



The Genesis Machine

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In an America becoming repressive in the face of world tensions, Brad Clifford, a young mathematical physicist, had been virtually drafted from academia to work on defense projects. But Brad's true dedication was to bring about the unification of all fields and forces, and his theory was too wild for his superiors to take seriously. So he defied the political authorities and went AWOL to work with a fellow maverick scientist. They built the machine that his theory made possible - but the machine made all weapons impotent, and could either wreck the world or save it. And the Powers That Be wanted to control it for their own benefit.....

The Genesis Machine Details

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From Reader Review The Genesis Machine for online ebook

C.A. Knutsen says

This is an outstanding contribution to the speculative world of how things might be explained which seem impossible within our four sensory dimensions. This book has influenced my writing, especially the yet-to-be published third book of the Janus Unfolding Series. I really like the k-space theory. I read for the first time several years ago and just re-read it. I liked it even better the second time. I also am very attracted to the notion that science could be used to find a way out of our war/arms stupidity.

Sean Randall says

This started off as a very hard sci-fi story and was pretty heavy, scientifically. I enjoyed it a great deal, even if the ideas were over my head. One of Hogan's better works in my book!

Brett Thomasson says

After winning a bet by getting his first novel *Inherit the Stars* published, James Hogan decided he kind of liked writing and figured he'd take another shot at it. Dissatisfied with the way faster-than-light (FTL) travel was often shown in science fiction novels, he decided he would try to build a story around the process by which an FTL drive was discovered, and extrapolate it from then-known scientific principles. The result was 1978's *The Genesis Machine*.

Bradley Clifford is a brilliant researcher who spends his day hours working for a government-directed research facility and his spare time researching the strange behavior of subatomic particles. But the political climate frowns on research without application -- specifically military application -- and his private hobby gets him on the bad side of his bosses. When he quits and joins a like-minded co-researcher at one of the last private research foundations around, he pursues his own research to fantastic implications. But that draws the attention of the same military and government officials he just left, and they pressure Clifford to use his research for their purposes. How will he maintain his principles while not sacrificing his friends and allies to government pressure?

A design engineer by trade, Hogan shows real skill at exploring and explaining the science that drives his story. The characterizations are rather flat, which makes the final twist he sets up a little artificial as well. The politics and the "villains" of the piece are barely more than caricatures at best and more often cartoonish than anything else. Although he had more than a handful of good science fiction novels left in him, *Genesis* finds him doing pretty well at the science but leaving a lot to be desired in the fiction.

Original available [here](#).

Earl Baugh says

Re-read this in 2002. Still holds up! A great book.

Harry Steinmetz says

An excellent job of explaining theoretical physics, at least of the 70s. Interesting alternative future history and a strong Libertarian political philosophy in the lead character. The ending was a bit pat, but getting there was very fun. I'd recommend this if you are into theoretical physics.

Patrick Scheele says

With the world on the brink of WW3, a scientist throws a temper tantrum because he doesn't get to do whatever he wants. He shows everyone just how great he is and how sucky they are by building some machine that prevents further war.

Johnny says

Written one-half decade before 1983 when CERN (*Conseil Europeen pour la Recherche Nucleaire* aka European Council for Nuclear Research) discovered W and Z particles by turning their SPS (Super Proton Synchrotron) into a proton-antiproton collider by using its IRS (Intersecting Storage Rings), *The Genesis Machine* (1978) posited the idea of *k*-particles which both created particles which could be seen and were “annihilated” into a different space-time referent. In *The Genesis Machine*, the scientists at a low-profile laboratory (hiding in plain sight as it were) attempt to use the gravitational dynamics of these newly discovered particles to create and manipulate gravity fields.

Sure, gravity fields are old-hat in science-fiction, even before Hugo Gernsback coined the term “Scientifiction” for *Amazing Stories* magazine (April, 1926), though, it shouldn’t be surprising that discoveries proliferate and gravitational manipulation is not where *The Genesis Machine* eventually gets its name. Yet, the literature rarely offers a plausible, yet incredibly speculative, theory for how this artificial gravity might be induced. In *The Genesis Machine*, the scientists treat the *k*-particles’ relationship to gravity as analogous to the experiments of Faraday relating the creation and manipulation of magnetic fields through electricity (p. 115). Now, lest one think I am unveiling a nasty spoiler, note that this analogy comes more than 100 pages into a 300-page novel. And, as noted earlier, that isn’t the last speculative and mindboggling discovery. Science is often subject to military-industrial intrigue where “weaponizing” becomes the primary interest of government. Such as intrusion leads to a devastating set-up which quickly endears the reader to the idealistic protagonists before moving to the point that the magnetic analogy (along with references to theories like the “Hawking Effect” (p. 124)) pushes one into the “main event,” so to speak.

The truth is, *The Genesis Machine* makes a valid point about the subservience of science to the service of the military. There is a great line in *Heisenberg’s War* about a former German scientist working on the Manhattan Project who discovered that the Germans weren’t going to put together an atomic bomb, after all. The scientist said to the military liaison that since the Germans didn’t have the bomb, the U.S. wouldn’t have to use the bomb developed by the Manhattan Project. The liaison responded that the scientist didn’t understand. “If we have it, we’re going to use it.” That sentiment pervades the characterization of the government in *The Genesis Machine*.

The Genesis Machine is idealistic about science, but not so sanguine about geopolitics. Starting on p. 170, James P. Hogan visualizes a pan-African coalition and pan-Arab confederation joining together under a Treaty of Khartoum. He sees the then Soviet Union dividing into two major blocs, one favoring western ideas with the other become ever more hardliners in Marxist/Leninist/Stalinist terms, as opposed to dividing into a group of autonomous nations. China was perpetrating ruthless aggression along the Indian border and had galvanized Japan, South Korea, Indonesia, Australia, and New Zealand into a more unified grouping. Remember, *The Genesis Machine* was written in 1978, before the wall came down. The story is dealing with the idea of MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction) as Hogan saw it then, and as it could conceivably happen with a sufficiently destructive weapon in the future.

Despite the geopolitical speculation being somewhat off, the scientific speculation is fascinating, the resolution of the plot problem is amazing. I did not see that coming. The implications for cosmology if the scientific speculation proved demonstrable reminds me of some of Rudy Rucker's amazing ideas. Though I didn't see the "big idea" coming, there were several points which were predictable, but not enough to keep me from enjoying *The Genesis Machine* thoroughly.

John Loyd says

The Genesis Machine (1978) 299 pages by James P. Hogan.

Bradley Clifford is a physicist who has come up with a theory of the fundamental nature of matter and energy involving extra dimensions which he terms k-space. He is trying to publish a paper, but he works at ACRE, which is run by the military, and they don't want any knowledge that could be used against them out there for the enemy to see. When his attempt is shot down he sends his paper to Zimmerman at a station on Luna, who is one of the few scientists not under military direction.

A few weeks later Aubrey Philipsz from Berkeley tracks him down and asks if he's the guy who came up with the k-space theory. It turns out that the upper management at ACRE have a problem with Clifford and are trying to keep him out of the loop.

This world of 2005 is on a downward spiral of conflicts and arms build up, with the balance of power shifting from West to East. This is why the army is trying to coerce scientists into making more weapons.

The first half of the book is mostly Clifford explaining k-space theory. Then there is a chapter thrown in about the wars and skirmishes going on around the world. A little after that there is a chapter thrown in about the BIAC, a computer that gets its input via a helmet that the user wears so the BIAC can read the thoughts of the user. That seems like as big a stretch as the k-space theory and it's dumped on the reader two thirds the way through the book.

That is all used to set up the climax. It all works out somehow -- based on the way the leaders in Hogan's year 2007 act and react. Maybe in 1978, that's the way we thought the leaders would act, i.e. being a little to free with the nukes and other warmongering activities.

If you enjoy discussion on relativity and beyond, the first half of the book is fantastic, and in the second half the story is, let's say, satisfying. I think the segues could be better. Still the story didn't bog down, even with a hundred pages of talk of k-space, it was enjoyable. I'd recommend Thrice upon a Time over this one.

Charliece says

This is a hard science fiction story about how a really smart scientist could change the world.

Gernot1610 says

Wär's ein Lesebuch gewesen, hätte ich es abgebrochen. Zuhören ist einfacher, da bin ich toleranter

Rick Bavera says

This is an "old-school", "hard" science type of science fiction book.

The story was good. Lots of science in it...maybe a bit too much for me....or different from what I normally enjoy. Much of it just had me a bit puzzled.

One thing that I really did like was that the characters were more "real" (developed?) than is often the case in "hard" science Sci-Fi (especially older tales)

Dima says

A couple of scientists discover a new theory about how the world works. They build a machine that is used to disarm the world. Deals with bureaucracy and the government meddling with everything.

Alex says

Super-science super-saves the super-day! The best parts of this book were the flagrant xenophobia and the incredibly light grasp of politics that Hogan seems to possess.

Facedeer says

The made-up science behind Project Jericho was neat and its technological implications were well explored, in that regard this was actually a really good "hard" science fiction novel.

However, the story fell apart badly at the end when Hogan started delving deeper into the human aspect of it all. It winds up with a very Randian "heroic engineer imposes his will on the idiots around him and turns the world into a utopia" resolution. The ending depends on the protagonist being the cleverest person in the world for it to work out, with no reason to believe that he actually *is* the cleverest person in the world.

Fun read, flawed ending.

Jack Marxer says

I like all the books of James P. Hogan that I've read. His science (or alternative science)-based sci-fi is exactly my favorite kind. I also enjoy his positing of alternative socio-political frameworks.
