



The Law & the Heart:

Kenneth Schneyer, Liz Argall (Contributor), Gareth D. Jones (Contributor)

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Escape your creditors with suspended animation! Leave your money to your clone! Live in your favorite actress's head for just pennies a day! Nebula- and Sturgeon-nominated author Kenneth Schneyer explores the seams where humanity and technology, society and individuality intersect, in thirteen mind-bending, thought-provoking tales of near and far futures that will amuse, amaze, and unsettle. The law will change, and the heart will change, and the heart will change the law. These stories confront the question of just what makes and keeps us human. The collection includes four new, previously unpublished stories: "Grapple with Thee", "Half a Degree", "Exceptionalism", and "The Orpheus Fountain".

"The stories here are formally ingenious, even startling, and at the same time full of heart; the combination is brilliant and delightful. More please!" -- Kim Stanley Robinson, author of 2312 and Shaman: A Novel of the Ice Age.

The Law & the Heart: Details

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Author : Kenneth Schneyer , Liz Argall (Contributor) , Gareth D. Jones (Contributor)

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From Reader Review The Law & the Heart: for online ebook

Sherry says

I received a free copy from storycartel in exchange for a review.

This is a great collection of stories. The stories were thought-provoking and believable. They made me think of legal challenges in the future world and brought up situations I've never thought about.

There were three sections of the book, and I love the categories. The stories were a variety of lengths. Some stories were funny. Some strange.

I did have some trouble with the amount of legal terminology in the stories and I had to re-read certain sections; but the stories were so well-written and interesting that I had to read on.

Tina says

The differences and similarities between humanity and technology, and the way people and society interact with thought-provoking events represent the bases for Kenneth Schneyer's collection of short stories, The Law & the Heart. The first part of the collection treats matters of the law, where the author plays with daring ideas such as cryogenics or the existence of truth and lies in stories like "Author Plus Seventy" or "The Whole Truth Witness." Personally, I was charmed by The Heart section of the book. Nonetheless, the whole collection offers a great reading experience, since it targets a wide variety of subjects and experiments with a cornucopia of emotions.

When presented with a science fiction book, readers often tend to judge it based on other books that they already read or movies they saw, since we are always looking to discover the next big think in matters of innovation and plot development. But that is not the case with The Law & the Heart because readers will be enchanted by the author's writing style from the very beginning, and impressed by the emotions involved in the writing and in the actual stories. Kenneth Schneyer did a wonderful job writing a unique science fiction collection and, while stories like The Orpheus Fountain can be too intense for some readers, keep an open mind and try to see them all as stories of the heart. You will only benefit from reading The Law & the Heart collection.

All in all, Kenneth Schneyer's short stories offer a unique view into the future, create a new world where technology and the power of human emotion can go hand in hand, and where matters of the heart intersect with matters of the law and lead to a whole new vision of the science fiction genre - as it says in the subtitle: Speculative Stories to Bend the Mind and Soul. (Reviewed for Readers' Favorite)

Autumn says

No rating as I just could not get into the book. I tried and even went back to re-read parts but 20% in it was

just not for me.

Richard LeComte says

These stories mix the author's expertise in the law with a number of SF riffs, including time travel, intergalactic politics and future-shock cryogenics and longevity. The results are consistently entertaining and thought-provoking. The writing style mimics the author's own speaking style (at least as how I remember it from 35 years ago) so acutely that it's impossible to read these stories without hearing his voice in my head. I especially liked the story on patent trolls, gene manipulation and biologically induced truth-telling (a heady mix, all in one story!) as well as the story that explores the inadequacy and sadness of representing a world in a federation where travel, and decisions, take years. I hope he publishes more.

Edward Aubry says

Wonderful collection of thought-provoking stories! There is a running motif of loss throughout, explored in ways that science fiction so eloquently lends itself. The central question, asked from many different angles, is how would (will?) laws evolve to keep up with various sci-fi staple technologies (cryo-sleep, time travel, interstellar travel, extended life expectancies, and so on), and, more importantly, what effect will those technologies and laws have on whom and how we love? Each story is a self-contained thought experiment on that broad topic, with endnotes to describe when and why each particular question was raised for the author. It is a fascinating, compelling entertaining read, and my only disappointment was that it didn't include more stories. I very much look forward to the next collection.

Julie Dawson says

I am now officially a fan of Kenneth Schneyer. His short story collection, *The Law and the Heart*, features thirteen short speculative stories that take a look at the nature of science and technology when applied to matters of law and love. Schneyer's plots are often absurd on the surface, but upon closer inspection actually carve down to the root of the subject matter with a peculiar precision.

My favorite story in the collection is "Life of Author Plus Seventy." A struggling writer agrees to an employment contract that allows his employer to place him in suspended animation should he come close to death in order to circumvent the normal copyright laws regarding work-for-hire contracts. Our hero, in deep debt due to some excessive library fines, uses a loophole in the law to get himself placed in suspended animation as a means of avoiding his creditors. It is a silly way to tackle several serious topics at once, and a great example of the author's style.

My review is based on a comp copy of the print book. The production value of the print book is poor and does interfere with the readability of the book. The margins are so narrow that the text disappears into the binding and in some cases words are cut off. This is unfortunate, as it distracts from the enjoyment. I don't know if there are similar issues with the Kindle version.

Angelica Dimeo says

The publisher contacted me and sent it via ebook
I really liked all the stories that had a scfi
futuristic feel. The stories hit a cord of truth
with big business taking over the market
and being in politics.
thank you for the opportunity to read interesting stories.

Kathryn says

The Law & the Heart is a collection of short science fiction and speculative fiction stories with a philosophical bent. This is my favorite kind of SF: thoughtful, imaginative, character-driven, and more focused on humanity (or, to use a less species-specific term, what it means to be a conscious being capable of free will and moral choice) than on technology. The stories are grouped into three sections, "The Law," "The Heart," and "The Law & The Heart."

I have a special fondness for "Conflagration," the story that opens the collection: I published it in the Newport Review when I was editor there. It's speculative fiction at its best as a time traveler approaches Roger Taney, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, as he is about to issue his opinion in the Dred Scott case. Taney, who might be vilified in lesser hands, comes across as a complex, weary, and suffering man whose decision, while flawed, may have played a necessary part in ending slavery.

While "Conflagration" is a serious story, other stories in this section play with legal questions drawn out to humorous extremes. "I Have Read the Terms of Use" imagines a limited warranty statement for the human body, while "Life of the Author Plus Seventy" is a satirical meditation on copyright law, suspended animation, and library fines. (Moral of the story: always return your library books on time, kids!)

The middle section, "The Heart," includes some of my favorite stories. "Liza's Home," "The Orpheus Fountain," and "Hear the Enemy, My Daughter" are beautiful, thoughtful, and sometimes heartbreakingly meditative on the nature of love and memory and the meaning of family, while "Tenure Track," the story that closes the collection, manages to be both a philosophical inquiry into the societal implications of extended human life and a poignant personal story of loss, told entirely through the impersonal medium of legal and medical records, employee evaluations, and other documents.

A well-chosen collection of 13 character and idea-driven SF stories that sometimes venture into outer space, but never lose sight of the all-important inner space.

Note: The publisher provided me with a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Laurie Gienapp says

This collection of fourteen short stories is divided into three sections. The Law (8), the Heart (4), and The Law & the Heart (2). I enjoyed these stories... but the first section - over half the total stories - felt like an inside joke to me. I am an attorney, but as I read the first eight stories, I found that I kept wondering if non-

attorneys would appreciate them.

C Dove says

We'll written set of short stories. Author unfortunately is treading where many authors have already gone. Still each is well written and contains the authors own twist on the ending. Continue to produce well structured crisp work!

Beth Cato says

received a gratis copy of the book from the publisher; this does not impact my review.

I've been a fan of Ken Schneyer's work for several years. Indeed, I had previously read about half of the stories in this compilation. They were even better the second reading--and even more, I can see how his skill has deepened over time. It's not a surprise that one of his recent stories "Selected Program Notes from the Retrospective Exhibition of Theresa Rosenberg Latimer" (not in this collection) is up for the Sturgeon Award and was shortlisted for the Nebula.

Schneyer's background is in the legal field. This expertise incorporates very well with science fiction, and the first portion of the book focuses on THE LAW. It's very easy to write about whimsical technological improvements, but Schneyer adds intense realism by showing how something may be viewed--or even abused--within the law. "Life of the Author Plus Seventy" plays with the idea of cryogenics and debt, whereas "The Whole Truth Witness" shows how cases can be manipulated even when a witness cannot lie.

I think my two favorites, though, were in the section on THE HEART. "Liza's Home" brings an entirely fresh perspective to the complications of time travel and parallel worlds. Then there's the story that devastated me--"The Orpheus Fountain." I hadn't read this one before. It's pure science fiction, but the situation it created is, for me personally, the stuff of horror.

I typically don't like experimental stories. Often, they strike me as gimmicky and somewhat arrogant. Schneyer's writing is the exception for me. His story "Tenure Track" reminded me a great deal of "Selected Program Notes" (again, not in this book, but you can find it in Clockwork Phoenix 4 or the full story online for free) in how it uses letters to indirectly tell a deep story. In the case of "Tenure Track," it follows the relationship of a college professor and his wife as they endure treatments to extend their lives--but it's all done through letters, forms, and most heart-breakingly of all, a list of charitable donations for tax write-off.

Schneyer created a strong collection. The title may be *The Law & The Heart*, but in truth, these stories are all about heart.

David Richardson says

I love short stories and science fiction so this book really worked for me. The stories deal with a variety of subjects and they were all quite good although I had a little trouble understanding the last one. The book is divided into 3 parts and the stories in each part follow the theme perfectly. A good read! I received this book

for free from the publisher.

Bogi Takács says

This was good. Longer review definitely planned! Not sure when, maybe next week. I want another Schneyer collection! (Especially some of my favorite short stories of his were not even in this one.)

Source of the book: Gift from Miou (Thank you so much!!)
