

# IONOSPHERE 2



# **Journal of the National Fantasy Fan Federation Fan-Pro Coordinating Bureau**

**December 2016**

**Ionisphere 2. Edited by John Thiel, 30 N. 19<sup>th</sup> Street, Lafayette, Indiana  
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The aim of the Fan-Pro Coordinating Bureau is to increase the interrelationship of readers of science fiction and the writers of science fiction, as well as fantasy. To this end we publish interviews with fans and with writers, make available the website URLs of the authors and artists, keep files of authors' email addresses, keep news of interrelating activities on view, including convention activities, and make the bureau's facilities open to members of the NFFF. We also encourage letters to Ionisphere concerning the contents and any suggestions that may be offered on our activities and presentation, and will publish such letters in a letter column when we receive them. We are still understaffed, and need volunteers to keep files, look for related news items to present in this publication, and do convention and conference listings.

Articles on science fiction doings by members of the NFFF are welcomed, as well as any other material that would seem to be of interest in a scan of the science fiction field at both the professional

and the fandom level. We also ask the members who are writers to inform us of any new books or stories they are writing or have had printed, and will list titles of fanzines published by members when we are informed of them, and also print news by fans of their recent activities when they report it to us. Our present staff members are:

### ***Introducing the Bureau Members***

**The head of the Bureau is myself, JOHN THIEL. I have handled this activity before, when it was first created by former N3F President Irwin Koch, and ran it for several years, then turned it over to Jim Allen, who had been keeping addresses of writers. My prior fan activity has been OE of Apa-H, Editor of Shadow-Fapa for the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, and at present I have a science fiction fandom group on Facebook as well as a Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction fan group there. I've been in Fapa, N'apa and Saps, Frefanzine and the Cult and have attended conventions in Chicago, South Bend (Indiana), Lafayette, Indianapolis, and**

**Columbus Ohio. Fanzines I have published include Pablo Lennis, Caveat Emptor, The International Youngfan, Apa-H, an earlier Ionisphere, Barsoon (Saps), Rocket Fuel (N'apa), the Pdf Dragon for efanazines, and Synergy for the present N'apa. As for any "pro" status, the only sf magazine I have published any stories in is the netzine Bewildering Stories. (Still available in their annals.)**

**Our Pro Contact is JEFFERSON SWYCAFFER, who resides in San Diego, California and has a facebook page. His email address is [abontides@gmail.com](mailto:abontides@gmail.com) . He is the author of BECOME THE HUNTED (1984), THE PRAESIDIUM OF ARCHIVE (1986), REVOLT AND REBIRTH (1988), NOT IN OUR STARS (1984), THE EMPIRE'S LEGACY (1988), WARSPRITE (1991), THE UNIVERSAL PREY (1985), VOYAGE OF THE PLANET SLAYER (1988), and WEB OF FUTURES (1992). His bio and blog can be found**

on the net at

<https://www.amazon.com/Jefferson-P.-Swycaffer/> and at <https://jpswycaffer.com> ,

and at Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/JeffersonSwycaffer/>

He says of the Fan-Pro Contacts, “Super cool! This sounds like fun, and we’ll make it happen!”

Our Fan Contact is JON DAVID SWARTZ, who says of himself: “I have been a fan of popular culture since I was a small child who had to have comic strips and Big Little Books read to me. I still have some of these items, especially those related to science fiction (Buck Rogers, Flash Gordon, *etc.*). As a pre-teen, I read and collected the comic books that featured science fiction (SF) stories. As a teenager, I read and collected the major SF prozines of the time. Also, I was a member of a SF club and worked on a fanzine. Later, at the

**University of Texas, I belonged to SF clubs and worked on club fanzines. As a graduate student, I was a charter member of the Executive Board of the Academy of Comic Book Fans and Collectors created by Jerry Bails in 1964. With Robert Reinehr, I wrote the HANDBOOK OF OLD-TIME RADIO; A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO GOLDEN AGE RADIO LISTENING AND COLLECTING (1993). Bob and I had another book on old-time radio, HISTORICAL DICTIONARY OF OLD-TIME RADIO, published in 2008. This book was re-issued in 2010 as a paperback with the title of THE A TO Z OF OLD TIME RADIO. I have served as President of the N3F (2010-2011), as Reviews Editor of one of N3F's fanzines, THE NATIONAL FANTASY FAN (2003-2011), as club Historian (since 2004), as a member of the club's Directorate (since 2008), and as a Contributing Editor to FanDominion, the club's website. In addition, I am a member of First Fandom, and have been Special Projects Editor for First**

**Fandom's fanzine, SCIENTIFUNCTION: THE FIRST FANDOM REPORT, since 2002. Beginning in 2004, I have been writing articles for the pop culture magazine PAPERBACK PARADE and on Big Little Books for THE BIG LITTLE TIMES. Most of these articles are SF or SF-related. I have also written articles and reviewed SF (and science) books for other print publications, including SCIENCE BOOKS & FILMS, and for various websites on the Internet, including FANCYCLOPEDIA 3.**

**I was twice recipient of the N3F's President's Award (Franson Award) in 2005 and 2007, and won the club's Kaymar Award in 2010; I was also nominated as outstanding fan in the club's Neffer Awards competition in 2005 and 2010. My history of the N3F was published on the club's website, and most of it was reprinted in installments in THE FAN. I began contributing a series of Historical Vignettes and Founding Member articles to THE FAN nearly ten years ago, a series that**

**continues to this day. Recently, a tribute I wrote on longtime Colorado fan Bob Peterson was reprinted in Locus Magazine.**

**My book/monograph SF publications include three Fandbooks for the N3F— PSEUDONYMS OF SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY, AND HORROR AUTHORS (2010), THE HUGO AWARDS FOR BEST NOVEL (2013), THE NEBULA AWARDS FOR BEST NOVEL (2016)— and a book for members of The Big Little Book Club, THE BUCK ROGERS BIG LITTLE BOOKS AND OTHER COLLECTIBLES (2013). For First Fandom I co-edited the club's MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY in 2015 and 2016, and First Fandom's president, John Coker, and I wrote the FIRST FANDOM MAGAZINE ANNUAL (2016), and are currently preparing the 2017 ANNUAL.**

**In 2006, I became a member of the Carboniferous Amateur Press Alliance (CAPA) and contributor of my fanzine, THE ULTRAVERSE, to this apa's monthly 5X5**

mailings. When I write on psychological topics, I call my fanzine **COGNITIVE DISSONANCE**. I am a former member of various other SF and OTR organizations.

In mundane life, I received a Ph.D. in 1969 from the University of Texas at Austin and was Chief of Psychological Services at Central Counties Center for Mental Health-Mental Retardation, Temple, Texas, until my retirement in 1999. Previously, I was Associate Dean for Libraries and Learning Resources at Southwestern University, Georgetown, Texas, where I was also Brown Professor of Psychology and Education. I have taught at other colleges and universities, including UNAM in Mexico City.

When I was a SF fan in the late 1940s-early 1950s, and just becoming involved in fandom, most of the fans worldwide were SF readers of prozines and books. There were very few radio or TV shows devoted to SF, and SF movies were few—although the ones based on stories

by popular SF authors were eagerly anticipated.

In the 1960s and 1970s, fandom spread like wildfire, with several SF sub-fandoms emerging; in addition, the term “fandom” started being used by groups that had nothing to do with SF. Today, it seems most SF fans are media-oriented, preferring TV and movie SF to magazine and book SF. If I had to choose, I’d prefer the fanac of old; but I have learned to live and work within the fanac of today as well. Most SF fans still seem to be interested in attending cons and reading and/or contributing to fanzines. Hopefully, IONISPHERE will become one of the more popular zines being published today.”

Jon’s email address is

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# EDITORIAL

Ionisphere is a meeting-place of fans and writers, artists and editors of science fiction and fantasy. It is a nexus of activities of the Fan-Pro Coordinating Bureau, wherein some of the work we do is accomplished and some of it reported. What we give the membership of the NFFF is given here in this publication, where you can find insight into the coordinating activities, and can, if you wish, participate with us. We list addresses where you may correspond with writers and prominent fans, and we give the location of sites where you can read about them or view their blogs. Its purpose is to stir interaction in the science fiction community which is established by various clubs and organizations within the science fiction field. Here you can learn more about the books you read and discuss them with their authors. This helps to orient and define science fiction and makes it possible to explore its *milieu*. Science fiction and fantasy are worthwhile studies and they are worth grouping about. We are also interested in science, science news and advancements in science.

Science fiction fandom has both meaning and purpose, and the organization of it was done for the sake of building a science fiction outlook existing within the general literary framework and advancing the science fictional perspective in terms of other world views and approaches in the literary world. Literary societies mean so much more to readers of books than does the simple purchase and reading of them. The opportunity to discuss what you have read might be narrow if you don't have people with similar reading interests living near you, and so correspondence societies come into existence. The National Fantasy Fan Federation has been trying to organize and formulate science fiction activities since it came into existence, and the new coordinating activity is an expression of this organizational sense taking particular concern with interaction within the structure of organized fandom, including interaction with the writers and editors, which exists within correspondence, letter columns, and at gatherings of societies and clubs and at conferences and conventions. Those are things that form the Science Fiction World, which you can step into and out of as you please, but it is, as some say, something of a way of life.

As examples of what we might try to do, we might want to form an interdependent and linked-together culture on the net with the various science fiction sites that are on the net. We might list the blogs of fans and pros alike here in Ionisphere, and if it is feasible, provide links to these blogs. We might agitate the magazines to have the fan spaces they once had, to call the general attention to fandom. We might fill in the rifts and blocks which exist that keep fans from getting together. And so that's activity here.

# Science News Shots



Chinese Rover photographed



European Space Agency Plans for a “Moon Village”

Apparently space advancements on other continents are running parallel to or getting ahead of American space science in some matters—or are they just catching up? Should we be getting more into news on the “space race”?

## Pro Interview: Paul Levinson



Paul Levinson, PhD, is a professor of Communication and Media Studies at Fordham University in New York City. His stories and novels have been nominated for Hugo, Nebula, Sturgeon, Edgar, Prometheus, and Audie awards. His nonfiction books have been translated into twelve languages. He appears on CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, the Discovery Channel, National Geographic, the History Channel, NPR, and numerous TV and radio programs. His 1972 LP, *TWICE UPON A RHYME*, was re-issued in 2010. He was President of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America, 1998-2001 and does television reviews on *INFINITE REGRESS*. He can be found at [www.sff.net/people/paullevinson/](http://www.sff.net/people/paullevinson/) . on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/paul.levinson](http://www.facebook.com/paul.levinson) , and seen on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/user/PLev20062006> . His email address is [levinson.paul@gmail.com](mailto:levinson.paul@gmail.com) .

His books include *CHRONICA* (Jo Sara MeDia, 2004), *UNBURNING ALEXANDRIA* (JoSara MeDia, 2013), *THE PLOT TO SAVE SOCRATES* (Tor, 2006), *THE PIXEL EYE* (Tor, 2003), *THE CONSCIOUSNESS PLAGUE*

**(Tor, 2002, also a science fiction book club selection, the same year), BORROWED TIDES (Tor, 2001), and THE SILK CODE (Tor, 1999), and the nonfiction TOUCHING THE FACE OF THE COSMOS: ON THE INTERSECTION OF SPACE TRAVEL AND RELIGION (Fordham University Press, 2016).**

**IO:** What things have been most important to you in the writing of your books? What do you most want to show a reader?

**LEVINSON:** I love exploring the complexities of time travel, and its impact on the person as well as the world, and taking the reader along on these journeys. *THE PLOT TO SAVE SOCRATES*, *UNBURNING ALEXANDRIA*, and *CHRONICA—THE SIERRA WATERS TRILOGY*—are my major works in this area, along with *THE CHRONOLOGY PROTECTION CASE*, *THE LOOSE ENDS SAGA*, and, for that matter, *BORROWED TIDES*. But I also get a kick from writing about the here and now, the strange, incredible things that are bubbling just below the surface, before our very eyes that are looking elsewhere, and that kind of story—designed to wake up and shake up the reader—is the essence of my Phil D’Amato works, again, *THE CHRONOLOGY PROTECTION CASE*, and *THE COPYRIGHT NOTICE CASE*, and the three Phil D’Amato novels, *THE SILK CODE*, *THE CONSCIOUSNESS PLAGUE*, and *THE PIXEL EYE*.

**IO:** Does time travel represent anything found in life or thought other than itself precisely?

**LEVINSON:** In terms of travel to the past, I think everyone thinks about how life would be different if we were able to change a major event. What would our world now be like if JFK had not been assassinated—would we have gotten people not only to the Moon, but to Mars and

beyond our Solar System by now? And everyone would like to do something over, better than we actually did in our past. Travel to the future has powerful appeal—I'd love to see how my grandson is doing twenty-five years from now.

**IO:** Is this a different way of looking at things, thinking what our lives would be like if we had some sort of time travel?

**LEVINSON:** I guess it is, because it encourages us to look at the past and future in a different way. In that sense, time travel is a wonderful thought experiment.

**IO:** Are there any writers you consider compatriots in the things you are writing or writing about?

**LEVINSON:** Bonnie Rozanki's *THE MIND TRAVELER* (2015) is the best time-travel novel I've read in years, and treats the subject the way I like to see it treated, with full consideration of the paradoxes and ramifications of traveling back in time, in this case in a personal *tableau*. Rob Sawyer and I don't write about the same things, but I love the sheer daring of his ideas, for example in *FLASH FORWARD*, which deserved not only to be made into a major television series, but a series we should still be watching today.

**IO:** Your histories in your novels seem to be out of the usual historical range. Are you calling attention to ignored or unknown histories you want to have be more well-known?

**LEVINSON:** We know very little about pre-historic histories, because, being prior to written records, or records in writing we can understand, we have only fossil and other bits of physical evidence to rely upon. What did these diverse people think? Difficult to tell,

because we have no written or acoustic recordings of their thoughts. But chances are they were as intelligent as we are today, since brains do not evolve that quickly. This means that these people likely understood things, knew things, which we no longer understand today. And those kinds of stories are precisely the ones I most enjoy exploring in my science fiction.

**IO:** Is any of the history you describe alternate history, in the fictional sense?

**LEVINSON:** The history I write about in my fiction—when it’s recorded history, not pre-history, which is always the product of speculation—is not alternate but secret history, by which I mean, my history does not contradict or differ from what we know from historical records, but rather tells what happened between the cracks, in places and situations that were not recorded. Thus, in *THE PLOT TO SAVE SOCRATES*, I tell what happened to Socrates right after Crito left, and Socrates rejected Crito’s plan to help Socrates escape. And, in *THE SILK CODE*, I tell what happened in those caves in Basque territory, when historians recording their history weren’t paying attention.

**IO:** Is biological warfare a major danger at the present time?

**LEVINSON:** Yes, biological warfare is a major danger in our world, and has been throughout our history. Unlike other weapons, deadly viruses are self-replicating, or replicate themselves with the unintended help of the invaded host, and that makes them very difficult to control. Any weapon that harnesses the awesome power of nature is in a class of its own as a dagger to the heart of our species.

**IO:** Have you had personal experience with the things you write about?

**LEVINSON:** I've never time traveled, engaged in biological warfare, or traveled to Alpha Centauri, so, in that sense, I've had zero experience with these themes in my novels. But...all my novels and stories have some connection to New York City, where I was born and lived and worked all of my life, and its restaurants, parks, subways, universities, and streets play major roles in my novels and stories. And other places I've visited and seen first hand in one way or another also play a role—London, Chicago, and Wilmington, Delaware—also flesh out my stories. I never write about a place or train in my stories unless I've actually been there or traveled that route.

**IO:** What will be some of your future considerations?

**LEVINSON:** I'm writing a fourth Phil D'Amato novel, and a sequel to *BORROWED TIDES*. And I have 10,000 words on a brand new time travel story, with famous characters you haven't seen in any of my stories before, and I'm still deciding whether to expand it into a novel or finish it as a novelette.



## Letter Column

**Denise A. Fisk, [greenrose205@gmail.com](mailto:greenrose205@gmail.com)** : [To George Fillies] Hi George! Congrats on bringing back the "Ionisphere"! Here is a toast to many more in the future! Will this be published monthly, bi-monthly? I would like to fill the "news contacts" position. However, what are the exact functions of this?

Correction to what John Thiel wrote in his introduction. "...I would like to find someone to do this (particular position) and add him to the department."

Ummmm. While male pronouns, such as the above, usually refer to both men and women, it is running out of "steam", as it were. With many more females in the ranks of so many fandom positions, the collective "he" pronoun should now be changed to "he or she", to respect each gender. The redundant "he" doesn't cover both genders any more.

*Ms. Fisk was considered for the news position, but upon having the exact functions expected of the position explained to her, declined.*

*That is all the commentary IO has as yet received, but I would like to extend a full invitation to any and all of you to write in and comment on the issues whenever you chance to have something to say. Of course this department encourages correspondence. Address correspondence to me at the email address given at the top of the first page. Oh, why not give it here too? It's [kinethiel@comcast.net](mailto:kinethiel@comcast.net).*

*And this concludes our second issue; probably there will be expanded contents in the third issue, which will come out in two months, for our schedule is a bimonthly one. Our back cover, Hugo Gernsback. SF Founder.*



