

# WSFA JOURNAL MARCH-APRIL 2013

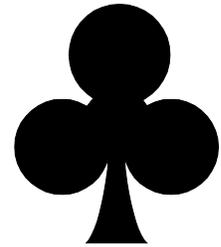


## Relationship of Two Clubs

The First Friday meeting of February, 2-1-13 was called to order 21:18 by Prez Barry. John brought out the Diet Crystal Pepsi. Sam L read the minutes. The BSFS contest is for writers 18 and older, live in MD or go to school in MD. Steve sent in about money. Last remaining CD coming due, will drop money into checking account until I can find a place to put it that pays more than the 0.X% that we're getting now. New person said does financials so can help. Cathy said as a 501c3 there may be limits in what we can invest. Trustee Bob said elections are in May. Let a trustee know if you want to run. There are three slots for award committee. The club discussed the trustees' role. And that they approve the hotel contract.

Prez asked about intertivities. Sam said Eva was the chair, but we could appoint a vice-chair. Several WSFAns went to the SFWA at a coffee shop. Brandon Sanderson will do a signing in Ann Arundal. Upcoming cons include Farpoint, Mysticon with Peter Davidson swapping for Sylvester McCoy. In Roake, VA. said Cathy. It marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Doctor Who* <but he's a time traveler, he could celebrate it anytime>. BBC America will be doing specials on each of the doctors. Elspeth said NASA had today as day of remembrance for Columbia. In July BBC will celebrate *Blake's 7*, with release of the DVDs. Steve watched them through the poor man's bitTorrent (old videotapes copied from TV). *WSFA Journal* said he sent journals to webmaster in Dec, but not up. Cathy approved last two. Meet up has 145 people. Lost one, gained one. Talk SF will discuss Wheel of Time

Capclave Present is present. BSFS doing writing contest and will announce winner at Capclave. Will do publicity around it. Good for relationship of two clubs <if we're playing relationship cards, shouldn't they be two hearts?> She has bookmarks and rack cards for Capclave. We have guests and hotel. If you can find a lower hotel rate, you will still count as long as member of the convention. No penalty. With our GoH, rooms will be going fast, so if you are thinking of going, get a room now. Can always put it on ebay later, said Mike. Or sublet it. Bob thought our room block went up to 100. Only two suites in whole hotel. Sugarloaf has one this year. In 2014 we have both in the contract.



Capclave 2014, Bill said wife said he can't do 2015 too. Nothing to report. Contract signed. Sharon Nicole will do bookmarks and will be ready by 2013 Capclave so can stuff flyers in bags. Bill said, will have over 100 items at Capclave this year, maybe not including readings. American Library Association recognized *Drowned Cities* as was one of top 10 YAs. Aletha Kontis can't make it due to NY Comicon; Cathy said the Javits Center won't book in advance so we can't know when Comicon will be.



Only old business is a meeting swap. Several people are going to Boskone. There was no new business.

Cynthia Moreno was here for a third meeting. She is a former member of BSFS and ran many consutes for many cons. Now getting back into scifi.

Small Press Award: Cathy said submission in open. Members can nominate a story to the small press award. Short story or novelette. Deadline for voting is the first week in August.

Announcements: Madigans have room for rent. Laurel was evacuated but not where Elspeth lives. Steve said Elisha von Nickles was rescued from her car in the flood.

Meeting unanimously adjourned at 21:54.

Attendance: Cathy Green, Michael Ikeda, Elsepth Kovar, Bill Lawhorn, Bob Macintosh, Candy and John Madigan, Walter Miles, Sarah Mitchell, Barry and Judy Newton, Mark Roth, George Shaner, Steve Smith, Mike Taylor, Michael Walsh, Ivy Yap, Madeleine Yeh, Cynthia Moreno, and Sam Hogan.



#### Top SF April Fools Jokes that are Real

1. Turning the U.S.S. Enterprise into a pizza cutter. This really exists!
2. J. J. Adams mixes up Star Wars with Star Trek when talking about the sf movie series he directs. What? How can the same person direct both? Isn't that like Grant running the armies of both the Union and the Confederacy???
3. Boston fans named their convention Boskone after the bad guys in a SF series, allowing a rival convention to declare themselves the good guys, Arisia.
4. The magazine *Analog* is now available online, making it digital.
5. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* was renamed *HP and the Sorcerer's Stone* because Americans would think it was boring old philosophy. Does that mean that Peter Brett's *The Painted Man* was renamed *The Warded Man* because Americans would think it was about painting? Are Americans that stupid? Yes!

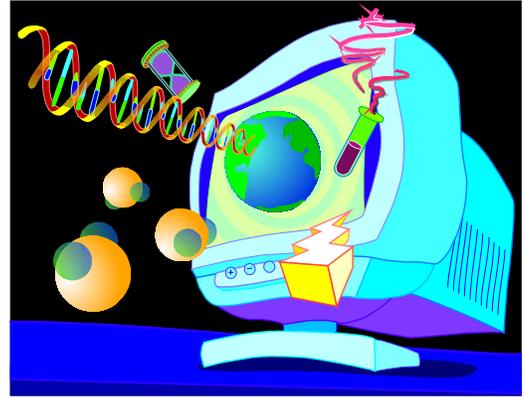
#### There Are People Who Will Kill You

The February Third Friday 2-15-13 began with enough people for a quorum but not all were members. Sam S declared this was not quorum so no call to order at 9:17. The treasurer's report was sent "I've closed out the <bank>CD; I figure we can do better than 0.X% (!) interest. I used the money from the CD to open new, free, accounts at <bank>. While the <other bank>i accounts get a tiny amount (pennies) of interest, they have many "mystery fees" that siphon off small but annoying (from a bookkeeping standpoint) amounts. As we're going to Square for our credit card processing, we don't need a special "merchant account". To simplify the bookkeeping a bit, I've opened a "WSFA Press" account. Money for books can go directly into and out of this account."

Bill Lawhorn had lunch with Sean Wallace and talked WSFA Press business. The contract with George was and with the person doing the illustrations were signed. Things are progressing. Sam S. explained George RR Martin is Capclave's GOH and our publishing arm, the WSFA Press is doing a book, a reprint of *The Skin Trade*, a werewolf story. Sam S. said Capclave membership is already up to 120, while normally we have 80. The cap is 650 Bill said, this is what the hotel allows. Print run will be 500 copies of a limited signed edition and another 500 trade. Jimmy asked about whether there will be more programming. Bill said we are taking all the rooms except Boardroom, will have 95 – 110 program items, not including readings. Last year 70-80. Bill has growing list of programming ideas. Bill sent out 99 invites for programming 56 responded, just 5 or 6 nos, 5-6 maybes. There will be the usual suspects. He mailed letter to Howard Waldrop, retro programming by mail for him. Sam S. said we're looking for people to volunteer and help. Jimmy asked about Norm Sherman of the Drabblecast. He lives in Baltimore and there are people who will kill you if he not invited. Killing is strong, maybe maiming said someone. <Remember, if you kill him, you have to do his job.>

For 2014, Bill continued Paolo has nothing available for a book and Holly Black is not sure. Bill is working on a backup plan. Work in that respect... program ideas coming in. Some respondents are coming up with ideas. There are ideas in his phone. Evernote.

Committee to talk SF will do podcasts, said Jimmy based on his Synthetic Voices podcast. Listen and discuss. Ernest asked, would it be possible to put somewhere what we will be discussed. John said he does as Meetup coordinator. Ernest asked about website. Ernest expressed some interest in oversight of the site. It is a Wordpress site so fairly easy. John M. expressed interest too. Jimmy said in regard to the discussion schedule, it is fixed. First Friday is F&SF and third Friday it is Synthetic Voices. Ernest suggested making it more visible on places where people can see it. Jimmy said usually puts it on Meetup but forgot. Carolyn offered to manage the website if simple.



John said 147 people in the meetup. Add one lose one. Slow gain. Bill said he started a Capclave 2013 event on Facebook. 37 people said they are going. The activities committee listed a showing of Metropolis. BSFS magazine panel. Fast Forward has interview with Scalzi. Library of Congress What If. Jimmy said Pseudopod, a horror podcast is having contest. 500 words. Maryland Amateur Writers contest is run by BSFS. The winner will be announced at Capclave. Galaxy's Edge is a new online magazine by Phoenix Pick, a mix of classic reprints and new.

We are doing a meeting swap next month as well. 5<sup>th</sup> Friday in March. Candy and John offered to host.

Here for his first meeting is Matt Leistikar, in the Navy. He wants to become an author and has written four manuscripts. Looking for people interested in writing. Likes Anne McCaffrey. Fan of George Martin, David Brin, Brandon Sanderson, and Jesus. <I have never typed that grouping before> Having a writers group improves your chances of getting published.

Bill Mayhew is here. Chuck Devine is here. Penguins are learning guerilla tactics. He mentioned Vulcan Ambassador Chuck's adventures. Chuck is learning Facebook.

Announcements. Ernest said, science fiction is for old people. Kathi said Arlington Planetarium is doing public education in sciences, including a weekend themed on evolution on Charles Darwin, with full dome show. March 15-17. Anyone can come. Suggested donation \$5.

Candy decided to join the 21<sup>st</sup> century so has a Facebook page for hourglass creation. But unlikely to give Spartacus his own page, although considering how much I update about him, it makes sense.

Meeting dissolved but not unanimously.

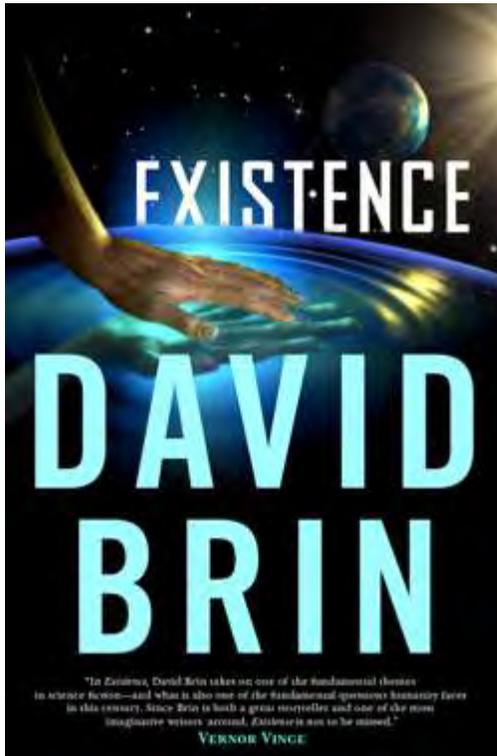
Attendance: Alisha Brown, Bill Lawhorn, Ernest Lilley, Candy and John Madigan, Sarah Mitchell, Kathi Overton, Jimmy Rogers, Laura Somerville, Teresa Telesco, Ivy Yap, Bill Mayhew, Robert E Howard, Christel Gesterling, Matthew Leistikar, Vulcan Ambassador Chuck (who has the same handwriting as) Chuck Divine.

No minutes for March First Friday as the Secretary was in Mexico with the whales.

### Review of David Brin's Existence

Reviewed by Samuel Lubell

I like big idea science fiction and this book had ideas in spades. Yes it has flaws, there are too many viewpoint characters and the dolphin/Uplift plotline went on too long if it was just a nod to his most popular series but was dropped 2/3rds of the way into the book. The jump of a couple of decades means the effort of the rich super-elites to reimpose feudalism and the confrontation between the first two alien objects found are both summarized rather than shown even though most of the previous pages had been devoted to setting up these conflicts. Still, the ideas carry the book.



Basically, humans discover alien objects. The first, studied with much publicity promises eternal life and what seems like a galactic community until the object declares the races never met each other. The stone is actually a chain mail letter since civilizations tend to destroy themselves, but can upload members of their species into these chain mail letters and send them off into space. Meanwhile another stone, studied by a secret Chinese group says the first stone is populated by liars.

Is the reason why we don't hear signals from space because the civilizations don't last long? Was the Enlightenment really a bad idea requiring the efforts of the richest (and therefore presumably the wisest) to rule the rest of us? What is the best way for human society to continue after the invention of artificial intelligent robots? Books like this one make the reader think, long after the names of the characters have faded.

### Put Up the Program and Flee

The March Third Friday 3-15-13 meeting opened with Prez Barry here, 21:16. The secretary had no minutes. "I was assured there had been a meeting." Sam L. read a letter about Keith Olson's death. Steve said we have less and less money as the meeting goes on. Steve is writing away checks. Trustees are looking for candidates for slate, next meeting they must announce. The election in the first Friday in May.

All journals from 2012 are now up. Barry said he had an old con report for people to look at. Gayle for WSFA Press is collecting money for George for book, will be mailing out a contract. Artist is working on cover. We have electronic copy of the text. We will have it in time for Capclave. 500 signed and numbered and 500 trade. Brian asked about preordering. Need a solid estimate. Then will have preorders for a limited number for Capclave members, can't sell until Capclave. Committee is looking at options for 2014.

Electronic media. There is a store up for WSFA Press. Sam L. asked about the officers page. Officers can post to announcements page. Jimmy asked if could get committee people. Bill said to let him post. Agreed. Gayle said we have several new members to Facebook page. People should be careful about not giving spammers permission to post. 146 people on Meetup.



Capclave present. Mike said we are running ahead of last year in numbers. Barry thought near 167 people. Membership list up at Capclave website. Brian asked what happens if we hit maximum fire marshal limits? Mike said first come, first serve. Someone asked about students and military, the wording makes it seem can only buy at site. Paul said he modified it. Gayle said for people to check. Bill said to Paul participants aren't being listed. Bill said programming is progressing. Good crew of people. Bill promised to get program up sooner than Lunacon did. Program participants have to go into password protected database. Jimmy asked when. Bill said he plans to have initial program up before Worldcon, over a month before. Then he will be on the road

for three week. The secretary asked for clarification, “Your plan is to put the program up and then flee?” Bob said at the moment our room block does not include double beds. If you want double, get the cheaper AAA rate. Paul said we have a link for personal plan. If you select 4 people it says no rooms available.

Bill said opportunity to talk. Talked to Bob and will check out Sequoia room where will do workshops. Waiting for conformation before will put workshops up. Mira Crawford will do writing sex scenes workshops. Alan Wold will do his traditional writing workshop. Brian Shaw will do a writing military workshop. Neil Clarke is in discussion for a publishing workshop. Also, talking to Mindy about one. 2013 is looking for programming ideas. Things are progressing. More discussion with hotel. Make sure don't have issues. Guests are good and might have another one. Paolo Bacigalupi just finished draft of *Water Knife*. He tweets with Holly back and forth.

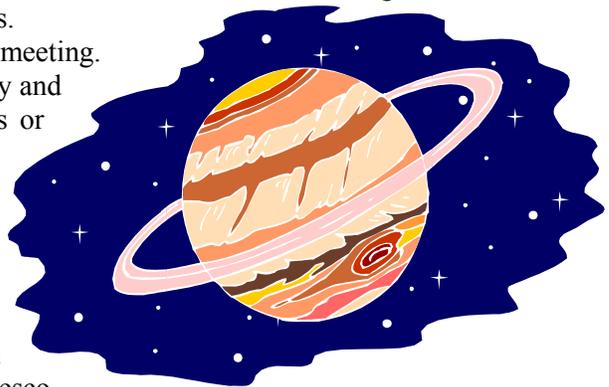
Talk SF will discuss podcasts. 70% of podcasted stories are reprints but growing number are originals. Literary award: Paul said as of now have Z stories. Members have the rest of month to nominate. Any member of WSFA can nominate one story. Authors can nominate one and publishers three. Deadline is April 5<sup>th</sup>. The story has to be published by a small press in the previous calendar year. Committee will narrow the list to to 5 – 10, members of WSFA will wait till the last day and vote. Preferential ballot. Stories are sent to an administrator who removes the author's name and identification information. Bill, “So Carolyn is a stripper.” Jimmy said BSFS Maryland amateurs writers contest 1,000 – 15,000 words. July 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. \$250 first prize. Winner will be announced at Capclave. Top five will read at Balticon.

Old business: 5<sup>th</sup> Friday at Madigans. New business: none. Here for his first meeting is Sandeep Nair. He now has own business so have time to do things like this. Found out about us through Meetup and emailed John. He was surprised to see so many people here since only four signed up on Meetup. Lately has been reading a lot of Neal Asher, Vernor Vinge. Lots of online forums. He is from Canada, been in the area for 11 years.

Eugenia Martin, married to Ken. This is her 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Announcements: Sam Pierce is back in the area. Charity and Jimmy and others are entering Pseudopods 500 words or less contest. Top three will be purchased by the podcast.

Meeting unanimously adjourned 21:55

Attendance: Drew Bittner, Ken Bryer, Paul Haggerty, Charity Helton, Bill Lawhorn, Brian Lewis, Sam Lubell, Bob Macintosh, Sarah Mitchell, Barry and Judy Newton, Jimmy Rogers, Judy and Sam Scheiner, Steve Smith, Gayle Surette, Teresa Telesco, Michael Walsh, Ivy Yap, Eugenia Martin, Sandeep Nair, and Sam Pierce.



### **‘Every age gets the art it deserves’ - Science Fiction: History, Background and Definitions**

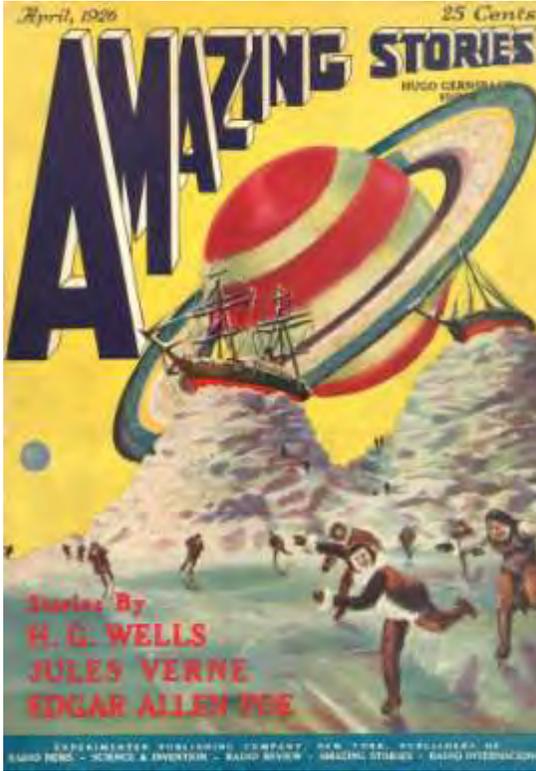
By Victor Grech, Consultant Pediatrician (Cardiology) and Associate Professor of Paediatrics, University of Malta, Clare Thake-Vassallo, Senior Lecturer, Translation and Interpreting Studies, University of Malta, and Ivan Callus, Associate Professor and Head, English Language Dept, University of Malta.

It would be logical to commence this essay by attempting to identify the approximate locus of SF within the general corpus of literature as perceived by the academy. Fiction might here be seen as having four main categories: canonical fiction (the classics), serious fiction that strives to become canonical, plain fiction (best sellers or general works) and junk fiction: popular and gauche fiction that includes mysteries, thrillers, westerns, romances, fantasy, and SF.<sup>1</sup> It has been argued that so-called junk fiction is as rewarding for its followers as the more serious genres, as junk fiction too can be complexly self-

<sup>1</sup> Thomas J. Roberts, *An Aesthetics of Junk Fiction* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990).

referential, richly interconnected and intertextual,<sup>2</sup> taking on great depth and meaning when interpreted in the light of a much larger arrangement of interrelated stories, with all of the associated conventions and clichés, transcending a simplicity that is apparent only to the inexperienced. We SF readers ‘do not listen for that melody. We listen for the variations’.<sup>3</sup> And conversely, ‘[m]ost of what seems inexcusably unintelligible in popular fiction is crystal clear to those who have learned how to read it’.<sup>4</sup>

SF was initially named thus in 1851 by William Wilson. He suggested a new form of fiction that he called ‘science-fiction’, a literature that would interweave the revealed truths of science with fiction, prefiguring Gernsback’s perceived role of SF as a science teaching approach that will be discussed later.<sup>5</sup> Actually defining SF is an endlessly challenging and disputatious task, one that has been deemed impossible since SF ‘is the literature of change, it changes even as one tries to define it’.<sup>6</sup> Thus the slogan on the masthead of the first issue of *Amazing Stories*, one of the earliest SF magazines: ‘Extravagant Fiction Today, Cold Fact Tomorrow’.<sup>7</sup>



Any determined attempt at defining this genre is problematised as any definition may instantly invite contention from critics. A reasonable and widely accepted definition of SF from the multitude available is that of Darko Suvin wherein he posits that SF is ‘the literature of cognitive estrangement’,<sup>8</sup> a literature with a wide ‘spectrum or spread of literary subject-matter, running from the ideal extreme of exact recreation of the author’s empirical environment to exclusive interest in a strange newness, a novum’.<sup>9</sup> Suvin elaborates further, stating that ‘SF takes off from a fictional (“literary”) hypothesis and develops it with extrapolating and totalizing (“scientific”) rigor’.<sup>10</sup> Suvin ably sums up his argument that ‘SF is, then a literary genre whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author’s empirical environment’.<sup>11</sup>

Suvin’s novum is derived from Bloch’s critical history of utopia, *The Principle of Hope* (1986), wherein Bloch, in one of the great works of the human spirit, contends that a philosophy of hope must stand on the front of the world process, a front that is related to newness, to the new and to the novum.<sup>12</sup> Jameson’s influential *Archaeologies of the Future* (2005) further avers that SF proposes a ‘minimal formulation of Utopian demands which might somehow retain effective universality’.<sup>13</sup> The utopian and communal aspect of SF has been additionally elaborated in Molyan’s, *Demand the Impossible* (1986), who elegantly states that ‘in the fragmented openness enabled by the science fiction narrative, the possibilities of the social revolution are symbolically explored and reiterated’.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, it has been demonstrated that the SF genre reached a number of stories sufficient to achieve intertextuality by the early 1870s. See Darko Suvin, *Victorian Science Fiction in the UK: The Discourses of Knowledge and of Power* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1983), p. 389.

<sup>3</sup> Roberts, *An Aesthetics of Junk Fiction* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990), p. 166.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

<sup>5</sup> William Wilson, *A Little Earnest Book upon a Great Old Subject* (London: Darton, 1851), pp. 137-8.

<sup>6</sup> Tom Shippey at the World SF Meeting, Dublin 1979, quoted in Fred Pohl, ‘The Study of Science Fiction: A Modest Proposal’, *Science Fiction Studies*, 24 (1997), 11-16 (p. 11).

<sup>7</sup> Hugo Gernsback, ‘A New Sort of Magazine’, *Amazing Stories*, April 1926, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Darko Suvin, ‘On the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre’, *College English*, 34 (1972), 372-382 (p. 372).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 373.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 374.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 375.

<sup>12</sup> Bloch Ernst, *The Principle of Hope*, trans. by N. Plaice and others, 3 vols (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1986), I, p. 18.

<sup>13</sup> Fredric Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future* (London: Verso, 2005), p. 172.

<sup>14</sup> Tom Molyan, *Demand the Impossible* (New York: Methuen, 1986), p. 75.

In brief, then, SF is a genre that is characterised by the postulation of a *novum*, and details the logical consequences of such a novum, allowing readers to conceptualise a set of utopian or dystopian circumstances wherein the real and postulated realities are consistent, but where the borders of actuality have been transgressed.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, **SF is Hegelian, in Hegel's terms, believing that the rational alone is real, and the real is rational, as it is SF's overriding goal to attempt to be logical, with outcomes expressed in solely rational categories,<sup>16</sup> while partaking of Campbell's monomyth, wherein a protagonist sallies forth into a 'region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won'.<sup>17</sup>**



**SF constitutes a contemporary type of myth as the conventional 'myth is diametrically opposed to the cognitive approach since it conceives human relations as fixed, and supernaturally determined', unlike quotidian life which definitely is not.<sup>18</sup> The mimesis of reality is therefore an important component of SF, a modern-day myth<sup>19</sup> that allows readers to identify with the characters and the story, with a scientific premise 'which, according to Aristotle, must be plausible rather than necessarily true'.<sup>20</sup>**

If we were to define by example, typical central elements in SF narratives would include protagonists who have been lifted out of their quotidian life to another locus in space and/or time, or who have been imbued with special attributes such as being scientists (not necessarily sane) or possessing special powers. Technological objects or devices may also feature and these may be useful, or conversely, threatening to the protagonist, or to society/humanity or possibly even to the entire universe. An exotic setting may also be depicted, and this may have been reached through space transportation or through time travel, conceivably even by the ready expedient of cryogenic suspension or some other similar plot device.<sup>21</sup> An exotic encounter with an unusual being may also be introduced, and this may be a special human, alien, android, robot, cyborg or artificial intelligence or any **combination of the above, with SF, as it were, acting as a crucible for the reader's reflexive wish fulfilment.** An overt or covert Faustian thirst for knowledge and power is also often integrated and stories are frequently a bravura, comprised of a pastiche of borrowed elements from pulp, gothic, detective, horror, school, sport, romance, adventure, myth, legend and fantasy<sup>22</sup>. In these ways, **SF clearly fits into Todorov's definition of a unique genre in that**

[g]enre represents, precisely, a structure, a configuration of literary properties, an inventory of options [...] It merely permits us to establish the existence of a certain rule by which the work in question – and many others as well – are governed.<sup>23</sup>

SF was born in the pulps, that ingenious medium invented by Munsey in 1896.<sup>24</sup> Gernsback, inventor and SF pulp magazine pioneer fervently believed that stories of superscience should primarily teach, prophesy and illuminate the public with upcoming scientific advances, while simultaneously fostering interest in the sciences. He is popularly



<sup>15</sup> This concept is amplified in Darko Suvin, 'On What Is and Is Not an SF Narration; With a List of 101 Victorian Books That Should Be Excluded From SF Bibliographies', *Science Fiction Studies*, 5 (1978), 45-57.

<sup>16</sup> Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, trans. by J. Sibree (London: George Bell & Sons, 1881).

<sup>17</sup> Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 30.

<sup>18</sup> Suvin, 'On the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre', p. 375.

<sup>19</sup> For a depiction of SF as the modern mythology, see Patrician S. Warrick and others (eds.), *Science Fiction: Contemporary Mythology, The Sfwa-Sfra Anthology* (London: Harpercollins, 1978).

<sup>20</sup> Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future*, p. 90.

<sup>21</sup> Many of these discrete tropes have been individually engaged in critical works. See, for example George Slusser and others, eds. *Worlds Enough and Time: Explorations of Time in Science Fiction and Fantasy* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002).

<sup>22</sup> It is worth pointing out that SF 'is characteristically cast in the Gothic or post-Gothic mould', a fact noted by several critics. Brian Aldiss, *Billion Year Spree: The True History of Science Fiction* (London: Corgi, 1975), p. 8.

<sup>23</sup> Tzvetan Todorov, *The Fantastic: A structural approach to a literary genre*, trans. by Richard Howard (New York: Cornell University Press, 1975), p. 141.

<sup>24</sup> Edward James and Farah Mendlesohn eds., 'Foreword', *The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. xvi.

known as the founding father of American SF, having created and edited the world's first SF magazine and is also 'ritually vilified' for his overdramatisation of the genre.<sup>25</sup>

Hence, Gernsback's *Wonder Stories: The Magazine of Prophetic Fiction* predicted television, tape recording, microfilm, solar energy, atomic weapons, fluorescent lighting, plastics, synthetic fabrics, stainless steel, hydroponics, juke boxes and many others in one of his own stories in 1911, along with various gadget stories.<sup>26</sup> This is not to say that all SF predictions become true, as while hindsight is always 20/20, prediction is invariably myopic, as admonished by Hegel,

[e]very individual is a child of his time; so philosophy too is its own time apprehended in thoughts. It is just as absurd to fancy that a philosophy can transcend its contemporary world as it is to fancy that an individual can overleap his own age.<sup>27</sup>

Hegel exaggerates by claiming that 'a philosophy' such as SF can never prefigure the future, as the single example given above to which we have deliberately limited ourselves clearly shows.

It was by way of these cheap pulps that SF began to emerge as a self-conscious genre, despite the repeatedly recycled clichéd stories,<sup>28</sup> and

[i]mplicit in many stories is the "manifest destiny" of the human race [...] mankind is justified in subjugating lesser [...] breeds [...] if science fiction is to be considered [...] a means of opening mankind to the wonders of the universe.<sup>29</sup>

This foregrounds perhaps the most important function of SF, a point that will be raised in more detail later, that 'is to neutralise the future, to remove the natural fear that humanity feels for the unknown', to dispel our trepidations with regard to the future and to replace it with upbeat utopian visions,<sup>30</sup> where the utopian 'contemporary triad of race, class and gender replaces Moore's old triad of greed, pride and hierarchy'.<sup>31</sup> In this way, SF's potential for the prediction of future developments and what they might mean for humanity alleviates the fear of what changes the future will inevitably impose on our species.

<to be continued>

<sup>25</sup> Roger Luckhurst, 'The Many Deaths of Science Fiction: A Polemic', *Science Fiction Studies*, 21 (1994), 35-50 (p. 40).

<sup>26</sup> Hugo Gernsback, 'Ralph 124C 41+', *Modern Electrics*, April 1911-March 1912.

<sup>27</sup> Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, 'Preface', *Philosophy of Right*, trans. by T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952).

<sup>28</sup> For a comprehensive review of this period, see Everett Franklin Bleiler and Richard Bleiler, *Science-Fiction: The Gernsback Years* (Ashland: Kent State University Press, 1998).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 'Introduction', p. xv.

<sup>30</sup> James Gunn, *Inside Science Fiction: Essays on Fantastic Literature* (San Bernardino: The Borgo Press, 1992), p. 152.

<sup>31</sup> Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future*, p. 13.