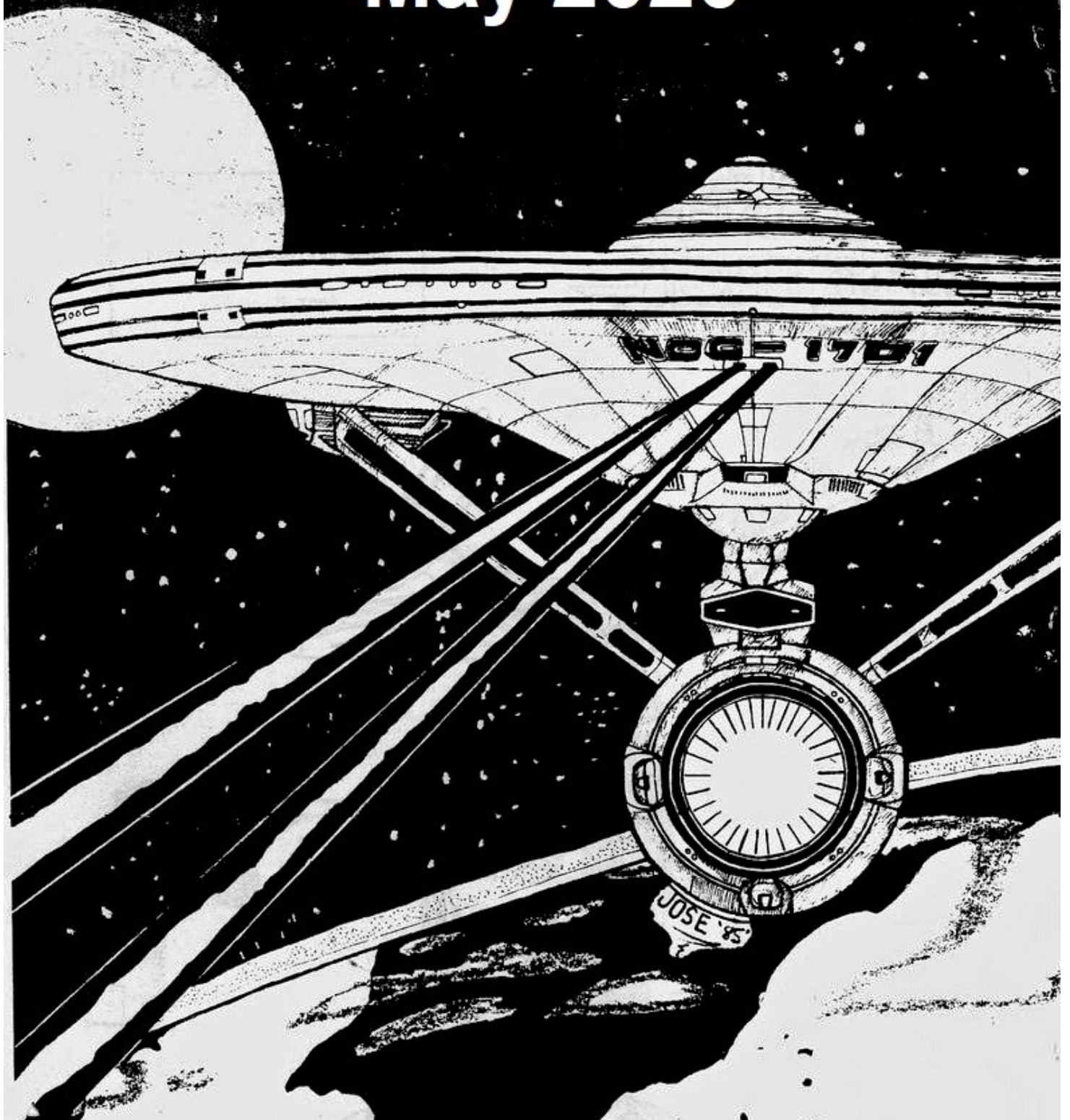


N'APA 246

May 2020



The Official Organ

#246

Next deadline: July 15, 2020

The official collator is George Phillies - phillies@4liberty.net.

The official preparer is Jefferson P. Swycaffer - abontides@gmail.com

Procedure: Please Read:

George Phillies will collate and mail, but submissions should be sent to the preparer, Jefferson Swycaffer. No harm is done if submissions get sent to George, but the process should be to send them to Jefferson.

N'APA is the Amateur Press Alliance for members of the National Fantasy Fan Federation (N3F). As it is distributed in PDF format, there are no dues or postage fees. It is open to all members of the N3F. If there are members interested in joining who have no computer access, special arrangements may be possible. People who only want to read are welcome to ask to be added to the email list. Check with the official collator, who is George Phillies, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester MA 01609; phillies@4liberty.net; 508 754 1859; and on facebook. To join this APA, contact George.

We occasionally send a copy of N'APA to the accessible (email address needed) N3F membership, in the hope that some of you will join N'APA. Please join now!

Currently the frequency is every other month, with the deadline being on the fifteenth day of odd-numbered months. The mailing will normally be collated in due time, as the collator is retired and the prepaper has a full-time job. Publication is always totally regular, though some readers question my interpretations of "is", "always", "totally", and "regular". N'APA has been in existence since 1959, but has transitioned from being a paper APA to an electronic one.

Welcome to Samuel Lubell, joining our austere deliberations! Let there be dancing and singing!

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Super thanks to Jose Sanchez, who sent many works of art for use as covers.

Synergy 22



May 2020

N'APA Mailing #246

A National Fantasy Fan Federation fanzine

Synergy's editor is John Thiel, 30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette, Indiana 47904, email kinethiel@mymetronet.net . It is a Ninth Fandom zine dedicated to the principle of getting together and finding interpersonal means of communication. The zine is dedicated to all the fannish progressives of the past.

EDITORIAL



Are We Advancing?

By "we" I mean all of mankind in this, the 21st Century. I refer particularly to those who have and make use of the net, as they are the most aware of the advancements in the world of today. Sure, we're advancing, prancing and dancing, but at the same time, we're dragging our old stick-in-the-mud selves that we could never completely shed, something that continues to accrue to us from previous generations. We're not advancing if we're not; we have to be aware of advancements and favor them and participate in them to be a truly modern part of mankind. That, again, describes owners and users of the net. As with Bill Gates' "information highway", the net practically represents continued progress and advancement. And here we are on the net, bless it, the N3F being reborn on the net due to the printing and postal costs of correspondence and most of our publications being beyond our means, so we've virtually left the solid earth behind. Nearly half a buck for a one-page letter? Nearly a dollar and a half to send

out a zine consisting of fourteen sheets of paper? Electronics, surprisingly, is one of the cheapest things cost-wise that is marketed, almost as if the technologically advanced are benevolently making it easy for us to have electronic things we want. Did Benjamin Franklin know how much of the world would be electronic when he harnessed electricity?

Well, technological advancement is not human advancement, though some scientists suggest it could be human advancement as well with implants and augmentations. But being part robot could be a form of deterioration as well, causing a degeneration of the human condition. All I know is what I read in the news.

We're accelerating, if not advancing. The world's going by fast, on news feeds. We lose touch with who's telling us things, due to newspaper and net anonymity. These things were predicted in science fiction earlier, these faults that could be had with advancing technology. Now perhaps we're living out some of these faults.

Presently we're having a plague, a thing which should have vanished with primordial times if man had ever developed the means of taking care of himself, but we have developed things like remote control, electronic eavesdropping and long-range guided missiles. If the germs don't get you the radiation might. But where have things of the spirit gotten? Poetry has progressed chiefly into nihilism, art into experimentation with novelty, music into rebellion.

A long while back, people in the N3F were talking about the lack of moral progress that was to be observed as civilization progressed, and some science fiction writers were talking about man's technology leaving man behind as it was developed. Among those discussing this were Bob Farnham and Marian Zimmer Bradley and Fran Light. The discussion was abrogated as feuding started taking over the NFFF, and did not show much later progress. There were, at least, people discussing this then, and it seems to me they were on the right track. Now, if there is to be discussion, this seems to be what there might be to discuss. One Chinese fellow said to me that that discussion was like the tiny point that opens up in the yang when the balance is shifting over to the yin. I know there was the consciousness expansion movement in which Richard Eney was involved that was based on what was being bemoaned in the N3F, how the sense of wonder had been lost, how people had ceased to look up into the skies (Fran Light was saying this), how nature was losing its attractiveness to people (G.M. Carr) who were apparently looking at locomotives and measuring horsepower in cars, and the consciousness expansion movement was aimed at recovering what was in the human

spirit, and there were also love cults and the cosmic all people, all of whom were mocked into insapience by the scientifically and materialistically-oriented; I suppose these impulses still exist somewhere. Certainly there is a lot of existential rock and roll asking things like "Where is love and who is love? I gotta know", which although it is not good music is indicative of this tendency to search through all the warfare debris for a consciousness that is not devoted to warfare and strife. A person might get superstitious thinking about what might be motivating all these conflicting tendencies. I'd say the ones who have had good perception ground out of them by social pressures devoted to advancement and the like are likely to be seen again, whether by way of the Age of Aquarius or the searchers for Xanadu, and there will be reason to want to find solutions for them. I was rather put off by a movie about Xanadu which showed people thrashing around in a trashy existence and showing no signs of intelligence—the movie-makers were trying to scum out such people as these by the nefarious representation of the movie. When once seen, such things occur again; it may be that these people are such that they will survive the plague and other things of that destructive sort and may fulfill the prophecy, "blessed are the meek".

Is it fantasy that something good may end up emerging from the human turbulence we find around us these days? Here's that superstition I mention, but why ignore everything that leads us to feel superstitious? It is my recommendation that science fiction readers pay more attention to fantasy and look for the good that may be in it, as a relief from things in which there clearly isn't any good. Why isn't there a benevolent magic that could help us toward better days? Is it because there really isn't such a thing as magic? That's the belief commonly expressed by science. Has science become evil in its striving for dominance of reality? Is evil worth our time and attention?

At least in writing this editorial I am avoiding the destructive and overcritical tendencies that exchanges of thought are taking. What do I mean by exchanges of thought? Well, the name of this zine is synergy, a merging of consciousness; it may be I would like this better than the cold isolation of the nihilist who is satisfied that he is not being taken in by delusion or illusion, but he isn't being taken in by anyone he knows either. Illusion is part of existence, delusion may be a part of progress. "Life is but a dream," they used to sing in Old London.

Here I've had my say for this month, and it's to have a say that I like being in an apa. I have not been ignoring the other zines in this apa in my writing of this editorial.

Mailing Comments

Jefferson Swycaffer: That was the sales pitch around here, delivered to me by my brother, who had gone into computing and supported himself by that means thereafter up until the present—the pitch was that we couldn't sustain ourselves here any other way but by computerizing things, businesses and individuals as well. They sold this from Purdue University to a rather rustic village that was near it called Lafayette, which pretended to be a town. Since computing came in big it's started to call itself a city. I don't think they've become very modern, even with the use of the computer and the possibility that it will cause them to change any.

Redmond isn't in NAPA to answer you, but you could give the correspondence bureau some business by taking up Jeffrey's offer to correspond, and Judy Carroll would be happy to see some further action there. Jeff's been waiting for someone to take up his offer for three months now.

Will sort of answers people by what he prints, rather than direct mailing comments. Which is not to say that he might not change his policy as time intersects with chance.

Lorien: Your #21 issue could be good material for future historians to study in terms of fandom—fandom in the time of the great plague. "They were there" would be the effect it would have, I'd think.

I do think something like this could only be the apocalypse, and the net is streaming it for us, making it all very visible.

Will: Take note that George suggested you send some of those reviews to Tightbeam and the N3F Review of Books. Sounds like a good expansion to review in those. You'd look real stately in the review zine.

I've got some material from both Will and Jeffrey that causes me to think that here indeed is the interaction I talk about; Will and Jeffrey and I are interacting just fine. Remember that the name of my zine is Synergy, that's about interacting. It's really ahead to be interacting in this manner with Will, and good business to interact more professionally with Jeffrey. So as you read on you can think, "Here's a man getting a zine together!" Exclamation mark optional.

Perfidia's Rainbow by Gerald Heyder



From gray to blue to purple to black is the kaleidoscope of emotions from mind to heart
Down to the depths of the soul. We all know the myriad of colors
When happiness and elation are the relation
Ship of our zenith called bliss and ecstasy
Yesiree bob, we fly like a kite with all our might, kissing the day and hugging the night
Of Shangri-La!

Sigmund Freud is null and void when we ride the cloud of both success
And fulfillment in every way we wish to be blessed. But then the test
Turns our cloud into a shroud like a palm dropped over a coffin
Which is often the case when we trace the colors of gray to black with purple in
between.

Gray is the warning sign when all is not well with our psyche,
Our balloon of happiness starts to lose its air, shrinking to blue, then purple
And ultimately to black where we are on the rack
Of depression, despondency, down to the pit of utter despair.
Perfidia's Rainbow has no pot of gold, just iron pyrite, fool's gold as it is called;
Thus we deteriorate into loss of hope, faith, trust, and believe that life is rife with strife
And desolation.

"The mills of the gods grind slowly", and we wonder if they will grind
From darkness back to the light of day, when shades will be raised and we praise the
sun once more.

Perfidia's Rainbow reversed to the pot of gold restored, perhaps forevermore.

"I coveted rings of gold, fearing not my soul be sold, then came those rings of gold
for my fingers, brittle and cold!"

DRAFT DODGERS by Jeffrey Redmond



War's about the same anywhere

From the ancient Er-Dan manuscripts (Codex 61), as translated by Ed-Mon:

On the three mooned planet the darkest winter season came upon the northern hemisphere. The coldest winds blew upon the inhabitants, and great storms of clouds and rain engulfed the freshwater seas. Travel, and especially seafaring, ceased almost entirely, to wait for a warmer weather time when the planet's elliptical orbit took it closer to the solar star. Then the far traveling would resume once again, and with it the better opportunities for successful military campaigns.

In the colonial capitol of the furthest continent, the royal governor summoned his advisors and army officers for a series of strategic planning sessions. Many of them had been double-promoted rapidly to their positions, and they owed their new assignments directly to him. He hosted the sessions with the best of foods, beverages, and entertainments, and he promised them the best of rewards for continued loyal service if a victory was achieved. They appreciated and accepted his hospitality, and they promised him their continued loyalty and support for any and all future endeavors.

As the winter season progressed along, the darkness of cold rains and fogs filled the hemisphere, but at the royal governor's palace there was much light and warmth as the advisors and officers planned for the most important events ever to occur in the colony's history. And in the springtime season, with the not-as-cold winds, a fantastic amount of edicts and decrees came from the colonial capitol to all districts under its sway.

In the coastal village near the border of the colony, the elders received orders to

assemble and raise their expected quota of conscripts for the local militia. The unit would join many other ones to supplement the regular force of troops assembling to invade their neighbor. But the villagers were shocked and ashamed at all of this, and especially because they had always gotten along very well indeed with their good neighbors and friends in the village on the other side of the arbitrary political boundary. They had hunted, farmed, fished, and traded frequently with these others, and they saw no reason at all to discontinue this happy way of existence.

The elders of the coastal village obeyed their instructions, and they called upon all of the young males of the village to assemble into the local militia section group. And many of them came to receive their new uniform tunics, weapons, and equipment. But many others did not, and the elders were curious as to why this was so. It had been the will of the royal governor to withhold sending collected tax revenues to the mother continent. He instead chose to use the finances for his own military endeavor. It was his will that he and his colony receive the great glory from the undertaking. It was also his will that it be more benevolent than previous such campaigns, and certain individuals would be exempted from the conscriptions if they could show just causes to be so. If a male was too young or too old, too ill or crippled, or the only son and heir of a family, he would not have to serve. And everyone in the little coastal village knew these exemptions thoroughly.

In the first section of the section group, a dozen males were supposed to report for service in the new call up. But only half that number actually appeared, especially the ones given parole from the local jail or promises of pay to end their chronic unemployment. The elders went around to find out about what had happened to the others. The one who was the section leader, or who was supposed to be, had served in a previous war across the sea. And he had been wounded, decorated, and honorably discharged. But then he saw no real reason to fight anyone else again, and he told them that his old war wounds had disabled him. The elders remembered his previous service, and they agreed that he had done enough.

The one who was supposed to be the assistant section leader remained with his family, and he showed the elders that he was the only supporting male there. All of the rest were his mother, grandmother, aunts, female cousins, wives, little daughters, and little nieces. His father was dying, and he had also deliberately sent his brother and male cousins away to hide with distant relatives. He cleverly told the elders that he would go if they agreed to support all of the females there. They were impressed with his

“volunteering spirit”, but agreed to give him an exemption as well.

A young trooper of the section climbed up on top of his uncle’s dwelling, and leapt off to deliberately land on one of his legs. After several tries, he fell down just right and broke it. The local physician reset it well enough, but the break caused him to use crutches, and he also deliberately walked with an exaggerated limp from then on. He explained that his maiming was from an unavoidable accident, and he too was given an exemption. There were reports from other areas of ones to be conscripted deliberately starving themselves so as to appear too malnourished, and one robustly healthy fellow in the village slowly became emaciated in this way.

Another trooper reported on time, but he brought with him his father’s birth document. He had gone to the solar star temple and borrowed it, ostensibly for the local lawspeaker to certify an inheritance. But instead he showed it to the elders, and he said that he was his father instead. And in order to be all the more convincing, he had gone for days without proper sleep, rubbed dust into his face, wore an older male’s tunic, and walked about a little more slowly, as if he really was so much older. He too got an exemption, and many years later he was even hailed by many others as being one of the oldest ones to ever reach such an advanced age. Although, of course, he “cheated” in this with the many extra years from the temple archives document he claimed was his own record.

Another trooper, the son of a wealthy merchant, asked his father for part of his inheritance and was given it. He then gave it to another young male, the son of a homeless and impoverished street beggar, to report for the conscription in his place. This worked because the poor one had the wealthy one’s documents and even used his name. Thus the wealthy one could well serve without actually serving. And he also helped the beggar father to move into a small cottage of his own, purchased with his son’s bribe, and to which the son could return after the hostilities were ended.

Yet another intended trooper simply disappeared. He left the night before he was to report, taking most of his personal belongings in a cart with him. He may have gone off to live in the forests, but no one knew what happened to him. There were ones who decided to suddenly begin attending lessons at the local educational center, and so receive a temporary student deferment. There was also the fisher’s son, who borrowed a smaller boat and went to live offshore on a small islet, in a little boathouse he renovated into his own more comfortable dwelling.

Thus the first section of the local militia section group was at less than half strength,

and the elders found the other sections of it to be the same. The section group, composed mainly of undesirables, was formed up and sent to report to the rapidly double promoted commander of the action group. He in turn reported to the double promoted battle group leader's command. But the officers found all of the units to be at less than half strength, and most of the commanders of the other militia units all found the same as well with theirs. Serving in the militia kept one from being conscripted directly, as a permanent supplement, into the regular forces. There was thus something of a motivation to serve in these auxiliary units, but much more so in the peace times than in the times of terrifying conflicts.

Reports were sent to the regular army, which had units composed of mainly higher motivated volunteers, that the militia units would not be able to adequately strengthen and support them. The army commander reported to the royal governor, and the latter became quite furious. He suggested that many of his subjects were deliberately avoiding military service with their lying, cheating, or hiding in various ways. They were cheating him personally out of his chances for conquest, victory, and eternal glory. But he was too arrogant and proud to rescind the conscription deferments of his call up orders. He could not bring himself to admit any personal mistakes. The army commander and his chief of staff, both of whom had been double promoted to their positions, both told the governor that there were not enough troops to accomplish a victorious invasion of the neighboring land beyond the border. And so another series of meetings were held at the palaces in the colonial capitol.

These lasted throughout the spring season, and new plans were drawn up and revised for a much more realistic military command. The regular force of troops, though actually smaller in numbers, would do well in a move into the border region merely as a defensive occupying force. The militia units, almost all at less than half strength, took over only the rear echelon duties of garrison, communication, and supply for the front line forces. The entire army was thus advanced just up to the assembled enemy's positions, and no further attacks were made. In this way both sides claimed a major victory: the colony for its "successful" invasion, and their neighbors for a "successful" halting of such. The warmer summer season passed, and soon after an armistice and later a peace treaty were signed. The militia units were then disbanded and sent back to return to their homes.

The ones who hadn't deserted or received any kind of an earlier discharge were still on hand to be officially sent home. The first section unit had only three troopers left in

its ranks when the action group returned to the little coastal village. The section group itself was supposed to have numbered more than four dozen, but in actuality had less than two dozen in its ranks. Yet it had not lost a single casualty to any combat or fighting situation. In other units unwilling conscripts had occasionally killed their officers and escaped to disappear away, and some had even crossed over the front lines to surrender to the enemy and remain almost adequately cared for prisoners of war. But there was the common feeling, especially among the ones of the militias, that there had never been any actual enemy threat or real reason to serve and fight in this campaign. And the colonial forces had suffered greatly from this lack of proper motivation and low morale.

In the little coastal village life almost returned to normal. The fisher's son remained on the islet, though he returned to visit with his family and friends from time to time. Students quit their schooling, and ones who had left to hide in forests and hills slowly but surely returned to where they had lived and worked before. The former beggar's son did indeed return to his father in their new cottage, and to a much better life than they had known before. It was then the autumn season, and cooler winds began to blow, and the weather became much rainier, and less favorable for outdoor activities.

And then the next winter season and the coldest winds were soon upon them, and all who had avoided the military conscription were glad to have avoided this weather as well. They all realized that had the units been at full strength, they would have been sent forth for an extended campaign, and continuous fighting throughout the seasons. They would have had to suffer and endure the cold, hunger, illness, fear, misery, rain, mud, blood, and death throughout. But as yet another onslaught of bitter winds and storms engulfed the darkened northern hemisphere of the planet, they all remained safe and warm in their lighted and comfortable homes. And they survived, to live their lives as best they could for yet another year.

In time the royal governor would be recalled for corruption and incompetence, and the army commander would take over the ruling of the colony in his place. He would remove and replace all of the advisors with his own personally chosen ones, but he in turn would later be deposed and exiled by the chief of staff. And he would be assassinated by one of his junior officers, after a violent quarrel over the permanent ending of any further double promotions.



But the most maddening, frustrating, downright passionate thing you'll ever find is being alive. There's just nothing like it.

Maya, yes, they call it the land of the East. The dream that we call the world in which we live. We live it. As we dream it. I get the impression that each day, each life is dreamed into being upon waking like a tulip on the rising and setting of the sun. Yes, I suppose it's all just a dream. We come and go in the dream. We live in the dream. And we die in the dream.

It's not all that easy being alive, but it sure can't be that easy being dead. Do the dead haunt the living? Do the living haunt the dead? Questions we ask ourselves as another night is torn from yet another day and we make haste to rise again. Never knowing, never really caring. Just going forward as always.

It's not so much heaven or hell or some other life I look forward to as it is a rest from the busyness of the world. Outside my door the world gets crazier. Politicians issue proclamations. Preachers give sermons in support of a life of sin. And bill collectors take all. While I sit here through the days and nights and years waiting for it all to come to an end. Soon, perhaps. But not now. The night grows darker with the passage of midnight, and I wait out the lonely hours to a new day's rising. Alive now. If only for the stark reality of the world.

I remain an outsider's outsider, writing lines on the midnight hour, dressing up my own brand of truth as best I can while my cat tiptoes all around me. It's better to be wild than free, and, to tell you the truth, I'm not either. Just a man alone in a room and at

one with the night and the words...waiting to pack it all up at some new dawn. It's a fool's life at best but better than so many others I've seen. I take another drink of darkness and go my own way.

Somewhere out there beyond the night I know so well there are other worlds with their own societies and their own ways of being. I only hope that they are kinder than this one. Admittedly, I have very little to compare my world to at the moment. But I do hope that their worlds are kinder than the one I've come to know. It would be nice to know if they are.

And sometimes the strangest thing is just being alive in a world that seems more alive with each passing day.

I'm not afraid of death, mind you. Death smiles on my doorstep and is a friend of mine. Now and then we play cards or perhaps a game of chess to pass the time. But mostly we just sit side by side, life and death, buddies after a fashion, waiting to see the show. Anything can happen.

Just a recurring dream, this life, as I say. A memory often repeated. Until we all fade away...

Admittedly, I'm a strange man. I read strange books and I tell strange stories and I have a strange black cat. But, seeing how a world of supposedly normal people are destroying the world in the name of their own madness, who the hell wants to be ordinary?

Yet I still can't rule out the possibility that all this is just a dream. One people. One mind. One dream. The dying of hope.

This is the dream that we call the world and our universe. Strange planets circle fiery orbs and we happen to live on one of them. Madmen lead this world into their own dreams, into chaos, into murder and bedlam, and billions praise them in the name of Jesus, in the name of Buddha and Allah too. While heaven awaits in every rose bush of every garden every dreamer calls home and ignores still. This is the world, our universe, that we have created. Watch that sleeping child in the bed over yonder and wonder what dreams he now has in store for us. Will it be heaven all over again? Or will it be hell? Go ask the rose. It has the answer and so much more...

An interesting variant of both Hinduism and Buddhism (in Japan, for instance) says that not only is every man, woman and child's life lived by one and all until everyone is accounted for, but that also every rock on the earth is lived, every animal upon the face of the earth, every tree in the forest, every fish in the sea, and all the stars in the

nighttime sky as well. That all the cosmos is lived and accounted for until the universe can die and then be born again. It makes for an interesting theory as well as a wide array of believers.

It's a strange universe. Comets have been known to rain down on our planet as have asteroids in millennia past. If any civilizations exist other than those here they are beyond our knowing. All kinds of mysteries lurk within and without—while I sit here waiting for the nights, unsure of what remains. Will the plague claim another victim in my town? Will I venture out another day? I know not. I pet my black cat and wait for the night to cover all.

It's amazing how much of my life has come to be dependent on words rising and falling on a computer screen. For years now, people have become rare in my life, so I squirrel myself away in these rooms with my books and my cat and all the tales evolving in my head while touching base with over a thousand people out there in the world by means of this remarkable device. The computer has become an extension of my body and mind and joins me to people all around the world separated from me by thousands of miles. It's machine and man joined together at its finest in this, the global village of the twenty-first century. And perhaps the scientists are right. Perhaps we are all cyborgs now, software and hardware joined to flesh and bone just like another computer circuit. Such are the times.



"After taking several readings I'm surprised to find my mind still fairly sound."

The Moon by John Polselli

Going outdoors into the cold winter night I gaze upward and see the moon. I observe the craters that are illuminated like X-ray photographs displayed across its circular face. The craters resemble strange rings in a preternatural circus whose performers are invisible. It is a circus of silence akin to a dream. The moon itself seems to be dreaming. Perhaps it is dreaming of me as I stare at its pockmarked visage high above earth in profound silence surrounded by the blackness of space in which an audience gathers, gazing at its spotlighted face. The moon intones a prolonged note of mystery, impossible to discern with the ears but audible to the spirit and to the soul. The moon is dependable, a pleasurable and welcome ritual that does not grow stagnant with the passage of time. The moon is like the waves of the ocean. Its lesson for us is silence, the importance of listening and maintaining a sense of calmness and tranquility.

And yet she denotes the madness, for she is Janus-faced. I think of my eyes reflecting her image while I gaze. She becomes more pale during the day as though she is frightened by the sun, for it is the night that remains her dwelling-place, and it is during the night when I love her most of all. She is a ghost in meditation high above the anxious world.

A palm tree across the street is an exploding firework of glossy reflective spangles caught frozen as in a photograph taken during the Fourth of July. It is a huge dandelion lacquered and green against a cerulean background. Its trunk is like a pinecone formed into an immense cigar and smoked by a giant lying sequestered beneath the ground. In my mind—in my imagination—I climb the pinecone cigar and gaze over rooftops of suburban houses now quiet as evening approaches.

Suddenly I notice the form of a large owl hiding below the branches like an ancient statue or a watcher from a far land. That tree is a totem pole imbued with power and magic.

A jet airliner rumbles overhead like a roaring arrow. Moments later it is followed by another airliner. There is a tribal war taking place in a distant land—a primitive island that is perhaps invisible to us on the earthly plane. I watch the soaring arrows passing between the tranquil branches of the palm

trees. The windows of the silent houses are darkened. Another arrow flies through the sky.



“Odd place for the sponsor to cut in, but I did order up the item being displayed, considering how convenient it was to do so.”

Well, folks, that's all for another issue of Synergy. Hope it's been a pleasant experience for you to read my zine. Until next July, then, the going-word.



"Just a bit of action now, this will make the show look good."

Archive Midwinter
a zine for N'APA 246

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5 April 2020



Comments:

Jose Sanchez: Cover: A delight! Who wouldn't want to be on a comfy raft with some snacks and drinks on the gentle waves (emphasis on "gentle!") under a generous tropical sun! Nice inclusion of King Kamehameha!

Lorien Rivendell: I, too, am fortunate to be in an industry and position deemed "essential." This is vague amusing, because what I do is not really relevant to virus health. (I work for an insurance company that specializes in chiropractic and acupuncture, neither of which are any good against infectious diseases. We also work with health clubs, gyms, and spas -- which are nearly all closed these days.) But it's a paycheck. They want to move me to "work from home" and I'm resisting it as hard as I can. I very strongly do **not** want to work at home.

The constitutional issue is fascinating! Can they just throw away the First Amendment, on the basis of a (very real) emergency? The Constitution doesn't say, "...except in a crisis." It says, specifically, Congress "...shall make no law..." that infringes on freedom of assembly. Some people have said, "The Constitution is not a Suicide Pact," by which they mean if we have to sacrifice liberties in exchange

for survival, that's fine. I'm...unsettled. I just don't feel good about suspending fundamental civil rights on the say-so of a single individual, even if backed up by a very broad consensus. I also don't feel at all good about a whole bunch of people dying! I don't think there is -- or can be! -- a good answer to this conundrum. I only hope this kind of emergency power is never abused.

It is a truism in airline safety and automobile safety that a human life has a certain monetary value. We could make cars safer by installing hundreds of thousands of dollars (per car) in additional safety equipment. But that would price them out of the market, and cheaper cars would eat them for breakfast in open competition. We could mandate such equipment by law -- and We The People would probably vote for a Congress that would repeal such regulation. In simple terms of nasty reality -- The Cold Equations -- a human life is only worth so much.

I just Googled "How Much Is A Human Life Worth?" and got various answers. One source said that insurance companies use \$50,000 as a value. Another source said \$7 million to \$9 million.

Speaking of the economic closure, California Governor Gavin Newsom said that it was worth it, "...Even if it only saved one life."

Well, to be bluntly realistic about it, no. We would not accept so high a price, to save only one life.

What is the answer? I don't know! The best I can do is latch on to a source of information that I trust -- and in general Governor Newsom meets that requirement for me -- and accept, after critical examination, what I am told.

(The same thing I have to do when reading about Quantum Physics! I can't do the math myself, so I am forced to accept what I read in reputable sources such as Scientific American and Science News!)

George Phillis: Interesting opening to your new novel. The first chapter, with the folks waking up to the horrible news, is fun, as it introduces a group of affable and vaguely eccentric souls, the sort who are pleasant to know and capable of sustaining the reader's interest. I do think they're too insouciant about the situation, sitting to breakfast before rushing off to investigate a nearby plane crash. It would seem to me that the authorities would arrive first and yellow-tape the whole scene, making it impossible for our protagonists to get the survey as described. The descriptions are rich and visual, and, of course, quite disturbing! I like the way the action immediately jumps to combat, making this an "action/adventure" story more than a "suspense/ thriller" story, although there are definite "thriller" elements, such as the White House scenes. Promising!

John Thiel: What is "jigger?" A new communications/sharing app? Or was "You can jigger me" an euphemism for "You can retire to the infernal regions?" (Grin!)

Lovely pictures! The technicolor globe is very nice, and the pic of the multi-story office building is inviting! Wish I worked somewhere as lovely!

"Do Science Fiction Fans Really Want To Achieve Unity with the Cosmos?" Fascinating question, and, of course, probably with at least as many answers as there are science fiction fans! Human civilization has wrestled with the question of individuality vs. commonality for several thousand years, and we still have attained only the roughest of compromise consensus. "We The People" enjoy about as much "unity" as we desire -- and too darn much for a lot of the most determined (or sociopathic) individualists. So surrendering to a *true* Unity, a fully-entailed multiple symbiosis, is scary to a lot of us.

Dante, in his Paradiso, depicted the angels in exact array, not unlike a marching band in precise formation. Such regimentation is not entirely attractive to many of us. I believe there needs to be space for people to "march to a different drummer," or to drum away in a wholly personal rhythm. J.R.R. Tolkien used individual musical freedom as his metaphor for the Sin of Rebellion, suggesting that wanting to play your own tune is the origin of all evil. I do not find that I can agree with this!

As all too often, I want to try to find a place of moderation, a mixed state that rewards individuality while still accepting those sacrifices needed for common progress. Too much consideration for individuality leads to anarchy (which usually collapses to violence, which then feeds back into compulsory regimentation) and, of course, too much regimentation points to fascism. Where is the Goldilocks zone?

I agree that N'APA, as currently constituted, is just a teensie too small, and optimally could pick up a few new members. (Here we find the biggest advantage of individuality -- diversity! We want enough differences of opinion to spark discussion, even considerate debate, but not so much that we descend into feuding and nastygrams. Which, alas, has happened in N'APA in years past. Don't wanna go there again, huh uh! Not fun!)

I enjoyed Jeffrey Redmond's short story, "The Chameleon." My favorite passage was, "He would always just agree with whatever they told him, and Ed-Mast thus became known as someone who must also be a very intelligent fellow." This is far from the worst way to get through life in modern times!

Will Mayo: I must be a product of my times, because I rather prefer the current "social distancing" we maintain from the concept of death, sanitizing it and keeping it at a remove, making it something of a taboo. I don't feel good about the Victorian obsession with death, part of which I suggest originated by Queen Victoria's unhealthy and obsessive mourning for Prince Albert. I think she set the tone, at least in part. Just as a matter of personal preference, I'd rather not attend an "open casket" funeral, but, rather, a remembrance ceremony in which the remains of the dearly departed play no part at all. (Maybe an urn of ashes...) The last two remembrance parties I've attended had very lovely slide-shows of photos of the dear departed from happy occasions (many in costume!)

Death means "Good bye." Death means never seeing that person again. I think that finality should be observed starting immediately upon death.

When friends and family have passed away, I usually have dreams about them, and I, personally, find this painful and disturbing.

re your reivews, especially for its timeliness, I second your recommendation of Daniel De Foe's "A Journal of the Plague Year." It's quite readable, and, while challenging for its grimness, is stalwart and even heroic. Also, it's available free at Project Gutenberg!

re reading books that are different from what "everyone else" is reading, I largely agree. There is a definite joy to taking "the road less traveled" in terms of one's reading. The occasional best-seller can be fun, but the sad truth is that these big blockbusters often do

not live up to their hype and really aren't as good as their sales would suggest. "The Da Vinci Code" was a disappointment, and, recently, I read Alistair MacLean's "Where Eagles Dare" and thought it was rather awful. The movie was a lot better!

Isolation:

Not fun! I got furloughed from my workplace. Sent home, no pay. I still have my health coverage, but I have to pay the premiums myself; my workplace can't deduct them from my paycheck any longer. (No paycheck!) But I do still benefit from the corporate rates, a lot cheaper than buying the same insurance for myself. And I will be getting unemployment compensation from the state.

I guess someone finally tumbled to the fact that what I do for a living isn't "essential" after all!

Lots of time for reading. Lots of time for writing. Lots of time to participate in social media, to send email, to watch videos. I go outdoors for a walkabout every other day, to get some fresh and and to keep from turning into a bowl of suet. (I have a head-start in that direction already!) Every now and then I treat myself to a long, hot bath. Nothing like a good hot soak!

I certainly want the economy to blossom again, so I can go back to my job and benefit from the regimentation necessary to my personal mental health. I'm not very good at self-motivating. I need Mr. Spacely to lean over my shoulder and yell, "Jefferson!" (I'm being unfair; actually I have a very, very nice boss!)

Speaking of Quantum Physics...

I am currently reading Reality Is Not What It Seems by Carl Rovelli, an explanation of Quantum Gravity in terms accessible to the non-mathematical layman. It's quite a good book, and I particularly love the way he begins and the beginning, going back to

the city of Miletus in 600 B.C. and the first of the "Atomists," those who held that matter is not infinitely divisible. He proceeds to cover Galileo, Newton, Maxwell, Einstein, and Bohr, to give the reader a good background in Relativity and Quantum Physics, at least in descriptive terms.

The unfortunate part is that the science of Quantum Gravity is unsettled still, and a lot of answers simply aren't known. Yet! So in places, the book has to cover competing theories and point to embarrassing blank spots and places where nobody knows the answers. The science is very much a "work in progress." It's a little like reading a book on Relativity written in 1915. It's just too early!

They

I just finished reading a "Thriller" novel, The Samurai Cipher, by Ernest Dempsey. I'm afraid it was a bit on the "average" side, not great and not awful. Lukewarm. Middlin' fair. It partakes of the "Da Vinci Code" style of puzzle/adventure, where half the time the characters are solving riddles and the other half of the time they're in gunfights with bad guys. Pretty "formula."

At one point in the story, the point-of-view character sees someone, and can't tell if it is a man or a woman. So the narrator -- not the character, but the writer -- says "they." And I found this to be tedious, ugly, distracting, and even offensive. "They came in through the door." Oh, did they? All at once, or one at a time?

In my opinion, this is wrong. It may have current linguistic correctness, in the sense that this is how people talk, but it lacks literary grace. It's awkward, and it pulls the reader away from the "reading trance." It forces the reader to stop, go back a few words, and figure out what is actually being said. I very strongly advise against this construction. Either default to "he," or use the necessary phrase "he or she."

(I'm old fashioned. I also believe that "literally" should not be a substitute for "figuratively," as has happened in recent years. I also believe in the difference between a subject and object, and I cringe when, on the radio, someone says, "The promise was made to the Mayor and I." Ow.)

The Contents of A Good Life #12



May 2020

For N'APA mailing 246

WILL MAYO, apartment 9b, 750 Carroll Parkway, Frederick, Maryland 21702. Email wsmayo@yahoo.com .

I am reminded of what Jefferson Swycaffer in the recent issue of NAPA said about reminding me how far we've already come. Perhaps that is true, but in light of current events I am reminded of how far we have yet to go. I guess I should heed my own words and get back to today.

John, regarding your editorial, yes, I would say that some sort of cosmic oneness is at the heart of a lot of fantasy fiction. Spencer of another century did it with his Fairy Land poem cycle, praising what he saw as the glory of England. Heinlein did much the same with his later novels. In my own way, I try to do it with what I venture forward. And, again, it looks like we're all in that together. Now more than ever.

A MAN WITH ALL HIS MANY READS

There was this man, you see, in a room all his own surrounded on every side by book cases filled with reads of every kind. From science fiction and fantasy to history galore they filled up his days and nights with every turn of the page. He had a hot plate plugged into the wall and he had a nice cold fridge filled with cold cuts so he never needed to go out. He had his reads. That was all the man needed in all the world. And with every book that the man took down from his shelves and read from cover to cover he laid another beside him, fresh for his reads ahead.

What was the most curious thing about the man and his reads, however, was soon the pile of books that he surrounded himself with, of books he had read and books he was yet to read, was the manner in which the man placed them all around him that, here, a book jutted out here, and there, a book became just so. It made the pile of books grow more and more so with every passing day.

Until, finally, the man bestirred himself from his place of many reads. He thought perhaps to fill out an order for another cold cut from the store. Or perhaps he just wanted to send out for another book to be sent to his secluded address. It is unknown. But it is known that sooner or later the man discovered that his pile of books blocked the doorway to his room and, try though he might, he could not dislodge it. He

remained entombed there in that room with his books and just one last cold cut. With one last turn of the page.

When at last they found him there, all shriveled in rags, in his room of many books, having at last dislodged the volumes from his doorway, they found him with his face deeply peering into one last book to read. Crying out for one more word, so to say, though the man was surely long dead by then. It is said that upon his tombstone it is written, "Here lies a man of learning. May he rest in peace." So it is said. And so he rests there still.

A Visitor To My Dreams

I had another visitor to my dreams last night, the poet Robert Woods. Every now and then we would pay a visit to the VFW and grab a couple of beers or maybe we would just huddle up in our mutual corners and write a few poems but mostly we just looked at each other and he told me of his time in Vietnam and also of his more recent battle with cancer and I told him of my own battles with schizophrenia and a case of the blues. It was a cool visit. And then I woke up again to the muddy dawn and it was just me and my cat and I wrote these words. Still alive. Still writing.

REVIEWS

I GUESS THAT'S WHY THEY CALL IT THE BLUES by Bryn Fortey. This collection to the blues greats of American music is written by Bryn Fortey of South Wales in verse form and I have to say that he sums it all up with all the passion any Delta musician could muster. The below poem of his sums up all the blues he loves in a few simple lines

DANCE

the dead dance
to a slow 12 bar dirge
beyond blues
beyond jazz

no rivalries
no need to impress
no hidden agenda
a final equality

death:
the real democracy

Going fast and published in a limited edition, this book is a treat for all blues lovers and for those who love the simple melody of life. It'll set you to thinking long after the final page.

BORN TO BE POSTHUMOUS: THE ECCENTRIC LIFE AND MYSTERIOUS GENIUS OF EDWARD GOREY, by Mark Dery. Edward Gorey. Who hasn't wondered at the strange man with his long, dangling white beard, his fur coats in the summertime, his library of twenty thousand books and all his cats, not to mention his love and raves of the ballet? Author of weird soundless comics, perhaps to be defined as some surrealist novels, depicting strange creatures in Victorian drawing rooms, children meeting all manner of bad ends, and men on a journey that can only end in mystery, Gorey has been the subject of inquiry for decades on end. Movie makers have sought inspiration in his craft, as have novelists, and many have wondered at the nature of this strange man's sexuality, though he spent his life alone with his rooms full of books and a house equally full of cats. Mark Dery here tells the man's story from birth to a death at the start of our century here, and unravels some of the mystery in rumors of a gay rendezvous, but to Gorey's followers (and they are legion) he will perhaps remain a subject of their interest and fascination for the remainder of the strange times that we call our own. Mr. Gorey. There was just no one like him.

UPON THE OCCASION OF MY DEATH by Bryn Fortey. Here's one good chapbook from Welsh poet Bryn Fortey, just jam packed with fine verse, exploring those intimations of mortality we all have (no, no immortality, that's Wordsworth, we're talking plain old Bryn here) with good lines and minus the unnecessary punctuation. He tells of the death of his fellow Welshman, Dylan Thomas, dead after downing one too many shots of whiskey, the comings and goings of his beloved Newport, Wales, once rumored to have seen the legendary King Arthur's Guinevere, now the haunt of drug dealers and procurers, but, no, we shall not speak ill of that, that is his beloved hometown, his to be born in and his in which to die same as my own beloved city where I too shall one day come to pass away. Finally, with the last turn of the page, Mr. Fortey devotes some words to his own end. "Keep it simple," he says, "And let me rest." And don't we all wish for such a way to end our days, devoid of ceremony but full of memories? This is one fine chapbook. I just couldn't put it down.

THE IMPROBABLE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES as edited by **John Joseph Adams**. "When you eliminate everything except the impossible you must consider the improbable," Arthur Conan Doyle's most famous character Sherlock Holmes said. This, then, a collection of stories by 21st Century authors, is an assortment of fiction exploring that very axiom in which the improbable can and does then come into play. Consider then these fine tales exploring murder, mystery and adventure and the ultimate nature of our reality. Aliens come into play as do ghosts, pirates, Jack the Ripper and alternate universes. A good time is had by both this reader and many others. I suggest that you give it a try.

SALVATION ON SAND MOUNTAIN: SNAKE HANDLING AND REDEMPTION IN SOUTH APPALACHIA, by **Dennis Covington**. Another book I enjoyed reading back in the 90s, this account of a reporter drawn into snake handling churches in the mountains of the rural Southeast while handling a murder trial involving one of their participants is one of the better books I've read on religious revivals and those caught up in the sermons of charlatans, better than other accounts I've read elsewhere. Notably, these preachers with their foolish but sincere belief in handling snakes as an act of worship of their God based on the Book of Acts in the Bible seemed every bit as earnest as Baptist preachers I've known here and elsewhere in the American South. One just as fanatical as the other. The reporter who penned this book was lucky to get out of that church. I have known men and women who have spent their whole lives in such cults and have never come out any wiser in life. Nevertheless, this is a rich and engaging account of one man's search for faith and how he found himself by losing it all over again. I recommend it to any reader who might benefit from learning of such dangers. It is well worth the read.

THE THINGS OF THE NIGHT

Once when I was young
and afoot in an unknown city
and was refused lodgings
in an abandoned factory

and had nowhere to turn

I thought I understood

the things of the night.

But, no, I did not.

And then again, one long ago year

I crept dangling from my fingertips

along a bridge to nowhere

I thought I might at last know

the things of the night.

But I did not.

It wasn't until the years passed me by

and I found myself greybearded and alone,

here with my books and my black cat,

that I think I might at last

understand those things of the night.

I know them well now, you see.

Just me, my cat and the night.

What more a man might need I do not know.

...My Life in Science Fiction

Since I am new to N3F I thought I would introduce myself and my relationship to science fiction and fandom.



Books have always been my best friends. As a young boy I read constantly so I inevitably read fantasy, the Oz books, the Andrew Lang multicolored fairy books, Seven Day Magic etc. But I'm not sure I really distinguished between fantasy and the other books for children. Then I discovered science fiction. At this late date, almost 50 years later, I no longer remember what was the first science fiction book I read. It may have been *Spaceship Under the Apple Tree* or *Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet*. From that I began reading both children's and adult science fiction. I cannot put a date to this, but I would have had to have read Isaac Asimov before age 11, since I still have the July/August 1978 issue of *Isaac's Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine* that I bought thinking it would have stories by Isaac Asimov in it. I must have enjoyed it despite that misconception as I shortly convinced my parents to buy me a subscription (one that I have continued nonstop in the 40 years since then). By 1977, age 10, I was enough of a science fiction fan that my father took me to see Star Wars, thinking I would enjoy it.

I did not get involved in fandom until college. I know I went to at least one Boskone and maybe an Arisia (two Boston conventions) while in college. And in my senior year, someone started a science fiction club at my college and I joined and even contributed a story to the club's magazine. But it never occurred to me to take the T to Boston to join the New England SF Association, or walk to MIT to join their SF club (and take books out of their library). I did buy plenty of sf books from the many used bookstores in Harvard Square.

After college I attended a couple of Lunacons while I was in New York and then Disclave when I moved to the D.C. area. I also started going to Balticon in Baltimore and Philcon in Philadelphia, in addition to the occasional Readercon, Lunacon, and Boskone. My first Worldcon was in 1997 in San Antonio and I was on the committee hosting Worldcon in Baltimore in 1998. I have attended multiple Worldcons (sometimes running the con newsletter and producing hoaxines) and World Fantasy Conventions since then. I am on the committee for the D.C. Worldcon, Discon III, in 2021 and will run the newsletter again. Locally, I have attended every Capclave since it started in 2001, chaired it twice, and ran its programming four times. At other cons I promote Capclave, sometimes by using Capclave's dodo mascot.

At a Disclave someone suggested I attend meetings of the Washington Science Fiction Association and I joined in 1994. In 1996, when the editor of the club's magazine, *The WSFA Journal*, became sick, I offered to edit it. I have been editor of the *Journal*, off and on, for most of the subsequent years. I also have served as the club's president (for three years) and as judge for its small press award. I also organize the club's semi-monthly sf magazine discussion. For the Baltimore Science Fiction Society, I run the club's Compton Crook Award for best first novel and organize the club's monthly book discussion.



I still read a lot (between 100-150 books a year) and am involved with multiple book clubs.

In real life I was an education policy analyst and communications specialist from 1993-2019 and now serve as policy communications specialist for the Commissioned Corps at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

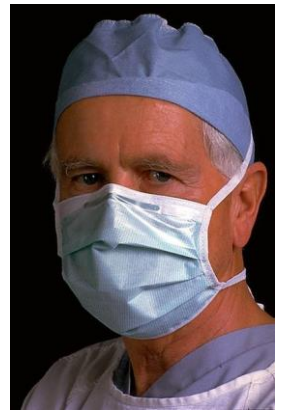
...Thoughts on the Pandemic



Science fiction has tons of stories about the end of the world, about great disasters, and even post-apocalypse fiction about survivors of a disease or nuclear war struggling to survive. Some of these stories even have traitors, quislings who side with the enemy aliens, good life who help the berserkers chase down their fellow humans, and even stories about people who take control of zombies to settle old scores.

This pandemic has shown people are willing to sell out their friends and family for a haircut, for a McDonald's burger, or an illusion of being able to return to a normal life. People are denying that there is a crisis, claiming it is all a hoax or "fake news" even as the worldwide death toll mounts. People are refusing to wear masks, spreading their germs around. And some have even stormed their state capitals, armed and dangerous.

As a result, states are pressured to end the 'shelter in place' rules and tell businesses they can reopen even though nothing has been solved. We still do not have a way to test everyone or to tell who is infected but not showing symptoms yet. So the result will be more deaths than if the government had mobilized at the first signs of a crisis and states kept people at home until the numbers of those infected stopped growing.



I am sure science fiction authors are taking careful notes.

... Letters of Comment

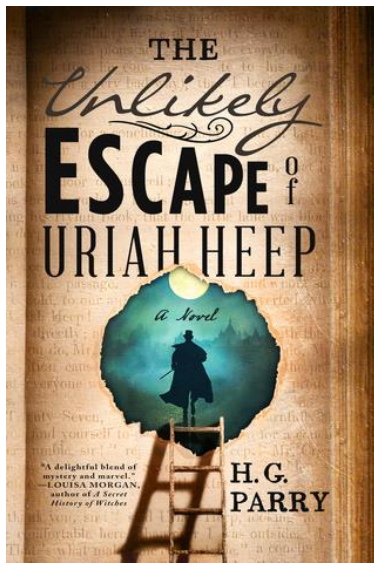
Lorien Rivendell - Yes, it does seem like we're living in a dystopian future. I think it is the world of Sarah Pinsker's *A Song for a New Day* which has people staying home out of fear of a global pandemic and concerts taking place in a version of online cyberspace called Hoodspace. A lot of my groups are on hiatus too, but WSFA and BSFS have online meetings and my Futurist book club meets online.

John Thiel - E.E Doc Smith's Skylark of Space was a separate series from Lensmen. While the initial astronauts were fighter pilots, not sf fans, I think you are underestimating how much subsequent astronauts, and the scientists and NASA personnel who make them go, are influenced by science fiction.

Jeffrey Redmond - Interesting fable. I'm not sure if your point is that it is a good thing to agree with everyone and never be controversial or that doing so leads to a life that is just "good enough" and results in no one really remembering you.



... Short SF Reviews



The Unlikely Escape of Uriah Heep by H.G. Parry

Literature professor Charley Sutherland has the power to bring fictional characters to life, much to the annoyance of his older brother who Charley frequently calls for help. But he is not the only one with this power as the brothers discover a whole secret street of characters from other books and a threat to replace the real world with a fictional one. Fans of books, especially Charles Dickens, will find the book delightful and there are mystery elements as the brothers try to find the other person with the power (although when the author gives a vital clue she calls attention to it in a way that makes the identity obvious).

But the book is really about the relationship between the brothers and the older brother's mix of jealousy, guilt, and protectiveness toward his gifted brother.

The Ten Thousand Doors of January by Alix E. Harrow

This is a beautiful book. I strongly recommend it.

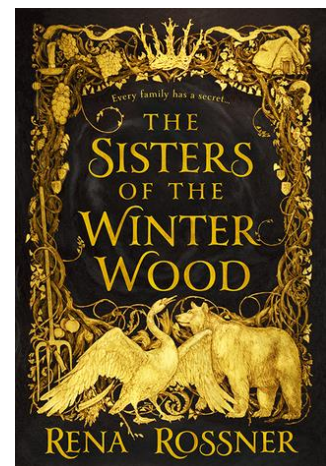
The main character, January, grows up without a mother and a father who always is away gathering strange objects for billionaire Mr. Locke, who raises January as sort of his own child. January starts off as a willful child, but after she has an encounter with a mysterious Door in the middle of nowhere that seems to lead to a different dimension, Mr. Locke starts disciplining her more strictly. Chapters from her POV alternate with what appears to be an academic text on the Doors. But the book turns out to be something else. The magic is mostly in the Doors and the places they lead (with an interesting comment that many aspects of our world would seem magical to someone without technology.)

The book is ultimately about the power of love and family as the truth about January's parents are slowly revealed. This is not a book for exciting action but rather strong emotional bonds. And the dog, Bad, is a great character.

The Sisters of the Winter Wood by Rena Rossner

This is a fantasy/romance with a very Jewish flavor. Just outside an isolated village on the Ukraine border, two sisters, Laya and Liba, grow up somewhat isolated from the others in their village. Although their father prays, he usually does so alone (or with Liba) not in the village synagogue. But when their Uncle appears with a message that their grandfather, the Rebbe is dying, their parents reveal a secret and go off to pay their respects, leaving the sisters to live by themselves for a short time with strict instructions to protect each other. But both fall in love, one with a worthy villager, one with a wanderer who is helping his clan spread rumors about the Jews.

I rate this book a 10 out of 10 (although this is in part due to how rarely I see a fantasy novel use Jewish characters/folklore.)



Note: All content and opinions in this publication are those of Samuel Lubell and not those of any employer, client, or membership organization.

Ye Murthered Master Mage 246
George Phillies
phillies@4liberty.net

I will try something different in this issue.
First, a progress report on my writing:

Projects as of March 20, 2020

Physics books:

The rough draft of the freshman physics book is at 464 pages, 270,272 LaTeX words, and approximately 175 figures. That is the complete rough draft, pretty good for about seven months work. I sent it out to several readers.

Finishing the rough draft took a certain burden off my shoulders. All this time I had been writing and it was by no means clear that I was getting any closer to completion. Finally I was down to the short introduction to Faculty readers and two figures. Those I finished on Monday.

There is a fair amount of work still needed, notably proofreading. The book also needs an index, meaning that I go through and add command codes telling the computer to insert something in the index. the Chapter Numbering needs a little tuning. It should finish sometime this Summer.

I now switch over, I think to working on novels. I have two Eclipse novels and two Adara novels dropping into place. Significant parts of those novels are done, but four novels is about 700,000 words, of which I have about 170,000. Those 500,000 words at a guess will need a year and a half, not to mention that I keep finding scenes for other incomplete novels.

I briefly ventured into politics again. There was an effort to hand my Libertarian Party's Presidential nomination over to a

Republican interloper. I participated in the effort that stopped it.

The other large project

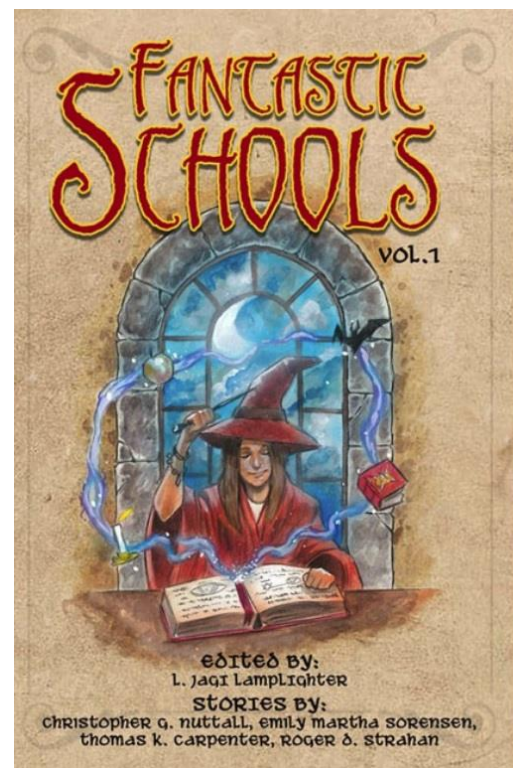
Writing review article in my technical area
80,000 LaTeX words

All the World's Wargames, a somewhat complete listing of all hex and counter board wargames, is under way.

Novels:

The Eclipse series:

I sold a short story to Chris Nuttall and Jagi Lamplighter for their Fantastic Schools collection. Here is the book cover:



Practical Exercise (Adara's Tale) At 52,300 words 4/8 52887 words] 4/15 55,700] 4/29: 55,898

Stand against the Light is at 80,700 words
Eclipse smites another doom or dies trying.

Of Breaking Waves is at 38,000 words
Against Eclipse, even Death may die.

Indian Summer 7700 words

Invasion Now 7300 words [4/8 7635]

Merchant Adventurers: Now at 40,800 words [4/8 43795]

Invasion Tibet (so to speak Buck Rogers prequel) Now at 39,200 words

The Eddorian Lensman total 15686 words
(serial numbers to be filed off) space opera

DisUnion total 15,834 words (after partition of US; NH/VT capture a flying saucer)

Hold High The Banner total 6121 words
(ChiComm platoon of 1940 enters not-D&D world, launches liberation struggle for the exploited small giant class species)

No Tears for a Princess total 88,647 words
classic fantasy with swords and magicians

The Gathering Storm 7000 words

sequel to Against Three Lands 10775 words,
No change

sequel to Minutegirls 172 words

sequel to Mistress of the Waves

sequel to The One World.

I started writing the freshman physics text last September, and somewhat under eight months later I have the rough draft of 450 pages including some hundreds of figures done. It now gets to age a bit.

The novel on which I am most emphatically working, because I have the cover already, is Adara (she shows up in the Eclipse books), the books being Practical Exercise, about her work at Dorrance Academy, ending with her finding the solution to Ettore's Paradox, (not known in our world), namely that Ettore falsely assumed that the number of fractions is much larger than the number of integers, when in fact there are as many of one as of the other. For this the closing sentence is 'Congratulations, Academician Triskittenion', Academician being the title that indicates that she can stay at Dorrance Academy as a scholar without having any teaching obligations. Academician is also the title of the second book in the series, whose theme is "Academic Warfare: Like the other kind, only violent."

Indian Summer is the Fall of a sub-Galactic Empire, as viewed by someone who is working to have the Anglic Union avoid being caught in the fall. I expect it will be a series of novellas spaced decades apart, following the actions of a near-immortal with a plan. The first one is the immortal getting control of a derelict space yard.

Invasion Now is an invasion of contemporary earth by aliens who, for example, do not have space travel, at the level of not realizing that we have reconnaissance satellites. They have teleportation gates.