2000s, Max Brooks's "World War Z" and related "The Zombie Survival Guide" were deemed so plausible for emergency scenarios that Brooks now consults for the military.

Continue reading at:

https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/books/coronavirus-feels-like-something-out-of-a-sci-fi-novel-heres-how-writers-have-imagined-similar-scenarios/2020/02/27/7dc59386-57f5-11ea-9000-f3cfee23036_story.html

Zoom, zoom, zoom ...

Take a Virtual Drive in a Mars Rover

BY Emily Long (Jun 2020)



If you've ever aspired to be a real-life Mark Watney ["Martian" novel by Weir] — collecting samples of rocks and dirt on Mars—now is your chance. With NASA's AI4Mars project, you can take a virtual trip around the red planet in the Curiosity rover.

The simulation, designed by a team at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, asks users to help classify Martian terrain. You'll label images taken by Curiosity from Mars' surface (as sand or bedrock, for example), and scientists will use the crowdsourced data to train a future rover to better navigate around dangerous obstacles.

Mars rovers have a tendency to get stuck in the sand—and sometimes aren't able to get themselves out—so the project aims to make rovers like self-driving cars. In order to explore space without a human crew, the vehicles have to know "where it's safe to drive, land, sleep and hibernate."

Continue reading at:

<https://lifehacker.com/take-a-virtual-drive-in-a-mars-rover-1844137274>

Some of my best friends are Aliens ...

Alien Movies On Netflix That Should Be Required Viewing

Netflix promo video (11 minutes)

Humans will always be curious about whether or not we have galactic neighbors, and if they would be our friends or foes. Maybe the answers are in the stars or in secret government files. Until we know the truth, we have some great movies on Netflix about alien visitors. Minor spoilers ahead!

See video at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNFTeIx6ySk>

Back to the Moon

Tiny, simple moon rovers will bring cubesat science to the lunar surface

By Meghan Bartels (Jun 2020)

Cubesats have revolutionized orbital science, and a roving counterpart may soon do the same for surface science, beginning on the moon.

Next year, as part of NASA's lunar delivery orchestrated by the Pennsylvania-based company Astrobotic, the agency will launch a small rover to begin that revolution.

Continue reading at:

<https://www.space.com/cubesat-model-for-moon-rovers.html>

We'd love to hear your thoughts on the above topics and with your OK, we may publish them!

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

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