

market for science fiction in terms of properties bought. However, I also feel that the big money and success will continue to be in the area of the movies. Television still seems to be a very limited market and only *Star Trek* has been a real success in the past 20 years. Even the success of *Star Trek* was limited; it managed only three seasons compared to the ten-to-fifteen-plus seasons of *Gunsmoke* and other long-running television shows. *Star Trek* was good because it showed there was a market for science fiction. However, the ratings showed that the market was limited.

Your question implies that we should consider other mediums such as computer terminals, video cassettes, etc. I don't really see much chance for science fiction's developing a significant market in these areas. I may be wrong, but I feel that books have been around a long time and will continue to be around. I would personally rather read a book than watch television or a movie, and I think the people science fiction appeals to feel the same way.

4) Can it really be almost 20 years since I helped Earl Kemp put together the first *Who Killed Science Fiction?*

Age seems to sneak up on us. I look back and bits and pieces come to my memory. I still remember starting out early one Saturday morning to go to Lynn Hickman's house to do the printing. My memory of the trip was that it was sometime in the winter. I don't remember where Lynn lived then, but an examination of a map suggests that Dixon, Illinois, is the most likely candidate. It is amazing how one remembers some things and forgets others. I can't remember the town without prodding but I can remember Lynn's basement, his Multilith, and our troubles with a wandering bat. I still remember Lynn and me chasing that bat with tennis rackets around the basement and speculating that it was really Count Dracula (Lugosi, not Langella) trying to stop the publication of *Who Killed Science Fiction?* Or Reva Smiley.

The main thing that sticks in my mind about the production of *Who Killed Science Fiction?* was that it was a lot of effort, especially on Earl Kemp's part. There were a lot of Multilith masters involved, and he typed them all. There was a lot of effort in printing and there was a lot of work in collating. I remember that it took us two days at Lynn's house just to get the whole thing printed. Somehow, at the time, it seemed like too much effort for an organization like SAPS. This is not to put down SAPS, which was serving a real purpose, but that purpose was communication and comment, not the quality literary analyses approach that *Who Killed Science Fiction?* represented. *Who Killed Science Fiction?* should have been an Advent publication, rather than an amateur press association effort.

I look back on *Who Killed Science Fiction?* and its production with real fondness. It represents a simpler time in my life when I had the time, money, and energy to commit to a hobby. Twenty years later I find that I don't have the time or energy to devote to science fiction. Somehow the responsibilities of job and home seem to absorb all available time and energy. I look back now and wonder how Earl Kemp managed to get the time and energy not only for *Who Killed Science Fiction?* but for *Why Is a Fan?* and CHICON III, given his job and family responsibilities.

In any case, it was a good time, and something was produced from it of lasting value: A friendship that continues across 20 years and 3,500 miles.

PANSHIN, ALEXEI

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alexei Panshin". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and somewhat slanted to the right.

I've been privileged to see a copy of the rare first edition of *Who Killed Science Fiction?* only once. About the time that it was first published, I stayed overnight at the home of its editor, Earl Kemp, and in the morning, before the house awoke, I was able to pick up a copy off the end table and page through it hastily.

What did it say? I hardly remember now, my time with it was so short. I think I remember John W. Campbell, editor of the magazine that was about to change its name from *Astounding* to *Analog*, saying: "Nonsense, my good friend. Science fiction isn't dead. Science fiction is better than ever."

But I could be wrong about that.

What did *Who Killed Science Fiction?* really have to say? I'm not at all sure, but I'm very interested in finding out. I may not remember the details of ten brief minutes of reading but, for 20 years, the *fact* of that publication, *Who Killed Science Fiction?* has been of great importance to me.

At the time, I was only an uncritical science fiction fan, a bolter of raw meat. New science fiction paperbacks were published every day—and I took little notice of whether they were reprints from the magazines of 1941 or brand-new work published for the first time. As far as I knew, there was a bottomless well of science fiction. I wasn't prepared to note the weakness of contemporary work. I was not yet taking account of the fact that the *Queen's Own FBI* series of novels that John W. Campbell was currently printing in his magazine were shallow and trivial next to the SF that had first won my heart.

That science fiction was dead was a new thought to me.

How could science fiction die?

It brought me up short. It made me think.

I wanted to write science fiction. I was trying to write it.

I needed to know—was science fiction dead? Who had killed it, and why? What did it all mean?

Like a good detective, I had to get the whole picture. If I wanted to write SF, as I did

and still do, I felt I needed to know what the nature of science fiction was, where it came from, and where it was going. Ever since 1960, I've wrestled with Earl Kemp's question, "Who killed science fiction?" and attempted to solve the case.

I pursued the question through the middle and late 1960s, when it seemed far stranger and less likely than it had in 1960. Science fiction apparently rose from the grave. In the hands of writers like Zelazny and Delany, science fiction seemed renewed, turned to new subjects, framed in new language. And I was part of all this action. My first novel, published in 1968, won the SFWA Nebula Award as Best Science Fiction Novel of the year.*

*Alexei is too modest. He should have named his first novel, *Rite of Passage*, and be justifiably proud of its awards as well.-E.K.

A strange and powerful corpse, this science fiction.

And yet, by the end of the 1960s, I came to the conclusion that, unlikely as it might seem in the midst of all this blaze of activity, Earl Kemp had been right to raise his question in 1960. I was gripped by the conviction that the science fiction I had known and loved all the years of my youth was no longer valid. That it had no more room for growth, no more spark, no more truth. And that I could not write it.

And yet I still believed in the validity of SF. I was still touched by its magic. I still wanted to write SF—as I do today.

I still wanted to write SF. And I believed that "science fiction" in the Gernsback/Campbell sense was dead.

I've spent the 1970s, with the help of my wife, Cory, in trying to get to the bottom of this. I've written little fiction. Instead, I've collected testimony, compared clues, examined facts, and written in my casebook. Through the 1970s, perhaps more than any other persons, Cory and I have written about the nature and meaning of SF, and the mortality of science fiction.

It's only appropriate, then, that Earl Kemp should have written to me now, 20 years later, invoking the name of the kid from Michigan who once slept on his sofa, asking me to contribute to this after-20-years edition of *Who Killed Science Fiction?* Cory and I think we know the answer to the question at last.

Our conclusion is that each era has its own SF—in the large sense—its own form of mythic literature, attuned to the needs and knowledge of that time. Each new formation of SF has its own life and death. It starts off full of beans and tricks, rife with possibility, and at the end is a tired old shuffler, a tyrant, an impediment ripe for a slit throat.

Science fiction, born in the days of Wells, recognized as itself in the days of Gernsback, came into its Golden Age in the days of Campbell—pushing the previous lost race and

occult formation of SF from the stage. Science fiction had its period as the typical form of SF, its galactic venturings the mythic template for the technological expansiveness of the postwar era. Science fiction stumbled mightily at the end of the 1950s—and Earl Kemp rightly detected this first sign of mortality. Science fiction isn't quite dead yet, as I write this in 1979, but its breathing is labored.

The new form of SF is already here. It doesn't have a clearly separate name, but it might be called eco-SF. In these stories it is the environment, the web of ecology, the interaction of the whole of human consciousness that is the transcendent driving-wheel, the source of energy, and not technological inventiveness as in "science fiction." Early examples of this new SF form appeared in the 1950s. *The Space Merchants* (Pohl and Kornbluth), which based its criticisms of rampant technology in ecology, is one. More and more SF since, whether apparently "science fiction" or "New Wave experimentalism" or "neo-fantasy," has shared this same new basis, founding its wonders and marvels not in technology but in ecology.

We are now in the process of leaving the technological era for the ecological era—signaled by the so-called Energy Crisis—and the new eco-SF is about to step forward into its own Golden Age: 1938 all over again, but more so.

In fact, those new movies and occasional books that have had unprecedented popular successes in recent times have not been "science fiction" but rather the new eco-SF. *Star Wars*, however much it may have borrowed from science fiction, as science fiction borrowed from the lost race novel, does not rely upon a science-fictional superweapon constructed out of toothpicks and chicken wire to smash the *Deathstar*. Rather, it is the universal mind-power, The Force, that is called upon.

Before long, the popularity of the new eco-SF will be so overwhelming and general that science fiction will be completely shoved into the background. A curiosity. A strange prototype. A who cares? Before the end of the century, the new SF will be the mainstream, the commonplace mode of expression. "Science fiction" will look like the work of plumbers. The new SF will be subtle and flexible, its paramount means of expression the video disc circulating by subscription, mail order, and clandestine means.

No Grand Sachem should be picked as the paramount figure in the emergence of eco-SF. No Gernsback. No Campbell. Instead, the combined work of many persons in a variety of areas will be recognized—academics, critics, editors, writers, directors. Such will be the scope and power of the new SF that many persons will be recognized for many reasons. In fact, such will be the ecological frame of mind that no one particular person will be singled out for unique honor. Rather, it will quite properly seem that the efforts of a wide variety of particular persons, the drift of events, luck, and this and that, all contributed to a field effect, a sudden great synergetic alteration explainable in the current fashionable and persuasive languages of Catastrophe Theory and the Theory of Dissipative Structures—and suddenly, lo!, SF emerged into prominence and became the mode of the day.

From the perspective of the year 2000, if one is concerned with the fate of science

fiction, the most important book of the period 1960 to 1980 may well be Robert Heinlein's *Number of the Beast*, for Heinlein's deliberate undermining of the metaphysical centrality and veracity of the *Future History* series, Heinlein's fundamental contribution to modern science fiction.

In fact, so fast is the revolution of thought these days, by the year 2000 it seems likely that the ecologically minded form of SF will have had its day and be showing its own first signs of impending mortality. The question of that day is likely to be "Why Has the Force Been So Wan Lately?" The successor myth, eco-SF's challenger and heir, antagonist and offspring, will already be on the stage, giving eco-SF the elbow, challenging it for its lack of centrality of vision, for its failures to acknowledge higher purpose, for its relativity and irresponsibility.

So much will have happened by the year 2000, in the sphere of daily life every bit as much as in the sphere of mythic consciousness, that all in all I can't help but wonder whether the Third Edition of *Who Killed Science Fiction?* that Earl Kemp has projected for the year 2000 will ever be published. Who killed science fiction? Too much will have happened in the meantime for anyone to care who done the old goat in. It was all so long ago, and besides, it was only the plumber.

Surely the question can be settled now, once and for all, so that it won't ever have to be brought up again.

Who killed science fiction?

You say that Heinlein didn't quite do the job? There are still a few kicks in the corpse?

All right. Hand me the knife. I'll do it.

There! (Anyone else want to have a hack?)

Hail, Death!

REYNOLDS, MACK

1) I'm of the opinion that the factor that has led most of the present boom in science fiction is the increase in pay for the writer. Before 1960 there were a few markets compared with today and the pay was fantastically low, often as little as a penny a word. And at that time there were few anthologies. In short, when you sold your story it was unlikely that you'd ever make anything more on it. Paperbacks were relatively few, and, if you sold a serial to one of the magazines, you'd have little chance of seeing it later as a book. There were very few writers who made a living writing science fiction exclusively. I doubt if there were more than half a dozen. Even such old-time favorites as Jack Williamson and Cliff Simak wrote their stories in their spare time, while Jack taught and Cliff edited a newspaper. The present writer made a living as a free-lancer but had to augment his science fiction income by doing travel articles and other things outside the

field.

Today, you can make a living. In fact, some of the top pros have become comparatively rich. At this writing Arthur C. Clarke has retired in comfort. Bob Heinlein is holding out for a million for his latest book. Bob Silverberg got nearly a quarter of a million for hardcover rights alone on the strength of an outline.

For one thing, the markets are considerably more numerous. Science fiction used to be largely an American and British phenomenon. Now it's worldwide. The other day, I sold four stories to Yugoslavia. One was "The Business as Usual," which I originally wrote in 1950 and sold to *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* for around \$35. The Yugoslavians gave me over \$100. And it's sold elsewhere, to anthologies, to collections, to college textbooks, in translation—perhaps 30 times. They even made it into a television show in Belgium. Then there are movie sales. Before 1960 precious few science fiction writers sold to Hollywood. The same applied to television.

When you sell a story now, you have a property, not a one-sale thing. You'll sell that same story over and over again. It means that you can afford to make science fiction your profession now. There are dozens of full-time science fiction writers in the field, and that makes for better quality. You no longer dash off a yarn in your spare time, largely out of pure affection for the genre, but devote all the hours necessary with the expectation of making quite a bit of money.

2) I think I'd probably choose Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Dispossessed* as the one book I'd want to keep. I'm a specialist in science fiction with socioeconomic themes myself and think there is much too little of political economy in our field. You'd think that science fiction would be crawling with stories about future societies. But no. More often than not, when even such masters as Asimov and van Vogt wrote their *Foundation* and *Weapon Shops* series, the governments of the future are feudalism. They don't even have capitalism. They've gone back to feudalism. Ursula, however, in her book, presents us with an anarchistic society, and a sympathetic one at that. It's a beautiful job of extrapolating in the field of socioeconomics.

3) I hate to say it, but I have a suspicion that television (and possibly Tri- Di) will continue to take over. I suspect that by the turn of the century there will be fewer books and more screens. What books we do read will probably be flashed on a screen for us from the National Data Banks. The cost of paper is skyrocketing and will continue to do so as our forests become more and more depleted. Newspapers, magazines, and even books are going to make less and less sense. Flash 'em on a screen rather than outright buy a hardcover or paperback book.

4) Sorry, I was in Europe when *Who Killed Science Fiction?* was published and, though I heard of the book, I've never seen it. I look forward to the new edition.

SCHWEITZER, DARRELL

1) It's not simple enough that one person can be singled out, but I feel a lot of credit goes to Donald Wollheim. He is responsible for both the Edgar Rice Burroughs and J.R.R. Tolkien booms, which caused fantastic literature to be more widely read than ever before. While Burroughs and Tolkien aren't directly related to the mainstream of science fiction, it did bring to the attention of publishers the fact that fantastic books *sell*. This is of enormous value, particularly after the barren period of the late 1950s when they didn't seem to have been selling much. Donald Wollheim also gets credit for publishing the first novels of writers who would become the superstars of the more prosperous late 1960s—Roger Zelazny, Ursula LeGuin, Samuel Delany, Thomas Disch, etc.

The field has gained sophistication and sensitivity since the end of the 1950s. Credit for this goes to editors who published material which might not have been understood or even recognized as science fiction in an earlier period. Cele Goldsmith, as editor of *Amazing* and *Fantastic*, certainly raised those magazines to heights not achieved before or since. John Carnell's *Science Fantasy*, even more than his *New Worlds*, helped to raise the quality of the field. The Michael Moorcock *New Worlds* and the various "new wave" anthologies published in the United States, notably *Dangerous Visions* (edited by Harlan Ellison), were important more for the publicity they generated and the change they brought about than the actual quality of the material published in them, although there was much of merit in them, particularly in *New Worlds* from 1964 to 1967. All this concern about expanding the boundaries of the field couldn't help but do exactly that. This helped to bring science fiction out of the creative paralysis it was in circa 1960. Writers began to do something more than just repeats of previous concepts. They began to pay more attention to *how* their material was written. This in turn created a market for more sophisticated material. My guess would be that many of the most distinguished works of the 1960s, including Zelazny's *The Dream Master*, Disch's *Camp Concentration*, Aldiss' *Barefoot in the Head*, and Brunner's *Stand on Zanzibar* could not have been published ten years earlier.

An increase in quality brings in new readers, and it also attracts academics, which introduce their classes to the material. It would have been absurd to teach the *Lensman* series in a classroom, since the writing fails on every level the academically trained person knows how to recognize, all the way down to grammar. An innovative idea is not enough for this audience. They demand excellence of form, too. Now there were stories worthy of adult interest published in science fiction magazines as early as the middle 1930s, and literate science fiction appeared with some regularity after John Campbell became editor of *Astounding*, but as a general rule it takes a university English department 20 to 30 years to find this sort of thing out. The universities, far from being leaders in any cultural trend, are always well to the rear. I suspect the process is one of teachers being replaced by their students. When, in the 1950s, a college teacher proclaimed science fiction to be illiterate trash, his students (who read what was then being published and were not basing their judgments on, at best, a skimpy knowledge of 1930s material) knew better. By the 1960s these people had become the professors. Jack Williamson's researches in the area of science fiction courses will bear this out. The numbers increase dramatically from the

early 1960s onward. Someone entering an academic career in, say, 1965, grew up reading the science fiction of the late 1940s and of the 1950s. He knew better than his teachers.

On a broader scale, we find that a vast number of fantasy and science fiction books were published by regular publishers, and science fiction short stories were published in mass-circulation magazines. About the time of the Depression, this stopped. It did not resume until after World War II. Anyone whose literary values were formed in the schools or by what was critically fashionable from the 1920s onward would be under the impression that fantasy is for children and anything imaginative is somehow suspect as not being “serious.” In my experience, this has been true of older professors I have known, but not of the younger ones. It’s also true of older people in general, those who were part of a generation raised without any exposure to the fantastic. But this is a temporary aberration, since human literature has been dominated by the imaginative throughout most of history, except very recently. I suspect things are simply reverting to normal. There now exists an audience which regards science fiction/fantasy as an ordinary form of writing. The idea that it is shunned and forbidden is probably beyond the experience of most people living today who are under 35 years of age.

I do not think films have had any important impact. There is not enough evidence that the *Star Trek/Star Wars* audience is a reading audience, although *2001*, with its attempts at philosophical seriousness, perhaps did attract book readers to science fiction. But it is important to note that no significant science fiction films, marketed as science fiction, were produced during the period of recovery, roughly 1963-67. I would say that the recovery is an artistic phenomenon, in that writers learned new things to say and new ways to say them, and thus kept boredom and stagnation away, and a publishing phenomenon in that publishers began to see science fiction as a money-making category. Each science fiction bestseller, *Stranger in a Strange Land*, *Dune*, etc., helped to make science fiction more than an extremely marginal proposition.

2) This is really an unanswerable question, since one must choose either an anthology which contains the most representative selection of stories, or a collection by one of the best writers, or the best novel. It is a very imprecise thing to say this or that is *the* best work because something else may be just as good in another way. Disch’s *Camp Concentration* attempts things never attempted in a science fiction novel before, and it is written with a polish and sophistication seldom matched, but the author found himself backed into a corner where allegorical necessity forced him to pull a rabbit out of a hat, and so he did, at the expense of plot logic. Probably the richest book of this period, for detailed imagination and ideas, is John Brunner’s *Stand on Zanzibar*, which also represents a quantum leap for the science fiction field as a whole. Roger Zelazny’s *The Dream Master* may be the most perfect infusion of outside literary material into science fiction, and it too is a significant advance, since one of the failings of science fiction during the failing period of the end of the 1950s was that it was too derivative of other science fiction and too little aware of the rest of human thought and culture. Samuel Delany’s *Driftglass* is probably the best story collection of the decade, demonstrating all the growth and acquired strengths of the new science fiction without any of its self-indulgent weaknesses. J.G. Ballard’s *Chronopolis* is also of considerable note for its infusion of

surrealism into science fiction, something which probably would have been unpublishable fifteen years earlier.

3) I think science fiction in 2000 will still be a printed medium for the most part. If one projects current publishing trends, the growth of science fiction against the shrinkage of other forms of fiction, it seems obvious that science fiction will account for all fiction being published in a decade or so. Of course curves like that never work out. They level off. The growth of science fiction is inherently limited by the available number of literate people capable of assimilating imaginative material. By the end of the century the old prejudice against science fiction should have died completely, although there may be a reaction in the sense it may seem old hat to some readers, the same way the medieval romance seemed exhausted by 1600 and the gothic novel (real gothics like Hugh Walpole and Mrs. Radcliffe, not ladies' nightgown and candle epics) were pretty worn out by the middle of the nineteenth century. There is a real possibility of this if the writers and readers of today become complacent with what is being written and published. I see some indications that the science fiction market is presently expanded, the demand exceeding the supply of top-grade material. As a result some mediocre writers, who scarcely would have attracted any attention at all in the late 1960s, are now superstars. But excellent science fiction continues to be published, and new writers are entering the field at an unprecedented rate, so I don't see stagnation in the immediate future. Probably in the year 2000 there will be science fiction novels as conventional and formula-ridden as a contemporary bestseller, serving the same needs, selling the same way, and being forgotten just as quickly, while the best material, which may not sell as much at the outset, will remain in print as long as there are discriminating readers. This has been going on already, which is why a 40-year-old book like de Camp's *Lest Darkness Fall* remains in print while many more popular but inferior works of the intervening years are dust.

4) I can't answer this since I know the original *Who Killed Science Fiction?* only by reputation and have never seen a copy. The 1980 reprint of it is most welcome.

SCORTIA, THOMAS N.

Earl Kemp's questions proved to be more difficult to answer than I had anticipated. However, with the help of my ever-trusty Horizon II, I submit the following deathless observations:

1) By "1980's success" I presume Earl means science fiction's wide acceptance rather than its literary or prognosticative success.

The "event" was the relentless intrusion of sophisticated technology into daily life to the point where even "mainstream" popular novels become increasingly based on essentially science fiction themes. (Witness: *FailSafe*, *The Child Buyer*, *Kalki*, *The Pidgeon Project*, *Marooned*, and a dozen other bestsellers of the recent two decades. Even the Scortia-Robinson books are basically science fiction.) The rapid development of space travel, information processing machines, advanced surgery, molecular biology, and early genetic tailoring, the frightening development of military devices—all of these have

become the stuff of our morning front page.

Such rapid growth has thrown the average man into what Alvin Toffler calls “future shock.” Science fiction was the one fictional form that routinely dealt with such matters. Although the theme of a story might be downbeat, the average science fiction story tried to describe the world into which we were evolving and the physical aspects (at least) of that science fiction world worked.

In that sense even the downbeat story carries a note of optimism. (Bad as the future is, we survived and got there. For all the political dangers of *Star Wars*, the gadgets are beautiful and the future exciting.) The promises and the problems and the hazards of today are those explored in science fiction. In a phrase, science fiction is popular because we are day-to-day living in a science fiction world.

2) Assuming that I would be allowed to keep only one science fiction book published after 1960, which one would I elect to keep?

I have not been that impressed with recent science fiction novels. Many are enjoyable and thoughtful books, but there is no single *sui generis* book I could name that would stand out among the books published after 1960. I am very fond of Robert Silverberg’s *Dying Inside*, but the science fiction content is only incidental to the novel. If you offered me “The Collected Works of Robert A. Heinlein,” I’d probably settle for that. I am much impressed with George Zebrowski’s *Macrolife* (Harper and Row, 1979); it is a sprawling book of giant intent. It fails on several levels, but abounds with ideas for future novels in the series.

3) What will dominate science fiction in the year 2000?

I suspect that the major theme will be related to the biological sciences coupled with space travel. The advent of relatively low orbital costs with the development of a second-generation space shuttle together with the rapid growth of molecular biology should focus our interests on what is becoming known as “exo-biology.” I expect that the major themes will center around genetic tailoring of animals, plants, and *man* for both space colonies (see the previously cited Zebrowski novel, *Macrolife*) and for planetary colonies. Terraforming of alien planets by biological techniques (probably the only practical approach because of the chain-reaction effect) is, of course, a part of the larger themes of exo-biology.

SILVERBERG, ROBERT

Alas, a search of the archives here does not reveal my copy of the original *Who Killed Science Fiction?* Whether it was a victim of the fire I had in 1968, of my move to California a couple of years later, or simple misfiling, I can’t say, but at any rate I can’t find it and, with the summer moving along, I see I’ll have to contribute to the 1980 updating without knowledge of whatever it was I said in 1960. Anyway:

The sad state of science fiction in 1960, it now seems to me, was the result of magazine distribution problems, editorial conservatism, auctorial incompetence, and cultural fatigue. That is, science fiction was then almost entirely a magazine-centered field, and the magazines had been decimated by the 1958 upheaval in American News Company; the editors then making decisions were generally stubborn, old-fashioned, tired, tight-budgeted, or all four; the majority of the writers active in the science fiction arena then were feeble ones, since most of the heavy dudes of the 1940s and '50s had gone elsewhere and the big guns of the late 1960s were still in high school; and, finally, the United States was slumbering through the staid and predictable Eisenhower years.

What pulled us out of the mire was, in order, the shift of science fiction from magazines to paperbacks; the arrival of bold young paperback editors (Terry Carr, for example) willing to try anything once, knowing that each book they published was a one-shot endeavor; the simultaneous appearance in the field of a dozen or so lively new writers; and the freakification of our society under the stress caused by the Kennedy assassination, the Vietnam war, the widespread use of mind-altering drugs, the coming to adolescence of the vast baby-boom generation, etc.

By the time the dust was starting to settle, around 1969, American culture had been quite adequately destabilized and a context had been established in which wild-eyed fantastic stuff was readily able to be accepted as normal popular entertainment. I'd cite the Kennedy assassination as the single event opening the way to today's growth of science fiction, and could document that odd thesis at great length if asked; but as I indicate here, a whole constellation of happenings is really the cause.

Afterword 1980

The Singer's Going To Sing A Song

By Earl Kemp

“...Twenty years ago today, Sgt. Pepper taught the band to play...may I introduce to you the act you've known for all these years...” (*Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*).

I want to thank you all again, you're such a lovely audience.

Flipping through the pages of my memory, the pages of *Who Killed Science Fiction?*, and letting my thoughts wander over the names as they pop out of the pages and grab at me...

They are gone now, so many dear old friends, or disappeared or altered into some unrecognizable other. Hugo Gernsback, the modern-day father of us all. *Astounding* and John. *Astonishing* and Ted Carnell. *Weird* and Seabury Quinn (“Bon Voyage, Michele”). *Star Trek* and James Blish/Atherton. *Famous Fantastic Mysteries* and Hannes Bok. Convention standbys Tony Boucher and Willy Ley. The ever-present Midwesterners Auggie Derleth, Rog Phillips, Ray Palmer, and Mr. Wonderful himself, Doc Smith.

Startling, Planet, and Thrilling Wonder Stories.

All of our yesteryears; the people/things who/that made up *Who Killed Science Fiction?* 20 years ago. I am almost overwhelmed by the magnitude of it all. Who could have foreseen, 20 years ago, that anyone would be sitting here celebrating the absence of so much that is so dear to all of us, as I am doing at the moment I write these words? I am not aware that so many well-loved science fiction people have ever been assembled together in one such effort before.

It is fitting then that *Who Killed Science Fiction?* should be a monument to the era.

The results:

Rendezvous with Rama.

Ringworld.

Stand on Zanzibar.

Starship Troopers.

Tower of Glass.

Triton.

What If: Stories That Should Have Won the Hugo.

and two “pretend” books, both by Robert A. Heinlein:

“The Collected Works of Robert A. Heinlein.”

“The Future History Series.”

In addition, one movie (*Star Wars*), one television show (*Steambath*), and one short story (“Sundance”) received honorable mention.

For item Number 3:

Looking forward to the year 2002 and the third edition of Who Killed Science Fiction?, what medium (already existing or not yet contemplated) will become, in your opinion, the largest market area for science fiction material?

*These data not available for 1979 as of this writing, which would bring these totals upward somewhat. Statistics courtesy Donald Franson and Howard DeVore: *A History of the Hugo, Nebula and International Fantasy Awards* (Detroit: Misfit, 1978).

The definite and loud response was: BOOK PUBLICATION (in some still-recognizable form) for four mentions, with an additional two mentions of science fiction in paperbound formats.

The significant runner-up, with two and one-half mentions, is television, advanced considerably and incorporating three-dimensional, sensurround, and/or plug-in t’feelyvision.

There was additional speculation regarding:

1. Subscription video-discs and/or tape cassettes.
2. Movies incorporating holograms.
3. A home computer environmental simulation role-playing game.

Of all these, I personally prefer the latter. There is an empty spot in my living room waiting for just such a strange device.

Who Killed Science Fiction? 1980: The other voices have spoken and 20 years and tomorrow have come and gone and the singer is finishing up the song he felt like singing. It is time for us to move on toward our next reunion, our third edition.

Hurry, 2002!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Earl", with a stylized flourish underneath.

--EARL KEMP

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