

STARTLING VISIONS MAGAZINE

true throughout the length of the story. It cannot be discarded or contradicted simply on the perception that doing so would make for a good story by adding extra drama, humor, or a surprising twist. Such contradictions introduce an inappropriate *arbitrariness* to the tale, in which events do not follow logically as they should. It is for this reason that I refer to tales employing Scientifically Impossible concepts in an erratic and inconsistent manner as Arbitrary Wonderment Fiction stories.

Arbitrary Wonderment Fiction can be especially problematic as far as recognizing Startling Vision Fiction is concerned, because so often readers unaccustomed to "unconventional" literature easily confuse one for the other due to certain superficial similarities which the two fiction types have in common. Since Arbitrary Wonderment Fiction is fanciful by nature, often dealing with fantastical happenings, characters, or ideas, it can easily resemble Startling Vision Fiction on the surface to readers unfamiliar enough with either to grasp the difference in treatment of their respective subjects.

Unlike Startling Vision Fiction, in which Scientifically Impossible concepts are treated soberly and consistently, Arbitrary Wonderment Fiction's marvels need not have any consistency, nor require any rationale, and are often treated in an eccentric and outlandish fashion. Because of this, and despite an apparent similarity, Arbitrary Wonderment Fiction is quite different in both structure and development from Startling Vision Fiction.

It should be noted that I haven't invented the phrase "Startling Vision Fiction" from any desire of imposing a new, "official" designation, as it were, on the literary scene at large, but instead from a need to have a term suitable for a common frame of reference, so that others will recognize and understand the general range of fiction I'm referring to when I use the phrase. I have no desire to force my own views upon the reading public or the literary field by espousing these distinctions—but merely to make clear my approach to the subject. **It is not my goal to change public opinion, even if it were possible for me to do so. Nor am I welcoming a debate as to the merits of my views or my creation and definition of the phrase "Startling Vision Fiction".** Rather, I'm expressing them here solely from the need to clarify my view and