



LUNA

NUMBER 1-1962

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LUNA, published by Franklin M. Dietz Jr., 1750 Walton Avenue, Bronx 53, N.Y. approximately four times a year.

Subscription rate: four for 50¢, single copies 15¢. Checks or money orders should be payable to Franklin M. Dietz Jr.

Trades accepted only on a selective basis. Fan editors wishing to trade should send sample copy, with note indicating desired trade basis if other than all for all.

STATION LUNA SPEAKING

This is a fanzine, by definition an amateur science fiction fan publication. However, I think it is not one which will fit into the general category that so many others do: here today, forgotten tomorrow. It's a venture in publishing that I've wanted to do for several years.

I found, soon after I started tape recording at the World Conventions, that many of the speeches and discussions on the program were extremely good. I felt that it was a shame that more hadn't been done to attempt to publish this material, give it a wider circulation and more lasting effect than the spoken word has on an excitement-packed gathering, where few who hear a speech actually take home a memory of what was said.

Fandom these days, for the past year or two, seems to be crying for some good solid material into which to dig its teeth, and these Con speeches are an excellent source of real thought-provoking topics. Not only is it a known fact that a person retains far more of what he reads than of what he hears, but printed material can be re-read, and referred to in detail by anyone wishing to take some positive action with relation to it, be he objecting to the discussion, agreeing with it, or even expanding upon it.

To give credit where credit is due, there have been a few others who also have seen this, and have constructively done something about it. To my recollection, Harlan Ellison was the first to actually go out after the texts of convention speeches for his 'Dimensions'. Norman Metcalf has more recently also been doing the same thing. And the past few years have seen several convention committees publish post-convention reports, in which they have presented the speeches by their respective Guests of Honor.

However, not only is there a host of material which has been by-passed by these few, but at each regional conference and convention the author, editor, or other guest speaker, who spends a good deal of time and effort preparing his address, is seeing his work vanishing after falling on the ears of the small number who were able to come to hear his speech.

This is a situation I'd like to help correct as far as possible with this magazine. It's contents will be devoted almost completely to publication of speeches, panel discussions, etc. from these conferences and conventions. I don't say exclusively, because I think that occasionally one of you are going to feel that one of these speeches or discussions should be answered, or amplified upon, or commented on in an article you'd like to write. And I'd like to keep the pages here open for these items too.

At the same time, I realize that most of you will not be inclined to write complete articles relating to a particular talk. But you will want to offer useful comments in a letter. Communication is a two-way channel, and it is my hope that we can hear from you on the other end too. As James Blish said in effect at last month's Philadelphia Conference, writing today has become a one-way proposition, since the loss of the letter columns in the prozines the authors no longer have any idea of what the readers like and don't like.

So, as I said above, it is my hope that we can hear from you, as wherever possible when your comments warrant it, I'd like to pass them along to the speaker in question.

Good reading.....

Frank

* Held on November 18-19, 1961

NEW MAPS OF AMIS,
OR
IT SOUNDS LIKE HELL TO ME

A Speech* by

RANDALL GARRETT

I have a book. It received quite a play-up in Time a few weeks back. It's called New Maps Of Hell, by Kingsley Amis. Hell is probably the word for it. No, it's not, I can think of others, but as you said, this is a family magazine.

I just read this last night, and when I finished reading it I junked the speech that I had originally come up to give, which I fortunately hadn't written yet. It was easy to junk.....

This is supposed to be a critique of science fiction. Mr. Amis feels that for some reason he is worthy to tell the public what science fiction is, where it's been, and where it's going.

You know this business -- Laugh and the world laughs with you, and if you feel sad you wish everybody else wouldn't laugh, you wish they felt as bad as you did. When you're in love, you wish everybody were in love. Well, Mr. Kingsley Amis is one of these biggish gentlemen called an angry Young Man. And he succeeds in making everybody who reads the book an angry young man.

He's got some definitions of science fiction in here that require all kinds of taking apart. Quote, "Prolonged cogitation, however, would lead one to something like this: Science Fiction is that class of prose narrative treating of a situation that could not arise in the world we know, but which is hypothesized on the basis of some innovation in science or technology, or pseudo-science, or pseudo-technology, whether human or extraterrestrial in origin."

Anybody that wants to hear that again can buy the book.

I don't suggest that anybody buy the book.

That's his definition of science fiction. Of course, the active little phrase here is "that could not arise in the world we know". Well, that junks most science fiction that takes place within the next five years. You know, "the world we know" of course does not include the future, we don't know anything about the future, and we can't even predict that the sun is going to come up tomorrow, because that would make it science fiction.

* Presented at the Lunacon 1960, sponsored by the Lunarians in New York City April 10, 1960.

I hate to say that Kingsley Amis is an idiot, but he obviously knows very little about science fiction. He's read all of Pohl and Kornbluth's stuff. To give you an idea of the man's taste, he says that Fred Pohl is probably the greatest science fiction writer in the field today. And he doesn't even mention my name in it. To compound his idiocy, he doesn't even mention Judith Merrill's name, although he quotes from stories she has published in her anthologies. He refers at least a dozen times to 'the editor of Astounding', and does not mention that editor's name until he has something nasty to say about him at the end. Anybody want to hear it?

He is deploring the terrible things that have happened in science fiction, and what should be done to clean it up: "What one really wants to see, of course, is not merely a process of self-reform on the part of existing science fiction authors, but an irruption into the field of a new sort of talent: young writers equally at home in this and ordinary fiction. One imagines them breaking up that stuffy convention atmosphere, getting rid of the translation machine and the thought form and all the rest of the cliquish jargon, making it unnecessary for poor L. Sprague de Camp to turn out any more essays explaining how stories are written, and, above all, kicking out the cranks who seem bent on giving science fiction a bad name -- John Campbell, the editor of Astounding, with his psi machine and his interest in reincarnation and his superman theory, Reginald Bretnor and A. E. van Vogt with their conversion to Korzybski's so-called general semantics, L. Ron Hubbard and A. E. van Vogt and John Campbell with the mysterious mental science of dianetics (Of one book on the subject, the blurb claims proudly that four of the first fifteen people who read it went insane)."

That's when he finally gets around to mentioning John Campbell. He quotes some of the most fantastic circulation figures in here I've ever heard. Galaxy is selling 125,000 a month, Astounding is selling 100,000 (which I happen to know is pretty close to correct), Amazing is only selling 50,000. I wonder where he got his information?

"A survey of readership can start with a figure or two: Galaxy sells about 125,000 an issue in the United States, plus editions in England, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Finland, and Sweden, in the appropriate languages. The Swedes are reported to be particularly keen, which recalls the fact that they are also the most jazz-conscious nation in Europe."

All the way through the book Kingsley Amis tries to tie up science fiction with jazz. I don't see the connection myself; I mean lots of people like jazz, lots of people like science fiction, the two areas overlap.

There's a fallacy in logic, I've forgotten the Latin for it, 'Because A follows B, therefore A is the cause of B'.* He seems to think that because some science fiction readers like jazz and some jazz players like science fiction, that one is the cause of the other, and he's digging all through this book to find out which one it is.

To continue: "Astounding has its foreign editions and sells something like 100,000 an issue in America, 35,000 in England, with subscribers in Africa, the Near East, Russia and China. Amazing, which seems to circulate only in English, has an American sale of 50,000. Taking into account the tendency whereby those who read science fiction at all will read Astounding, and presupposing a good deal of swapping between enthusiasts, one comes up with a total science-fiction readership in the United States of something approaching half a million."

4 * Post hoc, ergo propter hoc.

What he doesn't know is the "Who Reads This Stuff" business that we've had in science fiction lately. Well, if his figure is right, if there are half a million people who read the stuff -- then who are all these people who come to conventions? Most of them have never read the stuff. I mean, I can understand when somebody says "That's Randy Garrett!" and somebody says "Who's he?", but when somebody says "That's E. E. Smith;" and somebody says "Who's he?", you begin to wonder. And when somebody says that to Ed Emshwiller, everybody says "Oh, him I know." Actually that's not true, you know.

In reading the thing as a whole, you see that Kingsley Amis has the feeling that he knows all there is to know about science fiction. He seems to have read it, he knows nothing whatever about professional courtesy. I said he doesn't mention my name: he mentions a story of mine. He mentions stories by Bob Silverberg; I don't believe Silverberg's name is in the book. About half the stories he mentions are simply mentioned, something about the plot is given in there, then tossed aside. Half the time you don't know where he read them, and most of the time he doesn't even know who the author is.

You get the feeling that Mr. Amis came over to this country and made a friend or two, and was sort of lead around by the nose by somebody who was deeply interested in getting this Angry Young Man to write something about science fiction, but he was first going to tell him very carefully what science fiction was. It sounds like a fan who has been reading the stuff for about a year, and has decided that he can tell everything about all the people who have written it, all their little personal foibles, and what's wrong with it. He doesn't seem to know what he's talking about from one page to the next. He contradicts himself all the way through it.

It's the most exasperating book I ever read.

Kingsley Amis seems to think that he knows where science fiction is going, and where it should go, without knowing what science fiction is. He's not the only one to fall into that trap, because there are a lot of people, probably a lot here in this room, including those who write it, who are not quite sure what it is they are writing. Until you know what sort of thing science fiction is -- and should be -- you can't stand back and sight along it and see where it's going. The old business of "extrapolation" used to be simple: you took a sight along the path, and then did an about-face, and sighted along the future.

That doesn't work with science fiction. There's nothing to sight along. It goes along like this, [gesturing with both hands, up and down, sine-wave fashion] sales go up, sales go down -- different kinds of fads come in. Dianetics, anyone?

The trouble that everybody screamed about, or has been screaming about since the war, is that the scientists have caught up with us. Well, there go all our rocket ships and atomic bombs and space satellites and what-have-you, and where could we go from here? I think if you'll notice, science fiction, especially since 1926, has always been a little bit behind the scientists. There were no rockets used in early science fiction until Goddard and a few of those boys sat down and pointed out that it was the only way known that you can move in space. Atomic bombs weren't mentioned until after Einstein pulled his $E = MC^2$ stuff. In 1938, after the uranium atom was fissioned everybody started using Uranium-235 for atomic bombs.

I don't think it's the purpose of science fiction to tell the scientists what to do, or where their next idea should come from, as far as discovery is concerned. And I don't think we've ever done it.

We all have to operate on what the scientists tell us. Of course they shift their ground, too -- pretty rapidly. I remember when Venus was a swamp. Then it was full of formaldehyde and dust. We got a swamp back again, hooray for the dinosaurs! We need that. I can only think of one story that was written on a dusty Venus, that was The Duplicated Man. That's the only one that comes to mind right off the bat, because dusty Venuses are no fun. We need fresh frozen dinosaurs on Venus, and marshes and like that.

Mars? Well, everybody can remember when Mars had canals on it, and water flowed from the North Pole to the South Pole every winter, and back up again in the spring. Yes, Mars turns over every year as it goes around, doesn't it?

Any science fiction writer should, I think, keep up with what is going on in science. This doesn't mean that he's going to discover any new great scientific discoveries. What he can do, and should do, is say, as they did in 1938 for instance, "Well, if you can break up three or four atoms of U-235 and get some extra energy out of it, what would happen if you had a big lot of it, and you could get rid of whole cities?" Some pretty lousy stories were written about that, you know. And some pretty good ones.

But, as far as Where Are We Going From This Point, well, what are the latest discoveries? How far could you go? The wonders of the great discoveries may get pretty tiring after a while. With all due respect to Mr. Sam Moskowitz, you can only wonder for so long and then your wonder begins to run out. Travelling, for instance -- distance. I think the first one to really give distance a big leap was Campbell, back in Invaders From The Infinite. Once you've travelled from one end of the universe to the other, there's no further you can travel. And when you have a gadget which does it instantaneously, you can't get any faster than that, so travel for the sake of travel is shot right there. You've gone to the absolute utter limits.

Things like invisibility -- How invisible can you get? Men have walked through walls (and I always did wonder why they didn't fall through the floor, if they were that soft and squishy): More than that you can't get. Every dream and fable that we've had (in Western fairy stories at any rate, and One Thousand And One Nights) -- every one of those has been carried to its absolute ultimate in stories that have already been printed. Heinlein has tied up the time machine in its own little knot so beautifully that nobody else even bothers with it any more.

So the actual action itself is meaningless, it's already been done. So, where are we going from here?

No place, we've already been there.

The gadget, the action, the marvelous new thing, the planet with walking plants, or rooted animals -- you can expand those as far as you want to, and usually you'll find that somebody did it before you. You can be like Phil Farmer and invent new methods of sexual intercourse if you want. That's always fun -- but not practical.

These should not be the things we are looking for. If anybody can think up a new space drive, for instance, fine, I'd like to see it. Nobody has, I think, since E. E. Smith. Anybody know of any later? So what's the purpose of inventing a space drive when, as far as we know, we've already carried the space drive to its ultimate end. You've got the hyperspace jump. That's it!

Mr. Amis comments that we have 'conventions' in science fiction which he doesn't like. It irritates him that we have faster-than-light space ships. This is bad because we just say: "He got in his space ship and went from here to here."

I suppose what he wants us to do in each case is to sit down and explain how this particular space ship works. He knows, and you know and I know that scientifically we cannot explain any way of going faster than light. But we also know that none of the planets here in the solar system are just right for the story we want. We want a planet where people can walk around and breathe. We don't want our hero clomping over the surface of the moon all the time, or walking around Mars wearing a breathing mask or something.

So we've got to set it on some planet way out yonder. And that means we've got to get people there. So we say: "He got in his space ship and pushed the ultra-clutch and off he went."

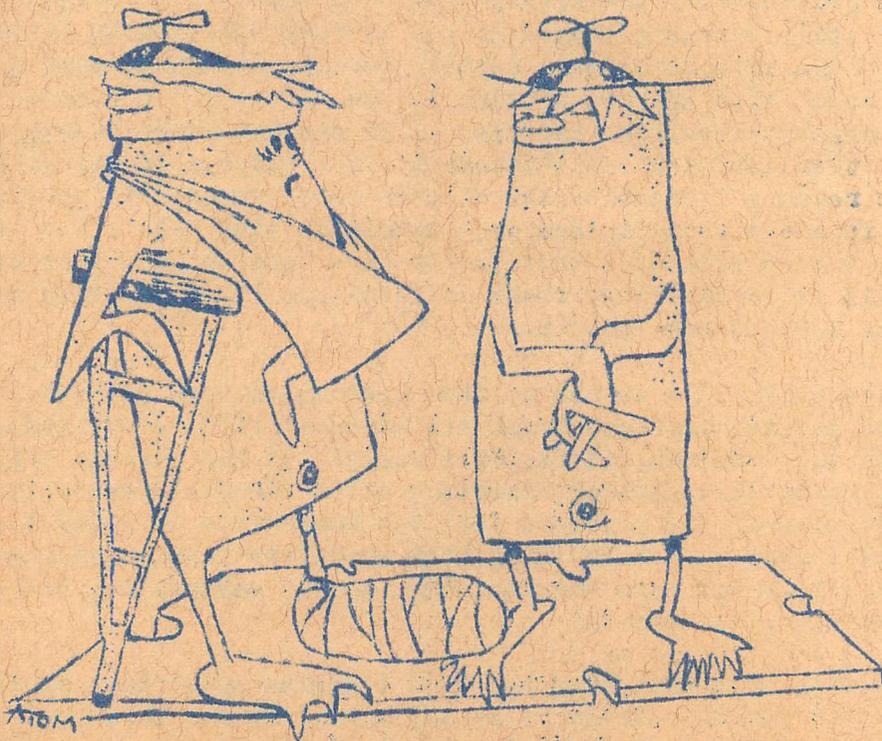
That's the only way you can do it. We have to have these conventions. Because, in that sense, the purpose of science fiction is not to do what Hugo Gernsback tried to do, make science popular. If popular means something that is studied by the people -- by the average man -- I don't think science will ever be popular. It still smacks of magic to the average man, and he doesn't like it. And he doesn't like science fiction either, because it smacks even more of magic. So the thing that science fiction is, as far as I'm concerned in my writing, the purpose of science fiction, is to see how human beings are going to react in a given situation. I think that's the purpose of all writing, except that in science fiction we are allowed more freedom. We're allowed to take a group of people and put them in a situation that nobody has been in before. Or, to take a situation that people have been in, and show how something can change it so that they react differently. Of course this applies both to fantasy and science fiction.

I think the only place we can go from here is to work out the problems that people and society may face under all kinds of given conditions, and if we keep working on it, (what was it Campbell called it? The Shotgun Effect?) if you keep blasting in that general direction often enough, eventually you will partially solve some of the problems that the human race is going to face sometime. There's only one other thing that should be done in science fiction: it should be a little bit more entertaining. And if anybody can tell me how to do that I'll be happy to hear it.

I want to read this one paragraph from Kingsley Amis' book so that I don't have to give you my opinion of it any more; you can form your own opinion. How many of you knew Cyril Kornbluth? Well, those of you who don't can check with those of you who knew him.

I want to read this paragraph: "Range of effect is uncommon in science-fiction writers, who show a depressing tendency to re-till their own small plot of ground: one thinks of Clifford Simak with his pastoral pieties, A. E. van Vogt with his superman fantasies, and almost anyone you like (Eric Frank Russell is the least unimaginative example) with his bright adventure stories and incuriosity about human character. Variety that goes beyond mere rearrangement is seldom to be found outside the works of Blish, Bradbury, Clarke, Sheckley, and Pohl, and variety of mood within a single work is rarer still. It does appear, however, in The Space Merchants, which has many claims to being the best science fiction novel so far. It is one of several which Pohl wrote in collaboration with C. M. Kornbluth, a prolific and competent author no longer with us. I will leave to the L. Sprague de Camps of the future the final determination of which partner is responsible for which scenes, but a check of Kornbluth's individual work - Not This August, in which America retrieves a total defeat by Russia and China, or Syndic, a chronicle of minor wars following upon a major one - soon suggests that his part in The Space Merchants was roughly to provide the more violent action while Pohl filled in the social background and the satire."

I wish I wasn't so angry. I don't even feel funny today.



"I only started telling him how good I thought the Kingsley Amis book is....."

SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM THROUGH THE YEARS

▲ Speech* by

E. EVERETT EVANS

There is one aspect of fandom that has intrigued me very much all of the time that I have been in it. This is the fact that science fiction fandom has been a testing ground, a proving ground, and a school for fans, youngsters, kids of even young ages - 10 and 12 and on up - to grow into our great professionals of today. The thing about that which I have noticed a lot, and one of the things that I have talked about quite a bit in the last few years, is the tendency among some of the older fans to push aside these "brats" who get in their hair with some of their silly ideas, and their talk, and their banter around, and things like that.

We have a saying out in Los Angeles and the LASFS that the deep creases that you see in the floor of our club room are from all the members of LASFS, the older members, getting down on their knees every Thursday night and thanking God that they didn't drown Ray Bradbury ten years ago when he was one of the brattiest brats of the whole bunch. And we say that to Ray's face, so I'm not saying anything behind his back.

Because here was a kid 12 years old who had an idea, who had a dream, and who had the ambition, and the will-to-do, and - more important - the place and the opportunity to put those dreams, those ambitions, into practice. Which was fandom. Here was a kid that knew from the very beginning back in those old days that someday he was going to be a writer. I have it on good authority, not only from Ray, but from other people, that since that time there has not been one single day that Ray Bradbury hasn't written at least 500 words. He worked for what he got, and that's one of the reasons, plus the fact that the guy is a young genius anyway, why Ray Bradbury is one of our top writers of today.

The same thing can hold true for - I could go ahead and give you name after name among our top authors for that same thing: they found in fandom a proving ground, a place and an opportunity where they could grow. Not only among the writers, but among a lot of others. I'm not going to just catalog names tonight, that isn't the purpose of this, but I will have to mention a few occasionally. And the ones whom I do not mention, there's no disparagement of them at all, it's simply that I don't want to start cataloging.

Almost from the first, when the magazines first came out, people started writing in letters to the editor. They would find the name of somebody in their own town, and they would get together and form a club. They would start writing letters directly to fan correspondents, from that the next stage was to get a pan of hecto jelly, and write down some of the things that they thought about and send it to a few other people. This gradually grew up to the tremendous number of fanzines which are appearing and have appeared through the past 20-25 years.

And all of those things were proving grounds and schools where people could improve and gradually better their knowledge of how to handle things, how to put words on paper, how to prepare material for an interesting sort of a book or

*Presented at the Nolacon, held over Labor Day weekend, 1951,
the 9th World Science Fiction Convention, in New Orleans, La.

magazine, and things of that sort. And from that has grown the fact that we have had a number of people graduate on up from the fanzine field into the professional field.

Also the same thing is true of artists. We've had youngsters, kids from 10 and 12 on up to 15, 20 and 30, and on up even, get their first chances of seeing their art published, on the hectograph or mimeograph, in the fan magazines. And a lot of these men have gone on to become some of our top-notch artists today. Having been the last six years in Los Angeles and knowing quite a bit about that, I can mention, of course, Hannes Bok, who was out there, as one.

There have been quite a number of others, several kids out there have done quite a bit of artwork, and are beginning to be published in the professional magazines. Not only from out there, but from all over the country. That again has been where fandom has been a proving ground, and a place where a man could grow into the ideal. It gives him a chance to increase his knowledge of the medium, and increase his ability to the point where it becomes professionally salable.

Then there were a number of others who started in this same way, in writing or publishing fanzines, who have gone on, and graduated into another step up above that, into the publishing as well as the editing of professional magazines. There are three that I know of now, and I think that is all at the present time. One of the earliest of those, of course, was Ray Palmer, who started in as a fan. He became a professional author, a professional editor, and now has his own magazines. Another one was Bill Crawford, who started in the same way, published - I don't think it was the earliest, but it was one of the earliest of the printed fan magazines - and now has his own magazine.

Then there were those who went still one notch higher than that. And that was the fans who graduated into what we call the agenting business. And the list is really rather impressive, because some of them have gone to quite great heights. I'm not sure of the dates on this, but I think probably the oldest was Julius Schwartz and Mort Weisinger. Sam Moskowitz and Jimmy Taurasi had their own agency at one time. One of the big agencies in New York at the present day is the Scott Meredith Literary Agency. Scott was a fan. Out in Los Angeles and Hollywood we have Torry Ackerman. So there is still another facet of the professional field that was filled by youngsters who have grown up in fandom, who have learned their trade, so to speak, through fandom.

Then there came the day when fans wanted books. They wanted some of the great stories of the olden times in book form, to keep permanently, because their old collection of magazines was getting pretty yellowed, pretty worn out. It was getting increasingly hard to get the old copies, having to pay two and three dollars for some of the issues. And when it came to getting anywhere from 2 to 7 issues of a magazine consecutively, that contained some story you wanted, it was very hard and very expensive to get.

So they wanted those stories in hard covers. But was it the professionals who were in the publishing business who took that up? No, it was the fans who started their own companies. There's quite a long list, including Lloyd Eshbach, Mel Korshak, Marty Greenberg, Bill Crawford, whom I mentioned before, and August Derleth, who was a fan in the first place, before he became a professional writer and publisher.

So we get from that a picture of the fact that here in this little cosmos we call fandom we have not only a lot of fun and enjoyment from our reading, our collecting, our fan publishing, and things of that sort, but we have a school, by which the average youngsters can grow up to do the things that they want.

YOU

A Talk* by

Theodore Sturgeon

I came here to talk about --- you. I have a very simple statement to make, but I'm going to have to make a speech before you understand what I mean by the simple statement.

I came here to talk about you, and so we'll start with you here in this room. You are science fiction people.

I owe a tremendous amount to science fiction. Science fiction is my best friend. It's also my worst enemy, but that doesn't alter the fact that it's my best friend. I get a kind of ... responsiveness out of science fiction people. Fans --- well, I've never understood fans. I don't think I ever was a fan --- not the kind who gets together with other fans. Perhaps I'm not gregarious. I'm not a joiner. But I started reading science fiction back in 1934. I got quite caught up in it. And then I began to read these readers' columns, and this was --- you. When I got to the point where I felt I could write a better story than the best story I'd read, I began writing science fiction, which was considerably later.

The people who are involved in science fiction, I think they're so very wonderful. They're so interested in so many, many things. This public attitude that science fiction fans come with propellorized beanies and something or other about rockets --- well ... I don't have to tell you that you're interested in a great many things besides rockets. Plenty of science fiction has been written about the here-and-now, and about the distant past, as well as the future. For this, then, this many-sided interest, this scope, I'm very grateful to science fiction fans, grateful to you.

Now I'd like to talk about you as people here in Philadelphia. Philadelphia means a great deal to me. I lived in Philadelphia for nine years. This isn't the first part of Bob Hope's gag: "I was in Philadelphia for nine years --- one weekend!" No, I really did, I lived here for nine years. This is not a very long time in terms of the other years I have lived; but I would like to remind you that when I lived those years here, they were, at the time, half my life. I was, I think, very much formed and shaped by the things which happened to me here. Naturally I've never forgotten them ... I still remember that the #10 car was the one that went out Lancaster Avenue, and the No. 11 that went out to Darby, and 38 went out to the city line, right? That's a long time ago, but I still remember those things. I went to Overbrook High School, and a matter of life and death was whether or not we won a football game with West Philly.

I'm very grateful to Philadelphia. I went to my first burlesque show in Philadelphia. I was twelve years old, paid fifteen cents and climbed a great many stairs. And I got thrown out for throwing my hat on the stage. At twelve you don't know quite what to do, you throw your hat on the stage.

*Presented at the Philadelphia Science Fiction Conference,
November 18, 1961, held at the Hotel Sheraton.



I remember when the Art Museum was opened. I remember when the Rodin Museum was opened. I remember being given a membership to the Franklin Institute. It was the most beautiful hand-lettered scroll, a parchment one, that you got in those days. I used to go there ... oh, I spent hours there, days on end, pushing those buttons and watching the chemicals mix, going into the Hall of Prime Movers, and so on. If anything in my life has affected me, directed me scientifically at all, it was that Franklin Institute. I wonder if the kids here in Philadelphia are really aware of what a treasure house that place is.

So ... Philadelphia has a great deal for me. I could tell you lots of other things about Philadelphia and me. I was sorry to leave it, and I'm always glad to come back too. To you --- Philadelphians, and people in Philadelphia whether or not you're Philadelphians.

I'd like to talk about you in a larger sense --- that is, as members of this American democracy of ours. ...but let me interject this point. When I sit here talking about you, and you, and you, I'm not holding myself apart from you. And I'm certainly not holding myself above you when I talk like this. I don't mean to be away from you as I say these things. I'm included; I'm a part of this. But there does seem to be (from what I read in the papers) something about the way I look at things. It seems it's possible for me to become, sometimes, a little more detached than most people around me --- people who seem to take for granted a great many things which rather amaze me. If I criticize anything, I'm not excluding myself and I'm not knocking the whole structure, I wish you'd keep this in mind as I talk about you, and what I feel is your responsibilities, you being what you are.

This is an American democracy we live in. We have freedom, and we fight for freedom, and I think that, with one exception which I'll go into later, the word freedom has had more balderdash talked about it, and it's one of the least defined things in our whole culture.

Everybody knows what freedom is, and we've got our Liberty Bell and all like that there. But we don't have freedom in this country. We don't have freedom of religion, for example. There are a great many of, in themselves, honorable religions in the world, some of which have a good deal more tradition and antiquity than Christianity and Judaism, which you are not free to practice in this country, if that be your preference. There are fertility religions; there are phallic religions. This is a very interesting thing, because, you know, local ordinances could keep you from worshipping that way, quite contrary to what seems to be the intent of the Constitution. The Constitution does not modify in any way its remarks on your freedom of worship. But just try using a naked lady as an altar --- for example --- and see what laws the local constabulary evokes to stop you. Any crossroads in the nation has legal means to stop that sort of carryings-on; you don't even have to go up to the county level.

Freedom of speech is also limited. It's limited rather well, I think, because the underlying philosophy seems to be that the law doesn't want you to damage anybody. On the other hand, freedom of speech has gotten some pretty mean curtailments from time to time. I was very interested to hear today that your local free-wheeling television station is not listed in your regional TV Guide. Yes, these things happen too.

Well ... how much freedom do you want, anyway? What is freedom? If you had total freedom, absolutely complete freedom, it would be pretty chaotic. There's no question about that. I don't think anybody wants all that freedom --- freedom to do absolutely anything. It might be fun for the first ten minutes; then you get

killed, and it needn't bother you any longer. There has to be limitations to freedom, in order for freedom to be defined at all. Freedom must be freedom-TO, or freedom-FROM something, or the term has no meaning. I've never yet heard a really good definition of freedom in a democracy --- never yet. Nor do I know of anybody who is really and truly and carefully examining it. That you must be vigilant, that you must earn it, that you must desire it, that you must be prepared to fight for and die for freedom ---sure. But nobody seems anxious for you to define it.

Here again I call on you, because it's your freedom. Tell us what this freedom is, exactly what you want to be free from, and free for. In the name of freedom we are subject to certain regimentations. We have a draft law in this country. Doesn't anybody feel that this works against his freedom?Some people are free, even, to do a great many good things, and maybe the good things are things they think are good and you do not. Maybe they've inherited a good deal of money and they're spending it on themselves. The extraction of money from mattresses and its injection into general trade might be called beneficent. Should the freedom of a beneficent playboy be curtailed? And what about the rule-of-thumb that a man should have the freedom to do anything ---absolutely anything --- which harms no one else? Should we then do nothing to prevent a psychopath --- even a wealthy self-supporting psychopath --- from getting his kicks by shoving needles into his leg muscles? Perhaps we should; but then was John Donne wrong when he said, "I am involved in mankind; every man's death diminishes me?" And for that matter, if we accept that rule-of-thumb, who's to define its parts? What is meant by 'harms'? How can we ever know, except within the narrowest limits, what activity is harmful? So much depends on the culture involved, and its stage of development. The Puritan taught his child, "Sing not. Hum not. Rin not. Laugh not." Oriental travellers in the Middle Ages went home to report with horror the scandalous fact that Europeans danced breast-to-breast.

I can't state here, as I said, the parameters of freedom. It's your freedom, and I think it's up to you to try to define it. I think it's very important, because unless somebody defines it, nobody will really know when it's being taken away from us. Unless somebody defines it, no one can expect to feel a real inner conviction that it's worth living for, fighting for, and dying for. I think that this is part of the very honorable old saying that the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. Unless you know what it is you're being vigilant about, you don't quite know where to look. I'll leave the subject of freedom on that, except to say that the time to be especially vigilant, looking especially hard for that definition, is when you are asked to do something in the name of freedom.

I attended a trial not long ago. It doesn't matter what the issues of the trial were. But the judge was a political appointee, and a local merchant, and a very nice guy. And it happened that he knew nothing whatsoever about court procedure, or the law, or those simple, vital, thoughtful reasons for having laws and courts in the first place. This man was apparently immune even from the smattering of law and court procedure a citizen can get from watching TV or reading whodunits.

The prosecuting attorney, an assistant D.A. who came up from a larger city, knew his job, and so did the defense lawyer. When the defense rose to object, the judge would stare at his own hands for a second, grow a little pink, and then flash a look at the prosecutor, who would nod or shake his head, or say, "I don't mind," or "Oh no!" and the judge would rule accordingly. How would you like to be on trial before a judge who sustained or overruled objections on the advice of the prosecutor?

The trial wound up, the summations were delivered, and the judge --- this was not a jury trial --- the judge found the defendant guilty and imposed a jail term. The defense attorney then rose to ask for a continuance to enable him to file an appeal. This was denied! The defendant was taken straight from the courtroom to the jail. The courtroom, of course, exploded in protest at that, but that didn't change anything. Back to you, then: how would you like to be the defendant in a trial like that?

Why I mention this at all is to point out that it happened in a village court in these United States. It isn't important in spite of the fact that it happened at the village level; it's important because it happened there. There are more villages than towns, more towns than cities; more people at the grassroots who are subject to legal ignorance, incompetence and venality than come under the flood-lighted procedures in big cities. And there is no way of knowing how many hundreds, how many thousands of times each month this happens to you in your courts. Did it ever occur to you to drop around while your local court is in session? It might be an eye-opener. You might even find real justice, justly applied --- that happens too. But wherever you find what freedom isn't, you'll be closer to that definition of what freedom is. The same thing can be said of justice; and the structure of our culture is such that it's your justice; your injustice; and nobody can help or hinder but you.

I'd like to go upward another step now, and talk about you as members of this world of ours. This is a very perplexing thing; humans moving in groups do the most extraordinary things. I've got a formula: if you want to find the intelligence quotient of a mob, you take the average I.Q. of the members of the mob, and divide by the number of people in the mob. And that's the I.Q. of a mob. It means a monster made of a thousand people, we'll say, with somewhat less intelligence than an earthworm. In the middle of this hall is a column four feet thick; that kind of monster could tear it out of here with its bare hands. It can do things a human can do: it can use a phone, strike a light, tie a knot.

Fortunately mobs don't happen too often, not here. But they're happening in other places, too often and too big. And it can happen anywhere, anytime; the seeds of it are always there. Have you ever heard the sound a mob makes? I have. It's the first sign you get that a crowd has become a mob. If you've ever heard it, you'll never forget it. If you've never heard it, and hear it for the first time, you'll know exactly what it is. I think it's sub-sonic. I don't know where it comes from, but it shatters the air, it melts your bones. If you ever get a chance to hear it, I suggest you go somewhere else. It's --- un-good.

Nations as a whole, I think, the bigger they get, the less intelligent they get. In larger issues, as they move in blocs we can regard as integers, they're just not smart. There are things that occur in the movements of nations, and the relationships between nations, which wouldn't be permitted in the average, well-run kindergarten. I have kids in kindergarten, and I know they just wouldn't be able to get away with it.

And in interpersonal relationships, such things wouldn't be permitted. Say I have a good friend, and I have a deadly enemy. My friend and I are close and share a great many things. My enemy is a deadly one --- he'll kill me the first chance he gets, and he has the power to do it. Then one fine day I discover that my friend and this killer are themselves friends of each other. Now, I couldn't tolerate a situation like that, and neither could you; none of us would, not for a minute. And yet, the way history moves when we're contemporary with it, it moves so hugely that we get no perspective, and we don't realize that such things happen.

You know, I've never heard anybody express any particular astonishment at the fact that Japan and the Soviet Union were neutral, and not at war, through the entire time that Japan was our most desperate and deadly enemy, and Russia our strongest ally. This is a thing so fantastic that I remember in the days before the war broke out, sitting around with friends trying to see how things were going to line up --- who would be on which side --- and somebody mentioned that lineup, that we'd be allies with Russia and Russia would remain at peace with Japan. And everybody hooted at him, they laughed at him, they thought he was making a big fat joke. Nobody as far as I know has since expressed any surprise at all at that impossible and immoral arrangement. And that's yours, too. You did that.

The things you can do!Isaac Asimov said to me late in 1957, when I was shedding a little blood over the Sputnik, "Don't worry like that. We're a species. We put it up there." I hadn't thought of that before. It's true enough. So I'll say, in the same context, you put it up there. That's something you can be proud of. We're also in a terrible fix. You got us into it.

You've got to get us out.

I've always thought that there was more thinking ability, more refreshing, sharp, way-out-there kind of inventiveness in a science fiction group than in any similar group you can find in the world. There is no similar group! There is no other such thing! We have no horizons. Listen: when the IBM engineers have a brainstorming session and they want to go what they call "far out", they call it Blue Sky Thinking. Well, the blue sky is a pretty close fence for a science fiction fan.

You know, it's occurred to me that any logical, non-far-out or nearby solution to the predicament in which humanity finds itself right now hasn't worked. And I just wondered if a solution couldn't be found in science fiction. Now, I'm not asking for floods of mail. I'm just asking you to think. I mean real goof-ball thinking. Because, since the near-in, non-goofball solutions haven't worked, about the only place to find a solution is far out.

But first we have to see what we mean by a solution. There's this machine, say, and it sends out some sort of rays, and everybody gets transfixed. Then you speak into a microphone and everyone does what you tell them to do. That's a solution. Total surrender to the Russians is a solution. Total destruction of the human race is a solution. Absolute annihilation of all dissenting groups is a solution, even if it has to wind up with one man alone on the planet.you see, merely finding a solution to war and strife and misery isn't enough. It has to be a solution that can work for the whole species. There is an increasing numb despair sweeping the world, because a solution for the species hasn't been found; it shows itself in the resignation of the Yangtze peasant who, after a crop failure and a flood, knows with absolute certainty that he is going to die before the year is out; in the tide of the meaningless emanating from the French existentialists; in the hopeless acceleration of the arms race. A practical solution must add hope to strength; there is no security in strength alone, because it is too easy for the enemy to grow as strong and stronger.

It is a great ideal to prefer death to slavery. Practically, there are a number of other things besides liberty which men are prepared to die rather than give up. National sovereignty, for one. In the cases of India and Pakistan, it is a creed. In some places, it's profits. In other places, it's land. Somehow, a real solution must preserve for the people those things without which it will not want to live.

It does seem hopeless. Yet my faith is unshaken, that somewhere, walking this earth at this moment, is a man with an idea and the power to implement it, or to explain it, or to invent it, or to do whatever else might be necessary to bring it into action; and it will work. And I persist in believing that the most promising area for the emergence of this man, idea, invention, or whatever, is in science fiction. Is in You. Is in that farther-than-blue-sky thinking of which you are capable. Some time soon You will --- You must --- come up with a viable solution for us all, a solution for free human beings, or --- let's say it this way --- free under law. Free to be able to live our lives in what the Declaration says: in pursuit of happiness. I urge you --- all of you --- to think about it and talk about it at science fiction clubs and conferences and conventions, and in stories and letter columns and among yourselves between times. If there is a possibility of a solution --- and there is --- it's within You, and you can find it --- you will. You must. What we'll do with it when we get it depends purely upon what it is. It has to be simple, it has to be understandable, and above all it has to be practical. 'Practical' means acceptable to the greatest possible number of people, not only in the United States, but in the world. That's a tough one, but it's yours, because you are You. You are You in Philadelphia, in America, on the world.

You're a very strange animal --- You.

You're funny ... and you're frightening ... and you're immensely powerful, and you're terribly inconsistent. Your potentialities are just --- incalculable. And ... you're --- so --- stupid!

I think there's a lot of hope for humanity.

I wish I could feel I had something to do with it.

**

Now it's time for me to get into the final question.

About freedom, I said that more balderdash is talked about it than any other subject --- with one exception. The exception ---

Love.

Damon Knight has written some very nice things about my examinations of love; and my preoccupation with it, and what it is, and what it means. About this too, apparently, I've been able to develop a certain degree of detachment.

It's a very fascinating thing. Viewed at large, it encompasses a great many things, love does. Love looks like various forms of ambition, sometimes; and sometimes it has many of the aspects of religion.

Love is ... well, here's a girl says she loves green, and another loves maple walnut. Men have died and worms have eaten them, but not for love. Love is a four-letter Anglo-Saxon monosyllable that's bandied about more commonly, and with more different importances, than money. Some of the things people say about it make it seem very important. Some are good. Like, "Love is when someone else's happiness becomes essential to you." I like that very much. That's Heinlein, of all people. Imagine that. It's hard to beat that one ... I wrote in a fanzine once that "It's fashionable to overlook the fact that an old-shoe lover loves loving old shoes. Love is something, I think, to do with the old biblical term "to know," in the Bible of the Old Testament especially. "He went in unto her and he knew her." For those who since high school haven't been able to detect the difference --- there it is. Sex isn't love, it's --- loving. It's a way of love.

And there are many, many more ways, many more aspects of love. "I never met a man I didn't like." Now this is a statement attributed to Will Rogers which has been quoted and quoted and quoted --- even by his son. I don't believe he said that. He was too perceptive a human being ever to have believed so fatuous a concept. I believe that what he really said was, "I never met a man I couldn't like." This makes it a totally different thing. It is a much more careful, more discriminating, more true thing, and certainly more worthy of Will Rogers. To me it means that in each human being there is something that can be liked --- or, for that matter, loved. It is a question of whether or not it's worth digging for it. I say it's always worth the digging, for what you find is a wonder; and I'll buy that statement: I never met a man I couldn't like. (Or woman either.)

But whether or not you're going to do that digging, I think herein we find a definition of love. The good Book says, "Love thy neighbor." Read: "Know thy neighbor." For "know" read "dig"; for that read "love." Loving is just that --- the effort it takes to find out what it is in your neighbor you can like. I think that this is what love is, and what love is for. And if you love this way, love becomes then, you see, very close to the biblical "knowing" --- a study of other people and learning to know them.

To know them --- to know neighbors, to know --- You. And that's what I've been writing about all these years. I write about what I'm looking for in people, what I'm trying to know. I write about You; so here is the statement I promised you:

I love You.

NOTE. The use of ellipses (...) in this transcript denotes a pause, and not deleted material.

Science Fiction Fandom Through The Years (Conclusion)

Now I've mentioned just a few names in the field, a few top ones - I did that purposely. If I were to give you a list I could keep going from here on in. Because a couple of us back in Los Angeles a few months ago, when I knew what I was going to talk about, sat down and started making out a list. And just from memory we covered sheet after sheet after sheet of people we knew of who started as fans, not as professionals who changed over to a new field, but as youngsters who started in the fan magazines, of their own or of others.

It's amusing to me in a way when I stop to think about it, of the number of these people who have done it. I said that we did quite a lot of checking, writing down of names of people that we could think of just in one evening, off-hand, without referring to any books or any magazines, just from memory. We listed over 350 fans who have sold stories professionally. I think it would be kind of interesting to find out how many of you,....well now, let's take it the easy way. How many of you who are fans have not sold a story professionally?

Well, what's stopping you? Come on in, the water's fine.

Thank you.

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