

Heinlein Reader's Discussion Group

Thursday 02-01-2001 9:00 P.M.

Heinlein's "Villains"



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Here Begin The A.F.H. postings

I am still preparing a lead off post, as well as getting ready for the arrival of visitors from the UK in 2 days but I just wanted to get the discussion started.

We're going to be looking at the villains in Heinlein; not the foolish or misguided, no, the real, dyed in the wool Black hats :-). Think about who gets your vote for the worst; the perennial favourites like Mrs Grew and Mrs Keithley or can you come up with a new one, a new slant on someone's actions? David Silver might want to vote for Uncle Tom perhaps?

Some points to consider; did Heinlein's villains change as his work matured? Did they vanish even? Did they ever succeed or did good always triumph? Were they believable or comic book, not nasty enough or too nasty?

Looking forward to your thoughts here and your presence on the chats.

Jane

=====

>Think about who gets your vote for the worst

Prof N.O.Brain got under my skin the most, I think.

>Did Heinlein's villains change as his work matured?

They were a pretty varied lot throughout, I think. It's hard to see a common type among the Governor in TMiaHM, Nehemiah Scudder, Prof N.O. Brain, the mutineer

officer (forgotten his name) who Johnny Dahlquist gloriously defeated, the Boojum in NOTB and the slaver in Citizen of the Galaxy.

>Did they vanish even?

No

>Did they ever succeed or did good always triumph?

I can't think of one who ultimately triumphed, but the Boojum was never ultimately defeated.

>Were they believable or comic book, not nasty enough

>or too nasty?

Pretty believable most of them, imho (h stands for haughty).

Julian Treadwell

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Julian Treadwell wrote:

>>Think about who gets your vote for the worst

>

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>

>

You see Neil O'Heret Brain as a villain? Well, as he's a Black Hat/ Heinlein in disguise I suppose he qualifies in a way. What does he actually do that's so bad though? All we see is him arguing with Jake and it would take a saint not to :-)

I had a theory that the villains were circular; at the beginning of his career they were slightly cliched and comic book; legless, faceless horrors in Lost Legacy, Nazis on the moon in RSG. Then, as his writing matured, the villains became more subtle; not the Wormfaces but the Three Galaxies, not John Thomas's mother but McClure...or no villain maybe. Then, at the end, tongue in cheek, he resurrected them all, The Galactic Overlord, himself as the Black Hats and came full circle.

One caveat; at the time of writing (1947), Nazis would have been a very real evil. Well, they still are but the idea of them hiding out to rise again has been done too many times. There is quite a chilling bit in RSG that contrasts with the rather formulaic Nazis that the boys defeat; when Art's mother tells how Hans, her husband looked when he was released from the concentration camp, to die soon after.

Jane

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Jane said:

>Then, at the end,

>tongue in cheek, he resurrected them all, The Galactic Overlord, himself as

>the Black Hats and came full circle.

>

...huh ?

That is a POV I haven't encountered (but I am in the wilderness). Himself as the black hats. Could you (or someone) expand on this?

cheers

OZ

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>Heinlein's villains

>Think about who gets your vote for the worst; the perennial

>favourites like Mrs Grew and Mrs Keithley or can you come up with a

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How about Yahweh of Job?

My other computer is a HOLMES FOUR.

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Major oz wrote:

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>oz

All the Black Hats in the book have names that are anagrams of Heinlein's name, Ginny's name or Heinlein's pseudonyms. In a letter to friends at the time NOTB was published, Heinlein says that he is the Black Hat. I think the idea is that the BH are the impetus that pushes the explorers from one situation to another and generally keeps the pot, sorry, plot, boiling.

This has been mentioned here quite often so I assumed most people would know what I meant; sorry, I wasn't intending to be cryptic! :-)

From the letter;

The first number is the page number in the USA editions; the second number (in parentheses) refers to the UK editions. 19 (9) Neil O'Heret Brain = Robert A Heinlein

93 (93) Bennie Hibol = Bob Heinlein

176 (177) Morinosky = Simon York (pen name; UNKNOWN et al.)

262 (273) Iver Hird-Jones = John Riverside (pen name: UNKNOWN et al.)

499 (539) The Villains Nine Rig Ruin = Lt Virginia Heinlein USNR

499 (540) Torne, Hernia, Lien and Snob = Robert Anson Heinlein

509 (553) Sir Tenderloinn the Brutal = Lt Robert A Heinlein USN RTD

509 (554) L Ron O'Leemy = Lyle Monroe (pen name for SF 1939 -46)

510 (555) Mellrooney = Lyle Monroe (pen name for SF 1939 - 46)

Heinlein then signed the letter R.A "Beast" Heinlein.

Jane

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>

...

I hadn't realised Morinosky and Hird-Jones were Beasts.

Something new every day...

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In article <3A71E78B.7DA7F261@netcom.ca>,

ddavitt <ddavitt@netcom.ca> wrote:

- >All the Black Hats in the book have names that are anagrams of Heinlein's name,
- >Ginny's name or Heinlein's pseudonyms. In a letter to friends at the time NOTB
- >was published, Heinlein says that he is the Black Hat. I think the idea is that
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>Jane

>

Unbelievable! This is so cool! I had no idea about this anagram relationship with the Black Hat names! This is why I subscribe to this group. NOTB will always be one of my favorite books by anyone...

Scott Hendrick

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>All the Black Hats in the book have names that are anagrams...

[snip examples]

Thank you so much, Jane.

This is a whole new area for me to digest.

cheers

OZ

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ddavitt wrote:

.SNIP re NotB.

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One name that isn't on the list is Private Hooly - the "wog", or Boojum analogue of a chimpanzee. I know he isn't a villain, but that name looks suspiciously like an anagram to me; I just can't work out a reasonable one. Does anyone have any ideas - it might be another Heinlein pseudonym, a red herring or perhaps he was making a monkey out of another author?

[Simon Jester]

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>Heinlein's villains

>Think about who gets your vote for the worst; the perennial

>favourites like Mrs Grew and Mrs Keithley or can you come up with a

>new one, a new slant on someone's actions?

How about Yahweh of Job?

My other computer is a HOLMES FOUR.

[LV Poker Player]

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LV Poker Player wrote:

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Or how about Loki of Job?

Quite possibly the only genuinely evil character in all of Heinlein's "adult" work - all of the others had some sort of redeeming quality, at least in their own eyes.

IIRC, Heinlein mentions in a few of his books that Male witches don't like being referred to as Warlocks - a title meaning Oath-Breaker, derived from Loki (the Norse prince of lies).

[Simon Jester]

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>From: "Simon Jester"

>Or how about Loki of Job?

Didn't play as big of a role as Yahweh, but still a candidate I would say.

>Quite possibly the only genuinely evil character in all of Heinlein's

>"adult" work - all of the others had some sort of redeeming quality, at

>least in their own eyes.

Yes, and one of my favorite Notebooks entries is "Your enemy is never a villain in his own eyes. Keep this in mind; it may offer a way to make him your friend. If not, you

can kill him without hate - and quickly." This is one of my all time favorite notebook entries. Some may have guessed this from the number of times I refer to it.

Let's take a look at, say, Belle and Miles from The Door Into Summer. Miles was hoodwinked by Belle and no doubt actually thought he was doing the best thing for their company and for Dan. I would guess that if pressed, Belle's attitude would have been along the lines of "Well, a gal's got to look out for herself, doesn't she? No one else will. Dan shouldn't have been so trusting. Trust doesn't pay in this world."

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>Trust doesn't pay in this world."

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But doesn't that mean that hardly anyone is a villain? Do they have to agree that they're evil? Who decides?

I think Mrs Grew, torturing children for money, qualifies as one of the worst. The Three Galaxies, rotating entire planets and murdering untold millions come pretty close too.

Jane

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Jane:

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>close too.

I'd discount anything or anyone not a human, e.g., the government of the Three Galaxies, the wormfaces, the deity from Job ...

Taking the order of importance observed by Heinlein and noted in Dave Wright's essay on anarchy of duty towards other humans ... i.e., family, then clan, then tribe (etc.) or whatever the order was (I'll have to look at that essay again) ... I'd theoretically look for the greatest villain as one who betrayed the family group to which he or she belonged. Perhaps Uncle Tom, or Thorby's grandparents, or someone else, depending on the nature of the wrong committed might qualify, here?

--

David M. Silver

AGplusone@aol.com

"I expect your names to shine!"

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AGplusone wrote:

...

>I'd discount anything or anyone not a human, e.g., the government of the Three

>Galaxies, the wormfaces, the deity from Job ...

...

I'd say any human gods could be included. In SiaSL, Jubal points out that most (all?) gods are basically human beings writ large - I think there's a quote to the effect that they "have the manners and morals of a small child".

Thou shalt honour the 11th commandment and keep it Wholly.

[Simon Jester]

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>family group to which he or she belonged. Perhaps Uncle Tom, or Thorby's

>grandparents, or someone else, depending on the nature of the wrong committed

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>--

>

Well, one example that falls under this definition is the renegade who works for the slugs without needing one on his back.

" a thing so outrageous, so damnably disgusting that I hesitate even to mention it, though I feel I must - there were men and women here and there among the slugs, humans (if you could call them that) without slugs...trusties....renegades. I hate slugs but I would turn from killing a slug to kill one such."

The slugs identify them by riding them, plumbing the murky depths of their minds, then releasing them, knowing that they will obey willingly. These are villains, devoid of all natural feelings of loyalty to one's kind. I always wondered how they functioned in the

world before the slugs came. The one Sam kills was a well known amateur sportsman, a 'gentleman' referee whatever that is. It sounds as if he was popular and famous so he must have done a good job of camouflaging his nature.

Jane

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On Sat, 27 Jan 2001 15:43:54 -0500, ddavitt wrote:

- >The slugs identify them by riding them, plumbing the murky depths of their minds,
- >then releasing them, knowing that they will obey willingly. These are villains,
- >devoid of all natural feelings of loyalty to one's kind.

This is EXACTLY my opinion of PETA members -- People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. They betray and harm humans routinely for the benefit of creatures not of their species. In fact, they view a preference for humans as "speciesism." Some scientists have noted that PETA's speciesism could be extended to preferring things that look like people (cocker spaniels) and not being so concerned with the fate of animals that don't, such as lab rats or bacteria.

Phebe

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>From: ddavitt ddavitt@netcom.ca

>But doesn't that mean that hardly anyone is a villain?

Not in their own eyes.

>Do they have to agree that

>they're evil? Who decides?

No, they don't have to agree. Our prisons would be somewhat empty if we let people decide that one for themselves. As for who decides, well, I have my standards. The government as a whole has standards. Mrs. Grundy has hers. I don't think there can be an overall preferred decision maker on this one.

>I think Mrs Grew, torturing children for money, qualifies as one of the worst.

So do I. But Mrs. Grew herself would probably disagree.

[LV Poker Player]

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On 27 Jan 2001 11:05:50 GMT, lvpokerplayer@aol.com (LV Poker Player)

wrote:

>>I think Mrs Grew, torturing children for money, qualifies as one of the worst.

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>So do I. But Mrs. Grew herself would probably disagree.

How do you think she would have justified herself?

Phebe

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>From: Phebe pheb@bellatlantic.ne

>>>I think Mrs Grew, torturing children for money, qualifies as one of the worst.

>>

>>>So do I. But Mrs. Grew herself would probably disagree.

>

>

>How do you think she would have justified herself?

My guess is that she was a totally amoral person, with no feelings or empathy for anyone but herself. If you pointed out that she was torturing children, her reaction probably would have been along the lines of "So what? What difference does that make? No skin off my nose." From what I understand, the most vicious criminals in our prisons are like this, and make no attempt to justify their actions because they need none. They did what they wanted because they wanted to, no further justification needed. Someone who knows more about criminal psychology than I do might want to weigh in here.

To sum up, her attitude would probably be "I don't need to justify myself. You want me to stop, pay me more than my current employers do."

My other computer is a HOLMES FOUR.

[LV Poker Player]

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On Fri, 26 Jan 2001 21:29:03 -0500, ddavitt wrote:

>The

>Three Galaxies, rotating entire planets and murdering untold millions come pretty

>close too.

The Three Galaxies wasn't a villain, it was a court system.

I guess one's opinion of this may depend on one's opinion of capital punishment. The idea of an intelligent species that is just too dangerous to allow to live is common in scifi, books and movies (The Borg, Aliens). It worked for me, and the point ---- that they didn't move their sun along with their planet ---- was, ummmmmmm, chilling, let's say.

Phebe

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On Fri, 26 Jan 2001 21:29:03 -0500, ddavitt

insisted that the sooth was being spoken here:

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>Three Galaxies, rotating entire planets and murdering untold millions come pretty

>close too.

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>Jane

I believe that to be a true villain, one must knowingly _choose_ evil. ("Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven", Richard III, Mordred, Fu Manchu, the I.B.I. Lieutenant in Between Planets, the three "vultures" who try to rape Dora.)

But antagonists who are obstacles our hero(ine) must overcome seem to me to have interested Heinlein more. Often they are either unimaginative bumblers like "Stinkey" Burke, or competents who have different value systems (the Martian Dak kills). Both types believe in the rightness of their cause, but only one seems to be worthy of the respect of Heinlein's protagonists.

--

Jon

"if someone gets something out of the story that the author didn't intend then I'd say they were making too much soup from one oyster."

ddavit

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jon ogden wrote:

>

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>the respect of Heinlein's protagonists.

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Seems to me then that not all Heinlein books have villains. They all have some irritant or goad that pushes the hero into action, or matures him/her but not necessarily villains.

I'm thinking of Farmer for instance. Bill meets some stupid people, some nasty people, some aggravating people. In learning to deal with them he grows in self control but none of them are evil.

There's an interesting bit in Cat where John Sterling, the fictional character that Roger and Hazel Stone wrote about, leaves a picnic as he can't take time off from fighting his arch nemesis the Galactic Overlord. Jubal says,

"There goes real nobility. When at last he destroys the Overlord, he will be erased. He knows it. It doesn't stop him."

Colin asks why he will be erased and is told,

"...for plot purposes, especially in adventure stories, heroes and villains come in complementary pairs. Each is necessary to the other."

Later Colin realizes that;

"A hero of Sterling's stature must oppose a villain as strong as he is. If we kill off the overlord, then we must dream up Son of Overlord, with just as many balls, teeth just as long, disposition just as vile, and steam coming out of his ears."

So; no Mrs Grew isn't a good thing? Or does the above only work for the comic book villains who aren't really evil, they're just drawn that way (echoes of Jessica Rabbit :-))

Jane

(nice sig Jon!)

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On Sun, 28 Jan 2001 17:10:09 -0500, ddavitt

insisted that the sooth was being spoken here:

>

>Seems to me then that not all Heinlein books have villains. They all have some irritant

>or goad that pushes the hero into action, or matures him/her but not necessarily

>villains.

I have trouble coming up with "real" villains in his books. His heroes fight for for their survival and for their group's survival against an assortment of greed, stupidity, environmental problems, alien ways of thinking, and -- mostly -- themselves. So many of his stories are about his heroes have to break through the straitjacket of their own thinking that it would seem to be the unifying theme of his fiction.

>I'm thinking of Farmer for instance. Bill meets some stupid people, some nasty people,

>some aggravating people. In learning to deal with them he grows in self control but

>none of them are evil.

Absolutely! And then same thing could be said about M. V. Smith and Waldo.

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>Roger and Hazel Stone wrote about, leaves a picnic as he can't take time off from

>fighting his arch nemesis the Galactic Overlord. Jubal says,

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>knows it. It doesn't stop him."

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>"...for plot purposes, especially in adventure stories, heroes and villains come in

>complementary pairs. Each is necessary to the other."

And, as they are presented here, both equally boring. Superman versus Brainiac is never as interesting as Batman confronting Two-Face.

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>the overlord, then we must dream up Son of Overlord, with just as many balls, teeth

>just as long, disposition just as vile, and steam coming out of his ears."

Dungeon Masters have that trouble in their games. After awhile the player-characters become so powerful than only deities can oppose them - that's when the smart DM announces that the character has been elevated directly into heaven and is now a demigod - he can be prayed to, but not played.

>So; no Mrs Grew isn't a good thing?

I don't think she qualifies. Too alien. On the other hand, I think that Job's Jehova may. (Not human, per se, but apparently sharing our value system.)

>Or does the above only work for the comic book

>villains who aren't really evil, they're just drawn that way (echoes of Jessica Rabbit

Well that's certainly true when Oscar faces Cyrano. (or the Cryano-doppleganger, I'm not sure which, or whether RAH meant there to be a difference.) On the other hand, Laz says that there are some men, you don't bother to waste time on - you just shoot them.

The epitome of non-villains, for me, is Manning in SU. I have often wondered if, in Heinlein's mind, he was able to hold onto enough of his idealism to create a Patrol that would ultimately overthrow him and probably put him on trial for his crimes.

>Jane

>(nice sig Jon!)

I like it

--

Jon

"if someone gets something out of the story that the author didn't

intend then I'd say they were making too much soup from one oyster."

ddavit

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On 26 Jan 2001 22:45:29 GMT, lvpokerplayer@aol.com (LV Poker Player)

wrote:

>Miles

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>thing for their company and for Dan. I would guess that if pressed, Belle's
>attitude would have been along the lines of "Well, a gal's got to look out for
>herself, doesn't she? No one else will. Dan shouldn't have been so trusting.
>Trust doesn't pay in this world."

I doubt Miles thought that. As for Belle, I doubt that she would have used that rationale....I don't know what she would have thought. Because later, when he comes back and she is an alcoholic with her looks ruined, she has forgotten all about her perfidy! She thinks he still ought to love her. A good example of people believing they are always in the right. So she dealt with her actions by simply forgetting them. Anyone else have an opinion on that? After all, they ARE stealing the company and patents outright! Belle is one of my "favorite" villains in the sense that she is complex and believable.

Phebe

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>From: Phebe pheb@bellatlantic.net

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- >forgetting them. Anyone else have an opinion on that? After all, they
- >ARE stealing the company and patents outright! Belle is one of my
- >"favorite" villains in the sense that she is complex and believable.

Not really. Remember, he was given a check for his stock and a bonus on top of it. My guess is that Belle had Miles thinking that this was more than sufficient compensation, and that Dan really was standing in the way of progress. They were freeing Dan to go his own way, while paying him, and freeing themselves to turn the company into a major industry. Belle would have been good at this sort of persuasion.

As for Belle, my justification is one of several that would be possible. But I really doubt if she considered herself a villainess.

It's been a while since I read *The Door Into Summer*, and I think it disappeared in my last move, along with *Cat*. But I seem to remember when Dan visited her in her fleabag apartment, she did attempt a justification along the lines of Dan was "sick" and they did what they did to "help" him? Am I remembering that right? She would not have seen it that way at the time of the swindle, but that was the way her memory of it turned out, and I think she honestly believed it as she sat there in an alcoholic stupor.

Even if her actual justification at the time of the swindle was different from what I proposed, I still stand by my assertion that very few people are villains in their own eyes, and that Belle was not one who saw herself as a villain.

My other computer is a HOLMES FOUR.

[LV Poker Player]

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On 27 Jan 2001 21:32:35 GMT, lvpokerplayer@aol.com (LV Poker Player)

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>really doubt if she considered herself a villainess.

>

Good, I think you are right. There's quite a lot like that that actually goes on in the corporate world ---- the inventor, the start-up guy, forced out when his style holds back the sharks that currently have control.

>I seem to remember when Dan visited her
>in her fleabag apartment, she did attempt a justification along the lines of
>Dan was "sick" and they did what they did to "help" him? Am I remembering that
>right? She would not have seen it that way at the time of the swindle, but
>that was the way her memory of it turned out, and I think she honestly believed
>it as she sat there in an alcoholic stupor.

I think so. I thought I had that book memorized, but it's been awhile since last reread, I guess. It is Dan's careful gallantry that I recall. In that scene, that is.

Phebe

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"AGplusone" <agplusone@aol.com> wrote in message

news:20010126225526.07832.00000445@ng-ch1.aol.com...

> Jane:

>

>>But doesn't that mean that hardly anyone is a villain? Do they have to agree that

>>they're evil? Who decides?

>>I think Mrs Grew, torturing children for money, qualifies as one of the worst. The

>>Three Galaxies, rotating entire planets and murdering untold millions come

>>pretty close too.

>

>I'd discount anything or anyone not a human, e.g., the government of the Three

>Galaxies, the wormfaces, the deity from Job ...

>

>Taking the order of importance observed by Heinlein and noted in Dave Wright's

>essay on anarchy of duty towards other humans ... i.e., family, then clan, then

>tribe (etc.) or whatever the order was (I'll have to look at that essay again)

>... I'd theoretically look for the greatest villain as one who betrayed the

>family group to which he or she belonged. Perhaps Uncle Tom, or Thorby's

>grandparents, or someone else, depending on the nature of the wrong

committed

>might qualify, here?

Thanks for taking time to read my essay. [\[Click here Adv.\]](#).

However, I have to disagree, (maybe). And although what I am about to say might sound cold-hearted and unfeeling, I see it is a necessary corollary of my interpretation of Heinlein's (fictionally expressed) 'theory of morals', that I outlined in the essay.

Loyalty to every level can be subjugated to a 'higher' level without its being a 'betrayal' of the lower levels. In this case, Uncle Tom submitted his nephew and niece to

possible danger because of a desire to protect and advance the welfare of his country/planet. Just as a person can give up his own life to defend his family, he can also give up the life of his family, or as in this case, put them into a position where they might be subjected to harm, in order to do what he can to protect the life of his nation, or other 'higher' loyalty.

I know that many people would have strong feelings against such a viewpoint. I doubt, frankly, that I could do such a thing myself. Think about it for a moment. Almost no one would object to a person killing a person in their own self-defense. Very few would have objections to a person giving up his own life to protect the life of his family. Somewhat fewer, most likely, would have objections to a person giving up his own life in the defense of his country, even when such a loss would, most likely, cause some harm to his family. Many more would have objections to giving up the life of his family for the protection of their nation. I can't give any examples off the top of my head, but it is my gut feeling that many people, throughout history, have indeed sacrificed their families to some 'higher' loyalty, and that we don't necessarily consider them 'traitors' to their families. At the very least, we rarely call them "villains".

There are obvious exceptions and it happens often that such a 'theory' can be nothing more than a 'rationalization' to commit evil in the name of the 'nation' or the 'race' or whatever group might be appropriate. I doubt that such people would ever consider themselves 'evil' in their own eyes, however.

In some cases, such people would, in reality, be 'amoral' as was pointed out on this thread by someone and would have no idea of 'right and wrong' and have no care for the consequences of their actions with respect to the welfare of others. Some others would *know* that what they were doing was wrong, but, in spite of this, put their own welfare above all others and also care nothing about the consequences. In yet a third case, some would be 'honestly convinced to the rightness of their cause'. The first two cases, IMHO, are definitely 'evil'. The reality is, of course, that they have never achieved 'any loyalty' to anything above their own self-interest. The third, I could not call evil, even though I wouldn't hesitate to condemn the actions of all three cases and do everything in my power to stop them, if they caused harm or suffering to others. (Something to consider. Perhaps that which distinguishes the first two cases from the third, namely pure self-interest versus loyalty to something above self-interest, marks the definition of 'evil'. Even though all three can cause harm to others).

In light of this, I can concede the possibility, (and this is why I put in the 'maybe' at the beginning), that Uncle Tom was working from what he 'perceived' to be the right thing for his country, when, in fact, his perception was wrong. I definitely don't think that he falls into either of the first two categories, and even if we grant, for the purpose of discussion, that his loyalty to his nation/planet might eventually cause harm to others, I can't call him 'evil' or a 'villain'.

The problem with all of this is that it is quite often impossible to determine the 'motivation' of characters and thus impossible to determine into which category they fall.

David Wright

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jon ogden wrote:

>

>>So; no Mrs Grew isn't a good thing?

>

>I don't think she qualifies. Too alien. On the other hand, I think

>that Job's Jehova may. (Not human, per se, but apparently sharing our

>value system.)

>

>

That's an interesting POV; why alien? Because harming children is so awful a deed that it's not compatible with being human? I don't quite see how that works; we could never have villains if villains have to be human and evil isn't human. Maybe I'm just reading it wrong; could you expand a bit?

Jane

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David Wright:

>In this case, Uncle Tom submitted

>his nephew and niece to possible danger because of a desire to protect and

>advance the welfare of his country/planet. Just as a person can give up

>his

>own life to defend his family, he can also give up the life of his family,
>or as in this case, put them into a position where they might be subjected
>to harm, in order to do what he can to protect the life of his nation, or
>other 'higher' loyalty.

Yeah, but ... he put them in that position (as decoy) unwittingly so far as Poddy and Clark (and their parents) were concerned. I could see him saying: "Listen, kids, if you come with me, you might be in danger because there are evil men who may try to stop me and you might be injured collaterally." But he didn't do that. Had he done so Clark might possibly not have been so stupid as to agreed to smuggle what turned out to be the A-bomb on board. He didn't talk to the parents about this aspect either. I don't care how far in the clouds that father's head was. I can imagine the conversation between Uncle Tom and his brother-in-law. "You want to use my kids as WHAT?! You realize of course this means you never set foot in this house again (or worse, "we have to meet in a set duel"), don't you?"

Yes, people take their families in covered wagons across the continent; but they usually have a slight clue what they're getting into.

--

David M. Silver

AGplusone@aol.com

"I expect your names to shine!"

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On Mon, 29 Jan 2001 12:42:37 -0500, "David Wright"

<maikosht@alltel.net> insisted that the sooth was being spoken here:

>

>"AGplusone" <agplusone@aol.com> wrote in message

>news:20010126225526.07832.00000445@ng-ch1.aol.com...

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>>family group to which he or she belonged. Perhaps Uncle Tom, or Thorby's

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>might sound cold-hearted and unfeeling, I see it is a necessary corollary of

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>or as in this case, put them into a position where they might be subjected

>to harm, in order to do what he can to protect the life of his nation, or

>other 'higher' loyalty.

David, I don't think what you postulate is possible. Imo, what Uncle Tom (like his literary antecedent) did, was to betray a primary loyalty for one which, Heinlein seems to suggest, evolves out of (but does not replace) that primary loyalty. By betraying it, he calls into question the legitimacy of what springs from it. Otherwise your argument suggests that untainted goodness can spring from a tainted source.

>I know that many people would have strong feelings against such a viewpoint.

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>moment. Almost no one would object to a person killing a person in their own

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>family. Many more would have objections to giving up the life of his family
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>my head, but it is my gut feeling that many people, throughout history, have
>indeed sacrificed their families to some 'higher' loyalty, and that we don't
>necessarily consider them 'traitors' to their families. At the very least,
>we rarely call them "villains".

The only support for your argument that I can think of is "Farewell. Return with your shield, or on it." But I think I could make a case for the Roman matriarchs' placing their city-state over their families was a sign that the Republic was corrupt and the Empire was doomed to be. (And in this case, it is presumable that the son is going willingly, not unknowingly.)

When the family unit is replaced, or made less of, in order for the tribe/state to achieve primal, we are looking towards the corruption of the fascist ideal into the adulation of the great and godlike leader - be he Khan, Octavius, Mao, Hussein, Moon, or Farrakhan.

We may not call those who place the survival of their tribe over the survival of their family villains, but I believe we do call them fanatics.

--

Jon

"if someone gets something out of the story that the author didn't intend then I'd say they were making too much soup from one oyster."

ddavit

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On Mon, 29 Jan 2001 22:10:26 -0500, ddavitt <ddavitt@netcom.ca>

insisted that the sooth was being spoken here:

>jon ogden wrote:

>

>>

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>>

>> I don't think she qualifies. Too alien.

>>

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>not compatible with being human? I don't quite see how that works; we could never have

>villains if villains have to be human and evil isn't human.

>Maybe I'm just reading it wrong; could you expand a bit?

>

>Jane

>

Do I have to explain everything??? It should be quite obvious that I brain-farted. Saw "Mrs. Grew;" read "Mother-Thing." You are, of course, correct. If Grew isn't evil then I was elected president and OJ is my Attorney General.

(I so admire someone who can say "You're so full of it!" so gently. "Interesting POV," indeed! <grin>)

--

Jon

"if someone gets something out of the story that the author didn't

intend then I'd say they were making too much soup from one oyster."

ddavit

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"AGplusone" <agplusone@aol.com> wrote in message

news:20010130031611.03853.00003808@ng-md1.aol.com..

. >David Wright:

>

(snip)

>

>Yeah, but ... he put them in that position (as decoy) unwittingly so far as

>Poddy and Clark (and their parents) were concerned.

The more I think about this, the more I believe that Uncle Tom did not actually know that he was putting them in danger. (of course, this undermines my entire argument with respect to UT, but not necessarily the argument as a whole). The entire purpose of making the trip with Clark and Poddy was to *disguise* the fact that he was, in fact, on the diplomatic mission. Had he *known* that it was already compromised, there would have been no point in trying it that way. In addition, had he known the extreme lengths to which they were willing to stop him, I seriously doubt that he would have carried them with him. Perhaps, he can be faulted with the failure to recognize both the fact that his mission was known and that they were willing to blow up a whole ship to stop him. I haven't read Podkayne in a while, so I may be mis-remembering crucial details, but that is the way that it seems now.

(snip)

>Yes, people take their families in covered wagons across the continent; but

>they usually have a slight clue what they're getting into.

>

>--

>David M. Silver

>AGplusone@aol.com

>"I expect your names to shine!"

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(snip)

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>>own life to defend his family, he can also give up the life of his family,

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>David, I don't think what you postulate is possible. Imo, what Uncle

>Tom (like his literary antecedent) did, was to betray a primary

>loyalty for one which, Heinlein seems to suggest, evolves out of (but

>does not replace) that primary loyalty.

See my reply to David Silver about Uncle Tom's intentions. As far as betraying 'primary' loyalty. I don't see how that squares with the concept as a whole. Now, I will grant that in *most* situations, it is simply not necessary to go beyond such a personal

loyalty, because the consequences of any single person's actions do not normally determine the outcome of whether or not a nation, race or species undergoes tribulations or not. But in an extreme scenario, where such is, indeed, the outcome, the person would have to 'resolve the conflicts at each level' and determine his level of morality. Think of Johnny Dahlquist, who preferred to give up his life rather than let his baby girl grow up in a world dominated by the likes of Towers. Imagine, if you will, that his family were with him on the moon and that he took them with him to the bomb room, so that they couldn't be used as hostages against him. Would he have made the choice of sacrificing his baby girl and wife to not let all of the other baby girls grow up under such a regime?

In Space Cadet, Heinlein used the example of Riviera who had to call down the bombing on his own home town, where presumably members of his family still lived. It's interesting to look at the conversation between Lt. Wong and Matt in light of this discussion here.

>By betraying it, he calls into

>question the legitimacy of what springs from it. Otherwise your

>argument suggests that untainted goodness can spring from a tainted

>source.

>

As I have suggested, I consider it neither a 'betrayal', nor a 'tainted source'. Many people during the holocaust were willing to put themselves *and their families* into jeopardy for the sake of a greater humanitarian cause and that is the kind of thing that I am thinking of, whether you call it a 'race', 'nation', 'human kind' or whatever. I'm not saying, 'my government right or wrong' or of things like which happened in Jonestown.

(snip)

>At the very least,

>>we rarely call them "villains".

>

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>Return with your shield, or on it." But I think I could make a case

>for the Roman matriarchs' placing their city-state over their families

>was a sign that the Republic was corrupt and the Empire was doomed to

>be. (And in this case, it is presumable that the son is going

>willingly, not unknowingly.)

I think, as apparently RAH may have, that it was just the opposite which was the sign of its doom and downfall. As Lazarus said in his notebooks. "later this custom declined, and so did Rome". (May not be exact quote).

>

>When the family unit is replaced, or made less of, in order for the

>tribe/state to achieve primal, we are looking towards the corruption

>of the fascist ideal into the adulation of the great and godlike

>leader - be he Khan, Octavius, Mao, Hussein, Moon, or Farrakhan.

>

Any tool, whether it be a mechanical or electronic invention, or a 'theory of morals' can be used for good or bad. The ultimate consequences of *not* putting the welfare of the clan, race or species above that of the family can also lead to the type of 'dog-eat-dog' anarchy of which I spoke in my essay. Such outcomes of either choice do not necessarily have to follow.

>We may not call those who place the survival of their tribe over the

>survival of their family villains, but I believe we do call them fanatics.

Some yes, so no. The key to remember is that it can be the survival of the 'tribe', 'clan', 'race' or whatever on which the survival of individuals and individual families depends.

David Wright

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>Himself as

>the black hats.

I think the idea is the author of an action-adventure book (at least) is always the principal enemy of his heroes -- because he is the efficient cause of all their troubles,

sending them fleeing hither and yon for no better reason than auctorial convenience, etc.

Bill

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>IIRC, Heinlein mentions in a few of his books that Male witches don't like

>being referred to as Warlocks -

Correct. It is a social solecism; a male witch is a witch (a word that derives, IIRC, from "wicca") The social stricture against "warlock" was stronger in the thirties and forties than it is now. I believe the term "warlock" is a Christian invention and places the witch in a Christian-demonic context rather than the pagan-agricultural context.

Bill

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There is a technical definition of "evil" in Scholastic theology: To know what is good but to choose to do otherwise. I think this definition cuts through some of the circular and ambiguous meditations.

Maikosht, I don't think your analysis of Uncle Tom acting on the good for the higher rank of value is correct, because when he chose to endanger his family, he put himself outside the group values he is theoretically trying to serve: They have the right to choose to endanger themselves for a "higher" cause -- he does not have the right to choose for them and cannot get such a right within the context of western liberalism. Even if his "motivation" for doing this was oriented toward the "higher" value, he was undercutting that value by that act. He does evil in fact.

However, you are, I believe, still correct that Uncle Tom would not be considered a "villain" in the pulp sense we are talking about here.

There is another sense of villain people like C.S. Lewis were interested in -- as Screwtape was a villain, using banality to manipulate people into damnation. It does not seem to me that Heinlein was interested enough to place such a villain front-and-center, but he uses this type occasionally.

Bill

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>I have trouble coming up with "real" villains in his books.

I think you're right that most of the antagonists in Heinlein's books are simply "inconvenient" to the protagonist -- but there are a few I would say qualify. Mrs. Keithly in "Gulf." It's self-evident that she "knows" what is good -- she knows enough to present a front of ultra-respectability, but she thinks her goals are important enough to justify casual torture and murder -- i.e., she knows it's not good but chooses it anyway.

Now, arguably, some of the CIA-type organizations in Heinlein's books (Puppet Masters, "Gulf") might fall into the same category, though we are, tastefully, never shown the ruthlessness in action I cannot offhand think of an example, but the clear implication that the Old Man's organization is involved in Black Ops circa 1950 implies torture-for-the-benefit-of-their-goals. In thinking about this, we become embroiled in the concept of appropriate use of force, which is a very muddled area.

Bill

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>As for Belle . . . I really doubt if she considered herself a villainess.>

I have no doubt that Belle Darkin knew she was one of the bad 'uns and gloried in it. After 25 years she pulled the rationalization she used at the time over her head -- but she knew it was a rationalization when she did it -- called CYA.

Bill

=====
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On Tue, 30 Jan 2001 10:18:19 -0500, "David Wright" <maikosht@alltel.net> insisted that the sooth was being spoken here:

Snip

>>

>> David, I don't think what you postulate is possible. Imo, what Uncle

>> Tom (like his literary antecedent) did, was to betray a primary

>> loyalty for one which, Heinlein seems to suggest, evolves out of (but

>> does not replace) that primary loyalty.

>

>See my reply to David Silver about Uncle Tom's intentions.

There's no question that if Tom didn't intend for them to be endangered that the entire situation changes. But I responded to the postulates as they were this morning. However, I don't agree with you. Tom was too intelligent and competent to be guilty of gross stupidity.

>As far as

>betraying 'primary' loyalty. I don't see how that squares with the concept

>as a whole. Now, I will grant that in *most* situations, it is simply not

>necessary to go beyond such a personal loyalty, because the consequences of

>any single person's actions do not normally determine the outcome of whether

>or not a nation, race or species undergoes tribulations or not. But in an

>extreme scenario, where such is, indeed, the outcome, the person would have

>to 'resolve the conflicts at each level' and determine his level of

>morality. Think of Johnny Dalquist, who preferred to give up his life

>rather than let his baby girl grow up in a world dominated by the likes of

>Towers. Imagine, if you will, that his family were with him on the moon and

>that he took them with him to the bomb room, so that they couldn't be used

>as hostages against him. Would he have made the choice of sacrificing his

>baby girl and wife to not let all of the other baby girls grow up under such

>a regime?

Again - a totally different situation than what was posulated. Many times Men have provided their wives and children with the final mercy in order to save them from a worse fate. Presumably Dalquist, before sacrificing his family, would have talked it over with his wife.

By the way, Dalquist is fiction. I was looking at your ideas as they applied to my perceptions in the real world. (That's pretty much what i do with RAH's, too.) But when

I am asked to answer a what-if question about a character, I feel that I am treading on on pretty shakey ground when I am fool enough to answer.

>In Space Cadet, Heinlein used the example of Riviera who had to call down >the bombing on his own home town, where presumably members of his family >still lived. It's interesting to look at the conversation between Lt. Wong >and Matt in light of this discussion here.

The point was made that the Patrol was not crazy enough to think that most of its psychologically "clear" officers with certified nobility stamped on their souls (I'm not being snide, honest.) would be asked to or allowed to get anywhere near a bomb that had to be targetted at their country.

As to Riviera -- given the demands of his job, it's not unreasonable to assume he was unmarried and as a senior officer, it's not unreasonable to assume that his parents were dead. But we are both guessing at what is unknowable.

Granting for the moment your suppositions, what does that mean? That everything that Lt. Wong said was an expression of Heinlein's beliefs? Frankly, Riveriera has always made me shudder. I regarded it as proof that sometimes law-enforcement types are required to be inhuman.

However, let's assume that Wong does speak for Heinlein. In which case, I would have to say that this supports your argument. But all my caveats about fictional characters in what-ifs still apply.

>As I have suggested, I consider it neither a 'betrayal', nor a 'tainted

>source'. Many people during the holocaust were willing to put themselves

>*and their families* into jeopardy for the sake of a greater humanitarian

>cause and that is the kind of thing that I am thinking of, whether you call

>it a 'race', 'nation', 'human kind' or whatever.

You definitely have a point here. There are stories of gentiles who sheltered Jews in the same house with their own children - knowing that the Nazi's would take their revenge on the entire family. And I do regard them as heros. However, they were saving real, live, in-front-of-them human beings, not some abstract idea. I'm not sure whether that makes a difference, but it certainly shows that I don't have all the truth in my grasp. <grin>

>I'm not saying, 'my

>government right or wrong' or of things like which happened in Jonestown.

Jonestown, Waco, etc. happend because of people who had the same commitment to an abstract ideal as Rivera. They lost touch with the basic realities and have blinded themselves with a devotion to an ideal that demands they ignore their humanity.

>(snip)

>

>> At the very least,

>> >we rarely call them "villains".

>>

>> The only support for your argument that I can think of is "Farewell.

>> Return with your shield, or on it." But I think I could make a case

>> for the Roman matriarchs' placing their city-state over their families

>> was a sign that the Republic was corrupt and the Empire was doomed to

>> be. (And in this case, it is presumable that the son is going

>> willingly, not unknowingly.)

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>I think, as apparently RAH may have, that it was just the opposite which was

>the sign of its doom and downfall. As Lazarus said in his notebooks. "later

>this custom declined, and so did Rome". (May not be exact quote).

Yes, but he was talking about volunteer armies being replaced by conscript armies. I wasn't talking about the sons, but the mothers.

>>

>> When the family unit is replaced, or made less of, in order for the

>> tribe/state to achieve primal, we are looking towards the corruption

>> of the fascist ideal into the adulation of the great and godlike

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>Any tool, whether it be a mechanical or electronic invention, or a 'theory

>of morals' can be used for good or bad. The ultimate consequences of *not*

>putting the welfare of the clan, race or species above that of the family

>can also lead to the type of 'dog-eat-dog' anarchy of which I spoke in my

>essay. Such outcomes of either choice do not necessarily have to follow.

Absolutely. You are right that both slopes are slippery and that a slide down one or the other has to be the result. However, we may disagree about the likelihood of that slide, in either case.

>> We may not call those who place the survival of their tribe over the

>> survival of their family villains, but I believe we do call them

>> fanatics.

>

>Some yes, so no. The key to remember is that it can be the survival of the

>'tribe', 'clan', 'race' or whatever on which the survival of individuals and

>individual families depends.

"The former are idealists acting from the highest motives for the greatest good for the greatest number. The latter are surly curmudgeons, suspicious and lacking in altruism. But they are more comfortable neighbors than the other sort."

There may be Riveras in the real world. I hope i don't live too close to any. (Not a rebutal to anything you said, just a personal observation, you probably can agree with.)

--

Jon

"Admiral Heinlein doesn't allow the Russians to build rockets"

-- Larry Niven

=====
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On 30 Jan 2001 18:14:55 GMT, bpral22169@aol.com (BPRAL22169) insisted
that the sooth was being spoken here:

<snip>

>. I believe the term

>"warlock" is a Christian invention and places the witch in a Christian-demonic

>context rather than the pagan-agricultural context.

"Warlock" is from the Old Norse "var?lokkur," and means roughly "spirit song." Modern Pagans have developed a belief that it is a Scottish word and means oath-breaker and was a pejorative that began to be applied during the the Great Burnings of the mid 16th to mid 17th century.

It's hard to prove a negative, but I was interested in this at one time, and I could never find any evidence that warlock was first used or invented by Christianity. It appears to be an invention of the Neo-Pagans who cite each other when talking about this, never any verifiable sources.

It is true that James VI of Scotland (James I of England) was a fanatical believer in and hater of witches (Scotland burned something like 1300 witches while England burned four) He may have been a source of the Scottish-word legend.

--

Jon

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=====
=====

I meant to say:

>"Warlock" is from the Old Norse "var'lokkur," and means roughly

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--

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(snip)

>

>There's no question that if Tom didn't intend for them to be

>endangered that the entire situation changes. But I responded to the

>postulates as they were this morning.

I realize that and apologize for switching streams in mid-horse.

However, I don't agree with you.

>Tom was too intelligent and competent to be guilty of gross stupidity.

Well, he appeared to be intelligent and competent, but he obviously, had to not realize the extent to which one group, at least, would go to stop his mission, or otherwise he himself would probably not have boarded that ship, much less letting Poddy and Clark get on it. BTW, I don't recall at this time, but were the people behind the bomb attempt the same as the ones behind Mrs. Grew? Or was she perhaps, a fall-back in case the bomb failed?

>

>

(snip scenario about Dahlquist)

>

>Again - a totally different situation than what was posulated. Many

>times Men have provided their wives and children with the final mercy

>in order to save them from a worse fate. Presumably Dalquist, before

>sacrificing his family, would have talked it over with his wife.

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I don't see it as a different situation. I was actually asking, if he had to, would he sacrifice his family to prevent others from having to suffer the fate that he, (in the original story), knew that *his* daughter would suffer.

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>applied to my perceptions in the real world. (That's pretty much what

>i do with RAH's, too.) But when I am asked to answer a what-if

>question about a character, I feel that I am treading on on pretty

>shakey ground when I am fool enough to answer.

You are right. No one can say what a fictional character would do in the situation that I was suggesting. In fact, *no one* can predict what a *real* person would do in such a case. At the very least, I do not know what *I* would do in such a case. I would like to think that If I knew without a doubt that my decisions involved the life and death of some not insignificant number of people, and to prevent their death, (or other fate worse than death), that I would be have to sacrifice my family, that I could do so, no matter how abhorrent that thought is to me. I am much more confident that I could sacrifice my own life in such a situation.

>

>>In Space Cadet, Heinlein used the example of Riviera who had to call down

>>the bombing on his own home town, where presumably members of his family

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>The point was made that the Patrol was not crazy enough to think that

>most of its psychologically "clear" officers with certified nobility

>stamped on their souls (I'm not being snide, honest.) would be asked

>to or allowed to get anywhere near a bomb that had to be targetted at

>their country.

It was clear that it was expected that such occurrences would be extremely unlikely to happen, and should it happen, that they, in fact, would be 'locked up rather than take a chance', but it was just as clearly implied, that if it did happen, in spite of all of the low chance etc, and there was no other choice, that such an officer was expected to do so. Whether or not it is a reasonable expectation, that no one can ever know as I said above. Matt, I think, recognized that there had to be the possibility of 'skin of his own nose' being part of the price and one which he had to be prepared to pay no matter what the consequences to himself or to those close to him.

>

>As to Riviera -- given the demands of his job, it's not unreasonable

>to assume he was unmarried and as a senior officer, it's not

>unreasonable to assume that his parents were dead. But we are both

>guessing at what is unknowable.

>

True. Likely, I would agree, not married, but likely to have mother or father or siblings. Not really knowable. I agree.

>Granting for the moment your suppositions, what does that mean? That

>everything that Lt. Wong said was an expression of Heinlein's beliefs?

>Frankly, Riveriera has always made me shudder. I regarded it as proof

>that sometimes law-enforcement types are required to be inhuman.

>

>However, let's assume that Wong does speak for Heinlein. In which

>case, I would have to say that this supports your argument. But all

>my caveats about fictional characters in what-ifs still apply.

>

I don't know if RAH actually believed any of this himself and I'm not claiming that. I was only proposing, (although, I admit now that it I don't think it really was the case), that Uncle Tom's actions were consistent with such a 'theory' rather than being 'villainous' or 'evil'.

>>As I have suggested, I consider it neither a 'betrayal', nor a 'tainted

>>source'. Many people during the holocaust were willing to put themselves

>>*and their families* into jeopardy for the sake of a greater humanitarian

>>cause and that is the kind of thing that I am thinking of, whether you

call

>>it a 'race', 'nation', 'human kind' or whatever.

> >You definitely have a point here. There are stories of gentiles who

>sheltered Jews in the same house with their own children - knowing

>that the Nazi's would take their revenge on the entire family. And I

>do regard them as heros. However, they were saving real, live,

>in-front-of-them human beings, not some abstract idea. I'm not sure

>whether that makes a difference, but it certainly shows that I don't

>have all the truth in my grasp. <grin>

>

There is a valid point here. I do know that having 'real, live, in-front-of-them human beings' to deal with would make it easier to do such. I am firmly convinced, however, that it would be difficult, if not impossible to overcome that self/family sense of survival in the first place, no-matter how personal or close the contacts might be without some *higher level of morality' underlying such actions, whether it is there consciously or

unconsciously. An obvious situation where such would not have to be true, would be the case where the other people were truly considered as 'family' and thus would fall under what has been called here 'primary loyalty'. But, in the case of 'just friends' or 'people we know', it would be a different situation.

>>I'm not saying, 'my

>>government right or wrong' or of things like which happened in Jonestown.

>

>Jonestown, Waco, etc. happend because of people who had the same

>commitment to an abstract ideal as Rivera. They lost touch with the

>basic realities and have blinded themselves with a devotion to an

>ideal that demands they ignore their humanity.

>

Like technology on another thread, 'commitment to an abstract ideal', is IMHO, neither 'good' nor 'evil' in itself. The trick is know whether or not what you are committing to is to be used for 'good' or 'evil' purposes. And, it is, unfortunately, the case that such 'commitments' are often misued for 'evil'. But, we cannot deny that such commitments can be and often are the moving force behind much, perhaps even most, of what is good.

>>(snip)

>>

(snip)

>

>"The former are idealists acting from the highest motives for the

>greatest good for the greatest number. The latter are surly

>curmudgeons, suspicious and lacking in altruism. But they are more

>comfortable neighbors than the other sort."

In spite of what many people claim, you can always find that RAH's 'opinionated beliefs' usually have a counter-example somewhere to balance them.

>

>There may be Riveras in the real world. I hope i don't live too close

>to any. (Not a rebutal to anything you said, just a personal

>observation, you probably can agree with.)

>

Especially, not if my government leaders want to try to rule over the world and the Patrol is up there protecting everyone from such. :)

'Quis Custodiet Ipsos Custodes?'

David

P.S. I see that in replying to this group from my office, that one of my alternate e-mail identities was used, 'maiKoshT'.

This is a trivia question based on that:

This was originally an alternate screen name for AIM so,in addition to logging from home under my primary name,I could log onto the chat group (adv) from my office which has a much more reliable connection than I do from home and by which I could make sure that I had a complete log of the discussions. The name derives from the Russian masculine form for 'my' ,(misspelled) and a name which I first came across in H.Beam Piper's works but which was also used by Heinlein. That name is partially obscured by using the letter 'T' as shorthand for one syllable rather than the full syllable, (that syllable also being similar to another Russian word spelled diferrently).

- a) what is the full name that I put together with 'my'?
- b) What work of RAH did that name appear in prominently.
- c) What work of Piper's did it appear in?
- d) What source did Piper attribute the name to ?
- e) What is the English translation of the word represented by 'T'? (hint: Hilda refers to it in NOTB)

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On Thu, 1 Feb 2001 13:54:12 -0500, "David Wright"

<maikosht@alltel.net> insisted that the sooth was being spoken here:

>> Again - a totally different situation than what was posulated. Many
>> times Men have provided their wives and children with the final mercy
>> in order to save them from a worse fate. Presumably Dalquist, before
>> sacrificing his family, would have talked it over with his wife.

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>I don't see it as a different situation. I was actually asking, if he had
>to, would he sacrifice his family to prevent others from having to suffer
>the fate that he, (in the original story), knew that *his* daughter would
>suffer.

I think I would be in a more uncomfortable spot deciding what Dahlquist would do if the conspirators did have his wife and child and promised to kill them slowly and as painfully as possible unless he let them into the bomb room.

This reminds me of some of the I Robot stories. Istm that both of us are trying to program the the positronic brains of Heinleinian-hero robots and putting them into no-win situations where the laws conflict with each other. (Not complaining, it's fun. Just observing)

>>By the way, Dalquist is fiction. I was looking at your ideas as they
>>applied to my perceptions in the real world. (That's pretty much what
>>i do with RAH's, too.) But when I am asked to answer a what-if
>>question about a character, I feel that I am treading on on pretty
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>You are right. No one can say what a fictional character would do in the
>situation that I was suggesting. In fact, *no one* can predict what a *real*

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>doubt that my decisions involved the life and death of some not
>insignificant number of people, and to prevent their death, (or other fate
>worse than death), that I would be have to sacrifice my family, that I could
>do so, no matter how abhorrent that thought is to me. I am much more
>confident that I could sacrifice my own life in such a situation.

Probably the real question for most of us in here - at least those of us old enough to be fathers -- would be: How long would we allow ourselves to stay alive after we sacrificed our wife and children.

>

>> >In Space Cadet, Heinlein used the example of Riviera who had to call down
>> >the bombing on his own home town, where presumably members of his family
>> >still lived. It's interesting to look at the conversation between Lt.Wong
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>Matt, I think, recognized that there had to be the possibility of 'skin of
>his own nose' being part of the price and one which he had to be prepared to
>pay no matter what the consequences to himself or to those close to him.

>

Any armed force tries very hard to get its members into that state of mind. There must be enough success-proof available to have them keep doing it, but even though there is a strong militaristic tradition in my family, I'm not sure any of them would have been able to sacrifice their families, or even brooked a suggestion that they might. Though mayhaps that is mostly my projection.

Assuming that the Patrol with its advanced psychological conditioning techniques both obvious and covert, was successful in convincing its officers to always follow orders - would that have been a good thing?

The what-if question also occurs to me: Would Tex, Oscar or Matt actually respond with "aye, aye, sir" if they ordered to release strategic nukes on their home town? If yes, which ones and why would they?

>

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>consciously or unconsciously. An obvious situation where such would not have

>to be true, would be the case where the other people were truly considered

>as 'family' and thus would fall under what has been called here 'primary

>loyalty'. But, in the case of 'just friends' or 'people we know', it would

>be a different situation.

I am reminded of the young wife who has no children who is asked: "If you did have a child and both your child and your husband were drowning, which one would you save?"

The wife unhesitatingly answer, "My husband, because he and I could have more children."

A few years later, she has a child and is asked the question again.

This time she turns to her husband and says: "Honey, you know how to tread water, don't you?"

Reality never gives us clearcut choices. One way we can tell that Dahlquist and Riveria are fictional is that their choice is so clearly defined.

>

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>IMHO, neither 'good' nor 'evil' in itself. The trick is know whether or not

>what you are committing to is to be used for 'good' or 'evil' purposes. And,

>it is, unfortunately, the case that such 'commitments' are often misued for

>'evil'. But, we cannot deny that such commitments can be and often are the

>moving force behind much, perhaps even most, of what is good.

>

Problem is: when you commit to that abstract ideal, it is far less likely to evolve than the reality in which the commitment must be honored. I am not arguing for situational ethics here - at least i don't think I am - but anything absolutely frozen in stone - including the strictures against murder, theft, rape, incest, slave-owning or whatever repugnant act you want to bring up -- will sooner or later be tested in a scenario where the stricture is anti-survival.

>In spite of what many people claim, you can always find that RAH's
>'opinionated beliefs' usually have a counter-example somewhere to balance
>them.

RAH does have Oscar point out later - Doing things in the tradition of the Patrol does not mean doing the same things in exactly the same way. Which suggests they are supposed to think, not just act.

>'Quis Custodiet Ipsos Custodes?'

Indeed.

btw: Kosh is also the name of the alien/forerunner/angel in Babylon 5

.

"(t)Here is only one fundamental right (all others are its consequences or corollaries):
a man's right to his own life...which means: the freedom to take all actions required
by the nature of a rational being for the support, the furtherance, the fulfillment
and the enjoyment of his own life. A. Rand

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This thread is reminding me a lot of FAIL SAFE, another fictional situation that has no easy answer. I don't know if the book or movie would have the same impact now as when I read/saw them many years ago. Showtime did a live play type thing about a year ago that disappointed me, but I think that was the production.

Jeanette

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<="" a=""> **Here Begins The Discussion Log**

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You have just entered room "Heinlein Readers Group chat."

ddavitt has entered the room.

ddavitt: Hi David

dwrighsr: Hi. I'm here, but I might be out and in. How's everything with the baby?

ddavitt: Fine; sorry I left for a minute

ddavitt: My parents are here for a visit from England

ddavitt: So I may be in and out too

dwrighsr: Yeah. I just got back in myself. I'm sure you're enjoying have your folks there.

ddavitt: Yes; david takes Dad ice fishing tomorrow; they're standing here doing rods and reels and tackle stuff

ddavitt: Inspired by a photo in the paper of a 15lb pike someone got out of a 6 in hole in the ice:-)

dwrighsr: Ah, the mystical workings of 'ice fishing'. :0

dwrighsr: :-)

ddavitt: have you ever done it? Any tips?

SAcademy has entered the room.

dwrighsr: Nope. Never lived in an area where it was possible.

ddavitt: Hi SA

dwrighsr: Hi Ginny. Welcome

ddavitt: Ice is 15 inches at the moment but dad is still a bit nervous :-)

SAcademy Good evening all.

stepheneveiss has entered the room.

ddavitt: Sorry to hear about GD SA; was he a friend?

ddavitt: Hi Stephen.

stepheneveiss: erm.. its 2AM, I have exams in a few hours.. I'm kinda not here :-)

ddavitt: Still haven't chosen a photo for your page :-)

SAcademy Yes, Gordy was an old friend.

Featherz Dad has left the room.

ddavitt: I read one of his books ages because it got mentioned in a Heinlein book. Can't remember it all that well.

ddavitt: Maybe NOTB; I got a lot of new authors to try from that book.

stepheneveiss: g'nite all .. I'm off

ddavitt: Good luck

stepheneveiss has left the room.

SAcademy Very likely. I don't remember--lots of people mentioned in that.

bisaacz has entered the room.

ddavitt: Yes; I work on the principle that if an author I like likes a book, I may like it too.

bisaacz: I found that to be true.

ddavitt: Not always but sometimes

ddavitt: Yes; I read so much I need constant new authors to keep me going.:-)

ddavitt: Who is hosting?

bisaacz: Sort of in reverse to us, but Larry Niven is a big fan of Heinlein, and mentions him in many of his books.

SAcademy Gordy has been calling me about once a month since Robert died. I'll miss him.

dwrighsr: I'm pretty 'frozen' myself. There are only a few authors that I really like, so I mostly continue to read them over and over.

ddavitt: Yes; it's hard when a friend dies. I lost one early this month; wonderful man of 85 who fought in the Spanish Civil War

dwrighsr: Every once in a while, I try somebody new. Don't get good results very often.

bisaacz has left the room.

ddavitt: The Guardian in the UK had his obituary this week

ddavitt: I tend to enjoy re reads more than new books sometimes.

SAcademy Is someone keeping a log?

ddavitt: My computer keeps making beeping noises; if I disappear, I'll be back.

Phebe314 has entered the room.

dwrighsr: Jane, did Oz ask you to host. He asked me, but I had to decline as I had a very rough day yesterday and last night.. Yes, I'm keeping the log as usual.

BPRAL22169 has entered the room.

dwrighsr: Hi Phebe.

ddavitt: No but I'm sure we can muddle thru. Hi phebe

dwrighsr: Greetings Bill

ddavitt: Hi Bill

ddavitt: Or Bill can...

Phebe314: Hi, all!

SAcademy Hello, Bill

BPRAL22169: Yo -- Can wha?

dwrighsr: Well, I'll be here, but I don't think I can contribute a whole lot.

ddavitt: Host

BPRAL22169: Why don't you host?

BPRAL22169: And are we expecting Oz tonight?

ddavitt: I can but may not be here whole time; my parents are here

ddavitt: Dunno

BPRAL22169: Not a problem -- one of us can pick up the reins if you have to leave.

ddavitt: Shall we just start and see who joins us?

Phebe314: Sure

ddavitt: OK, Uncle Tom seems to be top of the hit parade of villains

ddavitt: But I just looked at POm and I don't think its fair

Phebe314: What, Poddy's uncle???? Surely not.

BPRAL22169: I wouldn't say that -- he gets the most talk because he is so ambiguous.

ddavitt: The whole family was due to go on the trip

ddavitt: When it was cancelled, it was only Poddy crying on him that made him blackmail the creche into giving them the tickets

Phebe314: I don't think he is at all a villain: I don't think he had any idea of the conspiracy, and had to consider the good of the greater number.

BPRAL22169: Phebe, Dave Silver advanced the idea thta Unca Tom is a villain because he knowingly endangered his niece and nephew for personal/political ends.

ddavitt: No plan to use Poddy and Clarke as a shield

Phebe314: I don't think it was knowingly: how knowingly?

BPRAL22169: I think the three top villains are mrs. Keithly, mrs. Grew and belle Darkin -- strange, I just realized: all women.

ddavitt: Family man on trip instead of man off to do politicking

ddavitt: That had occurred to me before

Phebe314: I thought the problem discussed on the NG was that he considered the large number of people he was responsible for over his relatives.

ddavitt: Kipling? Female of the species?

dwrighsr: I said that Phebe, but changed my mind.

ddavitt: Yes Phebe but arising out of what some see as a sneaky use of them as camoflague

Phebe314: Why did you change your mind?

BPRAL22169: I think he was trying to avoid the pulp cliches.

BPRAL22169: No Blackie Duquesnes for him!

ddavitt: Which ones in partic?

ddavitt: Oh, Blackie! he was a hero in the end.

ddavitt: Conveniently forgot all the murders..

BPRAL22169: Kind of a hero.

ddavitt: Well he was more interesting than Seaton

Phebe314: Well, I think Belle and also the Roman in Have Space Suit are my favorite villains.

dwrighsr: I don't think that he was knowingly putting them in danger, but simply to disguise his mission. Had he 'known' that they would be in danger, then he would have recognized that the disguise was unnecessary

ddavitt: Ever read the parody of Skylark? Star Smashers of the Galaxy rangers? Hilarius

BPRAL22169: No -- that letter in 1941 to JWC says he was more interested in bringing subtler literary themes to sf; he wasn't interested in the shoot-em-up good-guy bad-guy dichotomy.

ddavitt: The Roman? Iunio? A villain? Why?

ddavitt: Paradox david?

ddavitt: I agree, it was never going to work

Phebe314: David saying, "I don't think that he was knowingly putting them in danger, but simply to disguise his mission. Had he 'known' that they would be in danger, then he would have recognized that the disguise was unnecessary." Right, that's what I think, and then in the end he did choose the greater good, didn't he? Yes ----- IIRC he didn't ransom Poddy?

ddavitt: If the baddies knew, no disguise would work, if they didn't, it wasn't needed.

ddavitt: The political bits and the bomb were all a bit vague and confusing; not the main story at all

BPRAL22169: But isn't that a "true" picture of how politics and intrigue can suddenly intrude into a life if you aren't already aware of it?

ddavitt: But I never really got what Tom was doing

Phebe314: Re: Iunio ---- I didn't like him at all. That was quite a character switch Heinlein pulled there: the Roman was unfriendly, openly wanted to acquire the little girl for a sex partner, was dangerous and they had to avoid him carefully ----- yet in the trial the two modern humans cheer for him. I couldn't really relate to that.

BPRAL22169: He had gallantry.

ddavitt: Phebe you read different Heinlein's to me. Sex object? please!

BPRAL22169: That marks him on the heroic side in Heinlein's lexicon.

Phebe314: Go back and look, Jane: it's explicit!

dwrighsr: Open to interpretation. Wanting to buy her had many possible interpretations

Phebe314: I submit wanting to buy her didn't have but one interpretation!

dwrighsr: in the eye of the beholder....

BPRAL22169: Doesn't matter -- autre temps, autre moeurs. It wasn't offensive -- to them.

ddavitt: Not all slaves were sex slaves; some did the laundry

BPRAL22169: Doesn't matter.

dwrighsr: right, scullery maid or maid for his wife or whatever.

ddavitt: Pee wee was an androgynous 11 year old; hardly a femme fatale

BPRAL22169: A Roman might have a taste for little girls; it doesn't have the Christian overlay you're reading into it.

Phebe314: Why not? The two kids thought he was obnoxious, too.

ddavitt: Kip thought he had class, style.

BPRAL22169: Gallantry.

ddavitt: He was brave, didn't knuckle under; Kip followed his example in a way

Phebe314: That was later, in the trial.

ddavitt: So/

Phebe314: Earlier, he was clearly dangerous, and alone, and had no laundry ---

Phebe314: All in all, that was a puzzling switch to me. Why were PeeWee and Kip crying and cheering him during the trial?

ddavitt: Huh? He was family that's why

dwrighsr: Because they didn't think of him as you did.

dwrighsr: Right

ddavitt: They were alone, millions of light years from home, fighting for the survival of the planet

ddavitt: He was one of them; human

Phebe314: Well, they certainly thought of him as I did earlier when they were alone with him.

Phebe314: But I agree: he was family, human.

BPRAL22169: And Junio's gallant combativeness were just the back-stiffener needed.

ddavitt: They were wary but he was behind a screen; couldn't hurt them

dwrighsr: I think Pee wee was more upset that she couldn't talk to him than anything else.

ddavitt: He said of pee wee; "if she had meat on her bones, she might be worth a half denario". Gosh, you can practically see him drooling can't you.....:-)

dwrighsr: In other words , being left out.

ddavitt: She understood quite a bit of it

Phebe314: The best I could do with the switch was that Junio did his best: he took the best he had in himself, which was his training as a Roman fighter, and used that fully. \

ddavitt: When he offered to buy her, she said, come out and fight; feisty, just like him

BPRAL22169: There's more

dwrighsr: As Kip said, he wasn't in any position to disown even his sorriest relation, (speaking of the caveman)

BPRAL22169: Junio stood up to bigger forces than himself.

BPRAL22169: Which is exactly what Kip had to do.

Phebe314: Still, the Roman was a villain, in my terms. If he had been loose, he'd have used PeeWee and beaten the less experienced Kip.

ddavitt: He provided a good example

dwrighsr: How about Simes as a villain?

ddavitt: Define "used"

dwrighsr: in Starman Jones?

BPRAL22169: I'd like to talk about (later) villains that aren't really villains. ut not rightnow.

ddavitt: He endangered the entire ship and that resulted in several deaths; but he was weak, not evil IMO

dwrighsr: OK

Phebe314: David saying, "As Kip said, he wasn't in any position to disown even his sorriest relation, (speaking of the caveman)" They did, though: he just wasn't relevant to the trial.

BPRAL22169: Just getting in a bid.

ddavitt: Have we agreed that a real villain is one who knows what he's doing is wrong...but doesn't care?

ddavitt: Like the renegades in Puppet masters?

Phebe314: I am wondering how a villain can not be a villain.

dwrighsr: Either doesn't care or cares only for his own benefit

BPRAL22169: How about the Pan-Asian prince-commander in Sixth Column?

ddavitt: The renegades were the ultimate betrayers of the human race

dwrighsr: I agree with the comment you made on my posting that you do have to start with 'knowing the difference'

Phebe314: Well: how about the sargeant in Starman Jones (can't remember his name) who steals the astrogator books, but later saves their lives.

ddavitt: Sam is a hero

dwrighsr: Sam would have been a villain had he now redeemed himself.

ddavitt: Pan Asian; no, he was fighting a war the way he was taught it had to be fought. Product of environment

BPRAL22169: That wasn't addressed to Phebe. I'd say like Diktor in By His bootstraps or the male version of the unwed mother in Zombies would be examples of villains-antagonists that aren't.

BPRAL22169: But he used degradation of subject peoples as a matter of policy.

Phebe314: No, I don't think anyone things he or she is wrong. What's that recent movie about that, the young man who goes to Italy in the 50s, is a homosexual and can't really face this and keeps committing murders? He finally says that, that no one thinks he's a bad person ----- that is when we realize he is finally running out of rationalizations.

ddavitt: He fought nasty by our rules sure...

BPRAL22169: Even though some of his cultural values are different -- he still has the humanistic part of Japanese/Chinese culture to draw on.

Phebe314: Bill, what wasn't addressed to me?

BPRAL22169: I can't rationalize objectifying people as morally neutral.

ddavitt: I remember the bit where he wanted to keep Ardmore as a jester...but it would've meant killing people who heard him be disrespectful; not the initial cost but the upkeep. Grim humour!

BPRAL22169: The earlier comment, Phebe, about the Pan-Asian; the BHB and Zombies comment was to you -- the villain who is not a villain.

BPRAL22169: So Ponse was a villain to me -- but a likable villain.

Phebe314: Right, Bill, like Sam.

BPRAL22169: To understand all is not necessarily to forgive all.

ddavitt: But was Ponse a villain within his own society? I don't think so. Isn't that how he should be judged?

BPRAL22169: To understand all is -- simply to understand.

Phebe314: No, I agree: just because no one thinks they are wrong doesn't mean they are not wrong!

dwrighsr: But wasn't Ponse, operating within 'his' definition of 'right'?

BPRAL22169: Doesn't matter: one is morally responsible for one's choices.

ddavitt: But I know when I am wrong or have done something hurtful; I feel shame. it is possible to be aware of one's flaws and faults.

BPRAL22169: And if one chooses to raise humans as meat animals, then one is morally responsible for that. Has nothing to do with sentiments or feeling sorry for one's actions.

Phebe314: The Roman, then, was fine too: certainly behavior like beating up Kip and stealing PeeWee was probably SOP during the Roman occupation of Britain.

dwrighsr: But (to both bill and phebe), that implies rules 'outside' of his definitions of right and wrong

dwrighsr: so we can't use 'knowing right and wrong' to be a defining characteristic

BPRAL22169: Sure we can.

Phebe314: Bill saying, "And if one chooses to raise humans as meat animals..." Quite a lot of people think raising ANY animals for meat is wrong...

BPRAL22169: What you have pinpointed, Dave, is his "rationalizations."

ddavitt: He offered to pay for Peewee Phebe..and his one threat to Kip was in the nature of hyperbole

BPRAL22169: Yes, Phebe, but they are nutz.

dwrighsr: You are saying then that there are 'absolute rules of morality' that everyone, everywhere must submit to. ?

ddavitt: Can't be.

BPRAL22169: Mu

BPRAL22169: The question is formulated in such a way it cannot be answered

BPRAL22169: Human beings are what human beings are.

Phebe314: Bill saying, "Yes, Phebe, but they are nutz..." That's what YOU think, and what I think, but to them we are seriously immoral beings. I actually eat sheep I raise!!! Oh, the horror. So morality is very --- slippery.

ddavitt: There are no absolute right and wrongs; definitions change over time. There may be rights for a generation but not for all time

Phebe314: Mu, huh. :-)

BPRAL22169: Not really slippery -- if side issues are reduced to a minimum.

BPRAL22169: Joshu has buddah nature.

Phebe314: Ponse, too.

Phebe314: So what about Belle?

BPRAL22169: There is no moral onus to objectifying an object.

ddavitt: I still think a villain has to be someone who transgresses the laws of his own society and time. not legal laws per se

Phebe314: Belle betrayed Dan, seduced Miles, and they were going to simply steal the company and Dan's patents.

dwrighsr: Well, Hugh did think that Ponse was clearly immorally inferior to Memtok as I remember. How did he phrase that?

ddavitt: But barbara quite liked him

Phebe314: Like Apple did with Stephen Jobs..... it isn't unprecedented behavior. Is it wrong?

ddavitt: Belle was a villain because she tried to kill pete. That one's simple! :-)

SAcademy has left the room.

BPRAL22169: Complicated situation -- it's not a two - entity environment you're talking about.

Phebe314: And she wanted to neuter Pete, too!

dwrighsr: Poddy liked Mrs Grew too, until she found out she was really like

BPRAL22169: Her true crime!

Phebe314: I liked Mrs. Grew, too. Until.

ddavitt: Funny how she only got mad when C said she cheated at solitaire

BPRAL22169: Who was the villain of the first part of Methuselah's Children.

Phebe314: Belle had more definite foreshadowing, the cat problem, for instance.

ddavitt: Astute of C to notice that someone who always smiles is suspect

ddavitt: Is that shakespeare/ A man can smile and smile and be a villain still?

dwrighsr: Bork Vanning?

Phebe314: Iago.

ddavitt: Bork was just a politician

ddavitt: Thanks!

BPRAL22169: But Bork Vanning was also morally corrupt.

BPRAL22169: Or perhaps you already said that . . .

ddavitt: I just said...politician

ddavitt: GMTA

ddavitt: Tho Heinlein wouldn't approve of that sentiment...

BPRAL22169: Department of Redundancy Department.

ddavitt: :-)

ddavitt: He wanted something that was in limited suppl for him and his wife to be; is that so wrong?

Phebe314: Okay, here's my definition of evil: a person who is amused by, who enjoys, hurting people. Did Heinlein have any of those? They are VERY uncommon people. I've only met three in my life. Many people are *harmful* but few are evil.

dwrighsr: By our definition, he knew as well as everyone else did that what they wanted to do with the Howards was wrong, but they did it anyway for their own benefit. Classic villain

ddavitt: Mrs grew and Mrs keithley were indifferent to causing pain Not sure if they enjoyed it

Major oz has entered the room.

Dehede011 has entered the room.

ddavitt: Legless horror in lost legacy maybe

ddavitt: Hi you two!

dwrighsr: I don't agree. There is no indicaitino that Mrs. Keithley or Mrs. Grew *enjoyed* what there were doing, but they are clearly evil

Major oz: yo, folks...sorry I'm late. Took over two hours to get on.

BPRAL22169: And the Sons of the bird.

ddavitt: I doubt their victims cared; for them the end result was the same

Dehede011: Sorry to be late, my version of AIM doesn't like me.

Phebe314: People who are indifferent to the harm they do are simple pyschopaths --- but I think people called psychopaths are often evil: Ted Bundy.

dwrighsr: Welcome guys.

BPRAL22169: Sadism and sociopathy are brands of evil, but not the definition, I think.

ddavitt: I think it's clear not all the books have a villain by any of our definitions.

dwrighsr: An evil person can *enjoy* causing pain, but that is not what defines them as evil

SAcademy has entered the room.

ddavitt: That means one isn't necessary; but an adversary of some sort is.

Major oz: 'evenin, SA

Phebe314: David saying, " There is no indicaitino that Mrs. Keithley or Mrs. Grew *enjoyed* what there were doing, but they are clearly evil..." Not by my definition (which is okay, of course) but they are at least comfortable with it, they don't care.

Dehede011: When time comes I want to ask a question, that may be off topic, about the "Sons of the Bird."

dwrighsr: I agree Jane, in fact I can't really think of many at all besides the three we've mentioned,. Oh yeah . what about the Montgomery's in TEFL

ddavitt: Off topic?

BPRAL22169: I don't think we're going to get derailed -- go ahead and ask.

ddavitt: They were bad, yes

Dehede011: Mrs. Keithley was just extremely greedy wasn't she.

ddavitt: She was mad

Dehede011: OK I will

Phebe314: David, what would you say does define them as evil if it is not the enjoyment of causing pain?

BPRAL22169: I think I'd agree about the Montgomerys

ddavitt: Was going to blow up the world on her death; not sane

Major oz: but was it a doomsday bluff ?

ddavitt: Been a while...can't remember details

Dehede011: I once knew a fellow that thought his father had indoctrinated him into the "Sons of the Bird." I am absolutely convinced he believed that. Did any of you ever hear of the SOB's in real life.

dwrighsr: What I said. Knowing the difference (by the rules of their culture) that what they are doing is wrong, but either don't care about the consequences or care so much for themselves that they are willing to ignore the consequences.

ddavitt: Wasn't she going to proclaim herself Empress of the earth or something?

ddavitt: No, never. Had they read the book then?

Phebe314: I think most harm-doers are being defensive. They are angry, not enjoying.

Phebe314: So David would say Belle was a villain because she knew she shouldn't do that; I wonder about Miles.

Major oz: bebba hoid of "sons, etc"

Major oz: "never"

BPRAL22169: There are several underground and satanic cults -- could it be one of those?

ddavitt: Unpleasant profession of Jonathan hoag

dwrighsr: They are not 'evil' just bad. Miles had been brainwashed, literally, so its not quite clear what he really knew at that point.

dwrighsr: He still could have enough sense of right and wrong to be called a villain.

ddavitt: Are the best books ones with villains or just adversaries then?

Dehede011: I have no idea. I only know he seemed convinced. He was consistent with RAH and his "theory" seemed internally consistent

ddavitt: I'd go for adversaries myself.

Phebe314: Well, he hadn't been *literally* brainwashed, just seduced....I actually blame Miles more. Belle was an opportunist, but as someone on the NG said, she could have figured "A girl has to look out for herself" (i.e., I'm not bad!)

ddavitt: No Phebe..clear from reading the text that he'd had that drug used on him by Belle

Dehede011: Wasn't Miles weak?

dwrighsr: No. Its implied that she had used the 'zombie' drug on him.

Major oz: Was Jim Jones or the wacko that "jumped on the comet", talking his followers into suicide Evil ?

Phebe314: Jane saying, "No Phebe..clear from reading the text that he'd had that drug used on him by Belle" I must have skimmed that book 14 times; one day maybe I should read it slowly. :-)

dwrighsr: Hard to say. I think they were off their rockers to the point that they no longer knew any differences

ddavitt: I think, from memory, she "looks at him ddly" when they discuss the drug as they give it to Dan

ddavitt: oddly I mean

dwrighsr: and said' You should know'

ddavitt: Says something like; you should know how it works.

ddavitt: Then he says what and she says skip it

BPRAL22169: No -- means she used it on him to get him to cooperate.

Phebe314: Oz saying, "Was Jim Jones or the wacko that "jumped on the comet", talking his followers into suicide Evil ?" Or that woman in Uganda who burned down the church? Good question! Not if they believed in what they were doing, yes if they enjoyed the harm, I'd say.

dwrighsr: and of course, realizes that he 'wouldn't know'

ddavitt: That's how Miles signed stuff over to her and married her

BPRAL22169: Anyway, Ron, nobody could be "initiated" into the Sons of the Bird -- they were a separate creation, not human.

ddavitt: Fallen angels

Phebe314: My husband says he is going to have one drink and then go to bed ---- I'll come back if I can, anon, all!!

ddavitt: Night

Phebe314 has left the room.

Dehede011: Night

BPRAL22169: Where is Phebe located?

Major oz: It seems that "evil" cannot be defined, only an attempt to bracket it can be done by examples. eh ?

ddavitt: Tunnel is one of my faves; but jock is the only real viallin in that and I'm not sure he qualifies. Or is it grant?

Dehede011: The story the fellow had extended RAH a great deal. I do have to say he was a highly intelligent but odd bird.

ddavitt: Don't know. US somewhere.

Major oz: grant

BPRAL22169: I don't think Grant was a villain --

Major oz: but he is receemed

Major oz: "d"

ddavitt: I don't think it has a villain as such; which IMO makes it stronger

BPRAL22169: He's anothe rone of those who isjust "inconvenient."

ddavitt: They are the sandpaper that smoothes Rod's rough edges

BPRAL22169: How about the survivalist who killed the German (I forget his name; Rod runs across the corpse)

Major oz: i buy that

ddavitt: We never know who he is or why he did it..but yes, if he did it for the gun then that was wrong.

ddavitt: May have been within the rules; not sure

BPRAL22169: It doesn't really matter why he -- or she -- did it, does it?

Major oz: yes

Major oz: !

ddavitt: Heinlein probably couldn't stress that murdser was OK in a juvenile

BPRAL22169: The rules were: no rules.

ddavitt: If Johann had threatened him and it was self defence it would be OK and so would taking the gun

Major oz:culture abides....

Major oz: even in "no rules"

ddavitt: We just dont know

BPRAL22169: Well, there is that. Good point.

ddavitt: Seems bad on the surface but we only see the end result through Rod's eyes

dwrighsr: Actually, I don't believe that it actually says that he was killed by another student, only that his stuff was stolen by a human. \

BPRAL22169: But if so, we have still pinpointed a villain -- Johann now.

ddavitt: And Heinlein did show us a corpse with the gun later on; balancing the books?

Major oz: but stipulating the killing "for the gun" -- yes....wrong

ddavitt: i think we can say that one of them was a villain?

ddavitt: Doesn't matter which one.

BPRAL22169: Or possibly both.

Major oz: one of whom?

ddavitt: But it could have been an accident; shooting at a rustle in the grass..killing the dog as it leapt to attack..

Major oz: the original owner of the gun, or the one who wound up with it?

BPRAL22169: Just occurred to me: considering the hooraw over guns in Red Planet, Tunnel in the Sky's gun content is rather remarkable.

ddavitt: :-)yes

ddavitt: Both Oz

ddavitt: Or neither.

ddavitt: But Rod, the hero is gunless remember

Major oz: or both "both" and "neither"

BPRAL22169: Darn, I thought we had ourselves a villyun there fer sure.

Dehede011: Here in civilization we seem to have "Wrong - Not Wrong." RAH seems to be making a point that out beyond where the sidewalks end it is "Threat - Not Threat"

Major oz: I am caught in a meta-meta-meta-.....

dwrighsr: Yeah. I would have thought that whats-her- name would have really screamed at that one.

ddavitt: Yes Ron; could be. Bringing it down to the basics

BPRAL22169: Alice Dalgliesh. I don't recall any comment about that one.

ddavitt: Alice dalgleish

dwrighsr: Right Dog-leash

ddavitt:

dwrighsr: I couldn't resist :-)

ddavitt: I loved that book; i wanted to do that course..

ddavitt: I see now i would've been dead in about 30 seconds but...

BPRAL22169: I wanted to get acquainted with Caroline.

Major oz: If you are just a "pothole" in life, as the guy at motor vehicles, are you a villain?

dwrighsr: It certainly didn't match my high school. Lets see, when that one came out I was in the 10th grade, probably taking typing. survival-typing. yeah same thing :-)

ddavitt: She was great; real role model

Dehede011: I was once on an Island where at night there was no law but there were potentially bad-guy. All of a sudden the kaleidoscope takes a big twist and things look differently.

ddavitt: I went paint balling once; gave me a taste of Rod making himself a small target, hiding, tracking

ddavitt: I was back to cavewoman, primitive type in a very short time

Dehede011: like to have seen that

dwrighsr: As I've said, I had it wrong, but my perception at that time of the relationship between Caroline and Rod made me do a lot of thinking about my attitudes towards blacks.

Major oz: Any seasoned survival weenie will agree that it is better to be a rabbit

ddavitt: After, i walked home, looking for cover, just as Rod did. Very wierd.

ddavitt: i never had any real problems like that david so it just didn't register with me.

Major oz: What year was that, David?

dwrighsr: 1955 or thereabouts

ddavitt: I just got mad when they wouldn't let her fight the dopey joes

BPRAL22169: We're coming up on the hour. Shall we break?

Major oz: If we are looking for comparisons, I think it had much more to say about sex roles than about race.

ddavitt: Just seen your commemt Ron; like to see me paintballing? I was mean!!:-):-)

Dehede011: I believe you , Jane.

Major oz: sure, break.....

ddavitt: Last game, my husband to be shot me..never let him forget it.

ddavitt: great guilt ammo :-):-)

dwrighsr: Perhaps, but I hadn't gotten that far in my thinking yet O:-)

ddavitt: OK by me.

Dehede011: I had a buddy in flight school that even played volley ball for blood.

Major oz: zoomies do that

ddavitt: ouch!

Major oz: :-)

ddavitt: What's a zoomie?

BPRAL22169: Ok -- it's going to be 7:00 even (here) in just a few seconds -- free chat everyone until 7:071/2

Dehede011: :-)

ddavitt: 'kay

Major oz: pejorative term for pilots

ddavitt: OK.

Major oz: usually confined to military pilots

SAcademy Past my bedtime. Nite all

Dehede011: Oz, What is a zoomie, I was an Airdale.

BPRAL22169: Jane -- will you select a kickoff for the second hour-- we've had a few suggestions from the floor

ddavitt: Night SA

Major oz: nite, SA

SAcademy has left the room.

Dehede011: night

ddavitt: Umm...

ddavitt: Do you want to do the non villainous villains?

Major oz: airdale's are wetfoot zoomies, eh?

Dehede011: Yep

Major oz: wrong color wings

ddavitt: brb

Dehede011: Hey, I never thought of that.

Dehede011: You know the Navy version of the Air Force fight song.

Major oz: up in the air, junior birdman

Dehede011: "Off we go into the wild blue yonder --Crash."

dwrighsr: Well. I wanted desperately to be a 'zoomie', but my eyes were too bad and my teeth were bad enough that I couldn't even be an officer in the Air Force. Severe malocclusion, I was told, so I wound up enlisting in the Army.

Dehede011: I came close to finishing Navy Flight School - Then Ike read the reports from the U2

Major oz: I got waivers for commission, and a STACK of them to fly at Edwards.

dwrighsr: I had been Civil Air Patrol for years before that and then AFROTC in college, but no luck

Major oz:great duty, lousy er's

Major oz:written by civilians

Dehede011: Oz, you were an Army ground pounder?

Major oz: nah,,,,,nine years

Major oz: AF enlisted swine

Major oz: and 13 years ossifer

Dehede011: I was going career but Ike changed that.

dwrighsr: An 'ossified Oz' :-)

Major oz: yo

Dehede011: Ossifers are okay. I saw enough to know which way I would rather go. Despite occasionally having to "pay it all back."

Major oz: Great duty.....always got what I wanted (except for one assignment that they would never give me) and never had to do anything I didn't want to.

dwrighsr: Well, I thought briefly of going to OCS, but by then, Basic had convinced me that A career in the Army wasn't my cup of tea.

CherylYork has entered the room.

Dehede011: I did - one day I had to leave.

dwrighsr: Welcome Cheryl. A newcomer to our happy group?

Dehede011: Hi, Cheryl

CherylYork: Hello. :-) Yep...finally made it here!

Major oz: Out of 22 yrs, 2 months, I spent 7 yrs, 11 months as a full time student.

Dehede011: Sounds right. What branch of the army?

CherylYork: AG invited me to join this cheery party about a year or so ago.

ddavitt: Glad to have you; we're discussing heinlein's villains

Major oz: Good evening, Cheryl; I'm the old guy here.

BPRAL22169: Mark. We're back

Major oz: dw is the boss

dwrighsr: We're having a short break at the moment Cheryl. will get started back in a couple of minutes. Just chatting going on now.

ddavitt: Just on a break at the moment

CherylYork: Cool.

Dehede011: Cheryl don't let him kid you. Oz has mileage but I have the years.

CherylYork: LOL

ddavitt: Any favourite villains Cheryl?

Major oz: It's tread depth that counts.

dwrighsr: Are we having an 'old guy' contest here? I qualify

BPRAL22169: *sigh*

Dehede011: 66

Major oz: beats me.....you win

dwrighsr: I'm a mere child of 60 myself.

Dehede011: And that ain't the NUMBER OF THE BEAST

Major oz: i is 61

CherylYork: I guess I'm a "kid" here then at 38. :-)

ddavitt: Is this a guy thing? i can't imagine Cheryl and I fighting over who's the oldest!

Major oz: Now that is three 6's

ddavitt: I'm jane btw Cheryl

Dehede011: I thought you sounded kind of young Oz

ddavitt: I'm the baby then; 36

Dehede011: I always come up short.

Dehede011: LOL

dwrighsr: Old guys, young girls. Great Combination

ddavitt: :-P

CherylYork: Short...now THAT I can compete in:

CherylYork: ;-)

CherylYork: 4'10"

ddavitt: I think that's the smiley i wanted...

Major oz: I just overheard the classic quote: "Greetings; I am Manual Montoya; you killed my father. Prepare to die"

Dehede011: Jane, ye are but a wee slip of a gurl.

CherylYork: ROFL

Major oz:on TV

ddavitt: As a mother of a 12 week old baby i refuse to start discussing vital stats :-)

dwrighsr: Loved that movie. Love Mandy Patinkin

ddavitt: Heh, i wish

Major oz: buttercup :-)

CherylYork: Now about those villains... ;-)

ddavitt: 'as you wish'

Major oz: situps, Jane; situps

ddavitt: Yes; we've tried to define what makes one with no concensus

CherylYork: ...I have to confess that when I read the topic, I thought back and couldn't think of any

ddavitt: They're a form of exercise right/ I don't do the e word.

dwrighsr: Who do you consider a villain in RAH's books? Cheryl

CherylYork: that I thought of as really great villains.

ddavitt: Wormfaces?

CherylYork: Yeah...that's part of the problem...

ddavitt: Misunderstood IMO

Dehede011: I have the classic RAH villain.

ddavitt: GA

Dehede011: The son in FARNHAMS FREEHOLD

Dehede011: Weak, self centered.

ddavitt: Hmm...just weak IMO; what did he ever do that was so bad?

Dehede011: Every thing RAH detested.

BPRAL22169: I have a hard time thinking of him as a villain

CherylYork: ...most are either just a cardboard cutout for the plot point, or really not villainous at all;

BPRAL22169: He was too ineffectual.

Major oz: Could he have been a guard at Treblinka?

ddavitt: We really have to define it or we can't identify them

CherylYork: just at odds with our hero.

ddavitt: Hero...hah!

Dehede011: But he was everything RAH despised

ddavitt: (i can say that if AG isn't here can't I?) :-)

CherylYork: ;-)

BPRAL22169: But Dave Silver raised the point that he was that way because of Farnham.

ddavitt: Exactly!

Major oz: Great Point, De !!!!!!! There are "our" villians and then there are those that RAH set as villians.

ddavitt: Parents make kids; whole point of Poddy.

Major oz: Ate the twain meeting ?

Major oz: A"r"e

Dehede011: Yes, was that a classic case of a parent weakening the weak and strengthening the strong?

ddavitt: Hugh has to take responsibility in some small way, no matter what barabara said

BPRAL22169: I nominate that remark for the "cryptic Remark award" for the evening.

dwrighsr: which cryptic remark was that?

Major oz: whaaaaaat, the typo?

CherylYork: Wow...this is great. I've never thought about what really defines a villain before...

ddavitt: I'll second that.

BPRAL22169: About the Twain meeting.

CherylYork: ...seems to be tougher than I thought.

ddavitt: Well, I said it's someone who knows he's doing wrong and still does it

Major oz: punsy, eh?

Dehede011: Very similar to the three (four?) villains in Happy Valley.

ddavitt: Phebe felt it was one who got a kick out of inflicting pain

dwrighsr: The Twains met on the too too twack.

Major oz: now, those are REALLY villains, in the classic sense.

BPRAL22169: Urk.

Dehede011: Right Dwight

Major oz: booooo

CherylYork: True.

ddavitt: Generally someone who steps outside the lines society draws.

ddavitt: They were cliched black hats

Major oz: And they are given what all villains deserve: quick dispatch, no regrets.

Dehede011: Yes, but weak kneed, self indulgent, and no backbone.

Dehede011: Like Hugh

ddavitt: Better than they deserved

BPRAL22169: And of course the Black Hat is the #1 villain in all of Heinlein.

CherylYork: Not just that, though... For example, one could say LL steps outside the bounds with regularity...

ddavitt: That was a nice twist

Dehede011: Yeah, but RAH never got the juices flowing over them.

geeairmoe2 has entered the room.

Major oz: Once it is established that they are not of cultural use, they should be dispatched as casually as a mosquito.

ddavitt: LL, well, yes but he isn't evil is he?

BPRAL22169: Will -- long time no see.

CherylYork: ROFLOL

dwrighsr: Just stepping out is not sufficient. There has to be some negative impact on others to count as evil.

ddavitt: Take your point though

ddavitt: Hi Will

Dehede011: And the black hats never really feel threatening

geeairmoe2: Hello, all.

dwrighsr: that was the point of the covenant.

CherylYork: ...I guess a villian also has to be thwarting the protagonist in some way.

Dehede011: Hi Gee

BPRAL22169: The Glaroon?

ddavitt: I still think the renegades in PM were the worst.

BPRAL22169: Jahweh, of course, iin Job.

Major oz: long time no c, g

ddavitt: Too unclear what or who he is and his motives Bill

Dehede011: PM??

geeairmoe2: Busy, busy, busy.

ddavitt: Puppet masters; sorry

Dehede011: My fault

ddavitt: Glaroon I mean

ddavitt: The god in job was cruel like a cat

dwrighsr: Jane, Yes. and the ones in Sixth Column who collaborated with teh pan asians.

BPRAL22169: Glaroon is trying to keep someone from realizing his potentials -- if that isn't evil, I don't know what is.

Major oz: I cannot find any villians in Job.

ddavitt: We don't know that for sure. yes, them too, dave and the ones in free men, that short story

Major oz: would a cockroach call us villians

dwrighsr: I would agree Bill, if we knew just what the rules of that situation were. We don't.

Dehede011: Does a villain have to be evil as opposed to Hugh who was just spineless?

ddavitt: All collaborators in fact

ddavitt: I think so or they aren't villains

Major oz: Hugh, or his son?

ddavitt: Has to have that extra twist of natiness to qualify

Dehede011: Then in what way was Hugh evil

ddavitt: Neither are villains IMO; just flawe

ddavitt: d

BPRAL22169: I think part of our definition problem may be that we are mixing up moral and prose-structure terms.

dwrighsr: I don't think he is.

Dehede011: I think you are right, Jane

Major oz: agree, Bill

ddavitt: What is prose structure terms?

Major oz: ours and RAH's

Major oz: two classes of villians

BPRAL22169: A "villain" is a device for fictional purposes -- the antagonist of a romance.

ddavitt: Like H in NOTB

BPRAL22169: Opposes or thwarts the "hero" -- another fictional romance device.

ddavitt: You mean, in terms of a book, it's a label, not a description?

Dehede011: Bill, then Hugh would qualify

Major oz: Was the cop in Les Mis a Villian?

ddavitt: Then that redefines the question yet again.

dwrighsr: Hugh would qualify as the 'hero' not the 'villain'

Dehede011: Sorry I meant his son'

Major oz: yes....I think De misspoke

ddavitt: I think we see an adversary in all the books; in any book for that matter but most of them aren't evil

BPRAL22169: And of course, Farnham's Freehold is an inverted romance -- a story of the King and court in exile.

Major oz: ...of course (?)

Major oz: expand, please

Dehede011: E&E

BPRAL22169: Romances are stories of king and court in the traditional definition.

dwrighsr: Then a 'villain' is not necessarily 'evil' and in fact, a 'hero' of the story could be 'evil'. Or so it seems to me.

CherylYork: The traditional definition of a story requires conflict, but an actual villian is only one form

Major oz: yes.....

Major oz: and.....

ddavitt: If it had played out without the time shift would it have ended the same way?

CherylYork: that can take...Man vs Nature for example,

Major oz: No, Jane

CherylYork: or Man vs Himself (his OWN nature)

ddavitt: Or an organisation like three galaxies, rather than an individual

BPRAL22169: King and court is just the model -- it can be a family or a corporation.

Major oz: The hero would not have had the chance to prevail without the time shift

ddavitt: Would he still be stuck with grace and lost barbara?

ddavitt: (Who he called horse faced and gangly IIRC)

Major oz: I think he would either suicide or behave in such a way as to be executed.

CherylYork: RAH never was above using a little "deus ex machina" when it suited. ;-)

ddavitt: Author's perk:-)

Major oz:he would never just.....live there

Dehede011: lol

ddavitt: Oh...I meant if he had never gone into exile...never been pushed into the future

CherylYork: Okay...right...I see what you're saying.

Major oz: I am confused as to your conditions.....

ddavitt: If they had been bombed and emerged into a post holocaust world in their own time

Dehede011: Is that fall out shelter supposed to be modeled after his actual shelter?

ddavitt: Bill said inverted because in exile. What was the exu=ile?

Major oz: Who knows.....mayhap the son wouldn't have the opportunity to be a wimp

BPRAL22169: Seems to have been much larger.

Dehede011: Right

BPRAL22169: The exile is into the non-Western future.

Major oz: Maybe the p-h world wouldn't have any booze

ddavitt: So, no exile, no victory for Hugh?

Major oz: non sequitor for the whole cast

ddavitt: Maybe that's a dead end..just a passing thought.

BPRAL22169: It would certainly have been a very different story -- no leisure to start farming for one thing.

CherylYork: Right...okay.

BPRAL22169: Too much radioactive rubble.

ddavitt: What about my idea of the cyclical nature of the villains as his work matured?

Major oz: OT: scary thought: I met people back in the 60's who HOPED for a nuke holocaust, as they thought that they had the skills to prevail in a p-h society.

ddavitt: Idiots.

Major oz: yeah.....

ddavitt: Comic book to realsim back to comic book but intentionally this time

CherylYork: Yep.

Major oz: But (as He says) not in their own mind.

ddavitt: Guess not.

Dehede011: In the mid fifties I was the ABC petty officer in my squadron.

BPRAL22169: Well -- those 60's survivalists didn't yet know about nuclear winter -- that's what really made surviving a nuclear war iffy.

ddavitt: Plague, cholera...

CherylYork: True.

Major oz:grab your ankles and kiss.....etc.

BPRAL22169: RAH's point in Farnham, IMHO, is that no matter who 'wins" a nuclear exchange, the civil values of western civilization go down the tubes.

Dehede011: If we got hit and survived I was to leave the shelter with a geiger counter and see if it was safe yet.

Major oz: I disagree

Major oz: that was NOT his point

Major oz: or even a minor one

BPRAL22169: Which is a rather sophisticated position for 1964 when he was writing it.

ddavitt: As we see in the first future...but what about the second one?

BPRAL22169: ga

ddavitt: That looks more hopeful

ddavitt: Nice job Ron!

Dehede011: ga oz

BPRAL22169: Do you really see that sign on the Freehold as the survival of the civil value of western liberal civilization?

Major oz: I don't see that point as being present at all. I see it as a discussion of social oneness and responsibilities

Dehede011: Yeah, I finally figured out that the message really was whether or not I glowed in the dark when I came back

ddavitt: Ponce didn't get to eat white babies.

ddavitt: Or so Hugh thinks.

Major oz:and a mild satire on race relations.

Major oz: ...with just a teeny bit on gender roles.

BPRAL22169: I don't think it was a satire -- I think it was a depiction that bigotry damages everyone it touches.

Major oz: hokay

dwrighsr: I've often seen it as a study in how power corrupts not just bigotry

ddavitt: Joe turning nasty you mean?

Major oz: we just said it differently

Dehede011: Or that bigotry is universal

Major oz: you betcha

BPRAL22169: That was one of them -- also Hugh's country-club liberal ideas and Joe saying "you don't know what you're talking about."

ddavitt: sad if true

Major oz: any one who has been in the Orient knows that

BPRAL22169: So, oz, what is your notion of the main point of FF?

Major oz: race and universality of silliness when it comes to dominance.

Major oz: the whole nuke war thing was just the canvas to paint it on

Dehede011: A depiction of one of Robert Humprey's rules.

CherylYork: I guess I'd have to say that all of that seems to be there "in the soup."

BPRAL22169: I think that's there -- but i wouldn't say it's the main point. This book was started about 3 months after the Cuban Missile Crisis, btw.

Dehede011: Leaders always lose touch with their people.

geeairmoe2: Has an agreeable definition of "villain" been hashed out here yet?

CherylYork: LOL

Major oz: Interesting.....the CMC never scared me. I doubt if it did many who knew what the capabilities were.

Dehede011: Antagoniist to the hero.

ddavitt: Study of a lifeboat situation, one he returned to in NOTB?

dwrighsr: I think that the times inspired the book, but that what it really said had nothing to do with that other than peripherally.

Dehede011: cmc??

Major oz: but it sure offered the politicoes an opportunity to lead the dummies around.

ddavitt: Not exactly Will

BPRAL22169: Cuban MissileCrisis, Ron

Dehede011: Right.

ddavitt: We were getting there and Bill pointed out that a book villain doesn't have to be nasty and confused me again! :-)

BPRAL22169: My mission in life.

Dehede011: I'll never forget going to work and seeing all those SAC bombers sitting at Lambert Airfield

ddavitt:

Major oz: dispersion

ddavitt: Confusing me is your mission? Black hat!!

Major oz: fundamental doctrine

BPRAL22169: Just call me an Erisian at heart.

Dehede011: Right, just outside of the our calculated range for the Cuban missles.

ddavitt: ? Eddorian?

BPRAL22169: I think that was Arisia, wasn't it?

Major oz: Florida sank 18inches with all the hardware

ddavitt: Not a typo then?

BPRAL22169: This is for Eris, Goddess of Discord.

Major oz: Evil twin or Eros ?

ddavitt: Ah! OK

Major oz: o"f"

Dehede011: Fla, should have flown barrage balloons like the English in that case

CherylYork: I got that one. 8-)

dwrighsr: I think that we can agree on bills literay definition of a 'hero' and 'villain', and agree that there were only a limited number of 'evil' villains. Could it be that RAH was saying that much of our obstacles are not caused by evil, but by people who have different agendas?

ddavitt: So, can we pick any book at random and identify either a true villian or an adversary?

BPRAL22169: Only if they are romances or related to romances.

ddavitt: Good point david

ddavitt: Like that quotation, a villain not a villain in his own eyes

Major oz: So, repeating.....was the cop in Les Mis a villian, or just an honorable lawman doing his duty. ?

dwrighsr: Exactly what I was thinking of.

ddavitt: His agenda may be valid to him

Dehede011: A villain

ddavitt: Not read that oz, sorry

dwrighsr: Or sometimes, the obstacles are simply events beyond ours or anybody's control.

BPRAL22169: A villain in terms of the story structure -- but not evil. I think if Javert were evil it would be a weaker story.

Dehede011: He persecuted Jean Valjean (??)

Major oz: A villain cannot be a villain in his own eyes?

Major oz: I realize that he doesn't have to be.

dwrighsr: Quote from Lazarus notebooks.

Major oz: But is it true that he cannot be?

BPRAL22169: That's one of the ways those subversive writers get us to think about our social values.

ddavitt: So; in Star Beast, no villain but who was the adversary? His mother? she wouldn't have accepted the label of villain

Dehede011: The court?

ddavitt: Thought she was acting for the best, both for her and him

Dehede011: They were adversaries

ddavitt: They were protecting the town from a dangerous beast

ddavitt: It ate a dog; baby could've been next

Major oz: Hey, Gee.....what do you think?

Dehede011: ga Gee

dwrighsr: so we just use the term 'protagonist' and 'antagonist' or 'adversary' for non-romances? Right?

ddavitt: define romance here

geeairmoe2: A villain is someone incapable of recognizing the existence of villainy.

ddavitt: Obviously not kissy face...so what is it?

Major oz: does he have to be

Dehede011: brb

Major oz: ?

ddavitt: No concept of right and wrong you mean?

ddavitt: Amoral?

Major oz: Sounds "not guilty by reason of not understanding he did wrong"

ddavitt: Not aware of the rules so not a team player

CherylYork: According to the New Oxford Dictionary: :-P

geeairmoe2: Change incapable to "unwilling"

CherylYork: noun 1 a person guilty or capable of a crime or wickedness.

Major oz: hokay

Major oz: can go with that.

ddavitt: Bringing in the dictionary; cheating!:-)

CherylYork: One subsection states:

dwrighsr: Lummie knew not to eat people. He/she had definite ideas of right and wrong.

Major oz: wikedness.....always liked that word

ddavitt: 'capable of" that's interesting

CherylYork: n (in a play or novel) a character whose evil actions or motives are important to the plot

Major oz: we are ALL capable of it

CherylYork: How does that do?

ddavitt: So if you're capable but don't act on it are you still a villain?

AGplusone has entered the room.

ddavitt: Hi david

geeairmoe2: Either Lenin or Stalin said: It doesn't matter if 3/4 of the world is destroyed as long as the remaining 1/4 are communists.

Major oz: All hail the king

BPRAL22169: Yo, David.

AGplusone: evening, all

ddavitt: You've missed us dissing Hugh :-):-)

CherylYork: So Oxford puts the "evil" in there for literary purposes.

Major oz: Or is it Hail to the Chief?

AGplusone: How did Hugh turn out to be a villain?

geeairmoe2: A villain doesn't care what is destroyed as long as his desires are preserved.

ddavitt: He didn't, just teasing you.

Dehede011: Evening Sargeant Zim

Major oz: So, was V.I. a villain or just a patriot?

CherylYork: Hello AG...finally made it here after all this time! O:-)

AGplusone: Glad you did, Cheryl.

CherylYork: Thanks!

dwrighsr: That's my definition of 'evil' not necessarily a 'villain'/antagonist' in the literary sense.

Major oz: Hugh didn't, AG; we just wanted to suck you into the discussion.

BPRAL22169: Not for the Bolshevik revolution -- but for the mad rationalism of the purges and the red/white war, I would say so.

ddavitt: Red planet had three definite villains in both senses of the word

ddavitt: they forced the plot and their actions were evil

BPRAL22169: The two schoolmasters -- who was the third?

Dehede011: The company?

ddavitt: Beecher, Howe and Kruger

dwrighsr: One headmaster, Howe, and the Resident General

BPRAL22169: That's right.

ddavitt: No, Howe was headmaster

BPRAL22169: The names had escaped me.

dwrighsr: I can't remember who Kruger was

ddavitt: Kruger minor villain but I think he still got disorporated..or did he/ damn, i should know that!

AGplusone: The other headmaster was a good man, just retired.

AGplusone: Kruger was the local authority.

ddavitt: Yes

ddavitt: But did he die?

dwrighsr: right at the original colony

Major oz: what book are we in, here?

ddavitt: hang on

dwrighsr: Red Planet

BPRAL22169: Currently Red Planet.

Major oz: hokay.....one of the three I have never read

geeairmoe2: Red Planet is an example of villains being people who don't care who gets hurt as long as their own desires are met.

Major oz: NOOOOOO

ddavitt: No, Kruger lived

Major oz: Is that the one where they skate the canal and spend the night in a cabbage. ?

BPRAL22169: You would think that the juveniles would be a fertile field for villains -- oh, we forgot the classic villains: rogue nazi's on the moon.

ddavitt: Yes it is Oz

Major oz: hokay...I read it

AGplusone: I think the 'villain' in Red Planet was the 'corporation' that had the colonial charter, just as the 'corporations' in Friday and in Cat were also villains.

Major oz: the schoolmaster was holding hostages, yes?

ddavitt: Strange; ones on the moon were comic book, ones that killed Art's father were scary

CherylYork: Oh, good points!

ddavitt: They wanted to make the colonists stay in winter homes;potentially fatal

ddavitt: Also to sell willis to a zoo

BPRAL22169: And in any case, violating a lot of peoples' customs, contracts, and civil liberties.

ddavitt: All for profit

Major oz: Wasn't he just "following orders"?

AGplusone: That was a local deal by two corporations functionaries who had the license to do what they wished because of laxity from above.

ddavitt: No; beecher was a head man in the Company

Major oz: hokay, memory fades

BPRAL22169: They were evil because they "enjoyed" just following orders.

AGplusone: I.e., 'individuals' who had taken over the running of the 'non-profit' for their own benefit.

ddavitt: But he was willing to cheat it too by selling Willis on the side and pocketing the cash

Major oz: ah, good point

Dehede011: Beecher - that recalls the Warden in TMIAHM

ddavitt: Yes, similar type. Howe was nasty but easily led

ddavitt: HTH

ddavitt: Was it good that H resisted the temptation to have villains in the juveniles?

ddavitt: they are a stock plot element usually

ddavitt: IMo the stories could get by without them

BPRAL22169: I think that's probably exactly why he wanted to avoid them -- when the mind recognizes a formula, it shuts down. He wanted to open minds up.

ddavitt: Agree. he went for the Black hat type who were there to help the protagonist more than hinder him

Dehede011: I think he was selling an attitude about the universe in his stories - villains didn't fit

ddavitt: Even if it didn't seem that way at the time

ddavitt: Nor did robots and aliens...

ddavitt: Much.

AGplusone: His villains, if there were any, in the juveniles were more impersonal institutions than individuals ... some of their agents were villainous, tho.

BPRAL22169: Some good aliens, though. But you're right -- other humans were alien enough.

Dehede011: Sorry, I think I should have said, "An attitude toward the Universe."

CherylYork: Good points.

dwrighsr: As I said earlier, obstacles which are due to people having different agendas or events beyond our control, natural disasters or such.

ddavitt: I hate to go but I have to feed and change Lauren and maybe attempt some sleep myself:-)

ddavitt: Enjoyed it, see yo saturday if i can. Goodnight

Dehede011: Say hi to Lauren

CherylYork: :-)Enjoy!

ddavitt: will do.

BPRAL22169: You can't get sleep -- you're a mommy!

ddavitt: Thanks for nothing Bill!!!

Major oz: David, I tend to think of that as crabgrass or potholes in life.

ddavitt has left the room.

geeairmoe2: In the beginning days of Monday Night Football, when Howard Cosell was considered the "bad guy" he was able to brush off criticism by saying "Every good story NEEDS a villain."

AGplusone: The folk who bent the rules to suit themselves, within the framework set by the stories, are suitable enough villainy for a juvenile.

Major oz: And it worked beautifully, Gee

Dehede011: I think I shall hit the sack myself. Loved talking to all of you.

Major oz:he was right

Major oz: c ya d

Dehede011 has left the room.

CherylYork: Sadly the "good guys" seem to be the villians these days.

CherylYork: :-\

Major oz: Sign of the times.....all the fault of Dr. Spock

Major oz:and set theory

AGplusone: Compare the woman who gets spacesick (because someone influenced a selection board to allow her to pass) with what Johann Sebastian Bach Smith as Jo-an does to ensure she gets to the head of the list to emigrate to the Moon ...

BPRAL22169: Together again! For the first time!

CherylYork: Not sure I follow...

AGplusone: woman who gets spacesick in Farmer in the Sky

dwrighsr: Me neither.

CherylYork: I meant the thing about Dr. Spock and set theory.

Phebe314 has entered the room.

AGplusone: Same use of influence seen as minor villainy in Farmer seen as self-preservation in IWFNE.

Major oz: Spock created spoiled kids and set theory forever ruined their ability to reason.

CherylYork: Okay, AG...I see that.

CherylYork: Oz...I guess I see that, too.

BPRAL22169: Ah, but set theory is the foundation of arithmetic, we are informed.

CherylYork: <= sadly, a product of Dr. Spock and set theory...

dwrighsr: Well, the worlds were very different in the two situations. Maybe that made the difference.

CherylYork: ...but I've mostly recovered.

CherylYork: ;-)

AGplusone: One's an adult novel, and the other's a juvenile, and we're shown differing POVs in which case villainy in one is laudable in another.

BPRAL22169: A kid is supposed to have a narrower frame of reference. Kids are extremely conservative.

AGplusone: Yes, my point.

Major oz: Well, David, as (whatsisname) in Teahouse Of The August Moon says: "Pornography is question of geography" Perhaps it works for morality (or villainy) also.

AGplusone: So the conservative POV is suitable for a juvenile.

CherylYork: Good point! After all, one theme that he often seems to hit is that what is defined by society as "right" may not

CherylYork: be morally so...

CherylYork: ...and vice versa.

BPRAL22169: And knocking the rough edges off and opening the mind is a classic bildung gambit -- "Tale of the Man Who Learned Better."

CherylYork: True.

geeairmoe2: So, basically, villainy is like beauty: it's in the eye (i.e. POV) of the beholder?

AGplusone: The entire thrust of *Between Planets* is toward Harvey's finding a place to belong to ... while so much of the adult fictions are to an escape from a place in which they are fixed.

Major oz: I speculate that "villainy" and "blue mud" are closely related.

BPRAL22169 has left the room.

BPRAL22169 has entered the room.

Major oz: hiccup, Bill ?

EBATNM has entered the room.

BPRAL22169: Yup -- I hit the ESC key once too often. Everyone, meet Andy Thornton

Major oz: Welcome, Andy

EBATNM: Greeting everyone, I think I'm here, or there or something

AGplusone: Hello, Andy.

Phebe314: Hi, Andy.

CherylYork: Hello!

BPRAL22169: "Here, there, and everywhere . . . "

geeairmoe2: Welcome, Andy.

BPRAL22169: We're talking about Heinlein's villains.

EBATNM: Has a decision on the worst one been reached?

AGplusone: I'm pretty well convinced that, short of Mrs. Keithly, Heinlein real wrote few if any villains that could be personalized.

Major oz: not since I've been on board

Phebe314: I don't think a decision has been reached on what is villainy, has it.....

Major oz: My vote is with the legless puke.

geeairmoe2: Who was the lady who held Poddy and her brother captive?

AGplusone: Mrs. Grew

Major oz: Nah, Phebe.....we can't reach one.

BPRAL22169: Mrs. Grew -- she was also nominated, and Belle Darkin.

AGplusone: but she was a mere tool of someone else ...

geeairmoe2: She came to mind first when I thought of Heinlein villains.

CherylYork: Oh, yes.

AGplusone: a simple agent, a functionary ...

geeairmoe2: But utterly slimey.

Major oz: Did the legless one have a name?

AGplusone: I've been reading a lot of John MacDonald lately. Now, he had villains.

geeairmoe2: Would the guy Oscar had to duel for in Glory Road be considered a villain?

Major oz: yew betcha, by golly

BPRAL22169: Cyrano de Bergerac? I wouldn't say so.

geeairmoe2: Kind of liked him.

Phebe314: Paul (husband) liked David's idea best that a villain is one who knows but breaks the current dominant societal mores.

Major oz: I don't see him as a villain, G -- more of a trainer.

AGplusone: How do you make Cyrano a villain? He's a functionary. Recruited by the wrong side.

AGplusone: thinks he's just a mercenary

AGplusone: like Mrs. Grew

Major oz: Some see a merc as the WORST kind of villain

Major oz: evil for profit

BPRAL22169: If you look at the story as a myth, then CdB is Cyril O Gordon, and he is dueling himself in a move of the Dark Night of the Soul

AGplusone: Such as the Dorsai?

Phebe314: Lots of torturers for El Salvador and so on are just mercenaries. They say, themselves.

EBATNM: So does a villain have to be evil or "merely" misguided?

Major oz: yes, even them

AGplusone: "merely" is an interesting concept, Andy

Major oz: UNTIL they become unattached

BPRAL22169: I introduced a distinction awhile ago that may be useful between a villain as a literary device versus a villain as a person being or doing evil

CherylYork: Now there is a debate that's had a lot of miles put on it without any agreement: were all Nazis just as responsible

CherylYork: for what happened as Hitler?

Major oz: no

Major oz: next question

Phebe314: Well, Andy, I don't think deranged is evil. The guy whose people suicided to join the spaceship behind the comet (kind of took the fun out of that comet, didn't it). He was nuts, but the followers ---- what were they? Very, very weak, I guess.

geeairmoe2: I still prefer the notion that a villain is someone unconcerned the damage done others while he seeks to satisfy his desires.

Major oz: :-)

CherylYork: :-P

EBATNM: John Hoag is a "villain" but not evil --

Major oz: expand, please

BPRAL22169: I, too, think that objectifying humans (or sentient beings) is a criterion of evil

Phebe314: A villain as a literary device versus someone to identify --- against.

BPRAL22169: Hoag wasn't a villain -- who is it you mean?

BPRAL22169: Sons of the Bird?

Major oz: Andy

Major oz: please expand

AGplusone: What was the name of the mutineer in Orphans? What drove him to mutiny? Was Mr. Christain a villain?

EBATNM: Major - Hoag illuminates the couple

dwrighsr: Huff

EBATNM: (can't think of thier names) way beyond what they

AGplusone: Yes, By Huff!

Major oz: hokay

EBATNM: can grasp -

EBATNM: and so causes them severe "metaphysical" damage

BPRAL22169: Mr. Christian is a classic example of the winner getting to define the categories, write the history.

dwrighsr: One of the 'Sons' appeared as Hoag and threatened the hero wife. Is that what you are referring to?

Major oz: How 'bout someone who forces us to see an unpleasant truth?

EBATNM: Yikes, forgot about the Sons of the Bird

Phebe314: Good point, Andy! That isn't being a villain, though ---- he was just an art critic, after all.

EBATNM: And we all know art (and literary critics) are a low breed

AGplusone: How would you write the history of the first flight to Mars that produced Michael Valentine Smith ... was Captain Michael Brant, Michael's father, a villain?

Phebe314: I saw that one coming, just too late. :-)

Major oz: That, Phebe, is one of the more vehement definitions of a villain

BPRAL22169: Of course he is an artcritic, and that's villain enough by most lights...

dwrighsr: That one and Pupper Masters are the really scary stories for me. I don't particularly like Hoag, but I love PM.

BPRAL22169: Darn. Too slow.

CheryYork: lol

Phebe314: Because Mike's father killed his mother? No...not long enough in the story to be a literary villain.

BPRAL22169: The collabos in PM have been nominated.

BPRAL22169: Of course, Stranger isn't a romance -- doesn't need a villain. it's a myth.

AGplusone: All but insured failure of the expedition by his adultery and poor leadership.

Major oz: I can see that there is not (nor likely to be) a definition of villain.

Major oz: Even in each of us, not to mention all of us.

BPRAL22169: (The spirit of Heinlein smiles craftily at us)

dwrighsr: Or rather, differing usages of the terms. Confusion.

AGplusone: evil=doing evil

Phebe314: Belle was the clearest Heinlein villain, I think, the most unlikeable, conscious of doing wrong, does it anyway.

AGplusone: The functionary who hires Friday to carry the impregnated egg to the Empire ... knows that Friday will be 'well-rewarded' when she arrives. Is he a villain?

EBATNM: I vote yes

Phebe314: Sure.

Major oz: I remember what S.M. Magdeline said about verbs: action, being, or state of being. Can evil be a noun in that sense or ONLY a verb.

AGplusone: Clearly so ...

BPRAL22169: Heinlein does have a lot of that kind of villain

Major oz: But.....

EBATNM: that is a darn good question Major ox

Phebe314: I say a noun. People can have a long-term trait of enjoying the pain and harm they cause.

BPRAL22169: The slave factors in TEFL and Citizen, for example.

geeairmoe2: Someone who is unconcerned of the damage done to others while seeking a goal.

EBATNM: er "oz"

AGplusone: realpolitick ...

Major oz: If KBB had assigned the same task, he would NOT be a villain

AGplusone: ensure stability of the succession, save the civilization

Major oz: No sweat, Andy.....a common pinkie slip

CherylYork: I was away from the keyboard for a few moments there, but I think I've caught up now...

EBATNM: but KBB wouldn't have put one of his agents in danger with NO chance

geeairmoe2: A civiliation that has to screw over people doesn't merit saving.

AGplusone: Everyone has called Oz "ox" at one time or the other.

CherylYork: ...my cat was looking for a Door into Summer!

Major oz: begs the question, Andy

CherylYork: ;-)

Phebe314: All civilizations screw over lots of people, surely?

EBATNM: Yeah, I'm good at that!

Major oz: CAREFUL, AG--I know where you live\

AGplusone: LOL

dwrighsr: Can I now say that 'Simes' was a villain? In Starman Jones?

Major oz: Sure, Phebe

AGplusone: The institutionalized villains are the ones RAH is more likely to draw than any other ... personally, I find very few truly evil characters ...

EBATNM: But thinking back re KBB in GULF where he send 'em out on a suicide mission - yup to save the world but still ...

Major oz: It's in the "how" and the "why" that counts

EBATNM: but also the intent

Phebe314: How about the villains in Have Spacesuit? Those creatures, can't recall their species, that want to eat people? They are deemed just too harmful to keep around, like raccoons, and are killed off. A common scifi theme. Heinlein did it too: a race too evil to live.

AGplusone: Agnes Douglas is one, until you find she's merely a goad on assignment to the world.

BPRAL22169: Slight difference for "Gulf" and PM -- the agents chose the mission as well as being sent.

EBATNM: PM?

BPRAL22169: I'm not sure "too evil to live" is right -- but incompatible with us and therefore doomed.

BPRAL22169: Puppet masters.

EBATNM: *duh*

BPRAL22169: you catch on to our witless mode of conversation . . .

Major oz: I'm approaching my 120 minutes, folks. I will try to get back on, but it took me a couple hours in the first place.

Phebe314: Bill saying, "incompatible with us and therefore doomed." Okay, but the Galactic Court found them too dangerous generally. Why didn't they find us too dangerous?

AGplusone: The character that Friday tells to sooth himself seems villainous ... and Rockford from the same scene ... but they're functionaries merely of whoever the ultimate evil (the successors of Keithley) are.

dwrighsr: I maintain that they (wormfaces) were villains in the literary sense, but not evil by their lights.

EBATNM: Bye Oz

Phebe314: By, Oz.

Major oz: I get dumped after two hours, folks

AGplusone: Keithley is mad. Evil ipse sese (?).

Major oz: propane powered ISP out here in the boonies

CherylYork: Okay. :-(

BPRAL22169: Phebe, I think it was a question of 'degree of knowledge.' The wormfaces had bombed their probationary period; we hadn't yet.

Phebe314: Right, wormfaces. Then the Puppetmasters (Aliens, Independence Day aliens, etc., etc.) weren't either. They just really, really liked taking over planets. Well, we do that too, of course.

Major oz: ...got to change the bottles

AGplusone: BRB Oz

Phebe314: I guess it's okay if we take over a planet (Earth) but if Aliens or Puppetmasters do it, that makes them evil.....I guess villainy IS a literary convention only.

AGplusone: It's as if the 'bugs' from Troopers have a point of view.

CherylYork: Hmmm...interesting points.

BPRAL22169: I register "huh?" on that one. "Taking over" our own planet boggles the mind.

BPRAL22169: The puppet masters and others were invaders -- initiating unprovoked violence.

AGplusone: If we recognize only human POVs they cannot. Yet, the dragons on Venus have a POV, the Martians in DS, have a POV ...

Phebe314: The bugs from Troopers did, certainly ----- and Ender's Game, a similar story in some ways, shows them as very sympathetic bugs in the end that were trying hard to communicate that they wanted detente.

Major oz has left the room.

Phebe314: Bill saying, ""Taking over" our own planet boggles the mind."

AGplusone: yes, I thought of that one as I typed the comment Phebe

EBATNM: So Evil Is as Evil Does?

geeairmoe2: Detente? Is that what the farmer and the turkey have ... until thanksgiving?

Phebe314: Let me try that again...""Taking over" our own planet boggles the mind." Well, we are making a lot of species extinct by overpopulating, making others extinct being my personal definition of overpopulation. I'd love to see us at 1/4 or 1/8 current population, by attrition, of course.

BPRAL22169: Have you been watching Forrest Gump again? Hmmm?

BPRAL22169: Phebe, I don't think the Galactic Court was concerned with those as judicial matters.

BPRAL22169: They were symptoms of the generally worrying qualities of the human race.

Phebe314: Such as?

Phebe314: Violence, aggression, a tendency toward imperialism.

EBATNM: The Galactic Court was actually the Galactic Security council. They weeded species deemed too dangerous to live.

Phebe314: That damn Galactic Security Council was anti-American!

geeairmoe2: Villain candidate: the slavers in CotG.

BPRAL22169: The court may have been concerned that we were the kind of species that exterminated our non-sentients -- possibly because they are our species' capital for the future -- but the "judicial" question they were concerned with was, do we present a "clear and present danger" to the species that make up the confederation.

Phebe314: No, not enough concentration on them literarily, like Mike's father. We need a focus to have a villain.

EBATNM: Would that include the support staff? <---- qeeairmoe2

dwrighsr: Their main concern seemed to be whether or not we posed a potential threat to them. In the end they basically decided that we were too immature at this stage to really know. So we got a second chance..

CherylYork: Even the New Oxford Dictionary has a hard time defining "evil" without resorting to stuff like "sin" and "the devil."

Phebe314: Bad deeds do not a villain make: we have to be paying attention and caring about them and their evil ways.

CherylYork: Keyword: Oxford Dictionary

BPRAL22169: In literary terms the evil deeds of the villain cause the story to turn.

BPRAL22169: So the story does have to focus on those deeds.

qeeairmoe2: Anyone who stands idly, or assists a villain perpetrate villainy is a villain.

BPRAL22169: Part of CotG's horror is the late realization that his family and friends and the clean comfort of Rudbek might have been the real villains.

Phebe314: David saying, "Their main concern seemed to be whether or not we posed a potential threat to them. In the end they basically decided that we were too immature at this stage to really know. So we got a second chance.." Right ----- this is a VERY common theme in scifi, the species too implacable, imperialist

EBATNM: in mythic terms the villain is what the hero(ine) has to overcome in order to achieve illumination

AGplusone: And the true villains in HSSWT are the two sell-outs, the traitors who work for the wormfaces ...

AGplusone: who wind up with the villains reward, getting et

EBATNM: So without the villains there is no illumination - kinda sorta

dwrighsr: Agreed. David.

Phebe314: As you see, Bill, I am very taken by your idea. It might be more accurate to say that I am *taking* your idea. Say, you didn't copyright that, did you? :-)

BPRAL22169: I wish I had -- it's common coin, though. help yourself. Plenty more where that came from.

CherylYork: lol

BPRAL22169: Take some from the bowl as you go out into the great wide non-nest world.

EBATNM: qeeairmoe2 - would you agree that the "second stage" villain has have intent or only have knowledge?

Phebe314: Define second stage again?

Phebe314: Support personnel?

AGplusone: The fun part of The Star Beast is the villains in the wing, the Hroshii, possessing the capability to end it all for our species, are dissuaded by our very own John Thomas, as if Clinton were in charge of the entire event.

EBATNM: second stage - villain at a distance, one whom doesn't directly do villainry

geeairmoe2: Whether someone can be considered a villain seems to hinge on if he is aware of the harm he does to others.

Phebe314: Good, I think.

BPRAL22169: Oooh. Does that mean ours is bigger?

EBATNM: in this case, yes, the support staff

AGplusone: ... root, and branch ...

BPRAL22169: Sometimes the support staff move front-and-center, as in Puppet Masters, where the three Company reps function as villains.

Phebe314: That's why Mike's father wasn't a villain ---- he was just doing his thing, very upset. It's a story, and not central. It's not HIS story.

EBATNM: Ah, but in Star Beast who is the Villain? The Hroshii or the John Thomas' kidnappers?

CherylYork: Okay...sounds right to me.

BPRAL22169: I think that book is a comedy of errors on all its levels.

EBATNM: The Hroshii only know that their Infanta was taken off-planet.

BPRAL22169: No villains -- just a lot of mistaken identities.

AGplusone: John Thomas, II, I think it was, kidnapped LummoX in the first place.

Phebe314: It has to be the people we can identify with, right? We can't identify with alien species who just happen to want to wipe out humankind ---- we have those everywhere, after all, and call them germs and viruses.

Major oz has entered the room.

BPRAL22169: Germs don't 'want' to wipe out humanity -- they just want a place to live and raise little germs.

CherylYork: Ahhhh....but those can be very effective villains in a way...

CherylYork: ...witness The Burning Zone...

Phebe314: The propane lit up your ISP, I see, Oz.

CherylYork: ...or The White Plague, for that matter.

CherylYork: :-P

Major oz: brrrrrrrrrr. it's cold out there

BPRAL22169: You got the pilot light re-lit on your monitor?

Major oz: yeah, and I lit a candle so I can read my screen

EBATNM: Rub two Boy Scouts together & get a good fire started

Phebe314: Bill saying, "Germs don't 'want' to wipe out humanity -- they just want a place to live and raise little germs." That's true of all "Aliens" isn't it ---- that's why it is necessary to make them slimy and drooly and say things like "Diiiiiiiiiiiiie" in Independence Day, so we can start to hate them.

Major oz: My pond was frozen to at least 8 inches last month

CherylYork: Hmmm...good point there, I think.

BPRAL22169: Did you see John Travolta's Hubbard movie?

Major oz: Not a big deal for my old home (WY) but really cold for here.

CherylYork: Heck, no!

AGplusone: We do that with everyone. Call the Shropshire Lad a lobsterback so we can aim at the cross belts on his chest.

BPRAL22169: They were objectifying sentient beings. These happened to be us.

Phebe314: Oh, migod, I did! It was SO INCREDIBLY BAD!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

BPRAL22169: But Travolta had a lot of fun playing it.

BPRAL22169: It was just pulp.

Major oz: What movie was that?

BPRAL22169: Battlefield Earth (the title finally kicked in)

Major oz: but JT are one.

Phebe314: I cannot believe they spent so much money on making such a bad, dark, dystopic, boring movie that stole wholesale from Logan's Run --- I wouldn't have believed it if I hadn't earlier seen the remake of Godzilla.

EBATNM: They filmed Battleship Earth? Yuck, ICK, & other comments

BPRAL22169: Welcome to Hollywood in the fin de siecle.

CherylYork: Now there is an example for you of a den of villians!

Major oz: was it tongue-in-cheek at all?

CherylYork: :-X

CherylYork: I wouldn't vote with my dollars for those bloodsuckers.

BPRAL22169: I think Travolta played his character for all the tongue-in-cheek the market would bear.

Major oz: hokay

BPRAL22169: I was in Santa Cruz -- anything would have been a relief.

Major oz: I like JT -- anyone who owns a GS has to be a good guy

AGplusone: IOW, Travolta did a Verhoexer on EIRon's masterpiece?

Major oz: wheels in wheels, AG

CherylYork: Sorry...pushed a button there I guess.

Major oz: :-)

BPRAL22169: I don't know -- never read it. But it seemed a fair make to me -- just very, very pulp. Worst of the Campbell tradition instead of the heinlein end -- the best

AGplusone: heresy!

EBATNM: <----- but an egg

BPRAL22169: We could tell by the cracks.

BPRAL22169: And the smell of hydrogen sulfide . . .

Major oz: I think I read 3 or 4 volumes. Funny, but got to be all the same thing.

AGplusone: And the 'yuk' er, yolk.

BPRAL22169: LOL

EBATNM: let's not scramble the chat, please

CherylYork: I just find Scientologists to be a scarey lot, personally.

BPRAL22169: It seemed to me like vintage Hubbard pulp.

BPRAL22169: No Scientology in the movie, though.

AGplusone: never finished it ... about 100 pages in I gave it a toss.

Major oz: really?

Major oz: none in the movie

BPRAL22169: Nope.

BPRAL22169: We've got about 10 minutes left -- any wrap up comments?

CherylYork: True.

AGplusone: I hold out for institutional villainy

Major oz: One of my NCOIC's was a scientologist. He was actually embarassed when he tried to explain it to me.

BPRAL22169: I did want to say something about villains that turn out not to be villains -- like Diktor in BHB and the Zombies.

AGplusone: GA

Major oz: we have met Diktor, and he is us.

CherylYork: I'd have to agree with that...the real evil to RAH seemed to be institutions that behave unhumanly, or inhumanely.

BPRAL22169: I think it's possible RAH was setting up something of the sort for the World As Myth books -- all the antagonists turn out to be the Circle of Ouroboros in the end after a final Ragnarok.

BPRAL22169: It's an interesting thought, anyway. And there is a direct reference to Zombies in Cat.

BPRAL22169: So it is at least possible.

CherylYork: Oooooooo....good point!

AGplusone: Baldwin's a villain ... Unca' Tom's a villain ... even the two stooges in HSSWT are villains, but "they is us"

Major oz: I was never persuaded that there was an "end"

CherylYork: I hadn't seen that before.

Major oz: Only a carosel on which you could jump

AGplusone: Just as Jehovah is the villain in Job, eh, Bill.

Major oz:at some random point

dwrighsr: Have you seen my chart of Zombies?

Major oz: yes

BPRAL22169: I can't remember when I heard that RAH knew the story of the seventh Lensman book and this may have influenced his World as Myth.

BPRAL22169: Yes.

Major oz: had problems with the "verticality"

BPRAL22169: Me too.

CherylYork: "The world is a circle without a beginning, and nobody knows where it really ends..." etc. -- Lost Horizons (the movie version)

Major oz:per omnia secula, seculorum.....

BPRAL22169: There's a logical problem about the WAM I haven't resolved -- it's supposed to be a "many worlds" set up, with each historical change generating a new timeline, but they have all these loops in the same timelines.

dwrighsr: The vertical lines simply demonstrated events happening at the 'same time'

BPRAL22169: The loop concept is supposed to be incompatible with the many worlds theory.

AGplusone: So, if you look at the

CherylYork: "Ev-ry-thing depends on where you stand in the circle that's spinning around...half of the time we are upside-down."

AGplusone: "First Human Civilization" in the FH chart ... does that happen after the wind up in WAM stories, Bill?

Major oz: I agree, Bill, that it is incompatible.

BPRAL22169: Dunno, DAvid -- haven't thought about that. The FH was a Korzybskian plan -- and the WAM stuff happens long after Da Capo. probably not.

CherylYork: Hmmmm....interesting cosmology...I've never seen any attempt at reconciliation between the cyclical and Many Worlds,

BPRAL22169: He's probably talking about Korzybski's "Manhood of Humanity."

CherylYork: but I'm not sure that it would be impossible.

AGplusone: When we all realize that there are many gods, and Walt Kelley is prophet to them all.

BPRAL22169: RAH was a fanatic Pogo fan.

EBATNM: By definition- anything is possible IF an sufficiently talented author writes it so

AGplusone: Yes, so Ginny told me once

Major oz: good idea, Andy

BPRAL22169: Of course, that could be a clue -- if both looping and Wheeler-Everett many worlds are in the same book.

EBATNM: we have met the enemy and he is us

CherylYork: Oh, wow...throwing around Korzybsky and Kelly in the same exchange...now I'm REALLY impressed! Cool!

BPRAL22169: Wouldn't that be a kicker! The whole point of the World As Myth is a Pogo line!

CherylYork: ROFLOL!

BPRAL22169: Great way to end a chat about Heinlein's villains. I propose we fold up our tents.

EBATNM: Deck the hall with Boston Charlie, Walla Walla Wa.

EBATNM: and Kalamazoo

BPRAL22169: and Kalamazoo.

Major oz: ::fold, flip, roll::

Phebe314: Very pleasant evening with you all. Good night!

AGplusone: Seems fair, g'night, all. Going to kiss and play with my spousal unit.

Major oz: What's next

Major oz: any suggestions?

BPRAL22169: It's slipped my mind -- Jane was the keeper of the schedule and i forgot to ask.

dwrighsr: If any of the newcomers are not on my mailing list to receive notifications of the log, please IM me or e-mail me at dwrighsr@alltel.net

BPRAL22169: But I know there is one waiting in the wings.

Phebe314: Can't think of anything right now; maybe we'll come up with something on the NG.

Major oz: hokay, I'll get to her

Phebe314 has left the room.

CherylYork: I'm on the list. Thanks for a great chat!

Major oz: David, are you hosting Saturday?

CherylYork: Nite!

CherylYork has left the room.

Major oz: nite

dwrighsr: I'm not sure at this point if I can make it. I'll let you know.

Major oz: hokay

AGplusone: nice to see you Will ... and meet you on-line Andy.

Major oz: I don't know if I will be there, but will try.

Major oz: Nice meeting you Andy

AGplusone has left the room.

BPRAL22169: He's creating a shortcut -- he may be away from the keyboard.

geeairmoe2: Rare free Thursday night for me. Saturday is till iffy.

geeairmoe2: Nite all.

Major oz: c you all next time

BPRAL22169: good night. Good chat.

BPRAL22169 has left the room.

Major oz has left the room.

geeairmoe2 has left the room.

EBATNM: Back, thanks, but I'll have to go ta-tah

EBATNM has left the room.

dwrighsr: Log officially close at 12:00 P.M. EST

<="" a=""> Final End Of Discussion Log