



**THE MAN WHO SAW THE FUTURE**

Prof. K. Smiles Mascarenhas has mentioned about the film *2001: A Space Odyssey* (March 2011). The movie contained an alarming prophesy of artificial intelligence going berserk. Both the film and the novel that followed it were a smashing success. Round about that time he was involved in the television coverage of Apollo mission to the moon. All these, his earlier books and the fact that in 1945 he proposed the concept of geosynchronous orbit in the 1945 paper, *Extra-Terrestrial Relays: Can Rockets give Worldwide Radio Coverage*, combined to make him extremely popular.

In 1989, two decades after the first moon landing, Clarke wrote: "2001 was written in an age which lies beyond one of the greatest divides in human history: we are sundered from it forever by the moment when Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin stepped out on to the Sea of Tranquility. Now history and film have become inexorably intertwined."

About himself Clarke had said: "Sometimes I am asked how I would like to be remembered. I have had a

diverse career as a writer, underwater explorer and space promoter. Of all these I would like to be known as a writer."

Dr. S.K. Gurtu, Jaipur

**SPACE FLIGHT IN FICTION**

Dr Arvind Mishra has presented a holistic picture in **Amazing World of Science Fiction** (March 2011). Because of the fabulous background job done by the SR team this cover story has made the March issue



a collector's item.

Some prominent authors like Jules Verne and H.G. Wells have been mentioned by Arvind Mishra. However, I would humbly like to add a few more names from non-scientific field. Voltaire in *Micromegans* (1752) wrote about the interplanetary wanderings of a Saturnian, Byron in *Don Juan* (1823) considered a lunar trip using steam engine, Edgar Allan Poe in *The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Pfall* (1835) took his hero to the Moon on a balloon and Alexandre Dumas in *A Voyage to the Moon* (1857) thought of a substance that was repelled by the Earth.

Perhaps it would not be out of place to say that more than hundred years before the actual discovery of Deimos and Phobos, Voltaire had mentioned Martian moons in *Micromegans* and Jonathan Swift in *Gulliver's Travels* referred to these twin satellites in connection with the scientific achievements of the Laputans. It is intriguing how, without any telescopic aid, they could come to this conclusion.

**Shashi**  
Indore (M.P.)

**FATHER OF SATELLITE COMMUNICATION**

This has reference to your excellent feature article about my favourite writer Arthur C. Clarke published in the March issue of *Science Reporter*. Although the readers may remember Sir Clarke as a famous science fiction writer, our planet profoundly remembers him as the father of satellite communication. He breathed his last in Sri Lanka since he admired its natural beauty. Thanks to Prof, Mascarenhas and the editorial board.



**Debasis Ghosh**  
Barrackpur (W.B.)

**AN AMAZING EDITION**

I heartily agree with your Editorial, **Shouldn't Our Children Know?** (March 2011 issue), that children should be aware about India's success stories in science. Unfortunately, the common man is also usually unaware about India's achievements in the scientific field because science does not hold much glamour whether in print or in visual media. Popular science magazines along with organizations and institutes should come forward to create pressure upon the government to increase space for science & technology in these media. But will an aid-dependent scientific and academic lobby—relaxed to being

detached from the common man—ever realize its necessity?

The cover story on science fiction by Arvind Mishra was very informative. He defines the science fiction writer as having an ability to predict future events, on scientific grounds obviously. Would that day ever come in India when policy makers take advice from science fiction writers, rather than 'babas' and palmists, just as the FBI took advice from Greg Bear, the famous science fiction writer!

**Abhishek Mishra**  
Faridabad, Haryana

**GIVING BACK TO SCIENCE**

After I passed my high school, this is the first time I came across my favorite science magazine. Over time *Science Reporter* has evolved a lot. This magazine is helping a lot in popularization of science among the Indian masses, especially due to the fact that it is enjoyed both by children and youth alike.

I am currently pursuing my studies at the School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi. I have gained a lot from this magazine and now it's my turn to give back to our scientific community. As a town planner, I always insist on better social and physical infrastructure with a healthy and scientific environment for our budding Indian students. I hope I can put this into practice later in life.

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