

SIGMA

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Winston Science Fiction 1952-1960

Joe Coluccio

In the not so distant past in a galaxy perilously close at hand, a group of junior high and high school librarians graced the shelves of the fiction section with thirty-seven glorious science fiction adventures published by the Winston Company of Philadelphia, PA. In those “Happy Days,” you could not perceive the wisp of a whisper of the concept deemed “young adult fiction.” In any case, the point was moot regarding science fiction. Anything SF was considered by the wide world of literature as childish. The Winston Series was displayed and labeled as “juvenile science fiction.” The covers were enough to amaze even the most staid, grown-up heart. They gave a serious boost to my burgeoning explorations in imagination.

The Alex Schomburg illustrated end papers contained in most of the Winston books still pluck at my heart strings with a lingering thrum.



There had been juvenile science fiction hardcovers before the Winston Series. The Tom Swift generations (Sr. and Jr.) were in publication from 1910 well into the 50's and 60's. Robert A Heinlein's first juvenile “Rocket Ship Galileo” was published in 1947. It, more or less, rejuvenated the sub-genre and cleared the way for the Winston juveniles and Asimov's Lucky Starr (1952).

The Winston Series, with exciting cover art and SF material written by SF authors, has become very collectible. I have purchased 36 of the 37 volumes over the last forty or so years. Only Ben Bova's “The Star Conquerors” which is very rare, too expensive and the least juvenile of the lot has eluded me.

What follows, in what serves as Part 1 of a “who knows how long” series concerning “juvenile science fiction,” are the facts and a couple images.

Authors who need no introduction to SF fans

Arthur C Clarke

(1952) **Islands in the Sky** (Cover Alex Schomburg),

Lester del Rey

(1952) **Marooned on Mars** (cover Paul Urban)

(1953) **Attack from Atlantis** (cover Kenneth S Fagg)

(1954) **Step to the Stars** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

(1956) **Mission to the Moon** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

Jack Vance

(1953) **Vandal of the Void** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

Donald A Wollheim

(1954) **The Secret of Saturn's Rings** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

(1954) **Secret of the Martian Moons** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

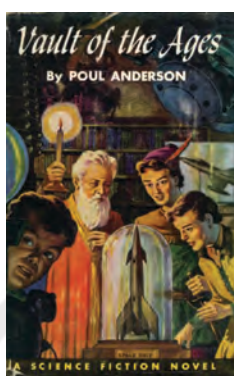
(1959) **The Secret of the Ninth Planet** (Cover James Heugh)

Poul Anderson

(1952) **Vault of the Ages** (Cover Paul Orben)

Ben Bova

(1959) **The Star Conquerors** (Cover Mel Hunter)



Likely lesser known SF authors

Raymond F Jones

(1952) **Son of the Stars** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

(1953) **Planet of Light** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

(1958) **The Year When Stardust Fell** (Cover James Heugh)

Alan E Nourse

(1954) **Trouble on Titan** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

Robert W Lowndes

(1953) **Mystery of the Third Mine** (cover Kenneth S Fagg)

Chad Oliver

(1952) **Mists of Dawn** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

Writers in plume clothing

Erik Van Lhin (pen name)

For Lester del Rey

(1953) **Battle on Mercury** (cover Kenneth S Fagg)

Philip St. John (pen name)

for Lester Del Ray

(1952) **Rocket Jockey** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

(1954) **Rockets to Nowhere** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

Kenneth Wright (pen name)

for Lester Del Rey

(1953) **The Mysterious Planet** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

Evan Hunter (pen name)

for Salvatore Albert Lombino better known as Evan Hunter, even better known as Ed Mc Bain of 87th Precinct Fame)

(1952) **Find the Feathered Serpent** (Cover Henry Sharp)

Richard Marston (pen name)

for Salvatore Albert Lombino better known as Evan Hunter, even better known as Ed Mc Bain of 87th Precinct Fame)

(1953) **Rocket to Luna** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

(1953) **Danger Dinosaurs** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

Philp Latham (pen name)

for Robert S Richardson, an American astronomer who wrote scripts for the Captain Video television program, and produced ten books on Astronomy

(1952) **Five Against Venus** (Cover Virgil Finlay)

(1953) **Missing Men of Saturn** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

Milton Lesser

A writer of many mystery and SF novels who legally adopted the name Stephen Marlowe in the 1950's)

(1952) **Earthbound** (Cover Peter Poulton)

(1953) **The Star Seekers** (Cover Paul Calle)

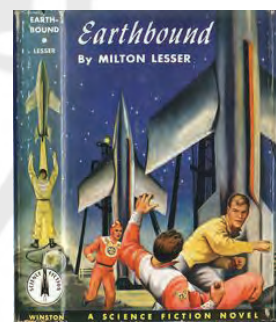
(1960) **Stadium Beyond the Stars** (Cover Mel Hunter)

(1961) **Spacemen, Go Home** (Cover Virgil Finlay)

Eric North (pen name)

for Charles Bernard Cronin, an Australian Writer, born in England 1884)

(1955) **The Ant Men** (Cover Paul Blaisdell)



The rest of the authors

Paul Capon

A UK writer who worked for many years as a film and tv production editor. He wrote 36 novel in the science fiction detective and children's stories.

(1953) **The World At Bay** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

Paul V. Dallas

(1956) **The Lost Planet** (Cover Alex Schomburg)

Bryce Walton

A prolific pulp writer under his own and other names. He wrote for the television programs Captain Video and Alfred Hitchcock Presents

(1952) **Sons of the Ocean Deep** (Cover Paul Orben)

Other Winston Works

Anthology

(1954) **The Year After Tomorrow**

eds. Lester del Rey, Cecile Matschat, and Carl Carner, (Cover and interior illus. Mel Hunter)



Science Fact

(1958) **Rockets Through Space**

Lester Del Rey (Cover James Heugh)



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In the future go to the smile.amazon.com page when you shop and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to Parsec.

We appreciate your help.

Science Fiction TV Holidays

During this holiday season, as we approach the new year of 2017 (why aren't we out searching the moons of Jupiter yet?), I started wondering about fictional holidays created from the SF television world. And, no, Seinfeld's Festivus doesn't count, although, quite honestly, it was when I recently watched a rerun of that very funny episode that I began thinking of this editorial's subject.

I think most fans are familiar with the Dr. Who Christmas specials airing the last several years but I thought I'd focus strictly on other SF television and films. I found the following holidays, some of which I'd forgotten.

Star Trek, the original series, aired a first season episode titled "Return of the Archons," which posits the idea of a perfect, emotionless society where, once a year, the *Festival* or *Red Hour* is celebrated. During this festival, every citizen of the planet goes wild, engaging in all manner of consequence-free debauchery, sexual depravity, and violence. Yikes!

On the opposite end of the spectrum, the reimagined series Battlestar Galactica and Caprica celebrated *Eros Day*, which was much like Valentine's Day, full of love, affection, and gift exchanging. Eros was one of the gods who founded the twelve colonies of Kobol. Other holidays created for the series' mythology were *Mars Day* and *Colonial Day*.

Unification Day was part of the Firefly backstory, similar to Independence Day. Unlike our July 4th, however, Unification Day celebrated the victory of the ruling classes.

Many episodes of Babylon 5 featured religion-themed stories, either of Earth or of the many alien cultures depicted on the show. One such religious holiday was the *Brakiri Day of the Dead* celebration, held once every 200 years. This is when deceased family members of the Brakiri race really do return from the afterlife. Can you imagine what a family reunion like that would be like?

The Wookie holiday, *Life Day*, is celebrated in the Star Wars universe and is similar to Christmas. Which brings me to our own time and place in the multiverse. Whatever holidays we celebrate, Christmas, Hanukkah, Mawlid un Nabi, Winter Solstice, Kwanza, Orthodox Christmas, and the many others observed in our own space and time, all reflect goodness, tolerance, and peace. Let's drink to that and hope those positive values can not only be celebrated but achieved!

We at Sigma wish everyone a peaceful and healthy New Year.

Larry



November 2016 Minutes



“Miss Darkness: The Great Short Crime Fiction of Fredric Brown.” This was the raffle bait, er, prize offered this time by President Joe, true to his love of SF as well as noir. The subject of Anthony Boucher, another writer of both SF and crime, came up. Meanwhile, Nils Hammer brought along a newcomer named Ken.

Newcomer James Edmondson, writing as Rex Jameson, is a roboticist who has written such fantasy works as “Lucifer’s Odyssey.” Eric Leif Davin’s “Twilight on Olympus,” a Parsec contest winner, has turned up in a Year’s Best Military and Adventure anthology. Mary Soon Lee has had three poems published, and eight accepted. Larry Ivkovich reported on reaching out to Ralan and Locus to get out word on Confluence.

Kate, bride of Joe, got us to go around and introduce ourselves.

After Mary read a quick poem, then another about a dragon, Larry won the Brown book as we raised \$15. Round about then Diane Turnshek showed up in a skirt that lit up with stars.

Joe proceeded with a Christmas-themed presentation meant to be hopeful in tone. (In fact, I recognized a cover for the novel “Rocket to Luna” by one Richard Marsten. Marsten was, in fact, Ed McBain, yet another writer greatly noted for crime fiction. I always remembered “Rocket” for being vaguely realistic while sneaking in the hint of a possibility of plant life on the moon.) He started off by showing us a commercial for Arconic, a corporation spun off from “our” Alcoa, which openly exploited the “Jetsons” theme song. Joe then took us through It’s a Wonderful Life and pointed out to us a crow named Jimmy. Life got an Oscar for special effects and featured a little girl named Zu Zu for a brand of ginger snaps. Joe noted that a specific astronomical formation known as Stephan’s Quintet in the constellation Pegasus, five distinct galaxies

looking packed together, made a crucial appearance at the beginning of Life. Life was based on a Christmas card(!) Its script drew upon such talents, many eventually blacklisted, like Dalton Trumbo and Clifford Odets.

Eric rounded out the meeting by reading to us an anecdote about how the great Shirley Jackson did not exactly receive hometown glory from her newfound fame. After that many of us left for the Christmas party, though I declined due to health.

Our headcount was 20.

Secretary Bill Hall

Nat Youngblood’s 100th Birthday



Wednesday, 28 December 2016, would have been the 100th birthday of Nat Youngblood (1916-2009). Who is Nat Youngblood? From 1963 on into the Nineties, Youngblood contributed four hundred paintings and illustrations to the Pittsburgh Press. However, I know him best for the mural “The Rise of Steel Technology” which used to hang in the great hall at the entrance to Buhl Planetarium.

Most of “Rise” is simple history. However, as it moves from left to right, it travels forward in time, and at the very end it dares to glimpse into the future, with a tall white multi-finned rocketship blazing straight up into a sky dominated by a Saturn-ringed planet, while in the background we see soaring white skyscrapers, no doubt tributes to the architectural freedom afforded by the power of steel. As a kid who grew up considering Buhl to be his secular cathedral, I took to heart the can-do spirit of Youngblood’s prophecy. May this century yet be able to bring some of it into reality.

Bill Hall

Brief Bio - Eric Leif Davin



Margaret St. Clair

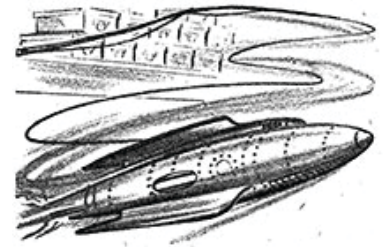


Margaret St. Clair (Neeley), (1911-1995): St. Clair was born in Hutchinson, Kansas. She moved to California and earned an M.A. (Phi Beta Kappa) from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1933. In 1932 she married horticulturist "Eric St. Clair" (George A. Pflaum), who was a laboratory assistant

in the Physics Department at the University of California. With him she operated the St. Clair Rare Bulb Gardens in El Sobrante, California, from 1938-41.

With the end of the war in 1945 she turned to full-time detective writing. Her mystery debut, "Letter from the Deceased," appeared in Detective Story Magazine in March, 1945, even before the war ended. She also published fiction in Dime Mystery Magazine and the men's magazine, Gent. Under the pseudonym "Wilton Hazzard" she published an article in the magazine Indian Stories on "Geronimo - Red Scourge of the Southwest."

She also began writing science fiction, with her debut being the 1946 story, "Rocket to Limbo," in Fantastic Adventures. To introduce this exciting discovery to his readers, editor Ray Palmer



Rocket to Limbo

by Margaret St. Clair

published her photo and an autobiographical mini-essay by her on the inside of the cover. In addition to her extensive resume of science fiction short stories, she published at least eight science fiction novels. The



first of these was the extraordinary Agent of the Unknown (1952) (with its android protagonist), as well as Mistress of Viridis (1956), The Games of Neith (1960), Sign of the Labrys (1963), Message from the Eocene (1964), and The Dolphins of Altair (1967). The latter is centered on ecological issues and is considered among her best. The Dancers of Noyo (1973) is a heady mix of political oppression, androids, Native

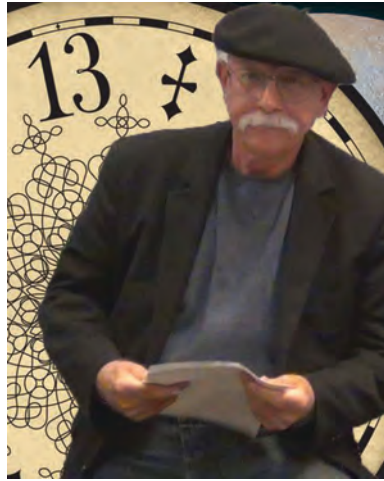
Americans, and post-holocaust California.

From 1946-1960 she published 91 science fiction stories, 70 under her own name and another 21 under the name of "Idris Seabright." She continued to publish many more into the 1980s. The "Idris Seabright" stories appeared mostly in The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, where this "new" author quickly established her own reputation and following. The first story under the Seabright pseudonym, "The Listening Child" (December, 1950), was chosen by Martha Foley of the prestigious Short Story magazine as one of the distinguished short stories of the year. She also published fantasy fiction in Weird Tales between 1950-54. Many of her short stories can be found in the collections Three Worlds of Futurity (1964), Change the Sky and Other Stories (1974), and The Best of Margaret St. Clair (1985).

She was voted a member of the Fantasy Hall of Fame by the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America. As "Eric St. Clair" her husband was also an author of science fiction short stories, as well as children's books.

"Eric Leif Davin's Parsec Short Story Award-winning story, 'Twilight on Olympus' was published in June in the Baen Books anthology, 'The Year's Best Military and Adventure Science Fiction, 2015.' He is also the author of 'The Desperate and the Dead,' available on Amazon and at Barnes & Noble."

President's Column



The future is when?

Thought about time at this time of the year is as confusing as it is appropriate. My old buddies chatter about the eternal now. Academic wonks spell out periods that are sub and divided into manageable chunks of historical integrity. Einstein says, “depends on your location and speed in relationship to the slippery sliding cosmos.” My clock mocks me each morning with a tick following a tock, or is it the other way round?. Physicists calculate formulae and then question time advance and reversal in the experiment. Psychiatrists just plain question. Philosophers remain the fools on the hill. And worst of all cable networks want me to time shift from the schedules of networks that are as strict structured as the Greenwich Mean Time Grid. It’s a wonder I don’t have time for breakfast.

“So,” every person asks, who glimpses at my lifetime collection of books, or sees me reading as the grocery line languishes, or spots a Kindle or an iPhone or a paperback, or an iPad stuck in some pocket or other in my coat, shirt, or pants, “when do you find the time to read?” I used to just “aw, shucks” and scratch the sparse top of my head. But lately, I pause, and say, “I do have a difficult time finding time.” I follow it up with a quote from St. Augustine, which I am sure makes me seem as pious as a tonsured monk wearing a suit of hair at matins, in Latin, the language of my childhood high mass. (I could follow it in the Sunday Missal, honest.) “If no one asks me, I know what it is. If I wish to explain it to him who asks, I do not know.” I will follow with, “It’s true, you know, but I still believe Old Augie’s argument is a cop out” By that time they are scurrying away, proud and glad in their hearts that they have never succumbed to the shivering reading fits.

SF people are thought to be future oriented. I suppose that seems correct. After all H.G. Wells’ Time Traveller stops for eight days in 802,701 AD, then he trundles off to 30,000,000 AD to meet a gigantic centipede-like creature, mounts the time bike for 1000,000,000,000 AD where Crab and Butterfly creatures have inherited the earth, ends up, finally,

on a terminal beach where he disturbs “the Thing” in 1030,000,000,000 AD. Looking forward in a depressing sort of way.

It does seem like the seeds of the future are here in the present. We perceive the past as a string that winds with an unerring aim to an end in our present. But all of that is for the people who run away from us SF reading, outré pondering, out of this world and the next thinking folks. I’m not saying they are wrong, (Why would I be privy to the nature of time?) but I am pointing out here, their worldview is uninteresting. Death by thousands of comfortable notions. It is better not to sleep all that well at night.

IT’S BACK!

21st Annual PARSEC Science Fiction/ Fantasy/Horror Short Story Contest

The theme for the 2017 contest is: **A HIDDEN, UNDERLYING TRUTH.**

Contest opens January 1, 2017 and closes March 31, 2017. There is no fee to enter and all entrants will be notified of the results by June 15th.

Word count for all entries: No more than 3500 words, no minimum.

Contest judges are:

JOSHUA BELLIN – Author of the YA SF duology, *Survival Colony Nine* and *Scavenger of Souls*.

MICHELLE MARKEY-BUTLER – Author of the historical fantasy, *Homegoing*.

THOMAS SWETERLITSCH – Author of the near-future SF thriller, *Tomorrow and Tomorrow*.

Information on submitting and additional details can be found on the Parsec website at:

<https://parsecink.submittable.com/submit>



Parsec Meeting Schedule Saturday, January 14, 2017

Parsec Meeting Topic

"YA Science Fiction: A Contradiction in Terms?"
presented by Joshua David Bellin



Joshua David Bellin writes YA science fiction (though by the time he's finished talking, he might have convinced himself otherwise). To date, his novels include the two-part series *SURVIVAL COLONY 9* (2014) and *SCAVENGER OF SOULS* (2016). A third novel, the YA deep-space adventure/romance *FREEFALL*, is due out in 2017.

Squirrel Hill Branch of the Carnegie Library
Room B - Next to the Rear Entrance
1:30 - 4:30 PM
Come in and introduce yourself
The room is open at noon.

SF AND ROCK - Part Four

Michael Moorcock/Hawkwind – Part 2

Larry Ivkovich

British “space rock” band, Hawkwind, has been recording and performing since 1969. SF and fantasy author Michael Moorcock, a longtime fan and associate of the group, collaborated with them on many occasions, contributing song lyrics on various albums including *Warrior at the Edge of Time* and *Space Ritual*.



The Chronicle of the Black Sword (1985) is Hawkwind's fourteenth studio album with guitarist Dave Brock the only original founding member of the band at that time. However, to paraphrase the saying, the song remained the same. Rather than just a song or two, the entire album is inspired by the saga of Moorcock's Eternal Champion, Elric of Melniboné, and his black sword Stormbringer, and their various future incarnations. It combines guitar-driven hard rock songs such as “Sea King,” “Horn of Destiny,” and “Elric the Enchanter” with the more “space rock” instrumental tunes, “Shade Gate,” and “The Pulsing Cavern,” which incorporate synthesizers and moody ambient effects and rhythms.



Moorcock contributed lyrics to the song “Sleep of a Thousand Tears,” and appeared with the band on some of their live dates supporting the album.

He and Brock worked together over the years on a number of musical projects with Moorcock being a musician as well in his own right, playing guitar and mandolin.

From *The Chronicle of the Black Sword*, the song “Zarozinia” refers to Elric's second wife. She, like Elric's first great love, Cymoril, is an incarnation of the Eternal Consort, usually a tragic figure in the mythos of the Eternal Champion.

The song “Arioch,” refers to one of the Dukes of Hell, the patron deity of Melniboné, who had been summoned to the earthly plane by Elric.

Many of Moorcock's works deal with the forces of Chaos versus those of Order. The song “Chaos Army,” addresses this theme.

The song “Needle Gun,” refers to the weapon of choice of secret agent Jerry Cornelius, who, like Elric, is one of the Eternal Champion incarnations. The gun was a future manifestation of Stormbringer.

Great stuff which still holds up today, even if you're not an Elric or Moorcock fan. You can listen to these songs via the following links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=seBg8h-DlpzQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3YyJVbn0VLI>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6_IRp5fxHA



Fantastic Artist of the Month

Julie Dillon

Julie Dillon has won the Chesley Award for Best Artist 2 times (nominated 4 times), the Hugo Award for Best Artist 3 times, the Locus Award for Best Art Book, and has been nominated for the World Fantasy Award for Best Artist, for her science fiction and fantasy illustration.

At only 36 years old, Dillon has already created an impressive body of work, including images for games, book and magazine covers, trading cards, and musical albums. She lives and works in California.

<http://www.juliedillonart.com/>



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Dues: Full Membership \$15

Associate Membership \$3 (with full member in the same household)

PARSEC is Pittsburgh's premiere organization of science fiction, fantasy and horror. We sponsor an annual conference, workshops for young writers, lectures, and other events that promote a love of the written word and a passion for speculative fiction. Our members include writers, teachers and fans. PARSEC is a 501c3 non-profit corporation.