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Portrayal of Physicists in Fictional Works

Daniel Dotson

Abstract: In his article "Portrayal of Physicists in Fictional Works" Daniel Dotson analyzes how physicists (including professors, teachers, physics students, and amateur physicists) are portrayed in novels, films, and television programs. Eighty characters are analyzed to see if they possessed any of ten personality traits: obsessive, having major mental health problems, withdrawn, brave, timid, socially inept, arrogant, too career-focused, out of touch, and stubborn. Dotson lists a summary of the characters with their traits followed by an overview of the traits and select examples of how characters possessed that trait. Male and female characters are compared to determine if one gender received a better portrayal (i.e., fewer negative personality traits) than another. In addition, characters possessing several personality traits are described in detail, as well as the few characters not possessing any of the traits.

What image comes to mind when thinking of a physicist? A mad scientist bent on global domination? An absent-minded professor? Eighty fictional physicists are examined in the article at hand, including researchers, professors, astrophysicists, space scientists, and geophysicists in twenty-eight novels, twenty-one films, and a television series. Characters' actions and stated facts about them determined if they possessed one or more personality traits: obsessive, having major mental problems, withdrawn, brave, timid, socially inept, too career-focused, out of touch, arrogant, and stubborn. Gender differences were also explored. The texts' subjects were not necessarily on science. Aliens, time travel, golf balls, exploring space, parallel worlds, and disasters are example topics. A character had to have enough of a presence in order to gather information on their personality. A brief appearance does not give a good sense of personality. Seven characters are portrayals of people who actually existed: Marie Curie, Pierre Curie, Albert Einstein, Lieserl Einstein, J. Robert Oppenheimer, and Erwin Schrodinger (two portrayals). Lieserl Einstein, a pre-marriage child to Einstein and his first wife, may not have survived childhood. Her being a scientist is itself purely fictional. One character is an alien trying to pass himself off as a human physicist. His actions as both a physicist and a human may give insight into the view of how physicists act. Eighty characters were examined to see which, if any, of a selection of personality traits they possessed. The personality traits are subjectively assigned to the characters based upon their actions and statements about and by them. The personality traits are not meant to be an official psychological assessment and are based solely upon their fitting into the concept of that trait.

Table 1: The Characters and Their Personality Traits

Character	Work Title	Gender	Job	Notes	Traits
Abdul al-Naguib	*Mars*	m	geophysicist	Even-tempered and a peacemaker between other characters.	brave
Adikor Huld	*Hominids, Humans, Hybrids*	m	physicist	Neanderthal Ponter Boddit's man-mate and co-researcher. In *Hominids*, he is accused of his murder until he bring him back to his world. In *Humans*, he is angered after Boddit expresses possible interest in the woman that accused him of murder and does not realize the level of Boddit's relationship with Mary Vaughan. In *Hybrids*, he insists Neanderthal cultural and sexual norms are followed when Boddit is with him.	brave, out of touch
Albert Einstein	*IQ*	m	physicist	Plays matchmaker with his niece and a mechanic. Coaches the mechanic to present a paper at a conference. He underestimates his niece's abilities to see the ruse and also prove her uncle's theory wrong.	out of touch
Alex Durant	*The Black Hole*	m	space scientist	Oblivious to the fact that Dr Reinhardt is insane until he reveals a human behind the mask of what was believed to be a robot. Killed by the evil robot Maximillian. Obsessed with Reinhardt's work.	too career-focused, out of touch

Alexei Dubov	*Meteor*	m	astrophysicist	Likes US-Americans, is not fond of the politics impeding saving the earth, and a womanizer. A bit of a jokester and takes many things in stride.	brave, stubborn
Alexei Strela	*Secret Lives of Second Wives*	m	physicist	Has a secret past in the USSR involving Chernobyl and, married himself, has an affair with a married immigration lawyer. Moves back to Russia, mostly against his will. Does not realize his citizenship efforts and continued romance with the lawyer are in vain.	brave, out of touch
Alice Coombs	*As She Climbed Across the Table*	f	physicist/professor	Obsessed with the black hole-like "being" Lack, who seems to have no pattern in what "he" takes in or rejects. Distressed by Lack not taking her in and has fallen in love with "him." Increasingly isolated and unhinged overtime.	obsessive, mental health problems, withdrawn, too career-focused, stubborn
Anson Clemons	*Warp Speed*	m	physicist	Develops a warp drive with the help of Jim and Rebecca Daniels, to whose romance he seems oblivious. While preparing to test the drive, the space shuttle explodes, leaving the warp drive to return home. The explosion was a plot via his former assistant selling secrets to China, who use the drive as a weapon, creating a secret war. Explores the galaxy with colleagues after assisting in the war.	brave, out of touch, stubborn
Anton Boll	*The Ash Garden*	m	physicist	Sent to Japan to examine the atomic bomb's results, he works to get a girl out of the country and becomes obsessed with her future. His desire to help her is not what she necessarily wanted.	obsessive, out of touch, arrogant
Arnold Dexter	*The Shaman Sings*	m	physicist/professor	Behind murders and stealing a grad student's work. Brings Waldo Thomson in on his plan. Once it begins to unravel, he becomes increasingly uncomfortable, even running out on the press conference for the work. Believes he should get credit for the student's work and frames a maintenance man for her murder.	mental health problems, timid, arrogant
Austin Shepard	*Supernova*	m	astrophysicist	Hiding out in a remote cabin after discovering a supernova is imminent. Killed by a plasma burst from sun.	timid
Brad Hume	*5ive Days to Midnight*	m	physics professor	Brother-in-law of J.T. Neumeyer, he becomes erratic when facing financial crisis. After Neumeyer shows him the briefcase from the future, he becomes interested in reverse engineering it to make money. His obsession with it, leads Neumeyer to remove him and his wife as guardians for his daughter.	obsessive, mental health problems, arrogant, stubborn
Buckaroo Bonzai	*Adventures of Buckaroo Bonzai Across the Eight Dimension*	m	physicist	Popular scientist/adventurer who passes through a solid mountain. By doing so, he ends up having to foil Dr. Lozardo's plans to rescue other creatures imprisoned there or face annihilation from the aliens who imprisoned them.	brave

Carl Axelrod	*5ive Days to Midnight*	m	physics student	Exhibits odd behavior from the beginning. Obsessed with J.T. Neumeyer and is at first believed to be behind the briefcase from the future. Later believes many problems will occur if Neumeyer lives and is determined for him to die as he was meant to. Escapes from the hospital Neumeyer tricks him to going to.	obsessive, mental health problems. Withdrawn, timid, socially inept
Charles Cargraves	*Destination Moon*	m	physicist	A fuel expert on a journey to the moon. Willing to stay behind when there is not enough fuel to leave, but all end up going home.	brave
Charles King	*Music in a Foreign Language*	m	physicist	He at one point helped write a subversive pamphlet with a friend in post-German occupation police state Britain. This pamphlet comes back to haunt both. Arrogant and obsessed with women.	obsessive, arrogant
Chris Richardson	*Supernova*	m	astrophysicist	Fighting to find Austin Shepard and return to his family.	brave
Clayton Forrester	*War of the Worlds*	m	astro/nuclear physicist	Helps to battle the Martian invasion, but bacteria are ultimate saviors.	brave
Conrad Zimsky	*The Core*	m	geophysicist	At times antagonizes Ed Brazzleton. When a bomb rolls onto him before launch, he solves the problem of the last bomb needing to be more powerful before being ejected with it. Argumentative and rubs people the wrong way.	brave, socially inept, arrogant
Dex Trumball	*Return to Mars*	m	geophysicist	Outwardly extroverted, intelligent, and self-assured. Actually yearning for his father's praise and admiration, instead of criticism and disappointment. At first shares his father's desire of making Mars a tourist attraction, but eventually assists colleague Jamie Waterman in saving Mars' cliff dwellings from tourism plans after previously challenging his leadership.	brave, timid, socially inept, arrogant, stubborn
Dick Solomon	*3rd Rock from the Sun*	m	physics professor, mission high commander	An alien posing as a physics professor while his comrades pose as his family to learn about humans. Their behavior appears mentally unstable in human society, but perhaps common behaviors in his species and due to misunderstanding human culture.	obsessive, mental health problems, socially inept, out of touch, arrogant, stubborn
Dmitri Sherbatov	*Shadow Wars*	m	physicist/researcher	Soviet scientist who discovers how to cheaply make gold via nuclear methods. He becomes a gold-making captive after being smuggled into Israel, a huge cut taken by a corrupt general. His ex-wife and son are involved in a KGB threat against him, making him braver. His desire to make gold for physics' sake gets him into this mess.	withdrawn, brave, timid, too career-focused, out of touch

Don Chambers	*Mobius Dick*	m	physicist	An arrogant bully whom sees nothing wrong with using others for gain, including drugging them to cooperate.	mental health problems, socially inept, arrogant
Donald Cargraves	*Rocketship Galileo*	m	physicist	Takes recent high school graduates to the moon, where they foil the plot of post-war nazis determined to bring back the Reich. At times, he wonders if he made the right decision in choosing the young men for the mission.	brave
Dr Kori	*Exile Trilogy*	m	physicist	Among a group of scientists to be exiled to a space station, he ends up on an island where he helps sabotage a plot to attack the world government. He helps convert the space station to a ship for travel to the stars.	brave
Dr Lozardo (aka Lord John Whorfin)	*Adventures of Buckaroo Bonzai Across the Eight Dimension*	m	physicist	While experimenting with traveling at speeds high enough to pass through solid objects, he becomes "possessed" by a criminal creature imprisoned in the eighth dimension. Years later, after hearing about Buckaroo Bonzai's work, he tries to rescue others from that dimension.	obsessive, mental health problems, brave, socially inept, out of touch, arrogant, stubborn
Dr Stranglelove	*Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*	m	physicist	Former nazi scientist and current U.S. presidential advisor, he at times acts as if he is addressing Hitler. He confirms the possibility of a Doomsday device that will destroy humanity.	mental health problems, out of touch
Ed Brazzleton	*The Core*	m	geophysicist	Accuses Conrad Zimsky of stealing his research. Created the ship that could travel to the earth's core. Sacrifices himself to set a manual override.	obsessive, brave, socially inept, stubborn
Elsa Mitwisser	*Heir to the Glimmering World*	f	physicist	Bedridden physicist whose daughter is likely not her husband's. She has incidents such as stealing and violent outbursts. She regains her composure when her unmarried pregnant daughter returns. Despite her mental health, she seems to know what is going on in the house. She obsessively hates the family's benefactor (and ultimate father to her unwed daughter's child).	obsessive, mental health problems
Emma Russell	*The Saint*	f	physicist	Develops a cold fusion formula. Simon Templar steals the formula for the Russian mafia and seduces her. She pursues him and they eventually end up on the same side and in love.	brave, too career-focused
Eric Bryce	*The Black Hole* (2006)	m	atomic researcher	Estranged from family and an implied drunk, he is pulled by the government	brave, too career-

				to help when an experiment goes wrong. He risks his life to eliminate the black hole as it destroys St Louis.	focused, stubborn
Erwin Schrodinger (1)	*Game with Sharpened Knives*	m	physicist	After the nazis take over Austria, he moves to Ireland with his wife, married mistress, and their illegitimate child. While there, he falls in love with an Irish woman, conceiving another child. Eventually, both mistresses leave and he is left alone with his wife.	brave, out of touch, arrogant, stubborn
Erwin Schrodinger (2)	*Mobius Dick*	m	physicist	At a sanatorium to have a tryst with a married lover who does not show, he gets involved with the strange people there.	
Ginny McKillip	*Supernova*	f	astrophysicist	Austin Shepard's assistant who helps spread the word about the coming supernova. Makes finding her boyfriend a priority after the city where he works is partially destroyed.	brave
Gloria Lamerino	*The Hydrogen Murder / The Helium Murder*	f	retired physicist	Gloria returns to her hometown after retiring. She gets involved in murder cases as a consultant for the physics involved. She puts off her ex as she becomes interested in a detective. In the second book, she underestimates and older woman's involvement in the case. She will not leave cases to the police.	obsessive, brave, socially inept, stubborn
Gordon Bernstein	*Timescape*	m	physics professor	From 1963, believes the noise in an experiment is a signal from the future and his actions change the bleak future of mankind. Work takes precedent over his dying mother. Proposes to his girlfriend, who is not right for him. Bravely continues to work with the signals despite nearly overwhelming apathy towards him in the department.	brave, too career-focused, out of touch, stubborn
Gregory Markham	*Timescape*	m	plasma physicist	From 1998, works with John Renfrew to send tachyon signals to the past with warnings about a bleak future. Obsessed with the altering the past. Helps fight off intruders at Renfrew's home. Dies in a plane crash, but is alive in a changed 1974.	obsessive, brave
Hans Reinhardt	*The Black Hole*	m	space scientist	Alone on a ship on the edge of a black hole for years, in reality his crew is still there. He turned them into partially electronic workers. Obsessed with the black hole.	obsessive, mental health problems, too career-focused, arrogant, stubborn

Hillsdale Landover	*Shadow Wars*	m	physicist / professor	On a spy mission to see if Israel can cheaply make gold. Fights for his life and what is right as he and Rachel Ravid run from corrupt US-American and Israeli officials. Does not notice that danger is everywhere.	brave, out of touch, stubborn
Horst Wittkowski	*Picoverse*	m	physicist	Arrogant ex to Katie McGuire, he is instrumental in the resulting time travels that lead to his death, near which he shows redeeming characteristics. Cares more about his research than his child.	obsessive, brave, too career-focused, out of touch, arrogant, stubborn
Isaac Lakin	*Timescape*	m	physics professor	From 1963, believes the noise detected in an experiment must be a problem and arrogantly derides Gordon Bernstein and his student. He causes problems for Bernstein's promotion and his student when Bernstein believes the noises to be messages.	arrogant, stubborn
J Robert Oppenheimer	*Fat Man and Little Boy*	m	physicist	Brought to the western U.S. to help create the atomic bomb. Called his mistress and snuck out to visit her despite warnings.	brave, out of touch, arrogant, stubborn
J.T. Neumeyer	*5ive Days to Midnight*	m	physics professor	Finds a briefcase on his wife's grave containing a police report and information about his death, which will occur in a few days. At first believing it to be a prank, more evidence mounts as he strives to stay alive while people near him are on the suspect list.	brave
Jack Preston	*Picoverse*	m	physicist	Seemingly an average physicist and a "stringer" at the DOE. He travels through alternate realities and finds out he is not human.	brave, out of touch
Jim Daniels	*Warp Speed*	m	physicist	Anson Clemons' student and later bonafide PhD, he helps develop a warp drive. Explores the galaxy with colleagues after battling terrorists and helping with the secret war.	brave
John Renfrew	*Timescape*	m	physicist	From 1998, works with Gregory Markham on sending tachyon signals to the past warning of a bleak environmental future. Ignores his family in favor of his work and does not notice his wife's downward spiral. Challenges intruders on his land.	brave, too career-focused, out of touch
John Ringer	*Mobius Dick*	m	physics professor	Visits Scotland to see former student Don Cambers' vacuum energy project, resulting in multiple realities. He trusts Chambers in the beginning, despite his behavior. Investigates what is going on and is obsessed with a disappeared past love.	obsessive, brave, out of touch, stubborn

Josh Keyes	*The Core*	m	geophysicist	Leads scientists to the center of the earth. Saves himself and the remaining colleague after the last of the nuclear fuel is used for the final bomb and again from the bottom of the sea. Claustrophobic and claims to not work well with groups.	brave, socially inept, stubborn
Josh Sterm	*Timeline*	m	physicist	Sends someone back in time to France without means of returning, preventing him from risking his friends' lives.	brave, timid
Julian Osborne	*On the Beach*	m	nuclear scientist	Travels to the nuclear-destroyed northern hemisphere to investigate a signal. Seems careless about things, but it really does not matter since all will eventually die from the spreading radiation.	brave
Kate McRae	*The Black Hole*	f	space scientist	Can communicate with the ship's robot, amongst others, with ESP. She wants to find out what is going on and trusts Hans Reinhardt less than Alex Durant, with good reason.	brave
Katie McGuire	*Picoverse*	f	physicist	Horst Wittkowski's ex. Very protective of her son. In alternate realities, does not understand how powerful and evil he has become. Obsessively watches her son via camera, although past incidents may justify this.	obsessive, brave, out of touch, stubborn
Kelsey Newton	*Quantum Web*	f	physicist/professor	She works with love interest Nolan Kilkenny after a Russian plot to steal a colleague's research results in death.	brave, stubborn
Lieserl Einstein	*Mrs. Einstein*	f	amateur physicist	Pre-marriage daughter of Einstein and his first wife, given away by her mother. Becomes obsessed with revenge and outdoing her father in physics upon learning his identity. Her husband and son die in the Holocaust due to her refusal to flee, believing her work for revenge and on nuclear weapons was more important and would protect them.	obsessive, mental health problems, brave, out of touch, arrogant
Lily Sinclair	*Chain Reaction*	f	physicist	Working on making hydrogen a viable energy source, she gets caught up in a conspiracy to make it unavailable due oil's influence. Her boss helps her and a machinist who are on the run, but is actually one of the people behind the happenings.	brave, out of touch
Louise Benoit	*Hominids, Humans, Hybrids*	f	physicist	Bravely rescues Ponter Boddit from a heavy water tank and shields him from reporters. Helps save Neanderthals from an unscrupulous man planning to use biological weapons to create a new world for homo sapiens.	brave

Malcolm Handey	*Supernova*	m	astrophysicist	Fed Austin Shepard's research to the government in exchange for increased high-end equipment. A bit devious and out for himself.	arrogant
Marie Curie	*Madame Curie*	f	physicist	Works continuously on radium, despite burns. Entirely focused on her work. States she has no time for friends, but interacts well with others. Continues working after husband's sudden death.	obsessive, withdrawn, brave, too career-focused, stubborn
Mark Perdue	*Particles and Luck*	m	physics professor	A genius who sees himself as disliked by colleagues, having OCD. and having little to do at his job. Roped into a neighbor's land and ex-wife problems. Considers an affair with the department secretary. Isolated at home and work.	mental health problems, withdrawn, socially inept
Michael Merriman	*Fat Man and Little Boy*	m	physicist	Saves another man after an explosion. Does not notice a nurse's obvious interest in him and feels inferior to others. Dies from radiation exposure.	brave, timid, socially inept, out of touch
Norman Standish	*Scratch*	m	physicist/professor	Underachieving but brilliant. Helped others on their way to great things. Obsessed with making the perfect golf ball. The ball company he creates with a con artist sells balls that are more the result of psychology than physics.	obsessive, too career-focused
Orro	*Learning the World*	m	physicist	Bat-like being on a world humans have encountered. Works with friend Darvin to predict what is supposedly a natural object, but ends up being the humans. Gets involved in secret government work.	brave
Paul Bradley	*Meteor*	m	astrophysicist	Bitter about his NASA past, but helps save Earth from an approaching meteor, despite political barriers impeding USSR help. Leads others to safety when a meteor splinter destroys their command center and parts of the city. Develops feelings for Tatiana Donskaya, but she returns to USSR.	brave, stubborn
Pierre Curie	*Madame Curie*	m	physicist	At first he wants to place Marie in a small corner of his lab out of his way, but begins to see her good qualities. Continues to work with radium, despite possible dangers of cancer.	obsessive, brave, too career-focused, arrogant

Ponter Boddit	*Hominids, Humans, Hybrids*	m	physicist	In *Hominids*, Neanderthal physicist whose work on quantum computing research with his man-mate Adikor Huld results in traveling to a homo sapiens-dominated Earth, where he falls for geneticist Mary Vaughan. In *Humans*, he returns as an envoy with the ambassador and furthers his relationship with Vaughan, including castrating her rapist after inappropriately sniffing another victim's evidence. In *Hybrids*, Ponter uses banned Neanderthal technology to have a child with Vaughan.	brave, socially inept, stubborn
Professor Barnhardt	*The Day the Earth Stood Still*	m	professor	An alien from another world seeks him due to his intelligence and fame. Not shocked to learn the visitor is an alien and helps gather world scientists to assist in his mission to learn of the consequences if Earth's violence spreads into space.	brave
Professor Soft	*As She Climbed Across the Table*	m	physicist/ professor	Created a black-hole like being Lack. He becomes obsessed with it, but not as much as colleague Alice Coombs.	obsessive, arrogant
Professor Weston	*Out of the Silent Planet*	m	physicist	Brought a man to another planet, apparently intended for sacrifice. Extremely arrogant and unstable. Brave, but foolishly so.	mental health problems, brave, socially inept, out of touch, arrogant, stubborn
Rachel Ravid	*Shadow Wars*	f	physicist/rese archer	Israeli physicist working at the same facility as Dmitri Sherbatov. Informs her former Mossad-agent father of the happenings, resulting in a corrupt CIA official's involvement. Fights for her life and what is right as she and Hillsdale Landover are on the run. Oblivious to spies and danger.	brave, out of touch, stubborn
Rebecca Townes Daniels	*Warp Speed*	f	physicist	Anson Clemons's student and later bona fide PhD. Helps him develop a warp drive. Seriously hurt in an lab explosion and later infected by a warp technology-enhanced flu virus. After battling terrorists and helping with the secret war, explores the galaxy with colleagues.	brave
Reed Richards	*Fantastic 4*	m	physicist	Although an excellent scientist, seems timid with his former wife.	brave, timid
Sean Gabrielson	*Project Pendulum*	m	physicist	Explores time in a pendulum pattern with his separately traveling twin. Encounters danger, observes the world's future, and worries about his brother.	brave

Serge Leveque	*The Core*	m	physicist	Sacrifices himself to save needed materials during a core breach. Weapons specialist.	brave
Shannon Muir	*The Black Hole (2006)*	f	atomic researcher	Works with love interest and former colleague Eric Bryce as a black hole destroys St. Louis. Stays behind in to help him, despite the military's nuclear weapons solution.	brave, stubborn
Steve Mills	*My Stepmother is an Alien*	m	physicist	Accidently sends a signal to another planet. After a quick marriage, he discovers she is an alien. He repeats his experiment to save the planet. Obsessive and does not notice his horrible luck with women has changed.	obsessive, brave, socially inept, too career-focused, out of touch
Stuart Conway	*Slipstream*	m	theoretical physicist	Time travels in short bursts via a cell phone-like device. The travels involve stealing money, bank robbers, an FBI agent, and nearly getting killed twice before finally traveling hours back to the bank to ask the teller out successfully for a change.	obsessive, brave, socially inept
Tatiana Donskaya	*Meteor*	f	astrophysicist /translator	Astrophysicist and translator for Alexei Dubov, she helps to prevent a meteor strike, falls for Paul Bradley, and escapes the rubble of a destroyed command center. Returns to Russia.	brave
Victor Von Doom	*Fantastic 4*	m	physicist	Highly driven to succeed and make money. A space accident increases his craving for power and his love interest, leading him to murder.	obsessive, mental health problems, socially inept, too career-focused, out of touch, arrogant, stubborn
Vincent Strudwick	*3rd Rock from the Sun*	m	physics professor	Dick Solomon's rival, he seems to enjoy pushing Dick's button, including pointing out his successful book. Dislikes the relationship between his daughter and Dick's "son."	arrogant, stubborn
Waldo Thomson	*The Shaman Sings*	m	physicist/professor	Helps Arnold Dexter steal a grad student's work, a plan ending in murder. Seemingly the culprit, in reality Dexter's lackey.	mental health problems, arrogant

23 out of 80, or 28.8%, of the characters were obsessive. Some obsessive behavior revolves around characters' work. Marie and Pierre Curie become obsessed with their work, despite signs of illness. Gloria Lamerino is hired as a police consultant on murder cases and gets too involved. Some characters are obsessed with people. Dick Solomon is romantically obsessed with anthropology professor Mary Albright and is jealously obsessed with fellow physics professor Vincent Strudwick, who wrote a popular physics book. Revenge is another obsession. Lieserl Einstein is bitterly obsessed with vengeance on the father who abandoned her by

outdoing him in physics. Her obsession results in losing her husband and son in the Holocaust due to her refusal to flee.

15 out of 80, or 18.8%, of the characters had major mental health problems. While some characters are stated as possessing major mental problems, others are labeled due to their behavior. One note is that sanity is usually judged relative to others in the same society (what is insane to us might not be insane in another society). Dick Solomon's behavior seems normal when compared to others from his world. Members of his family/crew and visitors, such as The Big Giant Head, exhibit similar behavior. He behaves outside the norm for humanity. Such actions as his obsession with Mary Albright, outrageous requests for office assistant Nina, his treatment of students, and misunderstandings of human society often leave most people bewildered or angry at his behavior. Alice Coombs's obsession with the black hole-like being Lack leads her to become mentally unbalanced as she becomes distraught over Lack not letting her pass in. Elsa Mitwisser is bedridden and prone to outburst of violence and only seems lucid part of the time. However, she seems to know more about what is going on with the family than anyone and eventually regains control due to a family crisis. Some characters see no problem with harming others to get what they want, including murder. Arnold Dexter, Don Chambers, Dr. Lozardo, Hans Reinhardt, Professor Weston, and Victor Von Doom all see others as less important than their goal. Hans Reinhardt transforms his former crew into cyborg-like beings, horrifying the crew encountering him near a black hole. 6 out of 80, or 7.5%, of the characters were withdrawn. Some characters are withdrawn due to their focus on their work. Alice Coombs and Marie Curie become isolated due to intense focus on their work. Marie Curie even states that she has no time for friends. Carl Axelrod, Dmitri Sherbatov, and Mark Perdue might be described as loners, having little interaction with others.

58 out of 80, or 72.5%, of the characters were brave. Bravery is the most common trait recorded for the characters. It is important to note that many characters are thrust into situations where being brave means survival. Many works involve situations where characters had to travel to dangerous or unfamiliar areas, help solve murders, or brave dangerous situations. Traveling to the unknown was a common theme. Ponter Boddit, Adikor Huld, and Louise Benoit travel between Neanderthal and Homo sapiens worlds. Abdul al-Naguib and Dex Trumball explore Mars. Saving Earth is another common theme. Alexi Dubov, Chris Richardson, Clayton Forrester, Conrad Zimsky, John Renfrew, Josh Keyes, Josh Sterm, Serge Leveque, and Tatiana Donskaya all battle for Earth's survival. 8 out of 80, or 10.0%, of the characters were timid. The characters in this category tend to be shy, not very interactive, or non-confrontational. While it may seem odd that characters can be both brave and timid, Dex Trumball is both. He seems the epitome of not being timid, except when it comes to dealing with his overbearing father, to whom he eventually stands up. While Reed Richards is generally brave, he seems more timid around his ex. 16 out of 80, or 20.0%, of the characters were socially inept. The characters in this category tend not to interact well with others. Socially inept does not always cross with timid or withdrawn. Several characters are socially inept due to being in unfamiliar surroundings. Dick Solomon, Dr. Lozardo, and Ponter Boddit are not from the world in which they find themselves. Dick Solomon and Dr. Lozardo are aliens in human form. Much of their social ineptitude is due to not understanding humans. Ponter Boddit, a Neanderthal inappropriately sniffs rape evidence and castrates the rapist (the punishment on his own world). Some characters are socially inept mainly around the opposite sex, such as Michael Merriman, Steve Mills, and Stuart Conway. Others see no problem with using people, including Don Chambers and Victor Von Doom.

14 out of 120, or 17.5%, of the characters were too career-focused. These characters are so focused on their career; they lose sight of family, friends, or even others' or their own lives.

Horst Wittkowski puts his career above his son. Marie and Pierre Curie get sick due to their radiation research. Dmitri Sherbatov is obsessed with creating gold, leading him into Soviet and Israeli political intrigue and putting his son at risk. 26 out of 80, or 32.5%, of the characters were out of touch. Some characters are in their own world, unaware of events and people around them or do inappropriate things. Some characters seem oblivious to their situation. J Robert Oppenheimer, working at a top-secret research facility, sneaks to make calls and visits to his mistress, clearly out-of-touch given his location. Others are out of touch in regards to other people. Alex Durant does not see Hans Reinhardt is unhinged until he unmasks what he believed to be a robot to see a human face. Neanderthal Adikor Huld does not at first notice that the Homo sapiens woman interested in his man-mate does not want to conform to his world's customs regarding when to spend time with the opposite sex.

22 out of 80, or 27.5%, of the characters were arrogant. Some characters at times act as if they are better than others. To say that Dick Solomon is arrogant is an understatement. His own needs are paramount, he belittles students for not grasping his lessons, treats office assistant Nina as chattel, and lords over his family/crew his position as high commander. Isaac Lakin believes the noise within an experiment is simply an error and will not accept it can be anything else. He creates problems for the team lead professor's promotion and a graduate student's future. Erwin Schrodinger (1) escapes Austria for Ireland, taking along his mistress, his wife, and takes up another mistress while there. 29 out of 80, or 36.3%, of the characters were stubborn. Some characters are determined to have things their way and do not want to yield to others' wishes or desires, while some stand in opposition to tradition. Marie Curie fights traditional gender roles. Others stick stubbornly to investigate wrongdoings, including Gloria Lamerino, Rachel Ravid, and Hillsdale Landover. Appearance and age could not be easily explored. Many works did not give a character's age, while some characters aged throughout the work. Lieserl Einstein goes from young child to an older woman. Appearance is similarly hard to grasp. Many works do not give adequate character appearance descriptions. While a film gives you an idea of age and appearance, one could judge the character by the appearance of the actor, such as Marie and Pierre Curie by the actors Greer Garson and Walter Pidgeon, respectively.

Women made up 16 (20%) of the characters examined, while males made up 64 (80%). How do woman physicists examined compare to their male counterparts? In general, they tend to possess fewer negative traits. Here is a gender comparison of personality traits:

Table 2: Comparison of Male and Female Physicists

Trait	Overall		Female		Male	
Obsessive	23	28.8%	6	37.5%	17	26.6%
Mental Health Problems	15	18.8%	3	18.8%	12	18.8%
Withdrawn	6	7.5%	3	18.8%	3	4.7%
Brave	58	72.5%	14	87.5%	44	68.8%
Timid	8	10.0%	0	0.0%	8	12.5%
Socially Inept	16	20.0%	1	6.3%	15	23.4%
Too career-focused	14	17.5%	3	18.8%	11	17.2%
Out of touch	26	32.5%	4	25.0%	22	34.4%
Arrogant	22	27.5%	1	6.3%	21	32.8%
Stubborn	29	36.3%	7	43.8%	22	34.4%

Examining personality traits with a difference greater than 10% between females and males, male characters had a much larger percentage of socially inept, timid, and arrogant characters while a much higher percentage of female characters were withdrawn, obsessive, and brave. Interestingly, male and female characters had the same percentage with mental health problems. Dr. Lozardo's high-speed experiments point to his bravery, which result in passing through another dimension and being possessed by Lord John Whorfin. After a later observation of Buckaroo Bonzai doing similar experiments, he becomes re-obsessed with power. His personality traits: obsessive, mental health problems, brave, socially inept, out of touch, arrogant, and stubborn. Professor Weston kidnapped a young boy, intending him as a sacrifice to beings on another planet. Instead, he ends up taking his cohort's acquaintance. While brave, he is foolishly so. His Personality traits: mental health problems, brave, socially inept, out of touch, arrogant, and stubborn. Victor Von Doom, while arrogant, seems rather normal at first. His behavior becomes erratic after a space accident results in the crew gaining various powers. His personality traits: obsessive, mental health problems, brave, socially inept, too career focused, out of touch, arrogant, and stubborn. Erwin Schrodinger (2) was the only character exhibiting none of the personality traits. He goes to a sanatorium to have a tryst with his lover and gets involved with the strange people staying there. Others have found a mixture of roles for scientists. One writer found that scientists seem to fall either into the Frankenstein or the savior role (Hirsch 1958, 510). Many of the scientists examined in the works above appeared to have a savior role or were the bad guy in the work. Another found the atomic scientist to be portrayed as the most important role in society or a messiah figure (see Hendershot 32-4). In another article it is stated that scientists in science fiction or whodunits were not serious portrayals of scientists, but merely moved along the plot (see Glass 288). In most of the works examined, this was true as many of the characters spent little time doing scientific work. Another author found an isolated scientist to be the norm (see Garnett and Ellis 71), which was true for many of the scientists examined, using the withdrawn characteristic as an example of this trait. Horror films from 1931 to 1960 portrayed mostly scientists as essentially evil and about a quarter of scientists were at fault for disasters (see Sandison and Dingley 35). While most of the scientists examined were not evil, Victor Von Doom and Hans Reinhardt were examples of this. It is also found that women scientists do not conform to stereotypes unless they compromise their femininity for science and have a feminist right to assertiveness, perhaps even possessiveness, and have a romantic demand to extend boundaries by including emotional or spiritual elements within the practice of science. Some women scientists are portrayed as subservient to men (Sandison and Dingley 46-7). This seems to be true for the works examined to a degree, especially in portrayals of women scientists before the 1980s. Women scientists examined from earlier periods, such as Marie Curie, were seen as inferior to men in the work and others see them as doing what is deemed as men's work. The women scientists from later time periods, which included most of the women examined, tended to be generally on a more equal footing with their male counterparts, with some examples of tension with male colleagues.

Several works addressed the characters examined above. One work saw Marie Curie, in the movie Madame Curie, portrayed as a wife and mother, then a beautiful woman, then a dedicated scientist (see Sandison and Dingley 46). This point I would disagree with since the movie clearly showed Curie's main goal to be studying and pursuing science. D.H. Dowling saw Dr. Strangelove as having Freudian obsessions, evolutionary aspirations, but also an "understanding of the intricate power balance between politician, soldier, and scientist" (145). Indeed, Dr. Strangelove seemed to understand, despite his many flaws, the implications of the occurrences in the movie better than others. The scientists in Timescape were seen as doing

important things (see Garnett and Ellis 67). Indeed, the scientists of 1998 were working on sending a message to the past to warn them that Earth's bleak environmental future. Gordon Bernstein from 1963 believes deciphering the message being sent is more important than almost anything, neglecting his dying mother in pursuing his goal, which ends up saving humanity's future. The character of Professor Barnhardt is seen by Cyndy Hendershot as being disillusioned about the failed scientists' movement and happy about the alien Klaatu's intervention on Earth as giving them new political power (35). Indeed, the film's scientists are portrayed as less fearful of Klaatu's ship and the US-American government is seen as paranoid and mistrustful of the unknown.

The physicists in the texts examined were portrayed generally in a positive light. None of the negative traits were possessed by more than half of the characters. Although women scientists were few in number in the works examined, they generally fared better than men, possessing fewer negative personality traits. While bravery was by far the most common personality trait in both genders, many of the works' plot lines had situations which required the scientists to be brave in order to survive. Other works found physicists portrayed in a variety of ways, including as messiah figures, the most important figure in society, evil, and the cause of disasters. While many of the scientists examined fit into these categories, many fit more into the mold of being like other characters with their own strengths and weaknesses.

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