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### Science Fiction: From Silly to Surreal

Rowel Jimenez

Syracuse University, rgjime01@syr.edu

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# Science Fiction

From Silly To Surreal

The background is a solid blue-grey color. Overlaid on this are several thick, black, hand-drawn style lines. These lines form large, sweeping, organic shapes that resemble stylized waves or abstract calligraphy. Some lines are straight, while others are curved, creating a dynamic and textured visual field.

# Part I

## 1930s-1940s

# Flash Gordon

- Flash Gordon and more campy movies like The Invisible Man epitomized early science fiction, largely seen as for children.
- Characters in franchises like Flash Gordon often remained types rather than fully developed personas, hindering deeper exploration of the genre's potential.
- The colorful and episodic nature of early sci-fi contributed to their perception as simplistic and aimed at younger audiences.



The background is a solid blue color. Overlaid on this are several thick, yellow, hand-drawn style lines. These lines form a series of overlapping circles and arcs of varying sizes. Some lines are complete circles, while others are partial arcs. The lines are arranged in a way that they seem to flow and connect different parts of the frame, creating a dynamic and abstract composition. The text is centered within this abstract design.

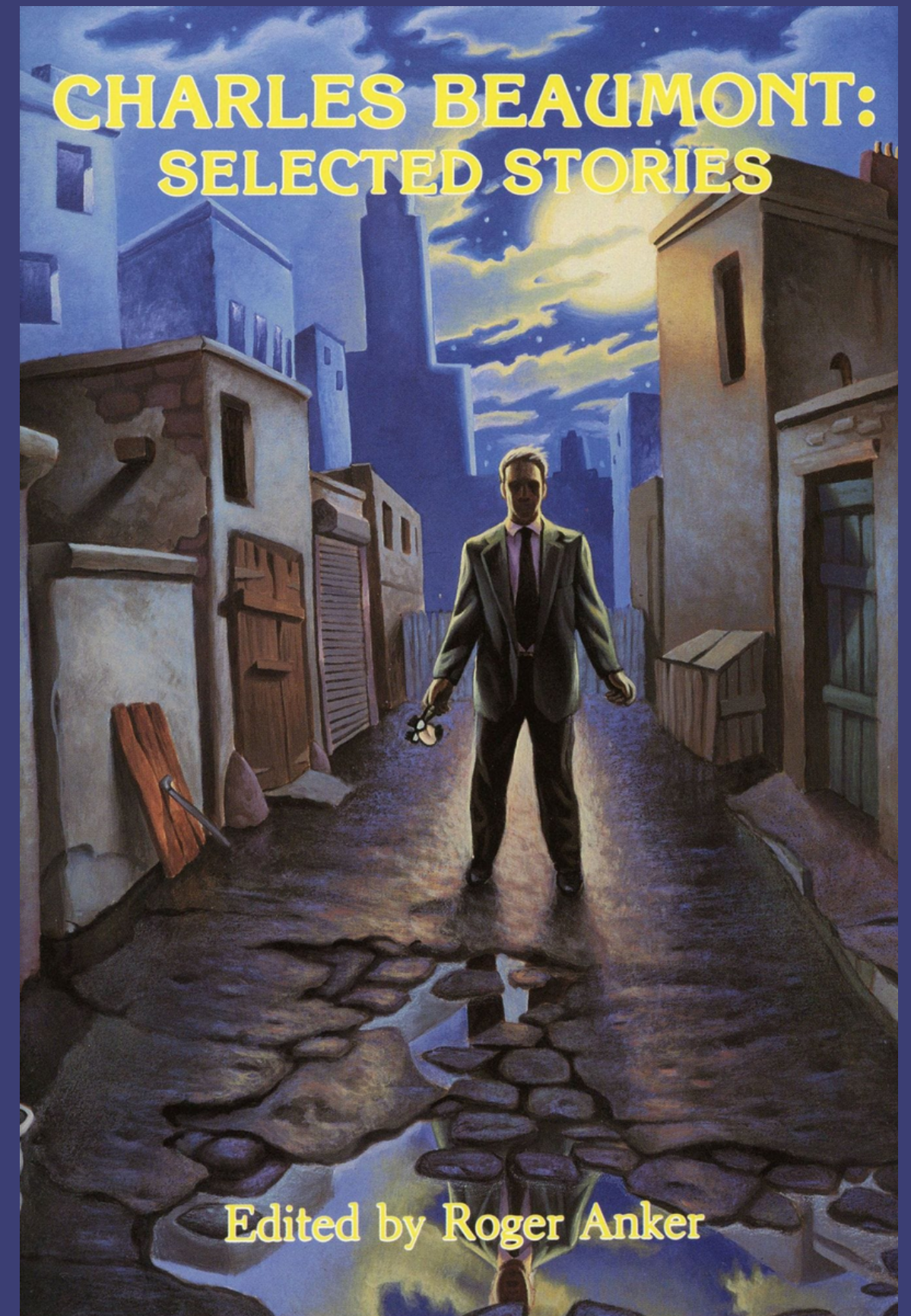
# Part II

## 1950s–1960s



# The Science Screen

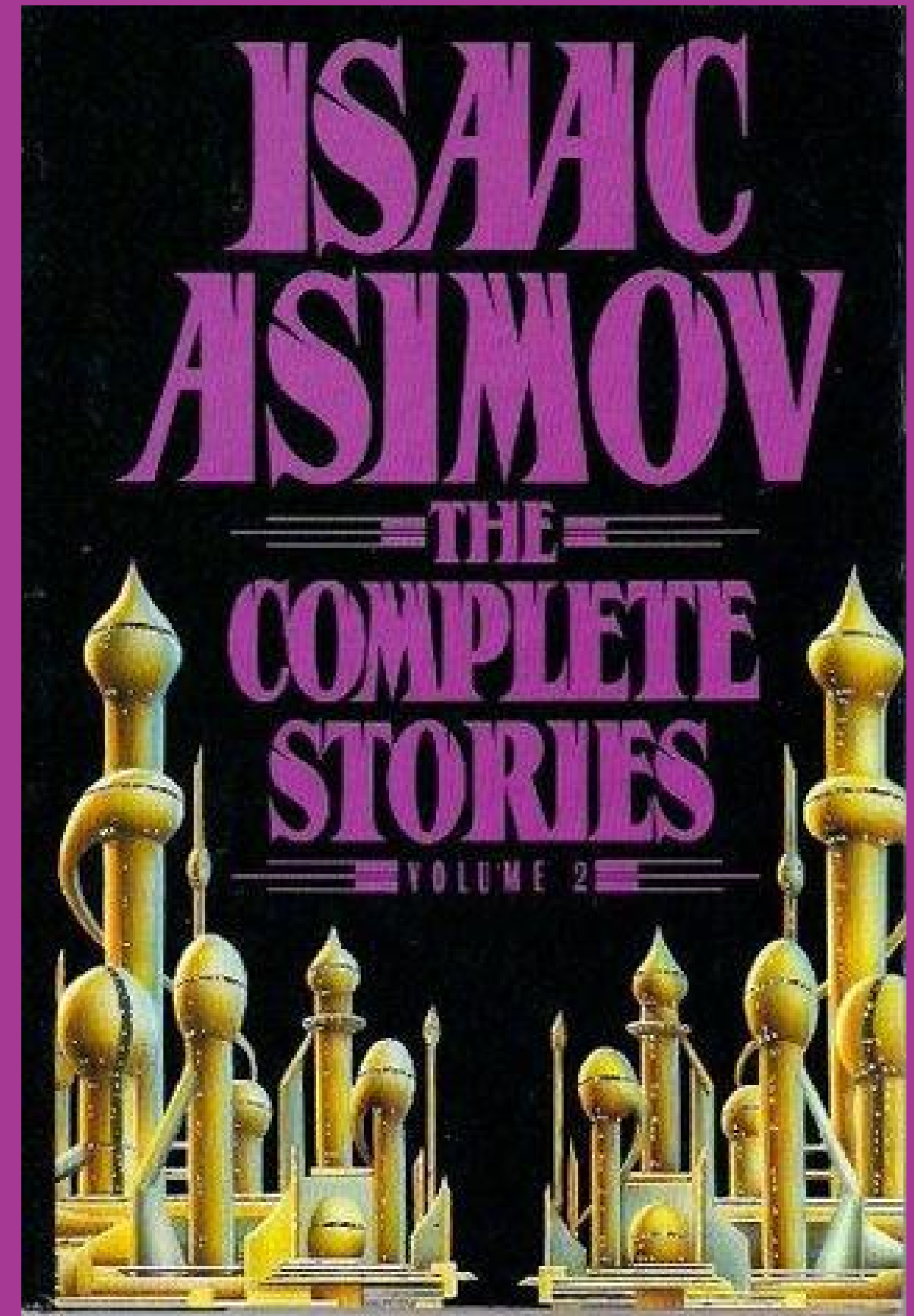
- Charles Beaumont wrote this article to explain why Cold War science fiction and horror weren't scary anymore.
- Emphasized that monsters alone couldn't make these stories good. Science fiction needed to explore its characters and the human psyche to have an impact.
- Published by Mercury Press Records, the magazine evolved in the 1950s to showcase short stories, offering the chance for more creative experimentation.





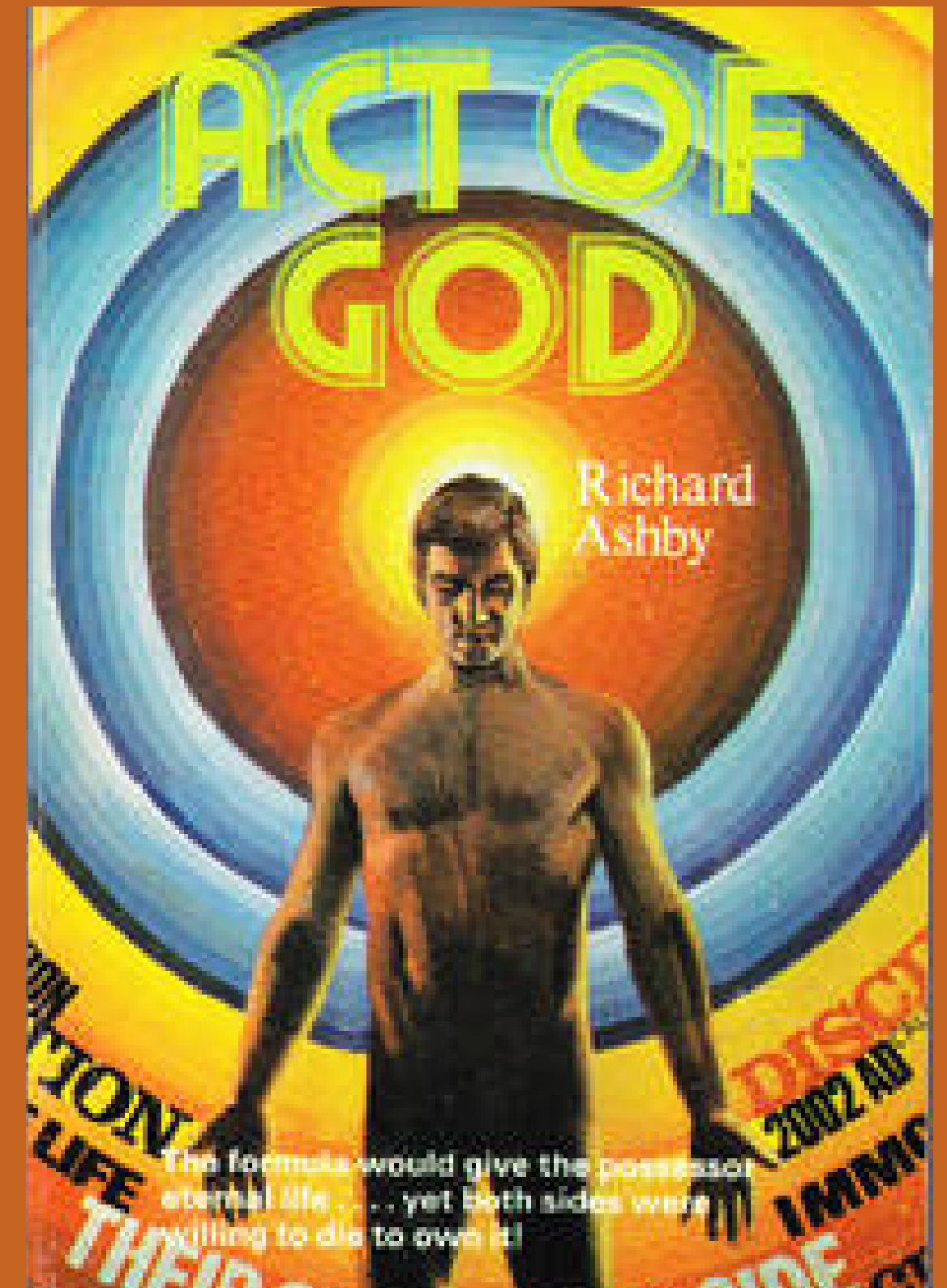
# The Talking Stone

- Isaac Asimov's "The Talking Stone" is set in a future where humanity explores space, the story follows characters deciphering clues to locate a source of valuable radioactive ore.
- Asimov also focuses on making the science used in the story accurate.
- Helped to show evolving science fiction, blending the mystery elements of crime noir films that were popular in the 1950s.



# The Sling

- Richard Ashby's "The Sling" intertwines political commentary with sci-fi, mirroring 1960s societal anxieties: racism, segregation, and electoral corruption.
- Sci-fi elements backdrop and play a smaller role in the political conflict.
- Showed that real-world issues meld seamlessly into sci-fi narratives, showcasing the genre's capacity for addressing and commenting on contemporary issues.





# Sci-Fi On Television

- Star Trek: The Original Series expanded TV sci-fi, tackling racism, imperialism, and government control through bold storytelling and sets for the time.
- "The Twilight Zone" delved into paranoia, totalitarianism, and human vulnerability, showing sci-fi could cover series topics.
- Both shaped pop culture, inspiring shows and enduring as franchises, impacting audiences with their timeless relevance.





# Part III

## 21st Century



# The Modern Day

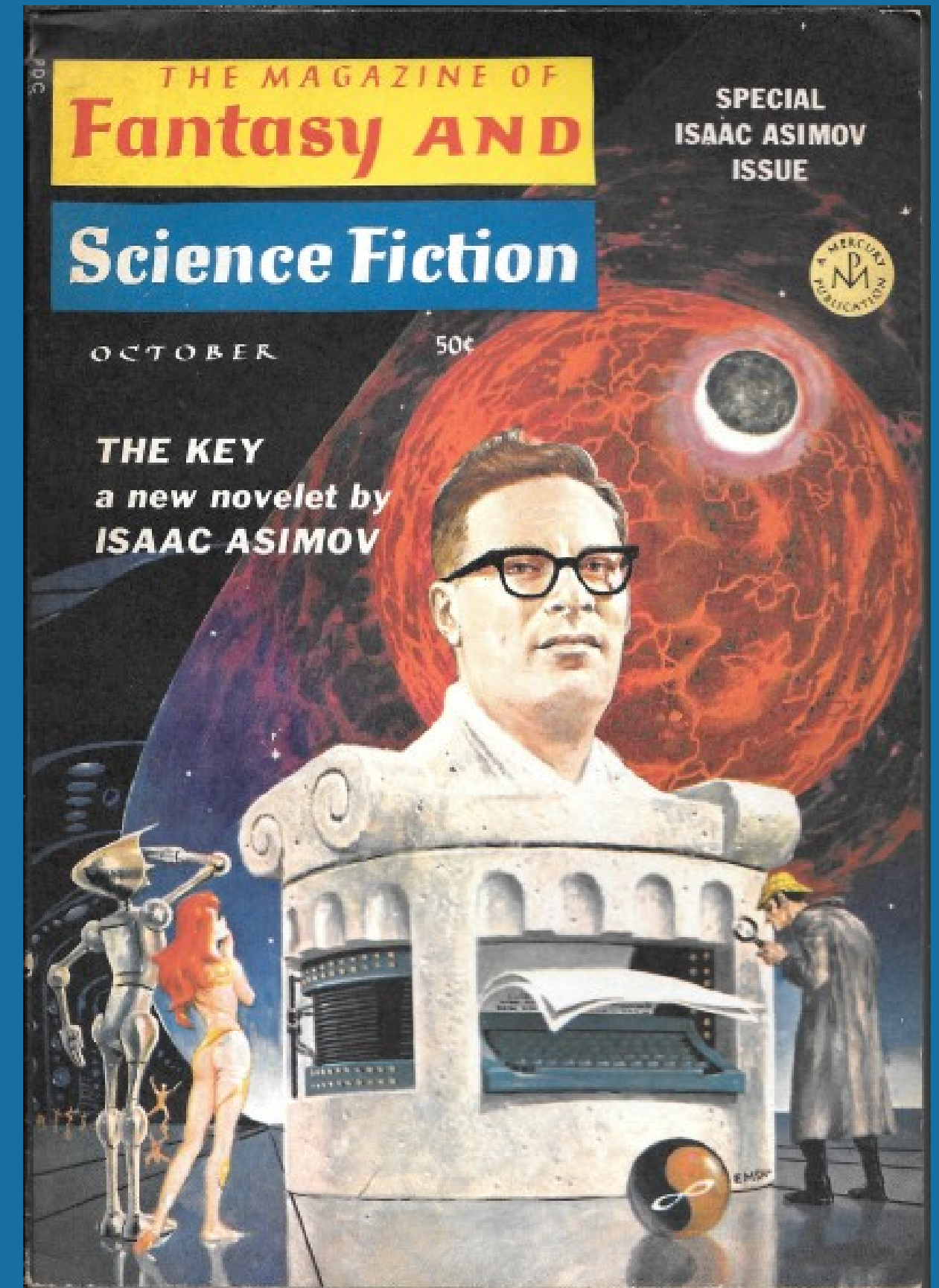
- Contemporary sci-fi merges advanced, sometimes real-life, tech with human experience, exploring AI, augmented realities, and environmental concerns.
- "Black Mirror" dissects tech's dark side, cautioning about society's reliance.
- While some modern sci-fi, especially superhero, leans more into action, many probe the ethical implications of scientific progress and humanity's trajectory.





# Mercury Press Records

- Mercury Press, started by Lawrence Spivak in the late 1930s, published The American Mercury magazine.
- It expanded in 1949 to include other serials like The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction. Producing works from authors like Charles Beaumont, Richard Ashby and Isaac Asimov.
- Their pieces have also been used as a primary source for this presentation.







# Full Video (8:20)

