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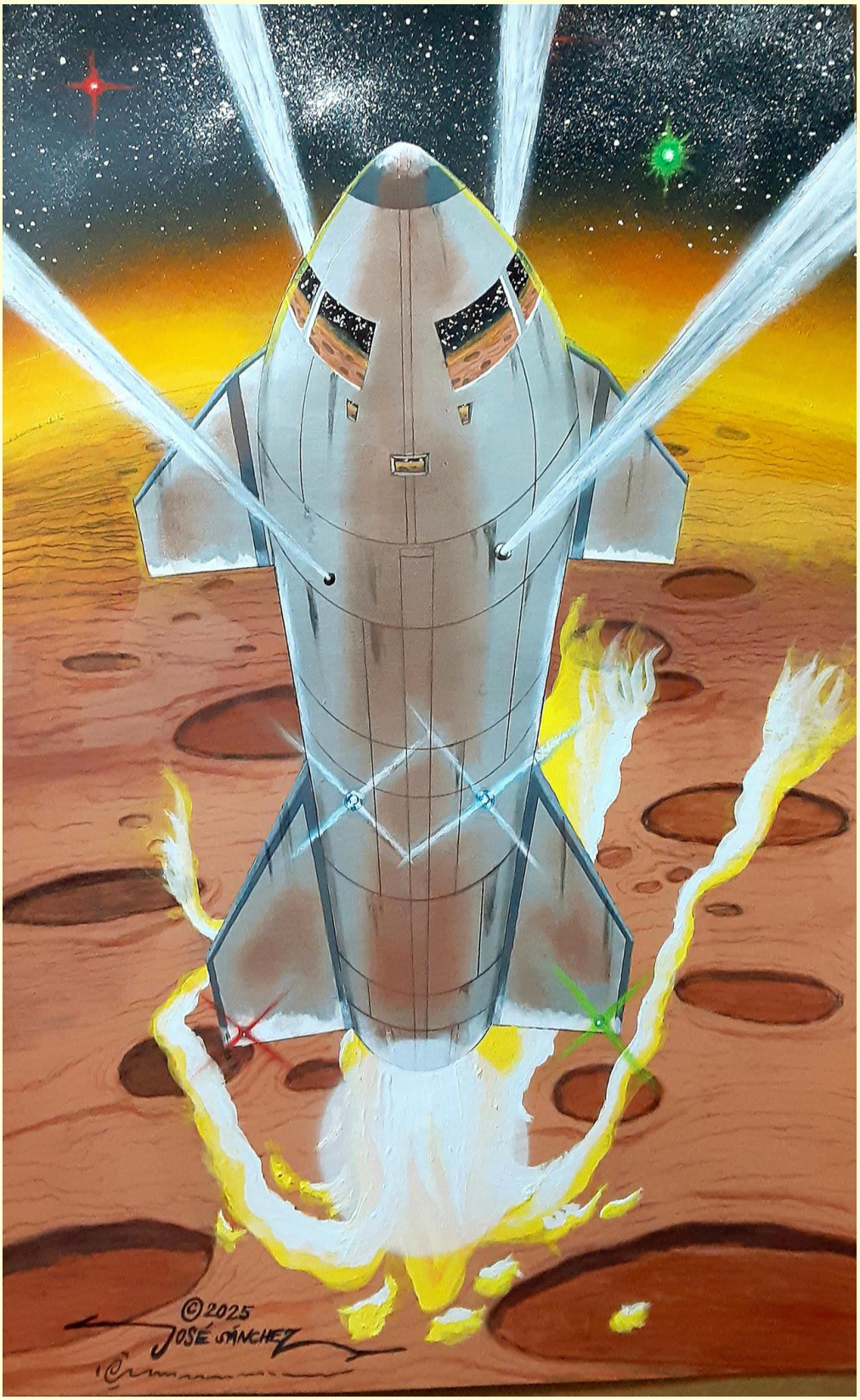
Edited by Samuel Lubell



Author Spotlight: Robert Silverberg

Media Conventions

The 'Golden Age' Human Torch (Part I)

Review of *The Way the Future Was* by Frederick Pohl (Part II)

Early Legion of Super-Heroes (Part VI)

From Wizard to Scientist: Changing Views towards the Scientist from Hawthorne to Twain (Part VI)

Editorial Note

Origins, a National Fantasy Fan Federation (N3F) publication of N3F's Historical and Research Bureau, covers the history of science fiction/fantasy, fandom, and related science focusing on pre-21st century content. Note that reviews and summaries may have spoilers. I urge people to send in articles, letters, reviews of older SF, and anything relevant to SamJLubell@gmail.com. I would be interested in stories on how people discovered fandom and what they did. I am also interested in articles about SF and fandom in other countries. I also welcome art. Thanks to Jose Sanchez for the cover and interior illustrations. And a big thank you to Thomas E. Simmons for his article on the Human Torch. Opinions in these pages are those of the author, not N3F or any organization or employer.

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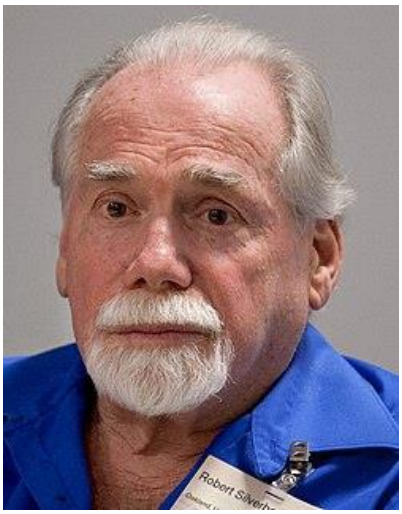
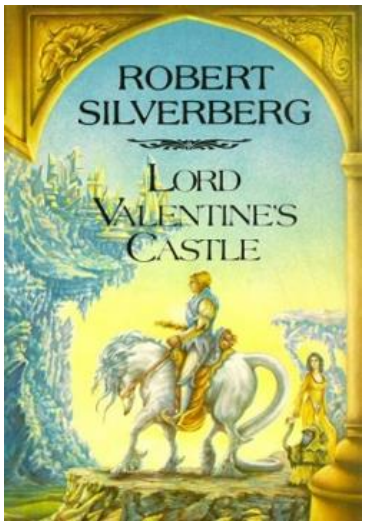
Literary Fandom: Author Spotlight: Robert Silverberg
by Samuel Lubell



Robert Silverberg is currently the oldest surviving major writer of the Golden Age of SF. Although there are a handful of writers older than him, he was published while still a teenager and arguably has had the longest career. Or, one should say Silverberg has had four careers in science fiction.

Born January 15, 1935, he began sending stories to magazines while still a teenager and wrote for fanzines. He edited Spaceship, a fanzine, from 1949 to 1955. He became professionally published in 1954 with "Gorgon Planet" in *Science Fiction Adventures* while a student at Columbia University. His first novel *Revolt on Alpha C* came out in 1955. He quickly became an extremely prolific writer, producing million words a year, not just of science fiction but anything someone would pay him to write including porn. He used so many pseudonyms that even he does not know all of them. For instance, he frequently collaborated with Randall Garrett as Robert Randall. In 1958, he had 80 stories published. In the 1960s, under the influence of Fred Pohl, he launched his second career when he discovered he could make more money in the long term by slowing down and improving the quality so that his work would be reprinted. His work grew more experimental and sophisticated, often dealing with his characters' psychology. In 1975, he announced his retirement from writing, but in 1980 he began the third stage of his career with the blockbuster novel *Lord Valentine's Castle* and its sequels (the Majipoor cycle).

His last novel was *Roma Eterna* (2003), although this was a fix-up novel of earlier published stories. However, he has had a fourth career as an elder statesman of the field and continues to appear at Worldcons which he has attended every year since 1953 (although a couple of times remotely). He writes the non-fiction *Reflections* column for *Asimov's* (originally for *Galileo*).



He won his first Hugo Award, for best new author, in 1956 and won Best Novella in 1969 for "Nightwings" and in 1987 for "Gilgamesh in the Outback." He won Best Novelette in 1990 for "Enter a Soldier. Later: Enter Another." His fan writing received a Retro-Hugo in 2001. He won the Nebula Award for best novel in 1972 for *A Time of Changes,* Best Novella in 1986 for "Sailing to Byzantium," Best Novella in 1975 for "Born with the Dead," Best short story in 1970 for "Passengers," and Best Short Story in 1972 for "Good News from the Vatican". He has far too many nominated works to list here.

See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_awards_and_nominations_received_by_Robert_Silverberg

Silverberg has written at least 500 books (including many non-fiction works) with at least 130 SF and Fantasy novels and nearly 500 identified stories. In addition to writing, he edited the Science Fiction Hall of Fame, nine volumes of Alpha, 12 volumes of New Dimensions, and many other anthologies.

Readers new to Silverberg should look at *Dying Inside* about telepaths, *The World Inside* about overpopulation, *A Time of Changes* about a rebellion against a culture that forbids the first person singular (I), and of course *Lord Valentine's Castle*. A good one volume story collection is *The Best of Robert Silverberg: Stories of Six Decades* from Subterranean, which is unfortunately out of print. A 1976 *Best of Robert Silverberg* can be found in used bookstores. The more recent *Voyagers: Twelve Journeys through Space and Time* is still in print. Project Gutenberg has 42 of his early works, although these are not his best. Subterranean Press published his collected stories in eight volumes (and the ebook versions are cheap, just $2.99).

Media Fandom: Media Conventions

by Samuel Lubell

Star Trek made appearances at general science fiction conventions even before the show began airing. Gene Roddenberry appeared at Tricon, the Cleveland Worldcon, in 1966, showing the two pilots, "The Cage" and "Where No Man Has Gone Before" a week before the latter aired on television. The first dedicated Star Trek convention was Star Trek Lives at the Statler Hilton Hotel in New York City on January 21-23, 1972. This was the first convention dedicated to a single piece of media. The organizers, led by Al Schuster, claimed that traditional SF conventions ignored or patronized the Star Trek fans, so they started their own convention. In addition to Star Trek guests like Gene Roddenberry, Majel Barrett, Doohan, George Takei, Oscar Katz, and authors David Gerrold and D.C. Fontana, the convention featured Isaac Asimov and Hal Clement. Since only 800 signed up in advance, the organizers planned for 2,000 and were shocked that over 3,000 people attended. By 1974, the convention, now simply called The International Star Trek Convention, had 15,000 attendees. This was more than they could handle and the organizers had to cut back to 8,000.

However, some people claim an event at a Newark, NJ public library on March 1, 1969, organized by librarian Sherna Comerford, was the first Star Trek convention. While the program book did call it a Star Trek Con and it did attract 300 participants, at the Newark Public Library, this event was more an afternoon (four hours) of presentations including one by author/scientist Hal Clement and slide shows, including one with prominent fan Lee Smoire. There were no professional guests (other than Clement), no dealers' room, no signings, nor other aspects of conventions as we know them (although they did have an art exhibit).

Al Schuster separated from the Star Trek Lives! Convention people in 1975 and formed his own International Star Trek Convention, while the Star Trek Lives convention was renamed Star Trek Convention. By 1976, there were three rival Star Trek conventions in New York City. Schuster's cons began to be called Schuster Star Trek Conventions although the formal name of his company was Tristar Industries (later Capital Exhibitions). The inability of the fan-run conventions to cope with the crowds wanting to attend led to an investigation by the New York Attorney General. Ultimately, the fan-run conventions were mostly replaced by for-profit organizations under license from Paramount, first Star Trek America and later Creation Conventions.

However, some fan run media conventions do exist. For instance, in the mid-Atlantic region, there is Shore Leave, which started in 1979 in Towson, Maryland, and Farpoint, which started in 1993, also in Towson.

Image from https://www.fanlore.org/wiki/File:Stlives72flyer.jpg

Comics Fandom: The 'Golden Age' Human Torch (Part I)

By Thomas E. Simmons

Most of us know the Marvel superhero character the Human Torch as Johnny Storm, the younger brother of Sue Storm ('the Invisible Girl') – the spouse of Reed Richards who, along with Ben 'the Thing' Grimm, make up the Fantastic Four. The Fantastic Four is a team-based group of superheroes led by Richards who originally headquartered in the Baxter Building, just a stone's throw from the United Nations building in Manhattan.

The original 'golden age' Human Torch was not Johnny Storm (he was Jim Hammond); nor was he a member of the Fantastic Four (he was on his own; a sidekick only came later). He was an android whose secret identity was as a member of New York's finest; the NYPD. He debuted in *Marvel Comics* issue #1, but Marvel was not Marvel in 1939; it was Timely Comics (Marvel Comics' predecessor).

The Human Torch was among the first superheroes to headline his own solo title, beginning with *The Human Torch* #2 in the fall of 1940. (The first issue in the series was titled *Red Raven Comics*; The Human Torch took over its numbering.) Captain America, by contrast, didn't appear in *Captain America Comics* #1 until a few months later, although Superman landed his solo title before both of them, in 1939.

The 'golden age' Human Torch was Frankensteinian; the creation of scientist Professor Phineas Horton, under the mentorship of evil genius Victor Timely (ha!), also known as Kang the Conqueror (and later, Kang Prime) who settled in Timely, Wisconsin, a town he founded in '01 (that's *19*01) using the pseudonym Victor Timely to become its first mayor. He was crafty and multidimensional.

Kang was also a time-traveling despot from the future with multiple-selves (e.g., Rama-Tut, Iron Lad, Mister Gryphon, Nathaniel Richards, and Scarlet Centurion). Projecting that he could master the 20th century from a 21st century perspective, he proceeded outwit the likes of Thomas Edison and Henry Ford using assembly-line robots. Turns out, he wasn't wrong. Even bad guys win, sometimes.

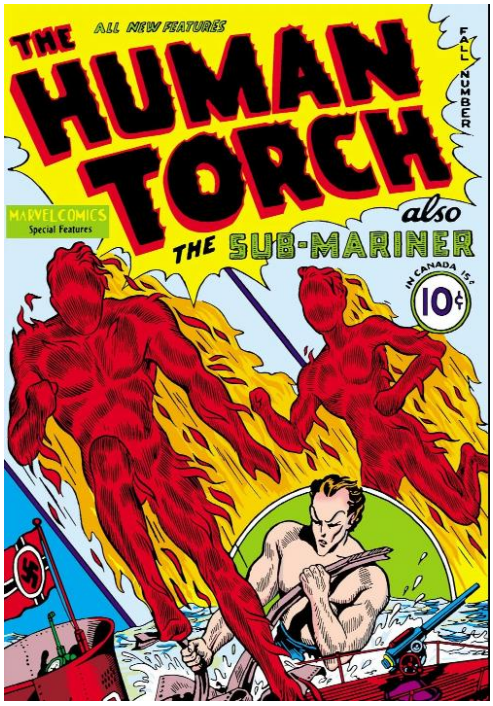
Soon, Kang 's grandson (Timely III) would direct a corporate conglomerate to provide security for the Baxter Building occupied, on its upper floors, by the 'silver age' Fantastic Four (of which, as referenced *supra*, the reconceived Human Torch, a teenage-mutated human, was a member) prior to the 35-story building's destruction in 1985.

Significantly, both the 'golden age' android Human Torch and the reconceived 'silver age' rambunctious teen-with-a-cosmic-beam-exposure problem trace their origins to scientific-pursuit hubris. Both are birthed of pride, and not in a good way.

The 1939 Human Torch is the invention of a gluttonous scientist named Horton; the 1961 Johnny Storm is the victim of Reed Richards' (his sister's fiancé's) recklessness in piloting a space probe, a mistake which renders Reed's friend Ben Grimm grotesque, albeit with super-strength. Any doubt about Reed's inflated ego should be put to rest by considering the moniker he drops for himself following the space probe passengers' exposure to cosmic rays: Mr. Fantastic. Johnny, too, is a casualty of Reed's arrogance, though he gained a super-power of his own. Johnny is a victim of Mr. Fantastic's failed experimental space flight.

Initially, though, the original Human Torch was himself a flawed science experiment. He was a flame-making tool under the control of a mad genius. Later, he would adopt a human sidekick named Toro and fight the Nazis. (Toro,

like the successor Torch, was a human with mutations.) But, at first, the Human Torch was a science experiment and a menace. The word "Human" in his title was just a bit of Timely sarcasm.



In his first appearance, it is revealed that Professor Horton invented a synthetic man with just one problem, if the robot comes into contact with oxygen, it immediately bursts into flame. Still, the professor takes credit for his latest discovery: "When I finished, I found I had surpassed anything that any scientist had ever done..." Not exactly a model of humility.

The professor consults with other scientists who advise him to destroy his invention lest it be hurled against civilization (their words, not mine). The professor refuses to do this. And so, the other scientists do what any reasonably minded scientist would do and tattle to the newspapers in order to force the professor's hand.

Still, even with the press against him, Professor Horton resists – not out of sympathy for the human replicant he has constructed, but out of his insistence that he can discover a device to gain control of the mechanical torch. Instead of destroying the robot, it is neutralized; encased in concrete so as to prevent any contact with oxygen. That solution doesn't last longer than a single panel; a leak admits a stray oxygen atom and "BOOM" the Human Torch is on the loose.

As he rockets over the heads of amazed citizens, the Human Torch reveals his sentience, wondering aloud, "I'm burning alive! Why must everything I touch turn to flame?"

He also displays his childlike playfulness. When a fire engine ("CLANG CLANG!") approaches, the Human Torch exclaims, "Hah! I like the sound of the bell."

And when the firemen link up to a fire hydrant and turn a firehose on him, he spouts, "Ha! Ha! Ha! Stop – It Tickles!" The gush turns to a dribble when the Human Torch steps on the hose, burning through it.

Immediately, the Human Torch is remorseful for having damaged fire department equipment. He looks for a retreat where he'll do no more harm and finds a swimming pool in which to submerge himself (away from free oxygen). Unfortunately, it's the swimming pool of a crime boss – Sardo – who reads the papers and therefore knows of the Human Torch's origins and powers. Sardo captures him, gleeful with his new "million-dollar racket" in the "fire-insurance business."

The Human Torch quickly discerns Sardo's motives and goes after the racketeer "and his mob of rats." In a fiery climax, Sardo's headquarters are destroyed and Sardo is killed. The Human Torch learns how to "flame off" and surrenders himself to the police. A city judge accepts the Human Torch's explanation that he was a victim of circumstance and releases him into Professor Horton's custody.

Back at the lab, Horton learns of the Human Torch's newly-discovered self-control of his flames and chortles, "We could make a fortune!" The Human Torch dismisses the idea, burns a hole in the roof, and leaps into the night, ending his first appearance in comic book history.

Literary Fandom: Review of *The Way the Future Was* by Frederick Pohl (Part II)

Reviewed by Samuel Lubell

Chapter Seven of Frederick Pohl's memoir, *The Way the Future Was*, tells of Pohl's life as an enlisted man in the army, writing that "An EM has no more individuality than the seventh egg in a box of a dozen." No person would

tolerate the rules that enlisted men must obey, but it allows you to let someone else do the worrying while you just accept the status quo. (Pohl confesses to enjoying all of it, even the utterly revolting parts). Pohl served in the United States Army from April 1943 (age 23) until November 1945. He underwent basic training in Miami Beach, where he became friends with Joe Winters. The two became Air Force weathermen in Illinois along with SF writer Jack Williamson (Pohl wrote that the "the weather wing picked up all the high-IQ oddballs in the Air Force"). In his spare time, he typed stories. He became a corporal and was sent to an air base in Oklahoma. Wanting more action, he kept applying for a transfer to a combat zone and ultimately volunteered for Arctic Training that sent him to Italy (Bay of Naples) to join the 456th Bomb Group, where he continued to write in a corner of the enlisted men's club. Then, in January 1945 he was transferred to the Mediterranean Theater of Operations headquarters to do public relations and edit the squadron newspaper, which he turned into a mimeographed newsletter (essentially an air force fanzine). He also took time to tour around Italy, especially Pompeii. He continued to write, including some SF that was published. On the personal side, he got divorced and then fell in love with Dorothy LesTina, marrying her in 1945 (at age 25 he already had a second wife). Six months after the Japanese surrendered, he was out of the army (Nov 1945) and back in New York.

After the army, Pohl worked with his father as a gentleman farmer (his father had acquired a thousand-acre farm with the money he made during the war). But when his father went bankrupt due to bad investments and the Army's cancelled contracts, Pohl had to get a real job. He started off as advertising copywriter (in order to afford his expensive apartment, costing all of $175 a month, and originally to research a novel about a copywriter), promoting mail order books and magazines with copy like "Have You Got a Big Bookcase? Because if you have, we have a Big Book for you ..." He moved to work at Popular Science. He wrote stories, but only occasionally. Then when the 1947 Worldcon was held in nearby Philadelphia, he saw a lot of his old SF friends and rekindled his love of science fiction. The nearby convention prompted some New York writers to form the Hydra Club, which came to include most of the major writers and editors of the day. In his personal life, his interests began to diverge from his wife's and they disagreed about having children. So after just two years of marriage, he had his second divorce. Soon after, he married Judith Merril, another science fiction writer. Pohl's third marriage lasted four years and they divorced in 1952.

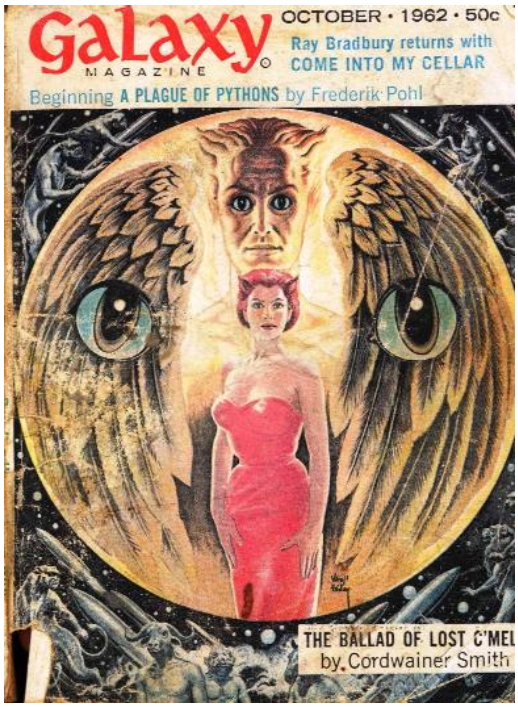
Originally, Pohl assisted his friend Dirk Wylie with his agency as a silent partner while working during the day at Popular Science. Then when Wylie died, Pohl worked with his wife Rosalind on the agency for a few years before continuing as an agent full-time on his own in 1948. He realized that he would make less money than he was at Popular Science, but felt he did not want to be someone's employee. As an agent, Pohl helped big trade publishers such as Doubletree acquire science fiction novels (such as Asimov's first book, *Pebble in the Sky*). He also collaborated with Cyril Kornbluth on stories and books. He claimed to have represented at least 35 of the top 50 SF writers of the early 50s including Wyndham, Asimov, Simak, Sheckley, Williamson, Kornbluth, Blish, Tenn, and Piper. The top markets bought more from Pohl than from all other agents combined and he had clients in many fields outside SF. He also was responsible for increasing science fiction magazine's pay rate from two cents a word to three by promising Damon Knight, then an editor, first pick of his clients' stories if he would raise the pay rate. Pohl then used this to get Horace Gold (*Galaxy*) and John Campbell (Astounding) to follow suite. Unfortunately, he lost money on being an agent, even with side jobs editing anthologies (he ghost-edited Heinlein's *Tomorrow the Stars*). Part of the problem was the deals he made with a dozen or so writers to pay them for their writing when they sent stories to him, not when he found a publisher willing to print them. This freed the writers from having to worry about market considerations or getting a time-consuming job other than writing. But this required more money than Pohl had, even after he cut expenses as much as he could and worked 80 hour weeks. His checks bounced and in 1953, he ended his career as an agent, after seven years, with Pohl owing $30,000. He never declared bankruptcy, and paid off everything he owed (although it took nearly 10 years).

While editing, Pohl faced a moral dilemma as a writer since his stories competed with those written by clients. Pohl quoted Harlan Ellison saying "No one should consider writing if he can possibly imagine doing anything else." Pohl continued "Writing is the way I make my daily bread; but it is also my hobby, my vice, and my ongoing and most valued psychotherapy." So, he wanted to get back into writing. Pohl reviewed the novel on advertising that he wrote while in the army, but destroyed it as no good. He still wanted to use his advertising experience in a book, so he slowly started working on a science fiction novel about advertising. Then, in 1951, Horace Gold looked at the half-finished first draft and told Pohl to finish it so he could print it. At the time Cyril Kornbluth was staying with the Pohls so he edited the first part, wrote a new middle section, and the two collaborated on a final section. This became *The Space Merchants*, one of Pohl's most popular (and profitable, earning around ten million including film rights) novels. Yet, despite Pohl's connections, no one wanted to turn the magazine serial into a book until Ian Ballantine bought it for his new, unconventional Ballantine Books. Ballantine was the first paperback publisher to do serious science fiction and paid twice the royalty rate of other publishers. Pohl offered to edit an anthology for them, *Star Science Fiction*, the first regular series of anthologies of original SF stories. Since the anthology paid twice as much per word as the SF magazines, Pohl was able to get some of the best stories. He continued attending Worldcon and helped organize the 1950 convention, before much of modern-day experienced con-runners formalized many of the now-common practices. In 1950, Pohl and his then-wife Judy had a daughter, before divorcing in 1951. Unlike his previous divorces, this one was not amicable due to the issue of custody.

There are several spots in the book where Pohl comments about how many couples broke up or rearranged spouses. He described how a sociologist once tried to study the kinship ties in fandom. "She spent three months trying to sort out who was married to whom and which had been married to what, not to mention less formal alliances, and gave up in despair. The game was Musical Beds." In 1953 Pohl married his fourth wife, Carol Metcalf Ulf (they separated in 1977 and divorced in 1983). They had a son, Frederik Pohl IV, born in January 1956.

After quitting the agency business, Pohl was a freelance writer for the next eight years or so, setting a quota of writing four pages a day no matter how long it takes, even on holidays, to maintain his rhythm. He wrote that a lot of what an author does is thinking, even when it looks like he is just loafing (he spent a lot of time on number theory and related brain teasers). He also began turning his research in various subjects into nonfiction books (ironic for someone who dropped out of high school and learned "catch-as-catch-can").In the 1950s he was *Galaxy*'s most prolific contributor, making $3-4,000 a year from *Galaxy* at 4 cents per word. He estimated that he wrote 100,000 words a year, in a wide variety of magazines. He stayed connected to other writers, frequently collaborating with friends and playing poker with Horace Gold and many writers of *Galaxy*. He described how Horace Gold did substantial editing and "Horace's battle to substitute his own conception of a story for the writer's caused fury and frustration. But, my God, the stories he got! Sheckley, Knight, Kornbluth, Leiber, Bester, Sturgeon, Tenn, and fifty others never wrote better than when they were writing for Horace Gold's *Galaxy*. He took mediocre writers and made them at least momentarily pretty good. He took good writers and stretched them as far as they would go. But in 1957, when speculators liquidated the American News Company, a nationwide distributer of magazines and

paperbacks, for its real estate, a lot of magazines lost their access to newsstands and went bankrupt (*Galaxy* was spared because Horace Gold had heard rumors and got his publisher to sign up with an independent distributor before the big collapse).



Unfortunately, Gold's health continued to decline and Pohl took up some of the slack and began ghost editing the magazine, even writing the editorials. Then in 1960, Pohl became the editor of *Galaxy* (and its companion magazine *If*) for almost a decade. He described in detail what it is like to be an editor and how it fed his vanity. He bragged that he published "nearly every writer of any importance in the field. For many of the best, I published all or most of the work written in that decade: Robert A Heinlein, Cordwainer Smith, Harlan Ellison, Larry Niven, R. A. Lafferty, Fritz Leiber, Jack Vance, and a lot of others. Many of the stories, including many of the best, would never have been written if I hadn't encouraged, coaxed, and sometimes browbeaten the authors." He described his efforts to make *Galaxy* monthly after a couple of years as a bimonthly (and *If* had been bimonthly even longer) and to get the pay rates up (*Galaxy* was averaging a cent and a half, *If* was paying just a cent a word while Campbell's *Analog* was paying three cents). So Pohl was able to get the rate up by paying a little for a few barely acceptable stories and paying three cents on the rest. He also competed on speed of acceptance/rejection by doing his own reading rather than relying on slush readers and also by getting stories from friends. He developed a system of putting the best stories in *Galaxy* while the ones he bought to ensure authors kept submitting to him went to *If* (as did stories by new talent). Ironically fans gave *If* three Hugos in a row while *Galaxy* received none even though Pohl did everything he could to make *Galaxy* the more sophisticated magazine with higher literary quality. When Pohl pressed his publisher to make the magazines monthly, they decided to start a third magazine, *Worlds of Tomorrow*, instead. To differentiate the third magazine from the others, Pohl printed speculative science, including an article on immortality by freezing oneself shortly before death that led to Pohl becoming a regular on radio talk shows and to becoming a skeptic on ESP and UFO sightings. That led to Pohl becoming a public speaker/lecturer at conferences of all sorts, universities, corporate meetings etc. Other magazines soon followed, including *International Science Fiction,* with stories from all over the world, and *Worlds of Fantasy* (edited by Lester del Rey). His magazines published Robert Heinlein, Poul Anderson, Jack Vance, E.E. Doc Smith, Cordwainer Smith, Keith Laumer, Fred Saberhagen, Robert Silverberg, Mack Reynolds, Larry Niven, and Harlan Ellison. Of the latter, Pohl wrote "He is also one of the twentieth century's greatest sources of tsoris. For most of that decade I published nearly all the SF Harlan wrote, and I would estimate that, taking everything together, Harlan was as much pain and trouble as all the next ten troublesome writers combined."

In 1969, the publisher sold their SF magazines to another publisher who wanted an editor who would be in the office all day. So Pohl refused and became editor emeritus. After taking some time off, travelling, and dealing with various crises (including a midlife crisis at age 50), he began to write again. He concludes the book by saying he dedicated his career to science fiction because he loved it. "Is spending one's life writing science fiction rewarding? Why, sure. In all the ways I have said and many more. But that doesn't have much to do with it. You don't love a person just because she rewards you. The person is rewarding because you love her. So it is with me and science fiction. For the gifts she has given me I am truly grateful. But I loved her on sight, giftless, and it looks as if I'll go on doing it as long as I live."

Pohl finished *The Way the Future Was* in 1977, and lived another 36 years. The memoir does not even mention *Gateway*, perhaps his most famous solo novel, which led to several sequels. Late in life, he excerpted parts of this memoir in his blog, "The Way the Future Blogs". Some of the memorials written after his death in 2013, mention he was working on a second volume of his memoirs, but if so, this has not been published. *The Way the Future*

Was is long out of print which is why I have summarized it here, rather than just review it. The memoir is well worth reading for anyone interested in the history of science fiction, although it occasionally lapses into bragging.

Comics Fandom: Early Legion of Super-Heroes (part V)

By Samuel Lubell

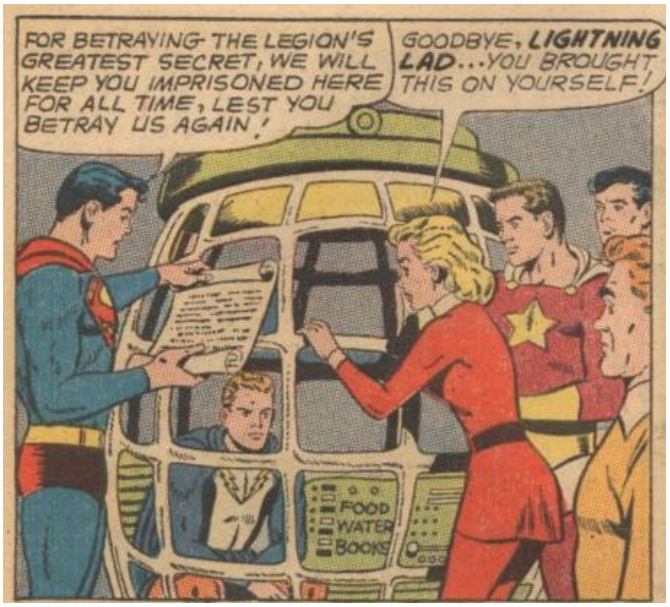
The Legion of Super-Heroes (LSH) by DC Comics is one of the most science fictional comics from a major comics publisher. It is set in the future, with many characters obtaining their power by virtue of being born on different planets. Science fictional concepts like time travel, faster-than-light spaceships, telepathy, etc. are common.

It is worth noting that the LSH in the '60s had far more female members than other superhero teams. By 1964, out of about 20 members, the LSH had Saturn Girl, Triplicate Girl, Phantom Girl, Shrinking Violet, and Light(ning) Lass. Note, I am not counting Supergirl since she did not appear regularly. By contrast, most other superhero teams back then only had one female member at a time (although with one female out of four members, the Fantastic Four equaled the LSH's percentage.) The Black Canary did not join DC's Justice League until after Wonder Woman left in 1969. The Justice League did not have two female members simultaneously until Wonder Woman rejoined in JLA 100 in 1972. Similarly, the Scarlet Witch did not join Marvel's Avengers until the Wasp (with the other original Avengers) took a leave of absence in 1965. The two females did not serve together until Avengers #28 in May 1966. DC's original Teen Titans did not have two female members until Teen Titans #25 in 1970 when Lilith joined while Wonder Girl was still a member.

#36 – *Adventure Comics* #319 (April 1964) "The Legion's Suicide Squad." The people of the mysterious planetoid Throo use new neutralizing force projectors to enforce their isolation by destroying any spaceship within 30 million miles. This threatens galactic trade, so the Science police call on the Legion of Super-Heroes (LSH) who select a party of seven members by drawing lots. Brainiac 5 says that the mission is too dangerous for a girl to get Saturn Girl to withdraw, but she insists "I was selected by fair chance and I claim my right to go." (Aside from the use of chance to assemble the team rather than picking those best suited for the mission, this statement is remarkable at a time when other female superheroes were made into secretaries or hiding by turning invisible). In three waves, all the LSH members are defeated. The Legion of Substitute Heroes (Subs), seeing the enemy defeat the LSH declare themselves a "Suicide Squad" and go in anyway, launching Night Girl (who only has powers in the dark) to the night side of the planetoid where she digs a tunnel to the citadel and discovers that the enemy is just the last two of their species, now old men, and forces them to turn the machines off. This is an okay story that does not even mention the irony that a girl saves the mission that was "too dangerous" for a girl.

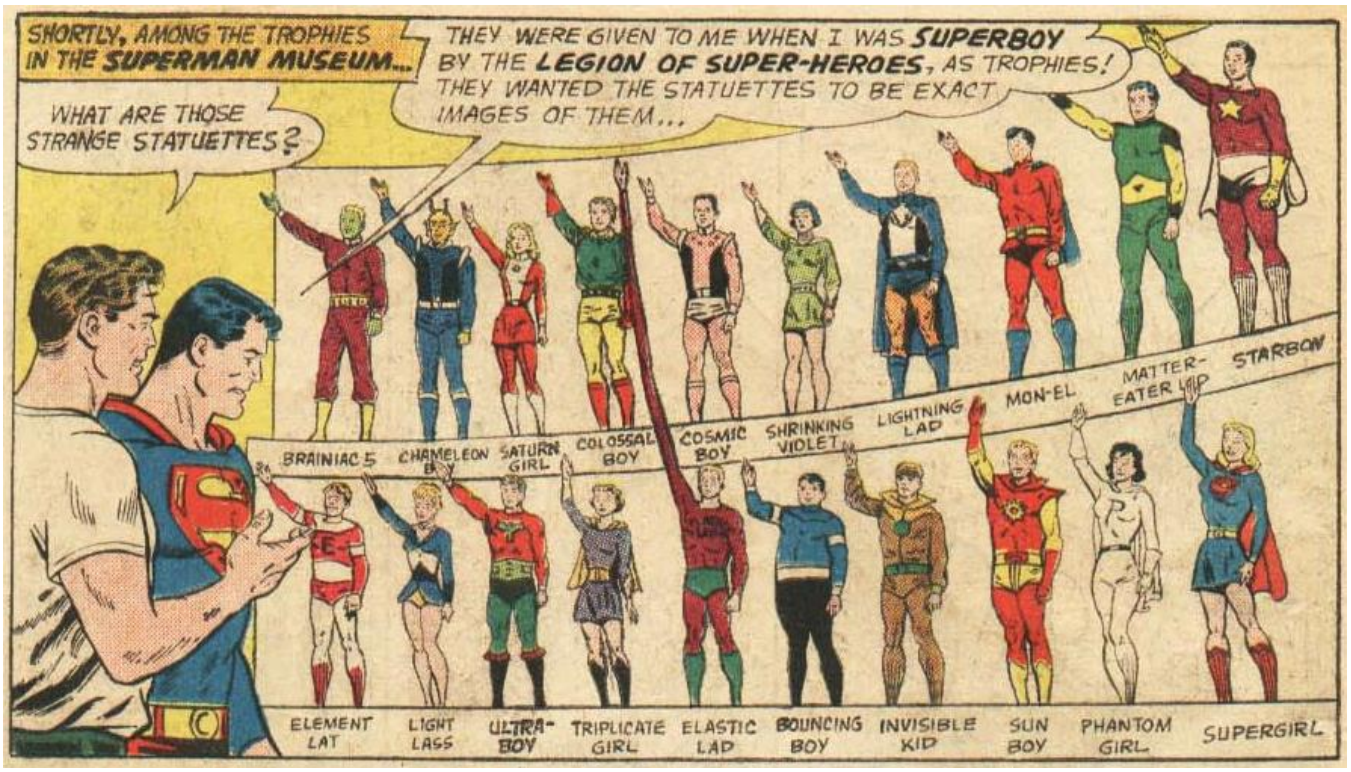
#37—*Superman's Pal Jimmy Olsen* #76, April 1964, "Elastic Lad Jimmy and his Legion Romances." After Jimmy Olsen spends all his money on a fancy dinner for his date Lucy Lane (Lois' sister), only to have her criticize everything, the women of the LSH come up with a plan to make her appreciate him by having Jimmy go on missions with them (in his LSH reservist role of Elastic Lad) while they pretend to fall in love with him. But the plan backfires when Lucy falls asleep instead of watching the time viewer. This one is for completests only (although the story does give romantic roles to the LSH females).

#38—*Adventure Comics* #320, May 1964, "The Revenge of the Knave from Krypton." The LSH captures an intruder in their clubhouse. Superboy recognizes him as Dev-Em, a petty criminal on Krypton who stole Superboy's father's space ship design and followed Superboy to Smallville on Earth. In a previous Superboy comic, Dev-Em tried to make the people there think Superboy had gone bad. But now, in the future, he claims to be reformed and is working with the Counter-Intelligence Corps on a mission to capture the leader of the Cosmic Spy Legion. But now that the LSH is involved, the CIC wants Superboy to disguise himself as Dev-Em and go undercover. The head of the CSL planned to expose Dev-Em to gold Kryptonite, removing his powers, but Chameleon Lad's shape changing pet, Proty II, had learned about the gold K from the real Dev-Em and saves the disguised Superboy. (Once again, I don't see why Proty is considered a pet when he can think, reason, and communicate telepathically.) I felt that was more of a Superboy solo story than a LSH one.



#39 – *Adventure Comics* #321, June 1964, "The Code of the Legion." The cover shows the LSH imprisoning Lightning Lad in a cage with slots labeled Food, Water, and Books (that's all anyone needs!) The story opens with Superboy, Mon-El, and Ultra-Boy combining their efforts but still unable to penetrate the Time Trapper's Iron Curtain of Time. Star Boy suggests using the Concentrator, but is told that it is the LSH's greatest secret weapon, not to be mentioned. Meanwhile Chameleon Boy and Triplicate Girl face separate traps by a voice demanding they tell what the Concentrator is. Both escape without telling. Meanwhile, Commissioner Wilson of the Science Police asks the LSH about their secret weapon and when Saturn Girl says it would threaten the whole universe, the Commissioner demands that he test each Legionnaire and imprison any who reveals the secret under torture. Lightning Lad tells the secret so is imprisoned; however, he lied about the secret because he did not trust the Commissioner. The LSH discover the Commissioner is really the Time Trapper in disguise who uses dark stars to attack the LSH. The only way to stop the dark stars is to use the Concentrator. (I found this disappointing as the LSH did not even try to use their powers or other weapons first.) While this stops the dark stars, the Time Trapper escapes.

#40 – *World's Finest* #142, June 1964. "The Composite Superman". The *World's Finest* comic featured team-ups between Superman and Batman (and Robin). Joe Meach, a caretaker at the Superman museum with a grudge against Superman, absorbs the powers of the LSH when Superman's statuettes of the Legionnaires are hit with lightning. He becomes the Composite Superman with a costume that is half Superman's, half Batman's. He threatens to expose the secret identities of Superman and Batman if they do not make him their third partner (what about Robin?). In reality, he plans to use his powers to humiliate the two super-heroes. But his powers start fading and he loses his memory before slipping into a convenient coma. I had some real problems with the story. For instance, as soon as Superman sees the Composite Superman, he says that he has the powers of Invisible Kid, Lightning Lad, and Chameleon Boy, but how would he know this as opposed to general powers of invisibility, lightning, and shape-changing? And why would he not suspect the Composite Superman might have the powers of the rest of the LSH? Even worse, the heroes were not involved in defeating the Composite Superman. He just lost his powers and slipped into a coma through a deus ex machina. No actual LSH member appears in this issue except as statues.



Literary Fandom: From Wizard to Scientist: Changing Views towards the Scientist from Hawthorne to Twain (Part VI)

By Samuel Lubell

This excerpt from my 1989 undergraduate History and Literature thesis has not been reprinted before. This section starts an analysis of 19th century science.

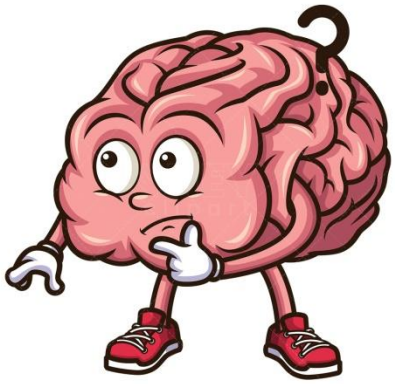
The nineteenth century has often been called the "The Age of Science". In the forty years between Nathaniel Hawthorne's writings and Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, there was an explosion of science and technology. New inventions and new ideas expanded the field of science. As its products became more important in daily life, the literate public developed a growing enthusiasm for science, and gave science it credit for the new technology that was improving their lives. In their minds, the increasingly practical science would lead to unprecedented prosperity and progress. Both Hawthorne and Twain wrote in genres meant for the general reader—Hawthorne in the gothic romance and Twain in comedy- so the change in their attitudes towards science may reflect a change in their audiences' conception of it.

Hawthorne, the earlier of the two writers, wrote when these changes were only beginning, and much of his fiction is set in an age when science was even less developed. In his period, American science was in the hands of amateurs, who, usually working alone, experimented within a broad range. These investigators in pre-nineteenth century science, most notably Cotton Mather, John Winthrop, and Benjamin Franklin pursued science as a hobby or a sidelight to their main professions. Prudence Steiner suggests a connection between Hawthorne's scientists and "these earlier scientists- men of extensive and systematic knowledge- the soul-physicians of the 17th and 18th century Protestant clergy"[1]

Like the science practiced by Hawthorne's characters, much of the science of the early and mid-nineteenth century fell into his category of the "doubtful sciences" especially mesmerism, phrenology, and spiritualism, which often dealt with the supernatural. Belief in mesmerism hit its peak among the upper classes in the 1840's, when it was used to

[1] Prudence Steiner, *Rappaccini's Family*. (Harvard Doctoral Thesis 1980) p.30

invoke mental powers of telepathy and clairvoyance, to cure the sick, and to contact the spirit world.[2] Authors of the time quickly latched onto the fictional possibilities of this belief Edgar Allen Poe wrote a hoax in the style of a report on mesmerism, "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar" in 1845, and Hawthorne included mesmerism in the plots of *The House of the Seven Gables* and *The Blithedale Romance* to express his fears about it. Although mesmerism was seen as scientific in the 1840's, it became more mystical in later years.



Another pseudo-science, phrenology, was more durable. Popularized by Lorenzo and Orson Fowler, phrenology claimed to be able to read a person's character in the shape of his skull.[3] Doctors, social reformers, teachers, and even artists applied this "science" to their professions. This "science" grew especially popular among the public who eagerly bought china heads with phrenological bumps.[4] In the early part of the century, even communication with the dead, spiritualism, was accepted as a science. Evidence of "spiritual manifestations" was produced in great quantities, "soon automatic writing, table levitation, and the playing of 'untouched musical instruments were common occurrences."[5] Though to modern ears this sounds more like magic than science, in the early nineteenth century there were few controls on what claimed scientific status.[6]

Starting in the 1830's the American public developed an interest in science as a useful way of viewing the world. The fashionable traveling lecture series called lyceums often featured scientific topics. Hawthorne himself was peripherally involved in this education effort through editing the *American Magazine of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge*. But like his magazine and the lyceums themselves, this interest in science lacked focus: fads grew and vanished according to the public taste. The term "Science" was still used to apply to all useful knowledge; and scientists themselves had only just emerged from being "natural philosophers" when the word scientist was coined in 1833.[7] While people in the eighteenth century Enlightenment saw all science, indeed all knowledge, as potentially valuable in its own right, Americans in the mid-nineteenth century were starting to limit their investigations to what seemed to be immediately useful.[8] This more specific view, utilitarian science, came to dominate the nineteenth century, especially since few people distinguished between science and technology. In reality, technology was largely separate from science, consisting in craft techniques applied and refined without much understanding of the theory behind the results. Still, the scientific community cultivated this misconception to make their own work seem more useful in an age when science was not yet producing many practical benefits. The "pseudo-scientists" capitalized on this gap between the increasingly utilitarian definition and the reality, producing their own visible results. Thus, in the early nineteenth century, the image of the scientist shifted from being a scholar examining the natural world, to being an applied scientist using knowledge to achieve some material benefit.

Hawthorne's early involvement in science persisted throughout his life. While American consulate in England, he mentioned seeing the *American Journal of Science and Arts*, the "only trace of... American learning or ability in any department" in Oxford.[9] Hawthorne often viewed the accomplishments of science, including technology, as

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[2] Taylor Stoehr, *Hawthorne's Mad Scientists*. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1978) p.33

[3] Arthur Wrobel, "Phrenology as a Political Science" in *Pseudo-Science and Society in Nineteenth Century America* edited by Arthur Wrobel (Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1987) p.124-5

[4] David Knight, *Age of Science* (New York: Basil Blackwell Inc. 1986) p. 79

[5] Robert Delp, "Andrew Jackson Davis and Spiritualism" in *Pseudo-Science and Society in Nineteenth Century America* edited by Arthur Wrobel (Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1987) p.101

[6] There was a degree of scientific merit in the "pseudo-sciences", information on hypnosis and early psychology came out of mesmerism, and some early knowledge of the mentally ill developed from phrenology. See "Afterward" in *Pseudo-Science and Society*, edited by Arthur Wrobel

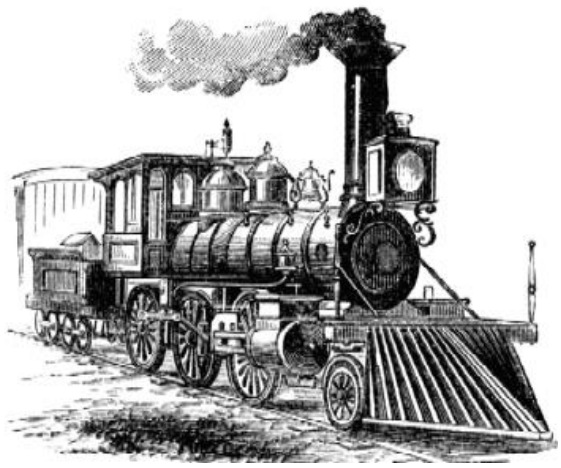
[7] S. Ross, "Scientist: The Story of a Word" *Annals of Science* 18 (1962)

[8] George Daniels, *Science in American Society* (NY: Alfred A. Knopf 1971) p.158-9

[9] Cited in Daniels, *Science in American Society* p. 151

unnatural, outside the realm of man and nature. Leo Marx, in his *The Machine in the Garden*, analyzes a passage from Hawthorne's notebooks, showing how Hawthorne, meditating in the woods, was startled by a railroad train but not by the sounds of village work. The village sounds could mingle with those of nature, "without any perceptible change of mood or tone he shifts from images of nature to images of man and society", but Hawthorne was unable to incorporate the sounds of a locomotive into this scheme:

> But hark! There is the whistle of the locomotive- the long shriek, harsh, above all other harshness, for the space of a mile cannot mollify it into harmony. It tells a story of busy men, citizens from the hot street, who have come to spend a day in a country village, men of business; in short of all unquietness; and no wonder that it gives such a startling shriek, since it brings the noisy world into the midst of our slumberous peace.[10]



This example of his thought suggests that Hawthorne's questioning of science did not only result from his use of the gothic form, but also from his opposition to the belief that technology was always an improvement. Passengers on a railroad to the Celestial City, in "The Celestial Railroad" (an allegorical tale based on Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*), remark on the convenience and ease of this modern mode of travel and laugh at the backward pilgrims still walking on foot; while in reality their convenient railroad is "a sort of mechanical demon"[11] taking them to Hell.

Hawthorne opposed science's transition from the more academic realm of "natural philosophy" to the practical world of utilitarian science, with its emphasis on exploiting nature. His scientists Rappaccini, Chillingworth, and Aylmer were all originally scholars and searchers for truth, who only later, out of personal concerns, seek control over nature. These characters reflect Hawthorne's grave doubts about the more active role of scientists in society. Since much of the world of nature was unknown, scientists' attempts to manipulate it could have disastrous consequences. His characters' fatal error is not their acquisition of knowledge, but their arrogance in applying that knowledge to alter the world and people around them.[12]12 By describing scientists in terms of sorcerers, Hawthorne emphasized their fundamental similarity- both had power and so both could misuse it.

The huge popularity of pseudo-science allowed Hawthorne to use the scientist-wizard to point out this danger of power. Many pseudo-sciences, especially spiritualism and mesmerism, were similar to magic, and were often presented in stage shows just as a "conjuror" would present magic tricks. The power of a mesmerist over his subject resembled that of a wizard, violating a victim's soul. Hawthorne just took this analogy from what the proponents of pseudo-science claimed, drawing his fictional wizard-scientists out of the science of his own day. There was not much difference between these sciences and magic; and in an age before the label "pseudo-sciences" differentiated them from legitimate science, the public's definition of science included their resemblance to magic. Therefore, Hawthorne's readers would have recognized the science of their own day in the supernatural mechanisms of his scientists.[13]

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[10] Citation and analysis in Leo Marx, The Machine and the Garden (NY: Oxford University Press 1964) p.13

[11] Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Celestial Railroad" in Norman Pearson, editor. *The Complete Novels and Selected Tales of Nathaniel Hawthorne* (NY: Modern Library 1937) p. 1073

[12] Kent Kreuter, *Literary response to Science Technology and Industrialization* (University of Wisconsin: Ann Arbor University Microfilms 1963) p. 54

[13] Stoehr p.252