

Are We All Becoming Geeks?

Chattanooga, TN – There was a time when admitting to being a science fiction fan was tantamount to saying you were socially inept, with acne, no friends and zero personality. However with TV shows such as NBC's "Heroes," "Lost" on ABC and even Sci-Fi Channel's "Battlestar Galactica" pulling in massive viewing figures on cable, it seems that the science fiction is now very much in the mainstream.

We have all become geeks. It's no use trying to argue that you haven't. The moment you put that RAZR onto your belt-loop or in your purse you turned into a real life James T. Kirk or Lieutenant Uhura. Own an ipod? Then you are a slave to high-tech gadgetry. Did you see "The New Bionic Woman"? Face it; you're even watching science fiction on TV. We can't escape the fact that we live with and rely on science fiction. Like it or not, we are all becoming Trekkies and sci-fi geeks.

"It always amazes me when people tell me they don't like science fiction," says New York Times bestselling author John Ringo, "I tell them 'Oh you don't? What about the 280 songs you've got in that playlist on your cell phone in your pocket!' We have longer, healthier and more enriched lives than any previous generation" he laughs, "and a lot of these improvements come from sci-fi visionaries. But people still complain and say they aren't a part of it."

But we are a part of it, or perhaps you prefer to think of it as sci-fi becoming a part of us. It is staggering the number of things we take for granted that people born as recently as our grandparents would have considered the most far-fetched of science fiction pipe-dreams: Digital watches, cell phones, ipods, laptops, Xbox's, CGI films, the Space Shuttle and Space Station, internet, heart transplants – the list is endless. Yes, believe it or not we live the lives of peoples once only depicted in science fiction books and films.

"Science fiction is about how technology changes society." explains Ringo, author of the new novel "Sister Time," "Anyone working in IT, communications, or electronics is a sci-fi nerd, right? But these people are now the high earners; they are the ones being courted by the advertisers, so in-turn they are a prime target for TV companies and major studios who produce shows and movies they will want to watch – and that in turn changes society."

But it is not just the movies that we watch that is reshaping society. The very fact that there are millions of IT and communications jobs these days also creates changes. As Ringo points out; "In the 1960's the only people making money out of technical science jobs were the handful of people developing missiles. Today there are millions of people making a living from jobs once thought of as the property of science fiction. Follow the money."

What then of the future, where will science-fiction lead us to next? Our grandparents couldn't believe it when our parents were holding walkmans, our parents can't believe we are holding ipods; what will our children, or their children be holding?

"People won't hold anything," replies Ringo without hesitation, "it will be full-implant. You won't need to hold anything because you'll have a tiny chip in your head." It might seem like a crazy notion, but just think how crazy the idea of an ipod would have been 30 years ago.

Stone-age. Bronze-age. Iron-age. The 21st century surely heralds the dawn of... The Geek-Age.

John Ringo's website can be found at www.JohnRingo.com.

About the Author

John Ringo is a nationally recognized best selling author and authority on science fiction. He had visited 23 countries and attended 14 schools by the time he graduated high school, which left him with a wonderful appreciation of the oneness of humanity and a permanent aversion to foreign food. Ringo studied marine biology until he realized the pay is awful, at which point he turned his attention to database management and it's associated paychecks. However, fate stepped in and John became a professional science fiction writer, authoring amongst others the New York Times best-selling series "The Posleen Wars." John has also done stints as an op-ed writer for The New York Post and as a guest commentator for Fox News. Having spent his younger years in the 82nd Airborne where he rock-climbed, cave-dived, rappelled, hunted, spear-fished and sailed, he is now content for others to risk their necks, preferring himself to read, write and hang out in cigar bars. His latest novel is "Sister Time" available from December 2007.

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