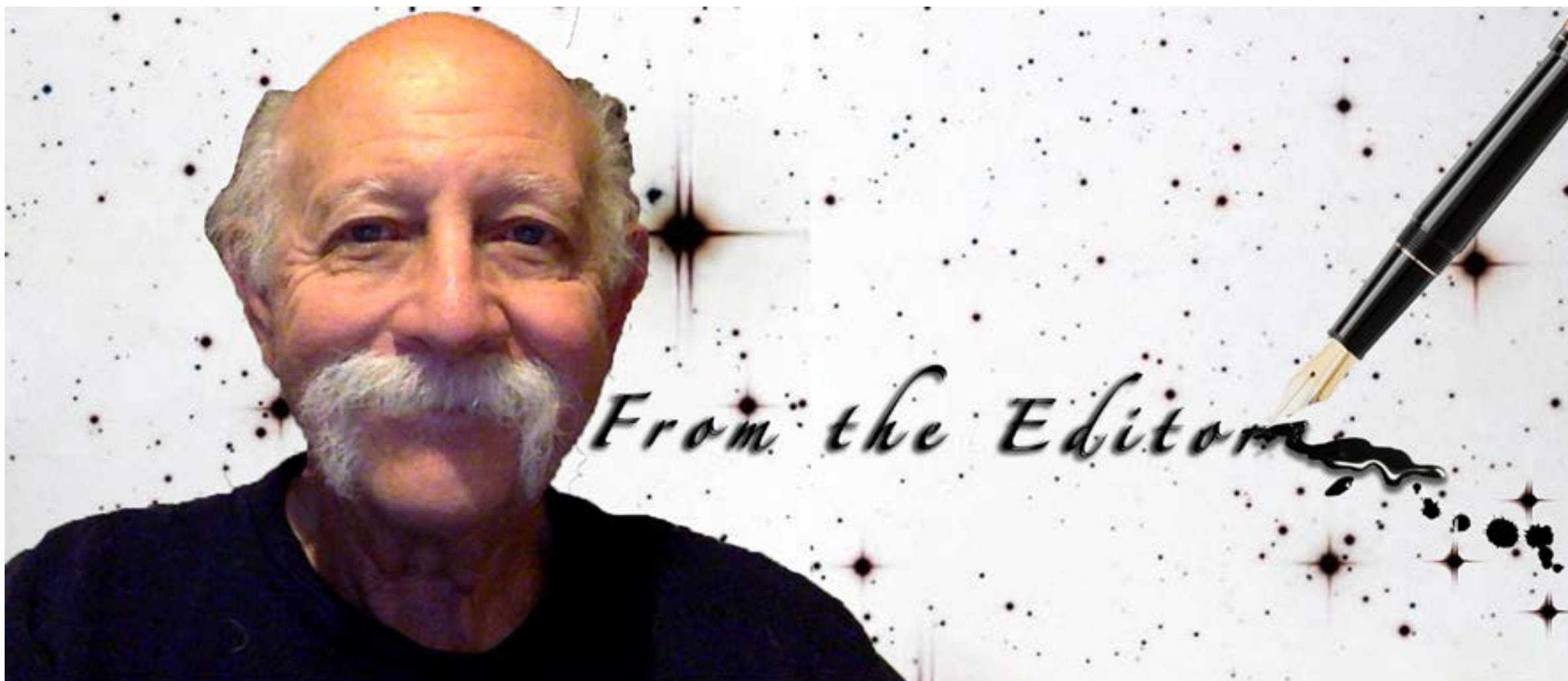




Sigma #429 December 2021





After a good drubbing from life, some "Future Thoughts."

Joe Coluccio ed. Sigma

I attended a school called New Experimental College. North in Denmark on the Limfjord. You can get Limfjord mussels on the local super shelf. I got used to pulling them off the rocky beaches and into a boiling pot. As a body of water, it divides the north tip of Denmark from the south body of Jutland. It more resembles a broad river than the fjords you have seen in photos of Norway.

I will not describe the pedagogical background and/or foreground that New Experimental College demonstrated. It would frighten some, disgust others, and delight a few. It was, however, the freest expression of an education unencumbered by the mucky thinking of institutional teaching in the world.

So it is natural that my mind drifts to the many ways that education in the US fails us. There is all the false stuff about teaching to pass a test to identify a level of what? intelligence? competence? Here was always a godawful idea. Tests have their place but grades based on them should be jettisoned. Grades should be jettisoned.

You can guess how effective the forced memorization of history, dates and number is by your own experience. December 7, 1941, is a day that lived in infamy not forever, but for a time. 1492, 1620, 1918, 1929, 6.02×10^{23} , 2.718.

Lucky you can't remember those textbooks full of dull history, dodgy language, dreaded physics and deadly math edited and published by companies backed by educators and parents promulgating the whim of some insincere ideology or other.

Sweep all that away.

All learning is based on telling stories. So why not tell stories? To paraphrase Elie Weasel's story "Why," asked someone of the rabbi, "Did God make people?" He answered, "Because he loves stories"

The first and most important stage of education after having bit of fun telling and reading stories to very young students and providing them a sense of play with numbers is to show them how to educate themselves.

High on the list should be memory training.

A number of years ago I exceeded the number of points on my PA driver's license (never mind I deserved it) and had to retest or face

a time taking public transportation. At the same time, I was under the thrall of some memory techniques. I decided to try the process while learning the intricacies of the Pa driver’s manual. On the day of the test, I was recovering from a bout of pneumonia. Getting to the floor of the State Office building was the first test. I was a sorry, bedraggled sight stepping out of the elevator. I took the test and gave it to the official at the head of the room to grade. He looked up at me and said (which I still doubt) he had never had someone answer every question correctly. Although I still felt like a useless discarded rag, pneumonia and all the memory techniques helped me to become a demon on the road once again.

Equally high should be math “tricks,” which are all based on the way math works, hence they are not really “tricks” but are a powerful means to understand the underpinnings and become comfortable with the manipulation of numbers and operations we perform. You don’t have to have a pain in your brain every time someone puts a formula before you, or phase-out to another level of existence when some number buzzing goes on in the room.

On the same level should be drawing sketching and seeing instructions, music, playing and hearing, exercise and health, puzzles, and solving. These can all be life-enhancing methods that can grow and live within. Teachers should be free to be creative in the ways in which they help students to understand and improve their education.

Yes, grasshopper, the student I am talking about is you. Until education does the work it is supposed to do, ground you in thinking, dreaming, plotting, creating, visualizing, hearing, etc., the ball is in your court. Learning must not end when you leave the institution. It must begin anew.

In the future, we should all be in intimate touch with our learning. With our cosmos. When you stop learning, when you stop growing, when you stop evolving, you stop living.

Cover: *My dreams are made of these*

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THERE WILL BE NO PARSEC MONTHLY MEETING IN DECEMBER

From: John Thompson
Subject: Triangulation Eergy

Triangulation: Energy - Call for Submissions

On December 1, 2021, the annual Triangulation anthology began accepting submissions for *Triangulation: Energy*. We continue to tackle environmental issues as we did with *Triangulation: Dark Skies* (light pollution), *Triangulation: Extinction* (loss of biodiversity), and *Triangulation: Habitats* (sustainable habitation). The theme this year will be energy, sustainable energy. We're looking for outstanding fantasy, science fiction, weird fiction, and speculative horror—from both new and established writers.

Editors:

- [John Thompson](#), Co-editor *Triangulation: Habitats*, Assistant Editor, *Triangulation: Extinction*.
- **Storm Walden**, Assistant Editor, *Triangulation: Habitats*.

See the Triangulation [Submissions Guidelines](#) for more details about submissions.

This year we're looking for stories that explore the possibility of creating sustainable energy with alternative technologies and/or social change. Economical fusion energy has been ten years away for sixty years. Hydroelectric is location dependant. Solar and wind have seen leaps and bounds in technology but by themselves can't provide the steady flow the grid requires to distribute the load. Yet.

As soon as we learned to control fire, anywhere from one to two million years ago depending on who you ask, we've been harnessing that energy to cook food, shape stone, keep warm, keep the sabertooth away, and move stuff around the planet.

Ever since then, we've been merrily burning everything combustible to utilize its stored energy while pouring heat and waste particles into the atmosphere. Forests of wood, mountains of coal, lakes of natural gas, and seas of petroleum have gone up. We delve deeper, raze mountains, we race to consume the Earth's resources at a rate that is changing our environment. We need to find a new balance, either through technology, or social change, or a combination of both.

What else is on the horizon?

Will great Bussard scoops collect hydrogen isotopes from the gas giants for export back to Earth and her colonies? Will we discover a means or source to harvest antimatter at a scale that can make matter-antimatter reactors economically feasible? Will the governments of the world mandate that all new construction must include photovoltaic and photothermal paneling?

Can we recognize hereto unknown forms of energy? Can we harvest energy from black holes? Several methods have been proposed. Zero-point energy is out there, waiting to be understood and perhaps tapped. Will the Fae come out of hiding and teach humanity how to manipulate and harness mana and ley lines and other arcane energies?

What are the expected—and potentially unexpected—ramifications of these developments?

What about sustainability? If we can harvest the energy from black holes, harness zero-point energy, is it essentially unlimited? What's your take?

As a species, we've understood the power of steam to turn wheels for 2,000 years but we couldn't harness steam to move things until metallurgy and engineering evolved to the point we could build reliable engines—just over 300 years ago. Can we make the next great leap in time?

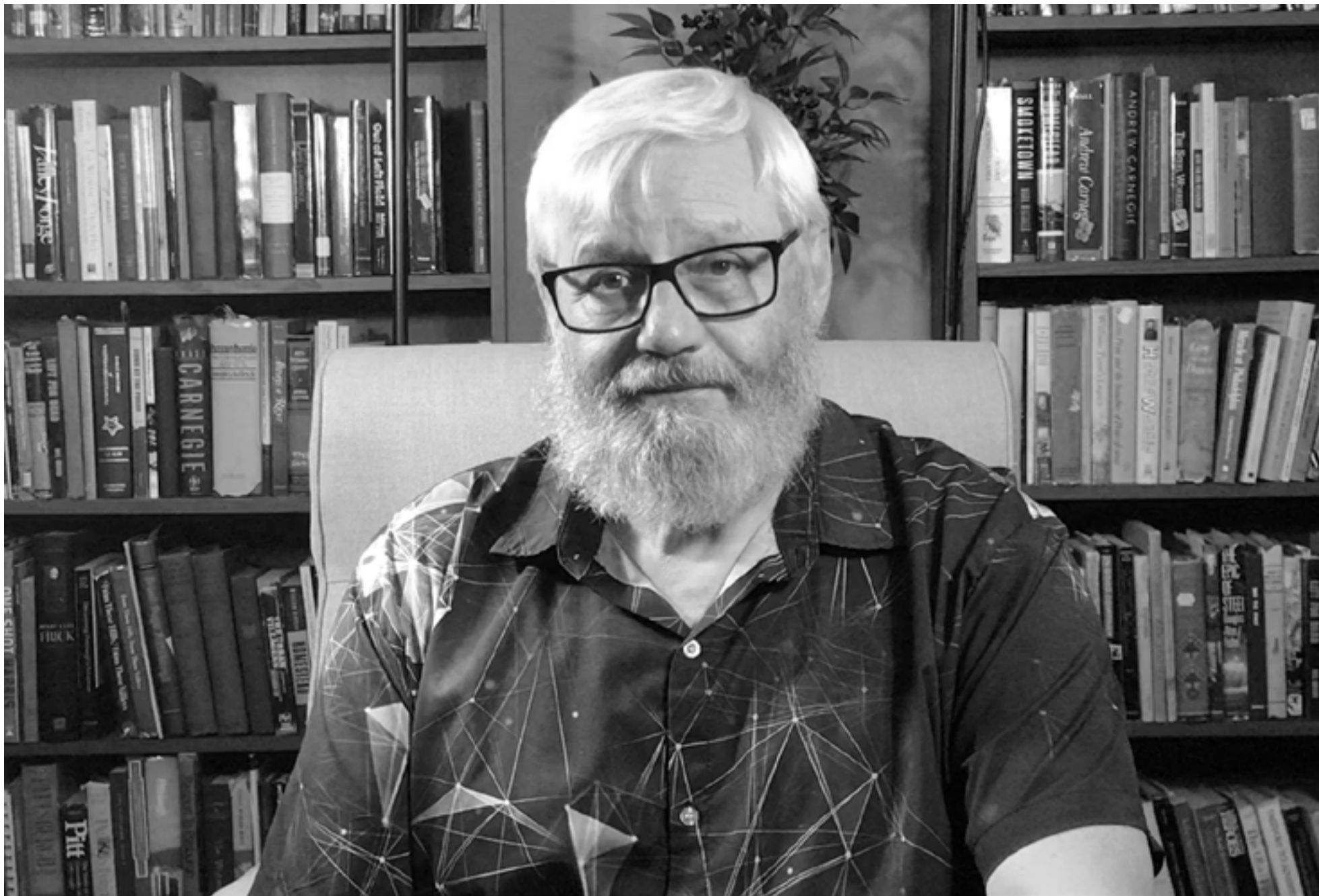
Or do we need to lower our expectations and live with less?

Submission Requirements

Submissions Open: December 1, 2021

Submissions Close: February 28, 2022

Word Count: We consider fiction up to 5,000 words, but the sweet spot is 3,000. There is no minimum word count. Stories over 5000 words will be rejected unread.



John Thompson - Editor - Triamgulation

New Year's Resolutions
Mary Soon Lee
*(first published in Star*Line)*

1. For novices

**Huddle in the Antarctic dark
with emperor penguins
for sixty-four days.**

Irrigate Mars (canals preferred).

**Memorize the first ten thousand
primes.**

2. For journeymen

**Endow peahens with plumage
eclipsing that of peacocks.**

**Circumnavigate the Moon by hot-air
balloon
(add appropriate atmosphere in
advance).**

Prove the Riemann hypothesis.

3. For advanced practitioners

**Travel to 17th-century Mauritius
to retrieve dodos.**

Rearrange the rings of Saturn.

Make π rational.

The Fermi Future?

By Scot Noel

A popular topic of futurist writers, bloggers, and vloggers is the Fermi Paradox, often appropriately paired with the Drake Equation.

The Drake Equation comes first. We'll dispense with the actual formula, but the idea is to work through the potential for alien civilizations by starting with the average rate of star formation, then how many of those stars have planets, then how many of those planets can support life, etc.

There are simply so many stars (about 100 billion in our galaxy alone), that no matter how small you make the other numbers, there should be alien civilizations out there. In 2020, a group of scientists at the University of Nottingham (one of the top 10 research universities in the UK) came up with a new spin based on the latest available data. Relying on something they call the "Astrobiological Copernican Limit," they estimated that at least 36 civilizations should be active in the Milky Way.

The Fermi Paradox, named after Italian-American physicist Enrico Fermi, starts with the simple question: "Well then, where are they?"

It's not just a question of listening for other transmitting civilizations or looking for mega structures built around other stars, it's the idea that the universe is so old that, almost no matter what calculation you make, they should be here, among us by now.

A space-faring civilization, even moving at our slow, rocket propelled speeds, would —once it got started— reach every corner of the galaxy in only a few million years. Possibly much faster. No warp drive required. And the universe, of course, is as terribly, unimaginably old as it is big.

So, where are they?

The Great Filter

Because we don't look out into our own solar system and see strange ships mining the asteroids and giant solar sails tacking against our own sun's solar wind, we have to wonder what's up. Hence the idea of "the Great Filter."

What keeps the sky so silent and apparently uninhabited in our time? While there is an encyclopedia worth of possibilities, here are a popular few:

Technical Civilizations have short live spans. They simply never last long enough to explore the galaxy or build great mega structures. Space faring, radio broadcasting civilizations are so rare, they can never see or communicate with one another. Life and intelligence may be common, but our specific ability to manipulate the environment to the point of space travel is unique in the universe.

Technical Civilizations reach some evolutionary stage, like an AI singularity, long before they go galaxy hopping, and so it simply looks like no one is there. We're looking for the wrong things.

The Fermi Future

I tend to believe that life in the universe is common, though most is probably microbial. Still, complex life and intelligence does emerge, though the bulk of those examples may be physically unable to develop industrial and then technological prowess. If you happen to be something like a genius squid living in the corner of a dark ocean heated by thermal vents, under a crust of ice kilometers thick— then developing electricity and the silicon chip is quite a stretch.

Yet space and time are so immense, offering so many rolls of the dice, that creatures similar to Homo Sapiens (at least in abilities) are sure to be out there. Why can't we see them, hear them, or perhaps smell them if they've been lurking nearby?

My answer lies in the future, where we basically must hang around long enough to figure it out. As it stands today, and by analogy:

We are 19th Century Catuquinaru drummers conceiving of future tribes that message across great distances with bigger drums.

18th Century balloonists imagining a sky full of Zeppelins.

We're radio broadcasters in a universe of energy conservers.

We are the uncontacted tribe of the Sentinelese, the modern-day people of North Sentinel Island, protected by Indian law from external interference, at risk of epidemic from modern diseases, and largely granted by the larger world the "right to be left alone."

Clever as we are, advanced as we are, humanity is not at the pinnacle of its skills, but at the awakening of its abilities. In 200 or 300 years we will look back at the Drake Equation and the Fermi Paradox with the wisdom of experience. "Of course," we will say, "that was pretty obvious."

I have on my shelves a book entitled "The Craters of the Moon," a learned tome that determines, by the weight of observational evidence, that the giant craters on the moon must be volcanic. They could not and did not conceive of asteroid impacts. In 1967. The book was written in 1967! (This was also a time, by the way, when there was absolutely no evidence of the existence of planets outside our solar system. No evidence at all. None.)

Let's not get too far ahead of ourselves with the Drake Equation and the Fermi Paradox. We always get ourselves in trouble when all we do is think. ww was wrong and Galileo far more right. Get out there and see it, do it, prove it.

Build the telescopes, the starships, the deep-space probes. Launch into the unknown. Go boldly. Touch the distant shores.

Once we set sail, we will know. Once we grow beyond the gravity well of our home-world, we will know. Once we reach a post-scarcity, Kardashev Scale, solar-system spanning civilization, we will know. And once we know, it will be plain, clear, and as obvious as night follows day.

The answer was always there, and we were not yet ready to see it. Until...

END



Inez Haynes Gillmore (Irwin) (1873-1970)



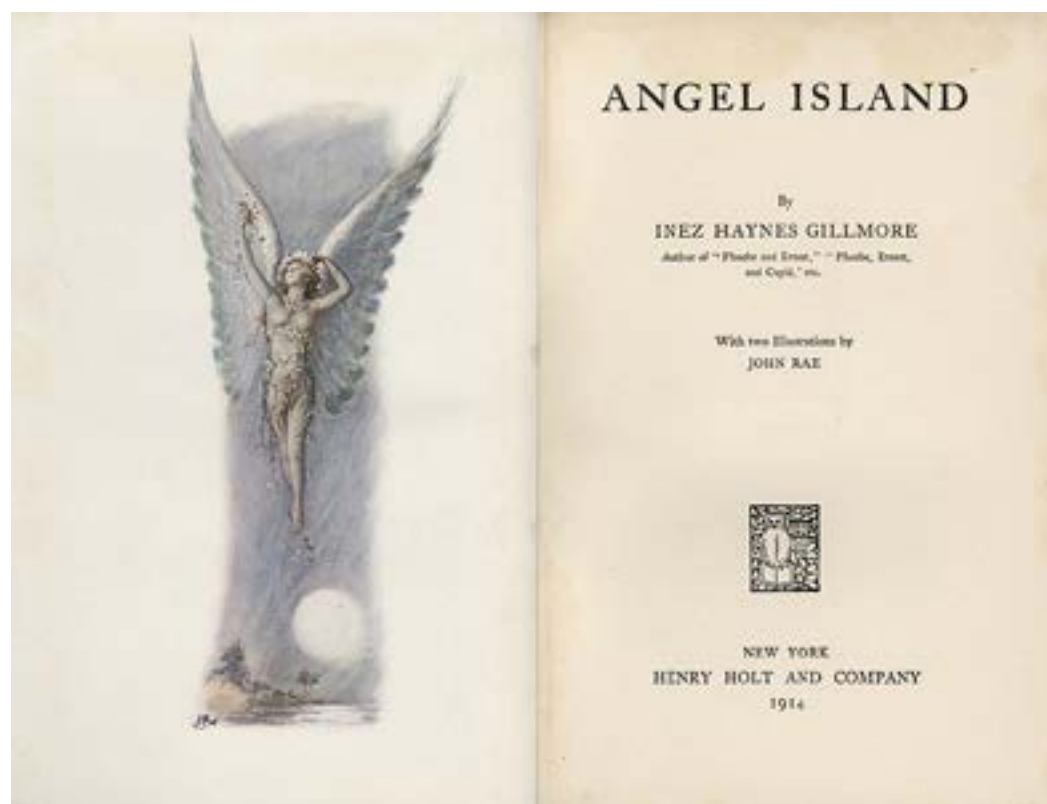
Born in Rio de Janeiro, but raised in Boston, Gillmore spent most of her life in New York City. She graduated from Radcliffe in 1900 and had become active in the woman suffrage movement while there, co-founding the National Collegiate Equal Suffrage League. Attracted to Alice Paul's more radical National Women's Party, she eventually became a member of the party's Advisory Council. She also headed the World Center for Women's Archives.

Her first husband, Rufus Gillmore, was a journalist who supported her suffrage activities. She published her first novel, *June Jeopardy*, in 1908 and shortly thereafter became the fiction editor of *The Masses*, the most influential Leftist magazine of the age. An official in many early writers' societies, most of her own work was either mainstream or in the fields of mysteries or children's literature. Her second novel, *Maida's Little Shop* (1910), launched her long sequence of children's books about

that heroine. The last in the series was *Maida's Little Treasure Hunt* (1955). Her primary genre novel, *Angel Island* (1914), concerned a war between men and winged women.

In 1916 she married William Henry Irwin and the two of them lived in Europe during World War I, reporting on the war. Her 1917 feminist novel, *The Lady of Kingdoms*, featured a working class heroine. In 1924 her short story, "The Spring Flight," won the O. Henry Prize for that year's best short story.

She also published nonfiction books, such as *The Story of the Women's Party* (1921) and *Angels and Amazons: A Hundred Years of American Women* (1933). She became the first female president of the Author's League of America. After the death of her second husband in 1948, she retired to Scituate, Massachusetts. She died at age 97 in Norwell, Mass. In 1988 *Angel Island* was reprinted as a classic of early feminist literature.





Rarely do we see someone who has the time and energy to create a comprehensive masterwork. Yet, we have the three volume exhaustive study of the Moon authored by Robert Garfinkle of Union City, California: *Luna Cognita*, published by the prestigious science publisher Springer Verlag.

Robert Garfinkle at Lick Observatory.



In *Luna Cognita*, you will find so many wonderful things about the Moon, it is tempting to call the work exhaustive. It is certainly all you need to enjoy and learn things while you observe the Moon with a small to medium (2 inch diam. -- 16 in. diam.) telescope. There is a great Atlas of the near side of the Moon, very useful and very clear. There is a day-by-day photolog and extensive discussion of what you can see on the Moon in that phase. There is a great section on eclipses, lunar and solar. But we,Äôre not stopping there! There is a big list of all the lunar probes and missions and the fate and location of all of them. There even include casual flybys, such as Galileo en route to Jupiter.

This comprehensive,Äô yes, exhaustive,Äômasterwork attests to what is possible to do when you can take ten years of study and research to develop such a project. Unfortunately, young University faculty do not have this luxury since they must produce research results soon in their careers to keep their jobs,Äôusually. So this type of work is not as common as it should be. Which means it is all the more valuable. It is expensive, but it's soooo worth it if you must have one book on the Moon.

Order it direct from Springer Verlag. There are reports that Amazon dealers sent only the first volume, for the same price, not realizing it is a 3 volume set.

OK, here's a puzzle for you. Try to answer it before you find out at the end. Who wrote this snippet of a tale? Was it Robert E. Howard? Or was it C.L. Moore? Or L. Sprague de Camp? Or someone else?



"When at last they got secret word the battle was surely lost, they took the old King and rode down the west.

"It was night. Faint and thunderous, the rumor of combat came over the plain. The great camp, yet unsuspecting, flashed with jovial flame on steel, where for miles deep choruses ran counter to bursts of warrior-laughter. Here were dancing girls, courtesans and slaves, the toll of conquered peoples; and there jewels heaped up, and bolts of rich fabric, plundered in proud cities.

"His majesty...the Invincible, the Ever-Victorious, lay rigid in his brazen pavilion, robed in cloth-of-silver so heavy that he could not have moved, even if he were not paralyzed these many years. He could no longer speak; only his eyes lived. His aged body was cold and shrunken.

"The Captain came clanking into the many-splendid place, and without looking at the King, plucked him up and tossed him on his shoulder, and strode out. All in black armor the Ten were waiting, holding their black horses by the bridle, with the Captain's horse and a horse for the King. They lifted up the withered, brittle thing and spread its legs across the saddle....

"Mounting all together, they spurred into the street of tents; and as the light struck them, dropped their visors, upon which was writ in gold the unspeakable Word. Men screamed, and with clanking armor cast themselves on their faces, at the passing of the Ten. Along the way ahead ran tidings of their coming, and they rode in chill silence, with waves of sound before and after rolling. Without challenge they passed out into the plain, westward, and galloped.

"High hung the hollow ringing shield of heaven, embossed with stars. The steady wind, unhindered for a thousand miles of plain, brought down the smell of bloody sweat from the battle, roaring off to the north with a sound of trees in storm. A lurid pallor shot up the sky there. The Ten lifted their visors and sniffed the taint of slaughter.

"They laid a course by the young moon's arc. Behind, the clamoring camp drew down to nothing, and the battle fell away over the shoulder of the world.... They pressed on, hour after hour, and the flat country flowed under their horses' pounding hooves, while the wide horizons stood still and torrents of stars poured down the sky...."

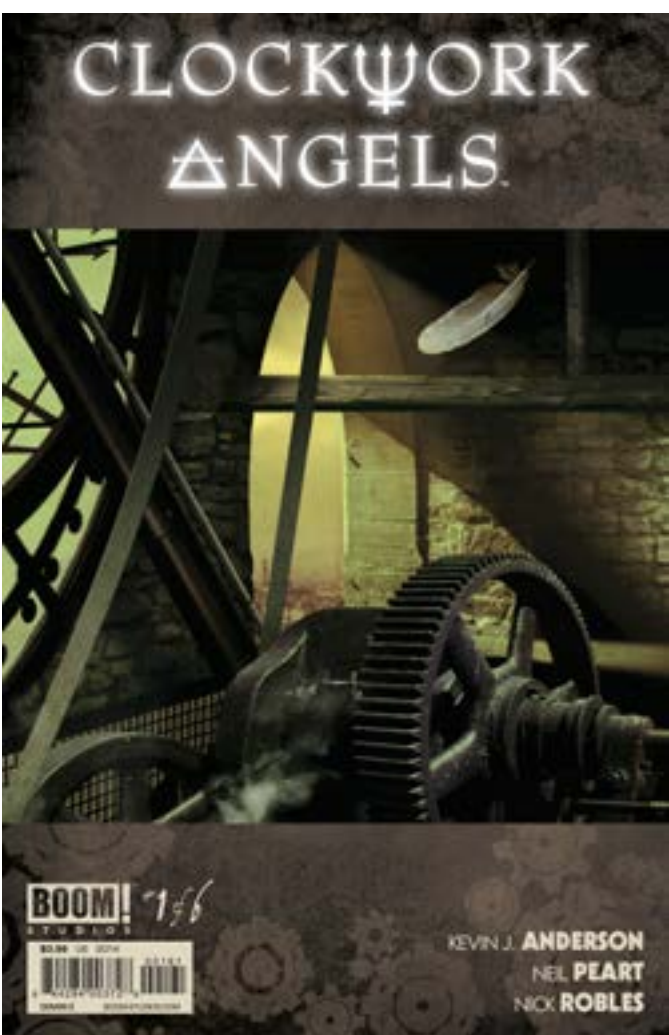
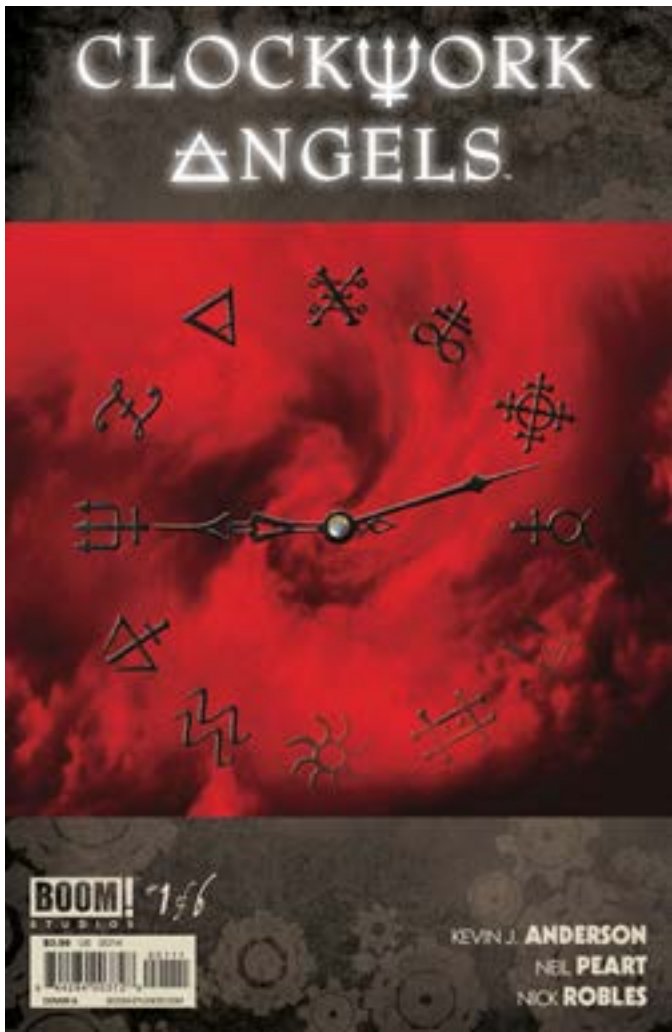
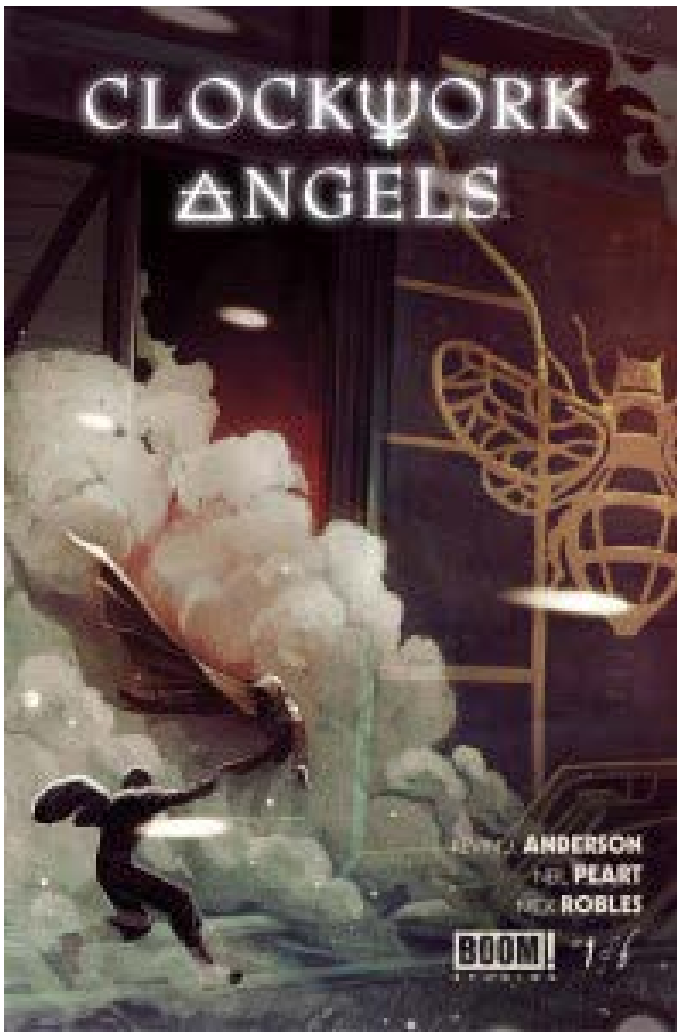
Answer: None of the above. It is an unfinished beginning of a story entitled "Ever-Victorious" by John Reed, written in 1920 shortly before his death. John Reed was the author of the famous history of the Bolshevik Revolution, "Ten Days That Shook the World." He was also the subject of the Warren Beatty – Diane Keaton film, "Reds," one of the best political movies ever made, wherein Beatty stars as John Reed.

If he had lived, and if there had been a market for such works as this (*Weird Tales* did not appear until 1923, after his death), perhaps John Reed would now be recognized as the founder of Sword and Sorcery stories, as this certainly reads like something Robert E. Howard would have written in the early 1930s. But, he died of typhus not long after writing this... and the world lost an exciting romantic writer. I certainly would have loved to know the rest of this story!



SF AND ROCK
The Clockwork Angels Trilogy
by Kevin J. Anderson and Neil Peart
A Not-Review by Larry Ivkovich

Though I’ve listened to the album “Clockwork Angels” by the Canadian progressive rock group Rush (another great record by that trio!), as my little “not-review” above implies, I haven’t yet read this trilogy adapted from the record’s lyrics and steampunk concept, by the late Rush drummer Neil Peart. But, since I’ve mentioned Peart’s friendship and collaboration with SF author Kevin J. Anderson and Peart’s love and influence of speculative fiction in previous issues of Sigma, I just wanted to let everyone know about these books, if you don’t already.





Kevin-J-Anderson

(As an aside, Anderson, himself a music lover, and musician Shawn Gordon put together a group of musicians who recorded two progressive rock albums written by Anderson and his wife, author Rebecca Moesta. The albums are based on Anderson's Terra Incognita novels and are titled "Terra Incognita: Beyond the Horizon," and "Terra Incognita: A Line in the Sand.")

Did I mention steampunk earlier? That's part of the premise of the *Clockwork Angels* books as I understand. There are steamliners and airships, alchemical energy, a carnival of clockwork wonders, the benevolent Watchmaker of Albion and his nemesis the Anarchist, and, of course, the Clockwork Angels themselves.

Hopefully, I'll have a review of at least the first book in a future issue.



Neal Peart September 12, 1952 – January 7, 2020

2021 HUGO NOMINEES PART 6

PARANESI by Susanna Clarke

Review by Larry Ivkovich

Well, probably by the time this issue of Sigma comes out the Hugo Awards were held and the winners announced. As a result, this will be my last review of those nominated works I've read. It's been fun to do that since, normally, I mostly only read one or two of the nominees. Among other things, it's allowed me to discover the works of authors I may not have normally picked up and become a fan of, like Rebecca Roanhorse, P. Djeli Clark, and Nghi Vo.

Though this book won the 2021 Women's Prize for Fiction, it took me a little while to get into it and, apparently from what I've read, I missed a lot of the literary allusions the author referenced. But, in the end, I enjoyed it very much.



A strange and compelling novel, *Paranesi* (only Clarke's second novel, *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell* having been published sixteen years ago) is a unique take on a couple of tried-and-true SF tropes which I won't reveal in order to avoid any of the dreaded spoilers. The story is told in the first person by the title character writing in one of the numerous journals he's maintained throughout his "life." It opens with Paranesi (which he suspects is not his real name but doesn't care) spending his day, as always, exploring his world – The House. The House is essentially a giant labyrinth with multiple levels and windows looking out onto a vast sea. The lower levels of the House regularly flood, sometimes rising to the topmost floors, and Paranesi basically lives on fish and seaweed. He's perfectly content to roam, wander among the many birds who roost in the House, study the plethora of statues gracing the various rooms, make schedules of the tides, write extensively in his journals, gaze at the sea, sky, and stars from out of the numerous windows, and meet with the only other living person in his world – a mysterious man Paranesi refers to as "The Other."



The Other only appears twice a week and never gives Paranesi any information about the House or about Paranesi himself, only asking Paranesi questions about how he's doing, sometimes leaving food or supplies, or articles of clothing. During the course of the story, a couple of other characters appear in the House and interact with Paranesi briefly. One of these characters is a woman known only as "16" and the Other warns Paranesi that 16 is dangerous and to avoid her. Yet Paranesi finds messages written by 16 and addressed to him that contradict the Other's warning. The messages imply it's the Other who's the dangerous one.

These encounters are strange and unsettling to Paranesi and he begins to think there's more to the House and to his life than he realizes. He's positive he's lived his whole life in the House. He has no memory of anything beyond that until he rereads some of his older journal entries which mention different people, places, and concepts he's completely forgotten, let alone writing about them. As he grows more suspicious of the Other and who he, himself, really is, and more trusting of 16, Paranesi begins to question his whole life and the reason for the House's existence.

Because of his careful study of the tides, Paranesi realizes a great flood is coming, one bigger than any he and the House have experienced and, in order to survive it, he has to decide who he should trust more--the Other or 16?

Very interesting and thought-provoking, *Paranesi* reads mostly at a slow, deliberate pace but Clarke's writing is stellar and the ideas, setting, and storyline move it along well. It's never boring and, though you may think you know the solution to Paranesi's plight, think again.



GREATER PITTSBURGH SCIENCE FICTION BOOK GROUP 2021 READING LIST

November 24, 2021 (Larry)

Novel: "Down and Out in the Magic Kingdom" by Cory Doctorow (224 pgs)

Short Fiction:

"The Evolution of Human Science" by Ted Chiang

"Day Million" by Frederik Pohl (4 pgs)

December 22, 2021 (Greg)

Novel: "Code of the Lifemaker" by James P. Hogan (330 pgs)

Short Fiction:

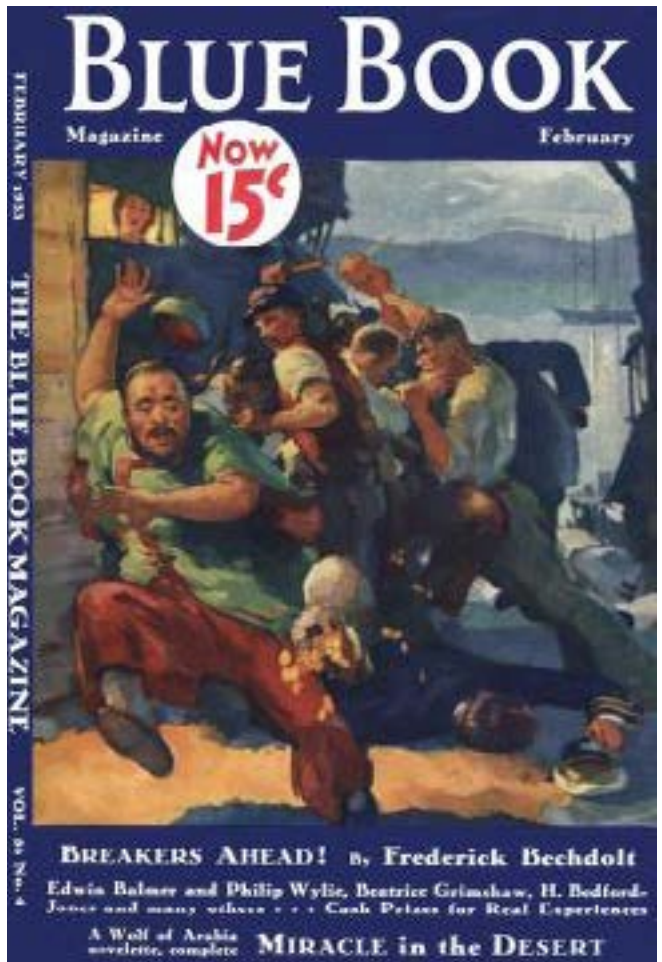
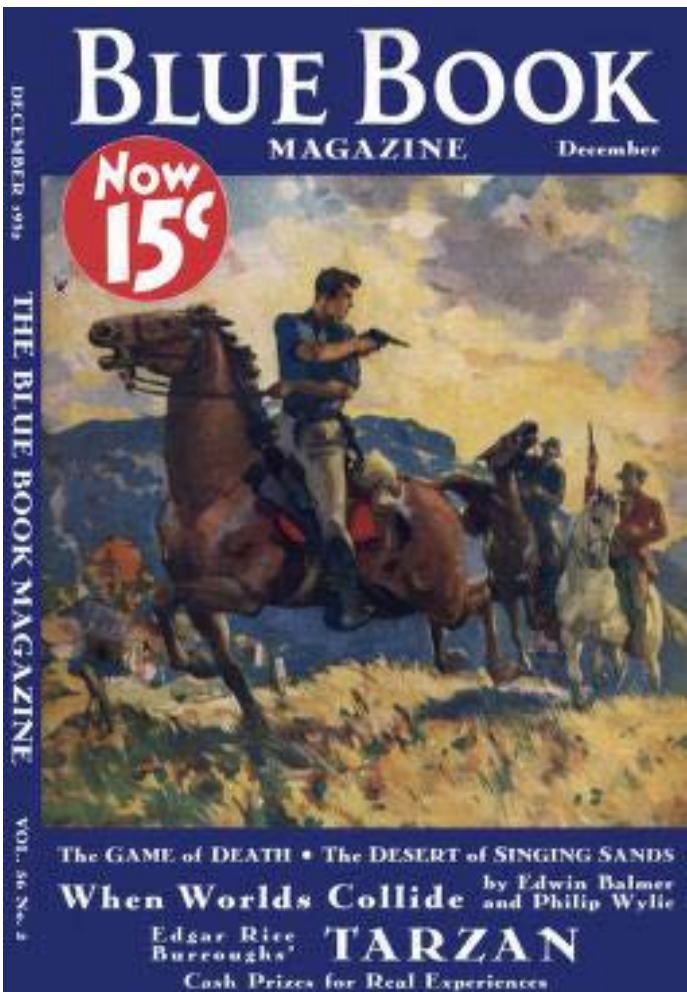
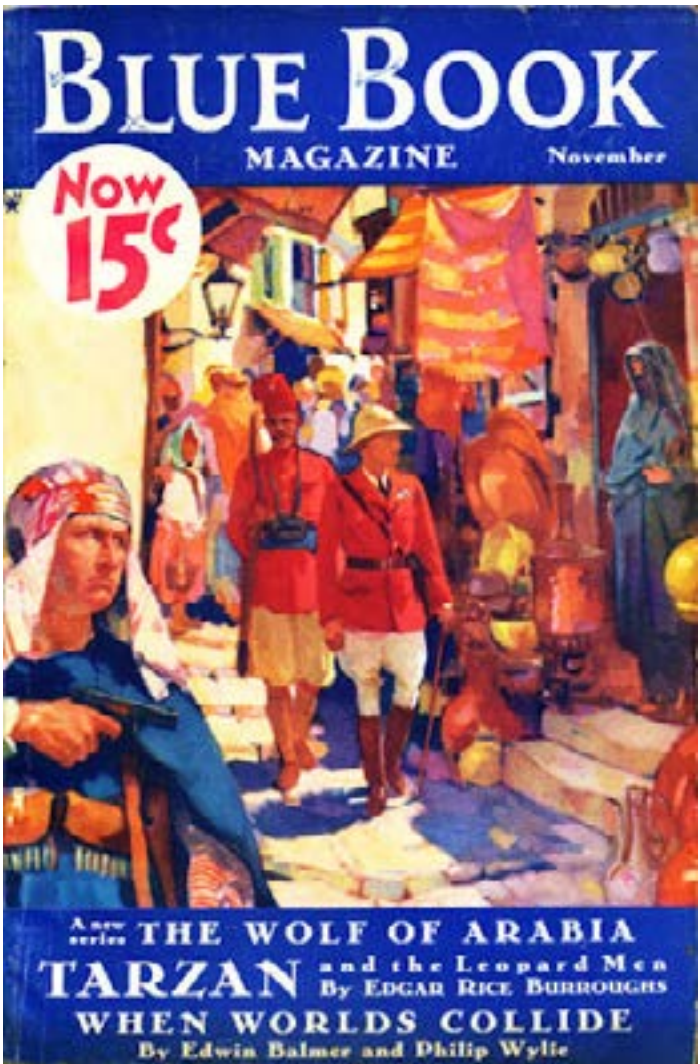
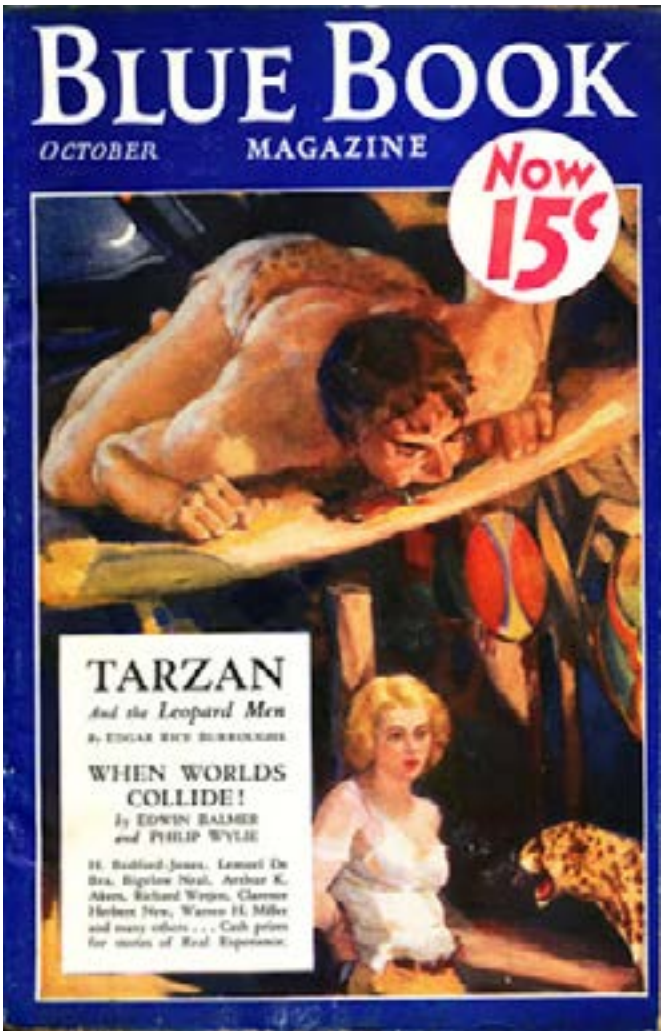
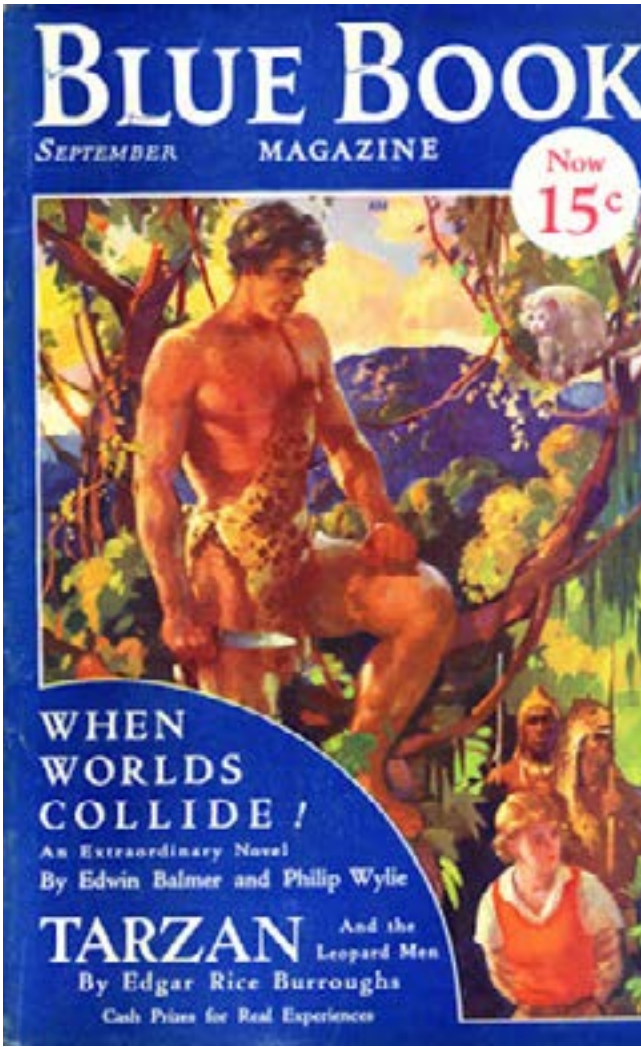
"Sam Hall" by Poul Anderson (36 pgs)

"Evidence" by Isaac Asimov (29 pgs)

For more information contact: Greg Armstrong
roboman@cmu.edu

We Wish Worlds Collide
by Joe Coluccio
Big fan of SF

I love it when a contemporary book review about a book written in 1933 has the insight to inform us that the composition is dated. (Code for racial, ethnic and sexual attitudes to which we no longer ascribe) Imagine my surprise, let alone my chagrin, when I discovered almost every review of both the film and the novel “When Worlds Collide,” 1953 and 1933 respectively, informed me that the works were dated.





Philip_Wylie

It would have been a whiff of fresh air if any of the 1933 reviews of Philip Wylie had warned me his au currant attitudes came with a warning from the Time Patrol. Nope, those folks, who lived and loved in another time which is perceived as another and by implication far less honorable world, thought Phil was a forward if apocalyptic, thinker. In many ways, you can thank Wylie for the overwhelming and identical apocalypse that faces us in our nightly trip to the cable cinema and eye-rubbing selection from our digital readers.

Fifty years (or much less according to future shock) from now your expiration date will be up. In the future, you will be condemned for the famous fifteen minutes deeded you by Andy Warhol. How does the scarlet X over your face feel?

To the Point.

George Pal, for a number of reasons which include “Destination Moon,” “When Worlds Collide,” “The War of the Worlds,” “The Time Machine,” and several Stop Motion

Classics is considered a fantasist of the first water. Although I have minor gripes with all of the films (who doesn’t?), I agree. Spend a day or so with George Pal and you will come away amused, entertained, and satisfied. Further, read the various novels and short stories and adaptions that are the sources and you may come away downright amazed.

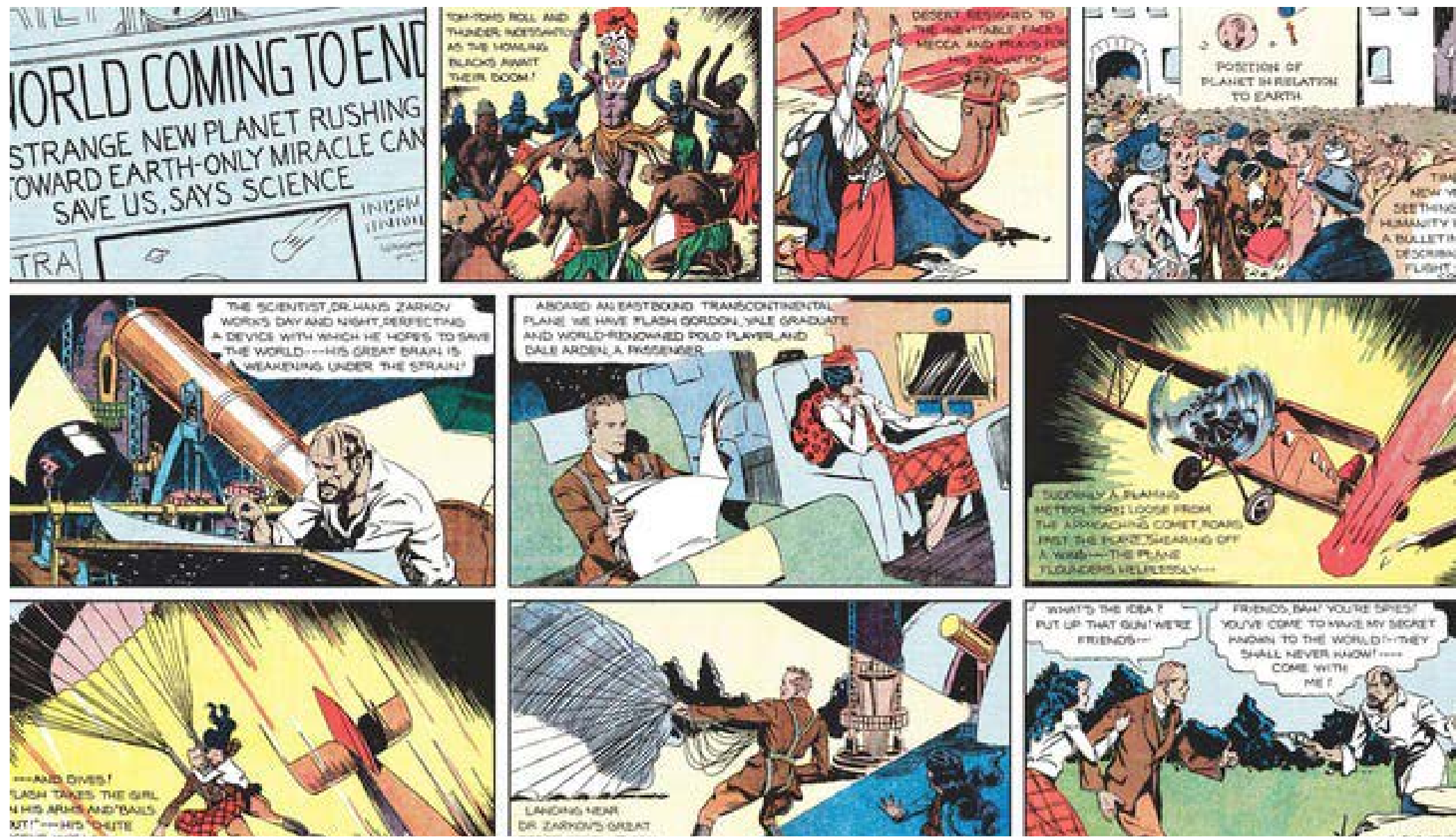
And more, such a day would put you very deep in the heart of the textuality of speculative fiction. Talk about your hypertext, hypermedia connections. If you are a fan of science fiction you will be well aware that any literary work of SF does not exist in a vacuum. It, like the game “Six degrees of separation from Kevin Bacon” (the fact that Kevin Bacon was in a film with Lillian Gish closely relates him to all but a few of the characters from the Keystone Cops) is related with very few steps to not just all of science fiction but possibly all knowledge and everything.

The Live-Action Feature Films of George Pal

<u>The Great Rupert</u>	1950	
Destination Moon	1950	Robert A Heinlein Matte Paintings by Chesley Bonestell
When Worlds Collide	1951	Ased on thr novel by Edwin Balmer & Philip Wylie
<u>Houdini</u>		
The War of the Worlds	1953	based on the novel by H.G. Wells
<u>The Naked Jungle</u>	1954	
Conquest of Space	1955	Chesley Bonestell Willy Ley Wernher von Braun
<u>Tom Thumb</u>	1958	
The Time Machine	1960	based on the novel by H.G. Wells
Atlantis, the Lost Continent	1961	
<u>The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm</u>	1962	
7 Faces of Dr. Lao	1964	based on a novel by Charles G. Finney screenplay by Charles Beaumont
The Power	1968	based on a novel by Frank M Robison
Doc Savage...The Man of Bronze	1975	based on a novel by Lester Dent

What is resonant and related to When World Collide? In the work of George Pal, we brush in one fell swoop from Wells to Heinlein and beyond. Not too many degrees of separation after that.

Alex Raymond took the basic premise for “When World’s Collide” which was being reprinted in Blue Book Magazine at the time for the starting point for his new comic strip, “Flash Gordon.”



The 1940 -1941 Comic Strip Speed Spaulding was based on When Worlds Collide.



The theme of escape from a dying planet was used by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shutter in the 1938 Superman comic book.

Kirk Alyn, the actor who played Superman in the original Superman serials played the part of a rioter attempting to take over the Spaceship that was reserved for the lucky folks who would survive the destruction of Earth in When World’s Collide.

Shuster and Siegel were also both influenced by Philip Wylie's "Gladiator", a novel about a suspiciously Übermensch in the creation of their Superman.

The film When Worlds Collide was originally pursued for production by Cecil B DeMille

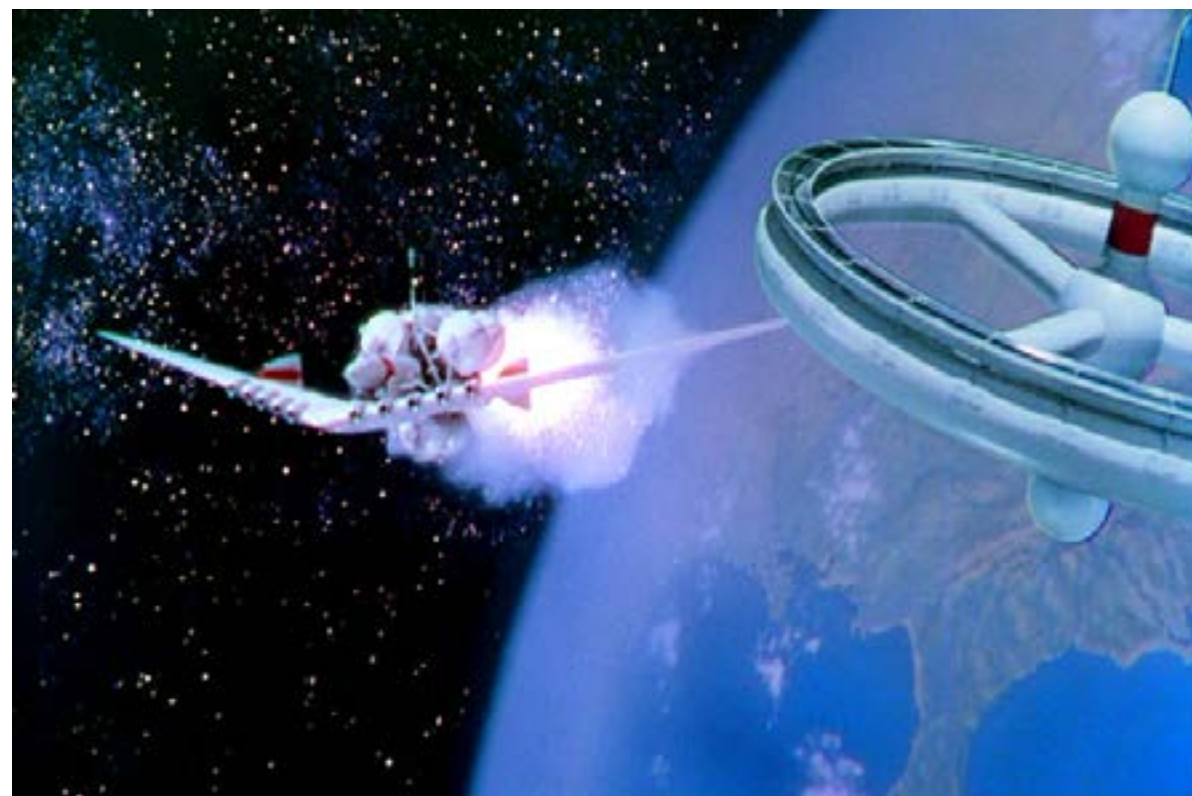
First lines of When Worlds Collide (Spoken over a shot of outer space)

Needles in a heavenly haystack. There are more stars in the heavens than there are human beings on Earth. Through telescopes men of science constantly search the infinitesimal corners of our solar system seeking new discoveries, hoping to better understand the laws of the Universe. Observatories dedicated to the study of astronomy are set in high and remote places, but there is none more remote than Mt. Kenna Observatory in this part of South Africa.

The last scene of When Worlds Collide as the colonists step out onto a brand new world is a cartoonish painting by Chesley Bonestell. It was put in the film as a placeholder, but the budget did not allow for any more special effects. Hence the unsatisfactory ending of the film.



George Pal planned to make a film of the sequel "After Worlds Collide" by Wylie and Balmer, but his film "Conquest of Space" was such a box office failure he was unable to obtain financing.



Stephen Spielberg was on target for a remake of *When Worlds Collide* when the film, "Deep Impact," intersected and killed the project.

When Worlds Collide is one of the films referenced in the opening Theme, "Science Fiction Double Feature" of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, both in the film and in the theater production.

These items and notions are just a shallow dive into the subject. Several character actors in the George Pal movies went on to become very familiar faces on nightly TV dramas and comedy, joining "Worlds" to mainstream American TV. Their faces will haunt you as you watch the films. In the periphery of vision are the other films of HG Wells, *Dr Moreau*, *The Invisible Man* both made and remade. Dig a little deeper and discover films and novels of Jules Verne. Deeper yet you can go, lost into a spiral of colliding worlds.



FANTASTIC ARTIST OF THE MONTH
TEHANI FARR
by Larry Ivkovich



Tehani Farr is a British-Mexican fantastic artist, her subject matter combining traditions of her Mexican ancestry with European myths and legends. After studying graphic design and modeling professionally, she became a professional illustrator in 2014.

She's done work for World of Warcraft, Sony Entertainment, Playboy, E Entertainment Television, among others. At present she focuses on cover design, graphic novels, editorial and festival art, concept art for movies, and music industry merchandising illustrations.

An interview with Farr can be read in the current online issue of Locus Magazine as part of their Spotlight series:
<https://locusmag.com/2021/11/spotlight-on-tehani-farr/>





I'M LOOKING AT
YOU BAG OF EARTH
ECTOPLASM...

---I KNOW YOU WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE SIGMA NEWSLETTER. IT IS WRITTEN IN YOUR SPIRIT, WHICH I CAN READ. SURELY YOU CANNOT STAND SOME OF THE BANTER OF THE PRESENT EDITOR. I HAVE PROGRAMMED HIM TO WRITE REALLY STUPID STUFF DESIGNED TO INCITE YOU.

HERE ARE THE DESIRABLE TOPICS TO PRINT I HAVE PLANTED IN HIS EASILY SUGGESTIBLE BRAIN:

IDEAS ABOUT PARSEC ITSELF - SURELY YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND OR ARE NOT SATISFIED WITH THE PRESENT STRUCTURE.

THOUGHTS ABOUT SPECULATIVE FICTION IN GENERAL - DO YOU LOVE AND SUPPORT MILITARY SF? IS FICTION FROM THE GOLDEN AGE DYING? ARE YOU FINE WITH THE NEW AGE KIND OF WRITING THAT IS EVERYWHERE? ARE YOU PLEASED WITH THE NEW DIVERSITY THAT INFUSES THE FIELD?

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