

SPRING 2020

NUMBER 107

# WARP

SPECIAL CORONAVIRUS ISSUE

CAPTAIN,  
IT IS  
ILLOGICAL  
TO HAVE  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
SUITS THAT  
ARE NOT  
N-95 RATED.



KGB and  
JOE ASPLER,  
2020

## MonSFFA's Executive

President  
Cathy Palmer-Lister  
[president@monsffa.ca](mailto:president@monsffa.ca)

Vice-President  
Keith Braithwaite  
[veep@monsffa.ca](mailto:veep@monsffa.ca)

Treasurer  
Sylvain St-Pierre  
[treasurer@monsffa.ca](mailto:treasurer@monsffa.ca)

### Appointed Positions

PR, Membership, editor of Impulse  
Keith Braithwaite  
[impulse@monsffa.ca](mailto:impulse@monsffa.ca)

Web Master & Editor of WARP  
Cathy Palmer-Lister  
[webmaster@monsffa.ca](mailto:webmaster@monsffa.ca)  
[warp@monsffa.ca](mailto:warp@monsffa.ca)

Keeper of the Lists  
Josée Bellemare

### On the Cover

Long-time club member Joe Aspler's entry was chosen as the winner of our online "Cartoon Caption Contest," and his topical dialogue has been inserted into the KGB cartoon's blank speech balloon, thus completing the piece.

Congratulations, Joe!

### Contact us

MonSFFA  
c/o Sylvain St-Pierre  
4456 Boul. Ste-Rose  
Laval, Québec, Canada  
H7R 1Y6

### Click to find us on line!



Facebook  
page



<http://www.monsffa.ca>



Facebook  
Group

## MonSFFA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

MonSFFA is in the process of looking for a new meeting hall.  
*Check our website for latest developments.*

Upcoming meeting dates may change when we move

### MARCH 7

#### **THEME Preparing for Costume Con**

Demo by Dan Kenny: How to make a Klingon head piece  
Show and Tell: Costumes by Mark and Lindsay  
Workshop: Keith Braithwaite, making cool props from junk

**All meetings are cancelled until further notice.**  
**Follow us on our website**

### APRIL 4

Our virtual meeting is posted here:

<http://www.monsffa.ca/?p=10111>

Coronavirus Song Parodies  
Rainbow Campaign

Sci-Fi Trivia Challenge: There will be prizes!

**Download our super SF/F quiz!**

<https://tinyurl.com/to2kh6s>

Toy and Action Figure Photography  
Pandemic Reading/Viewing Recommendations  
Virtual Presentation by Sylvain St-Pierre

<http://www.monsffa.ca/?p=10226>

Cartoon Caption Contest

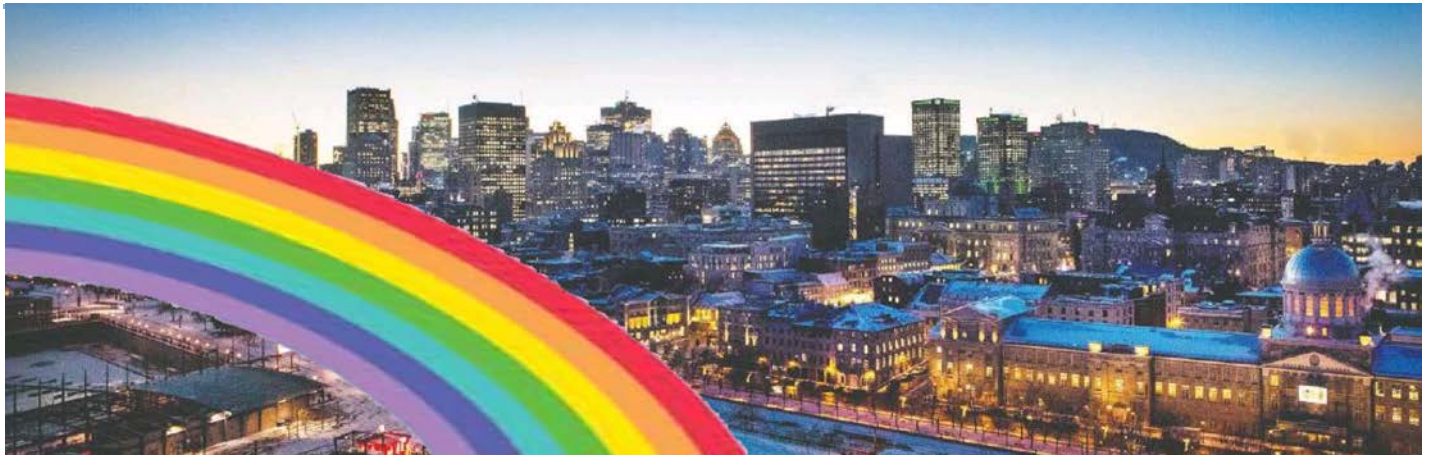
**Next virtual meetings are scheduled for  
May 9 & June 6**

In theory, we have meetings scheduled for  
July 12 (BBQ), August 8, September 12, October 17  
(But we don't know where)

The book sale is scheduled for November 14 at the Espresso,  
The Holiday Feast is scheduled for the 5<sup>th</sup> of December.

**Stay together though we're apart and follow us on the Internet!**

*Really Fine Print: WARP is published quarterly by the Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (MonSFFA), a nonprofit organization of fans interested in sharing their love of science fiction and fantasy. The opinions expressed in WARP are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect those of MonSFFA or the editor. To reprint any article, please contact us first. The use of copyrighted material is generally discouraged; but sometimes unavoidable; our apologies to the copyright holders, no serious infringement is intended. This is an amateur production, and your tolerance is appreciated by your fans.*



### FEATURE ARTICLES

Starfleet Treachery / 5  
World Con Trip Report, II / 7  
Me & My Kindle / 15

### REVIEWS

Reviews and recommended reading & viewing  
while in quarantine / 16

### DEPARTMENTS

You've Got Mail! / 3  
Blast from the Past: WARP 20 / 4  
Convention & Events I'

### MonSFFANDOM

February to March / 3:  
Dispatches from quarantine / 43  
MonSFFun / 7 & 48



*You've Got Mail!*

Dear MonSFFen:

Thanks to all of you for being around so long, to keep getting all these issues of Warp out. Who thought you'd ever see the number 106 on the front cover? Not me, I admit, so thank you for being there for the long haul. A letter of comment is the least I can do.

I have been seeing conventions like Ad Astra and other small cons and events struggle to find space to hold their events and meetings. Toronto has ridiculous prices, but I imagine that Montreal isn't that far behind. Church halls, community centres, even public space in a supermarket...there's got to be a place, even the party room of an apartment building or condominium.

*We have a few possible leads, but now with the pandemic, we can't even go looking at these sites to check for suitability.*

My letter...I did get a table in the Crafters' Corner at Anime North! But now, to see if Ontario follows Quebec in restricting gatherings of 250 people or more because of the COVID-19 coronavirus. That's what killed CostumeCon 38, which was supposed to be on as I write, and if Ontario does the same, that could kill Ad Astra 2020 and Anime North 2020. So far, the coronavirus has been the cause of convention cancellations like Toronto Comicon, Oshawa Comicon, Newmarket Card & Comics

Show, Collecticon in Hamilton, Nadeshicon in Quebec City, and small university gaming conventions in the Rochester area. I suspect this will get worse.

*Montreal has closed down everything to at least July 2. I think it will go on longer than that, even if we "flatten the curve." It will be a slow getting back to normal, with the more essential businesses coming on line first.*

In my letter, I mention a new pubnight, and it is in the downtown area, the first Wednesday of each month. I think we will stick with our own First Monday event in the west end. These days, it is all we can afford. The Valentine's Steampunk and Victorian market was a bust, with few people responding to it.

I have attempted not to torment myself with Worldcon reports in places I can't possibly get to, so I have seen just a few Dublin reports, and they have been mixed. The New Zealand Worldcon should be fun, especially for fans in NZ, Australia and South Africa, but when the Worldcon returns to Washington in 2021, they may have record attendance.

*CoNZeland is going virtual with the tagline: to boldly go there and back again where no world con has gone before! An interesting experiment. I'm almost tempted to join to see what happens. I couldn't afford to go physically. I think we can assume the conventions are all cancelled or postponed to*

*either late autumn or next year. The latest news is not at all encouraging.*

It is late, so off this will go. I need to send you my latest convention list, which has CANCELLED or POSTPONED on many cons, but people need to know. There are some big steampunk events coming up as well, so I should get that information to you, too. Good night, and see you at Ad Astra, I hope.

Yours, Lloyd Penney

*Guy Lillian had some nice words for WARP 106 in Zine Dump 47:*

This issue of the Montreal zine just made this *TZD* under the wire. One aspect I haven't hailed enough in this fine clubzine – that's a genzine put out by a group – is its art: Keith Braithwaite's *Alien* cover is unique, spooky and elegant. Cathy, a dear friend, opens textual matters with a look at *Warps* past, specifically 1992.

### ***BLAST FROM THE PAST: WARP 20, May 1992***



With this issue, the club abandons the unwieldy numbering system of using the month of publication. WARP 20 is proudly announced on the club's first ever colour cover! This stunning art is by Jean-Pierre Normand, a professional illustrator based in Montreal who was also a member of MonSFFA at that time. Interspersed through the pages are exquisite pen and ink drawings by Linda Michaels of Niagara Falls, NY.

From the High Chair, Keith introduced a jaw-dropping suggestion – having two rooms for club meetings! And we're currently having trouble finding one we can actually afford, sigh. A membership that included Jean Pierre and Baird Searls, and the president pondering the need for two rooms to meet the club needs? Those were heady days, my friend!

We were busy beavers back then, too. As well as monthly club meetings, MonSFFA was involved in planning Con\*Cept, TransWARP, answered the phones at the WCFE pledge drive, and volunteered at Creation Con in return for a free fan table. Capucine Plourd was invited to be artist GoH at Canvention, to be held in June in Kitchener, and Keith Braithwaite was confirmed as fan GoH at Maplecon. Thirty-three Klingons and MonSFFen showed up for a special presentation at the Dow Planetarium which was written by yours truly. My, but I was ambitious!

*Bonjour!* An article written by Yolande Rufiange in French about how she rediscovered her love of SF and eventually became a member of MonSFFA, and meeting me at Creation, brought

Barbara Silverman offers the 49<sup>th</sup> & 50<sup>th</sup> chapters of a *Trek* pastiche, one of several fan-written fictions in this issue. Sylvain St.-Pierre writes about space law (attractive topic for me), citing both *Judge Dredd* and *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, then shifts to a Worldcon report illustrated with *beaucoup* photographs. He finishes the zine with accounts of club activity, after Danny Sichel mulls the merits of the Hugo nominees of the past ten years or so. Thus the unique quality of a clubzine: lots of perspectives on lots of SF stuff.

*Thanks so much, Guy, and I will pass the praise on to our writers and artists!*

*I hope MonSFFen will take the time to browse TZD, there are so many interesting fanzines available now with the Internet.*

<https://efanzines.com/ZineDump/index.htm>

*Issue 47 is introduced with heartfelt tributes to Norm Metcalf, Mike Resnick and Steve Stiles.*



Cathy Palmer-Lister

tears to my eyes. Yolande is now in a residence for Alzheimer patients. Sensors has the usual roundup of news, including one interesting snippet, "Hollywood has found a new toy: the director's cut." Paramount was circulating promos for a new ST spin off, Deep Space Nine. The GoHs for Con\*Cept 1992 were announced: Roger Zelazny and Gregory Benford.

Part II of Brian Ekkers' fanfic *Prankster* is well written and still worth reading today. Joe Aspler wrote about alternate histories, Baird Searles about revisiting classic SF through the reprints. Sylvain St-Pierre wrote a survival guide for fans attending a con for the first time. Lots of sound advice even for old hands. Someone wrote a tribute to Isaac Asimov who had passed away at the age of 72 in April.

Under the title *Fandom*, another anonymous member, possibly Keith, wrote about the Star Trek Canada debacle. This was a fan club that initially obtained official status from Paramount, but then everything went wrong. Merchandise promised to members failed to materialize, and the club was accused of unethical, possibly illegal activities. Other clubs, such as Montreal's own Warp 9, run by Chris Chartier, accused Randy Ryborg of intimidation and extortion. Apparently at Creation in Montreal, Ryborg tried to claim 50% of Warp 9's income from newsletter sales and memberships on the grounds that he was official, and Warp 9 wasn't. Quite a story, and at the time of WARP 20, still unresolved with angry fans feeling ripped off. Caveat emptor?

Kevin Holden, Bryan Ekkers, and Szuzanne Bathory contributed to Sci-Fi on Video. Dominique Durocher wrote a two-page article on Japanese anime, Keith wrote a scathing review of the Brent Spiner Creation Con, but Kevin Holden was impressed with the K&L convention in Burlington.

You will find WARP 20 on our website:

[http://www.monsffa.ca/?page\\_id=437](http://www.monsffa.ca/?page_id=437)



# Starfleet Treachery

Barbara Silverman

**The story so far:** Captain Janeway is assigned to search for the Maquis leader, Chakotay. Immediately on entering the Badlands, Janeway's vessel is detected by Chakotay's ship. Negotiations are interrupted when both are hit by a massive displacement wave. Declaring a truce in the face of a greater enemy, the two captains consider their options, but then Janeway is transported to a laboratory. Inexplicably returned to their ships, the captains confer and realize they are each missing a crew member. Cavit is increasing belligerent toward Maquis, to the point of becoming a liability to Janeway. The captains transport over to the Array. There they meet with an old man who refuses to help them recover the missing crew. Back on the Enterprise, Janeway is informed that a nearby G-type star system has an M-class planet, and oddly, the Array is aiming pulses of energy straight at it. Janeway leaves Cavit out of the tactical consultation, further infuriating him. Tuvok tells her the missing crew must be dead, but Janeway will not give up. Evans is sent over to assist in repairs on the Starfleet vessel, but Chakotay warns him to be wary of Cavit. The away team assembled to explore the planet engages the Kazon, and meet Kes and Neelix, learning from them that the Array is the Caretaker who has sent Torres and Kim to the planet. The crew members are found in a clinic and taken to the Maquis ship to be treated by the EMH. Kes relates what she knows of her planet's history. Janeway visits the Maquis ship when informed that Harry and B'Elanna are awake, but they have no further information for her. The Caretaker dies, the away team is stuck on the Array.

## CHAPTER 51

Janeway stared at the object. Rectangular in shape, roughly the same size as one of their ship's main consoles, it had no display panel, no visual controls. The entire surface was black except for one side that contained six strange, unidentifiable symbols, which were reddish-brown in colour.

Completely perplexed, Janeway motioned with her hand as she turned to her security chief. "Tuvok, any idea of how this works?"

Walking around to the side, Tuvok continued scanning with his tricorder. "I believe this to be the main command centre. These symbols are probably either letters or numbers in the Caretaker's language. However, at this moment I cannot tell you what they mean."

The Vulcan studied the instrument in his hand. "It will require time to analyse the system. Perhaps hours or days."

Chakotay tried to keep the irritation and frustration out of his voice. "We might not have days. Will you be able to operate it?" Tuvok turned to the Maquis leader.

"I'm not sure, Commander. However, being able to operate it is one thing, generating enough power to send the ships back is another. I have discovered that the Caretaker was a non-corporeal life form of sporocystian energy. It is my belief that he was himself a source of the power used to run this Array and the displacement wave."

Beside her Janeway heard the Maquis leader utter a small, low groan.

The captain herself fought down the growing sense of dismay. "Tuvok, remain here. Continue your efforts to decipher this unit. It is our only hope of a quick return to the Alpha Quadrant and time is of the essence. The away team is to remain with you."

The captain then focussed her attention on the six-member Starfleet-Maquis team. "Be on the alert. The Caretaker appears to have died, however, at one time he had a companion."

Tuvok raised an eyebrow. "A companion, a mate?"

Janeway turned back to the Vulcan. "Yes. According to the old man she is no longer here, however, we cannot be sure. Keep a sharp watch, I don't want any surprises. Chakotay and I, along with Kes and Neelix, will return to the ship."

She fastened her gaze directly on Paris. "Tom, I want you to also return to the ship. Run a level ten diagnostic on the conn, it must be in perfect working order."

"Yes Captain!" Almost coming to



attention, Tom Paris happily replied.

Janeway smiled to herself. She had noticed how quickly the ex-con, perhaps Starfleet officer, was responding to her orders.

Moving closer to Chakotay, the captain tapped her comm badge. "Transporter room, lock onto my signal and the four around me."

Seconds later they were back onboard The Explorer.

Stepping down off the platform Janeway turned to her Talaxian guest. "Neelix, would you accompany us to the bridge, we need more information on the Kazon and this section of space."

Nervously rubbing his hands together Neelix joined Kes beside the transporter padd. "Certainly, Captain, I know a great deal about what goes on around here. I'll be glad to share it with you."

Moving to the captain's side, Chakotay heaved a small resigned sigh. "Neelix, we might be in need of any star charts you have. Perhaps, later on, we could see them."

Neelix felt sorry for the two commanders. They, and their crews, were so different from the Kazon and the majority of the inhabitants of the area. "Definitely....of course, Commander. Anything, anything at all that I can do to help, just ask."

Leaving the transporter room the five headed for the turbolift. Walking along the corridor Janeway glanced over at Chakotay. "What is the condition of your ship? Will it survive the trip back to the Alpha Quadrant?"

The Maquis leader replied as they entered the lift. "Good question. Certainly not another rough ride like the first one. With certain precautions taken....I think so. At least this time we'll be prepared. What about your ship?"

The captain just looked at Chakotay. The anxiety on her face answered his question.

Reaching the bridge, Kes and Neelix remained by the turbolift while Paris hurried to the conn, and Chakotay quickly went over to the ops station, to fill Evans in on the latest of developments.

Janeway walked over to Cavit who was sitting in the command section. "Any sign of the Kazon?"

He looked up from the report that he had been reading. "So far the Kazon have not returned. We do have warp five speed, however, only for five to ten seconds. Any longer the core becomes unstable. Since we still have damaged systems, Carey is having trouble locating the source of the problem."

The captain managed to suppress a frustrated sigh. If the Kazon arrived with a larger force...."Maintain a close watch on all scans, notify me immediately should the Kazon return. The Caretaker



died while we were over there. Tuvok remained to examine the equipment in hope of using it to return home. Maintain emergency beam-out status. Keep me apprised of the situation, I'll be in my ready room."

She walked over to the railing just above the conn. "Tom, once you're satisfied with conn operations go down to engineering, lend them a hand with the warp core."

"Yes Ma'am!" Concentrating on the panel, Tom Paris replied without raising his head.

Walking over to Chakotay and Evans, the captain noticed the Maquis leader had a strange look on his face.

Chakotay turned to face Janeway. "It appears we have a slight problem with the crews."

"Oh!" She replied quietly. Something in Chakotay's eyes told her that whatever was wrong it would not be serious.

The Maquis leader faced the Starfleet captain. His face and tone were grim as he informed her of the problem. "It would appear that during the battle Harry Kim helped out on my ship. Evidently he likes the way the ship handles."

Only with extreme effort did Janeway maintain a straight face. "Well, Commander, I don't see any problem. My crew likes your ship, your crew likes my coffee. We'll just exchange ships. As Mr. Tuvok would say, that's the logical answer."

No way could Evans suppress a laugh.

Chakotay turned to him. "Don't say another word!"

Evans and Janeway laughed all the harder.

However, down in the command area, first officer Cavit was not amused. Head bent, appearing to study the padd, his face and eyes revealed the dark, stormy passion building within."

Chakotay looked at Janeway. "Okay, I give up, you win."

Janeway tilted her head to the side, her eyes dancing with mischief. "Of course I win, I never play to lose. Come....we better get back to the problem at hand."

Turning away she headed for her ready room, motioning for Kes and Neelix to join them. Chakotay, looking at Evans, started to say something, then changing his mind, he followed the captain.

Once inside, Janeway sat down behind her desk while her two guests sat in the chairs facing the captain.

Chakotay remained standing, the concern on his face deepened the lines of fatigue. "Seska reports there is still no progress on the sensor system. That will be a problem should we be able to return to the Alpha quadrant. If we land in the Badlands we'll be at the mercy of plasma storms. If we land outside the Badlands, well...."

The captain made no comment. She understood the 'well' Chakotay was referring to, meaning Starfleet or more importantly the Cardassians. Instead she addressed Kes and Neelix. "Would you care for something to drink?"

Neelix sat perched on the edge of his chair. "Thank you, Captain. Would it be possible for us to have a drink of water. It is such a treat having so much on hand."

Folding her hands in her lap, Kes settled back in her chair. "Down in the Ocampo compound I never thought about water. What life would be like without it. Living with the Kazon, I learned how important it can be."

As the captain started to stand up Chakotay held up his hand. "I'll attend to this. Would you care for a cup of coffee?"

Janeway looked up gratefully. "You're a mind reader, thanks." She turned back to Neelix and Kes. "We take water for granted,

wasting it without thought. A long time ago, on my planet, many people did not care. They polluted and destroyed much of our fresh water systems. Now it's just the opposite. Fortunately we came to our senses in time, realizing what a valuable resource we had."

Chakotay walked over carrying a tray containing two glasses of water and two coffees. After handing the water to Neelix and Kes, he placed one of the cups on the desk, near the captain. Taking the second cup for himself, the Maquis leader put the tray down, off to the side.

Picking up her coffee Janeway leaned back in her chair. She looked up at the Maquis leader. "If we return to the Alpha Quadrant our truce will remain in effect until both crews are safe. That includes maintaining the tactical link until another Maquis ship can assist you."



For a moment Chakotay stared at the Starfleet captain, then moving a chair from the wall to the desk he sat down.

The Talaxian held up his glass. "There are some who would kill for this. You people live in such luxury."

The captain did not reply. Seated in the comfort of her ready room, a fresh cup of coffee in her hand, what could she say? She knew what Neelix had said was true. "Tell us about the Kazon."

After drinking some of the water Neelix held the glass in both hands. "Well....there are various factions, each headed by a Maje. Jabin is the leader of the Kazon-Olga sect, which you ran into down on the planet. The Kazon territory is huge and changes from day-to-day. Depending on which sect is where and which group won the day's fighting, Each faction fights the other, stealing what they can, grabbing the other's territory for their own. They are not the most friendly of people."

Chakotay heaved a deep sigh. "That....we already know. Are they open to reason or negotiation?"

Neelix shook his head. "Only if they have the advantage. Even then....they cannot be trusted."

Not liking what she was hearing Janeway drummed her fingers on the cup. "What about other planets and species around here. Is there any type of central authority?"



The Talaxian replied sadly. "In this section the Kazon rule. There are very few peaceful planets, only those powerful enough to defend themselves against the Kazon and the Vidiians. I'm afraid the majority of the species are best avoided or at least approached with caution."

Chakotay exchanged an unhappy glance with Janeway. "Who are these Vidiians?"

After taking another long drink of water Neelix replied to the question. "They have the most advanced technology around here, and you must avoid them at all costs. They suffer from a disease called the Phage, surviving by harvesting organs to replace their own."

In total shock Janeway looked over at Chakotay. Running his hand through his hair, the look on the face of the Maquis leader said it all.

Janeway finally found her voice. "All right, what are you and Kes planning to do?"

Neelix gave a small shrug. "I guess take my ship, avoid Kazon and Viddian scouting parties. Try to reach a safe sector outside their territory."

Chakotay did not like what he was hearing. "You say their territory is large, how long will it take until you are safe?"

Neelix thought for a moment. "I can't be sure, months for sure, perhaps a year or more. I have a few tricks up my sleeve."

Janeway had no doubt of that. "Neelix, for the time being why don't you and Kes remain on board. We will supply you with all the food and water that your ship can carry. I would like to talk things over with Commander Chakotay, see if we can come up with a safer solution for you and Kes."

Holding out his hand to his companion Neelix jumped to his feet. "Come on, Kes, might as well enjoy ourselves while we can." Quickly the two exited the ready room.

After they left, Chakotay slumped in his seat. "We are in a predicament."

Janeway nodded. "I know! We can't just leave them."

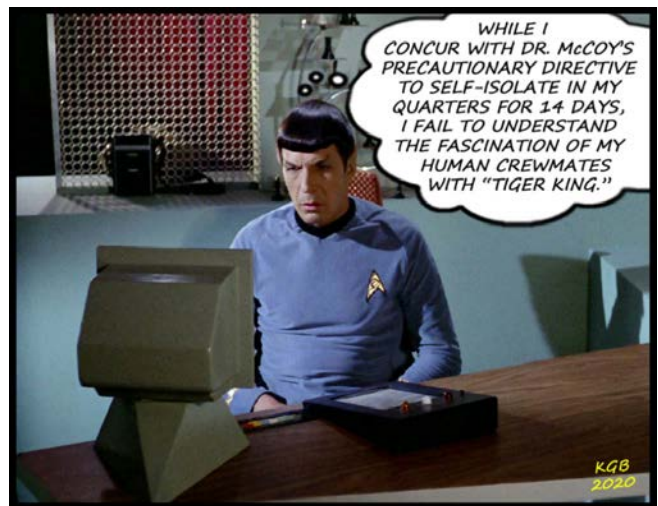
The Maquis leader looked at the captain. "No, we can't. However, I wasn't referring just to Neelix and Kes. We can't leave the Array!"

The captain answered with just two words. "I know!"



## MonSFFun

Keith has been posting comics on our website. In case you missed them, we are re-printing some of them in WARP. I have a feeling there may be more on the way, ;- ) so do keep checking into [www.monsffa.ca](http://www.monsffa.ca) . –editor



# a report on worldcon 77 sylvain st-pierre

## PART 2

### THE COUNTRYSIDE

**A**ugust 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

With the Worldcon now officially over, we had enough time on our hands for a full day trip outside of Dublin. We came across a nice little itinerary that combined both historical and natural sites around the Wicklow Mountains, due south of the capital. The tour unfolded in the reverse of the usual order, but that turned out to be a good thing because it gave us the best weather for the portion spent mostly outdoors.



*The bus was comfy. Right-sided drive, of course.*

In my opinion, the highlight was the visit of the **Glendalough Monastic Complex**, parts of which are over a thousand years old. The adjoining cemetery is delightfully creepy even in full daylight.



*So many centuries in those stones!*

A walk in the nearby **forest**, by contrast, feels much like a dream. The old moss-covered trees are eerily twisted and I could almost swear I caught sight of a fairy or two looking at us from behind a gnarled stump. Cathy and I went all the way to

the Upper Lake and back, and it's nice to know that we are still in good enough shape to do that.



*Fairies, leprechaun and trolls, Oh My!*

The tour company had recently added a **sheep dogs demo** to the itinerary, it proved both entertaining and instructive. Did you know that each dog has its own set of whistled commands, so they know which one the shepherd is addressing?



*Cute AND smart.*

On our way to the next stop, we went through areas that are surprisingly similar to our own Laurentian Mountains in look and feel, and at least some Irish immigrants to Quebec must have felt a pang of homesickness after they crossed over.

The **medieval city of Kilkenny** turned out to be well worth the trip. Not only was the town – which at one time was the capital of Ireland – very nice in itself, but it also sported a well-maintained genuine **Castle**, full of many beautiful art and treasures. Given the size of the thing, it was easy to understand how the former owners went bankrupt and eventually had to cede it to the State who, it must be said, has done a fantastic restoration job.

At the guide's recommendation, we were careful to avoid engaging in any sport-related conversation with natives, as they were somewhat grouchy after having lost an important hurley match to a neighbouring town.





*A very nice medieval town with all the trimmings...*



*Including a full size castle. Only the monster-filled moat was missing.*

The return to Dublin was just in time to pick up our clothes at the launderette where we had left them. We had one last local

dinner before going to bed early, being scheduled to leave at 6:30 the following morning.

*Believe it or not, launderettes are an actual thing.*



## August 21<sup>st</sup> - ONWARDS TO NORTHERN IRELAND

We did not know it at the time of booking, but not taking the train as originally planned turned out to be a good decision. The tracks were undergoing repairs and we would have had to switch to a bus for part of the journey.

It is sadly well known that Ireland is divided between the independent Republic and Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom. Crossing between the two was really a non-event, as the Brexit was still months away at the time and we would not have noticed the paint-splattered border sign if it had not been pointed out by our tour guide.

We had to suffer yet another unexpected change of plans: because of a leaking *tyre*, we started rather than ended the tour with a visit of the **Belfast City Hall**, which turned out to be a nice stately building with a number of interesting historical exhibits. It is fascinating to see the difference in outlook between how the separation from Great Britain was seen here and in Dublin.



*Yes, they have a statue of Queen Victoria. too.*

We then made a brief picture stop near the ruins of **Dunluce Castle**. This interesting structure, abandoned after the kitchen fell into the sea, served as inspiration for the Great Castle of Pike in the *Game of Thrones* series.



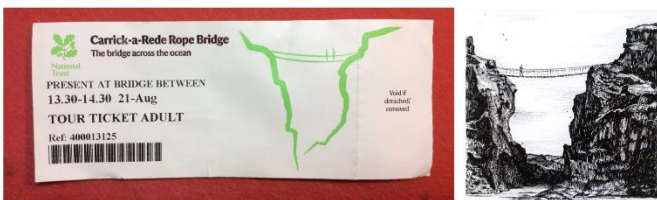
*Dunluce Castle: definitely a fixer-upper.*

It was rainy and blustery when we came to the **Giant's Causeway** but we could not pass visiting such a famous place.



*The giant was not there, but I can't blame him: the weather was terrible.*

Our itinerary also included the crossing of the **Garrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge**, but horizontal rain made this attraction somewhat less than attractive. The few stalwart souls on the bus who tried it came back drenched to the bone.



*I still have some of my preservation instinct left, thank you very much!*

Fortunately, the rain stopped for our visit of **The Dark Hedges**, an exceptionally old and scenic double row of trees, also made famous by the *Game of Thrones* TV series. We had the good luck of being the only tour bus on site, which is apparently very rare.



*The hauntingly beautiful Dark Hedges.*

The final stretch of road through the **Glens of Antrim** proved quite picturesque, and it is really a shame that there was not more sun to admire the gently rolling landscape.

## BELFAST

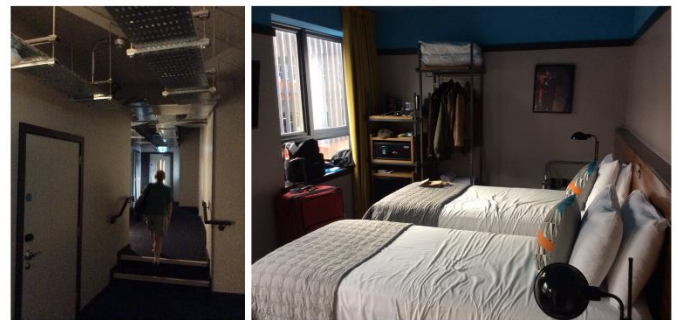
Because of the change in route, we were not able to disembark on the street right next to our hotel as expected and had to walk a bit.



*The Belfast Coat of Arms.*

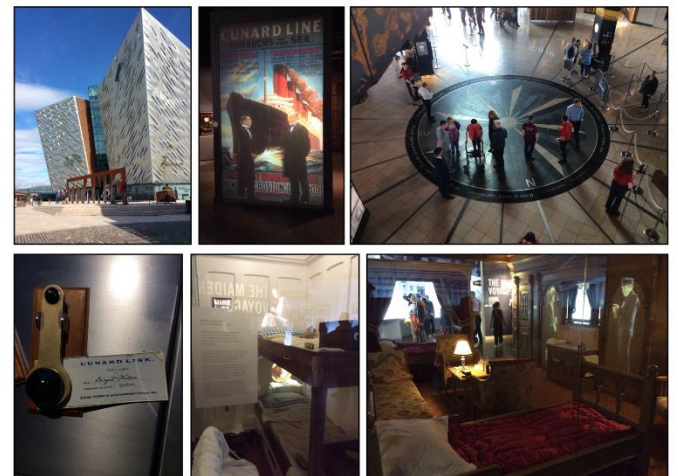
A word of warning: never believe an Irish native when they tell you that something is “[insert number] minutes away”. You can safely multiply their estimate by three and still be short. Trust me, we tested this multiple times and theorize that there is a hint of truth in all those stories where characters come back from the fairy world years after they went in.

When we finally reached it, **The Bullit Hotel**, turned out to be a bit of a special place. Best described as “industrial chic”, the place was clean but not very conveniently laid out. The location, however, was superb and within easy reach of most areas of interest.



*Something of a mix. Not the worst place I've stayed at, but far from the best too.*

Quite a few mundane places in Belfast are worthy of a visit. Foremost amongst them is the **Titanic Museum**, which is very vast and comprehensive. I very much liked the reconstruction of cabins from all three classes, and am so *very* glad that ocean travel has greatly improved since those days.



*You need to set aside several hours to thoroughly enjoy this museum.*

In a berth a short distance away can be found the **Nomadic**, a lovingly restored former Titanic tender. The hologram-like projection of the bartender is a really nice touch.



*The Nomadic is the last White Star ship still afloat.*

For those who prefer military ships, the **HMS Caroline** is a meticulously preserved light destroyer with an excellent hi-tech audio tour that will keep you entertained for hours.



*The HMS Caroline. Not to be missed if you like historical warships.*

Fans will especially appreciate that the tour stops at the quaint, but somewhat isolated, **C.S. Lewis Square**, which has several interesting Narnia-themed sculptures.



*I had to swear not to tell what I saw inside the wardrobe.*

There is some shopping of note to be done in Belfast. The city has its own branch of **Forbidden Planet** (lots of *Game of Thrones* stuff); but also the last brick-and-mortar **HMV Store** on the island (although their stock of vinyl records was severely depleted after Cathy left). There is a **Disney Store** for those who insist, but we just went by without stopping.

If you are into soccer, several shops are devoted to the merchandise of specific clubs. I was truly amazed at the array of things you can put a brand name on. Even the mundane stuff is of interest, featuring unfamiliar styles and trademarks.



*Something for all tastes and all purses.*

Should you be in the mood for whimsical dining, **Granny Annie's Kitchen** is the place to go. Part of a chain, this pub/restaurant offers a quite amusing *décor* and the food is excellent. But one can question the wisdom of putting strange objects upside-down on the ceiling in an establishment where Guinness flows so freely...



*Weird, but fun.*

Simply walking around, especially near the Lagan River, will provide you with numerous pleasant discoveries. Belfast is not very large and, provided you have a good map and do not trust the natives for direction, is a fun place to explore.



*Here and there in Belfast.*

If it rains on a weekend, you can spend a few hours roaming the stalls of the **St. George's Market**, which has a very large selection of handicraft and specialty food items to offer. Those with a sweet tooth, especially, will love the numerous traditional British treats available.



*So many beautiful things to eat, wear and play with!*

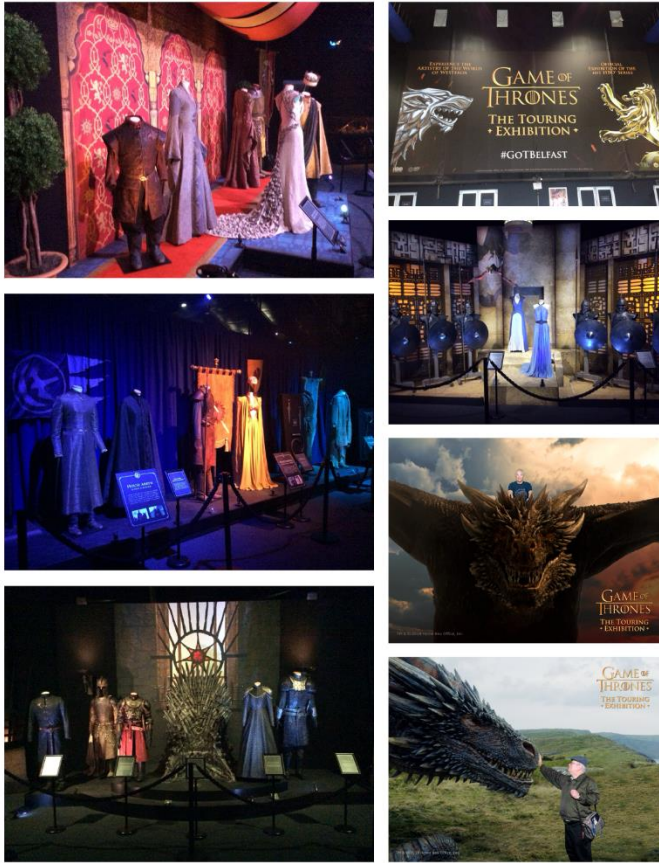
The **Game of Thrones** franchise is one of the major employers in Northern Ireland, second only to the government, and their presence felt all over. A few years ago, they installed beautiful faux-stained glass windows in various parts of the city, and they are worth seeking out.



*Try to see them all.*

We also had the good fortune of being able to visit the roaming **Game of Thrones Exhibit**, a well-crafted exposition based on the TV show. This was the next to last weekend before they moved to Germany, so it was definitely good timing as far as we were concerned.

We went very early in the morning and had practically the whole place to ourselves. Do not miss it if it ever comes to a city near you, the costumes alone are fantastic and a wealth of information is provided for each.



*They had a petting zoo. I got to stroke Fluffy's snout.*

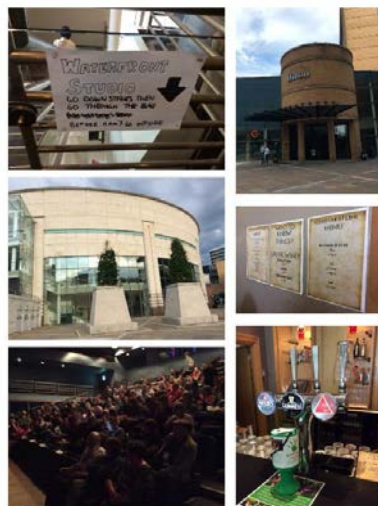
## TITANCON

Aside from taking advantage of the fact that we were already on the island, there was one major reason why we included Belfast in our itinerary: the city was host to the Eurocon for 2019.



This major regional convention, which moves to a new country every year, was purposely held so that it would immediately follow the Worldcon.

In fact, the later ended a day later than usual and the former started a day earlier just so that fans would find it easier to attend both. A sobering example of Fannish cooperation.

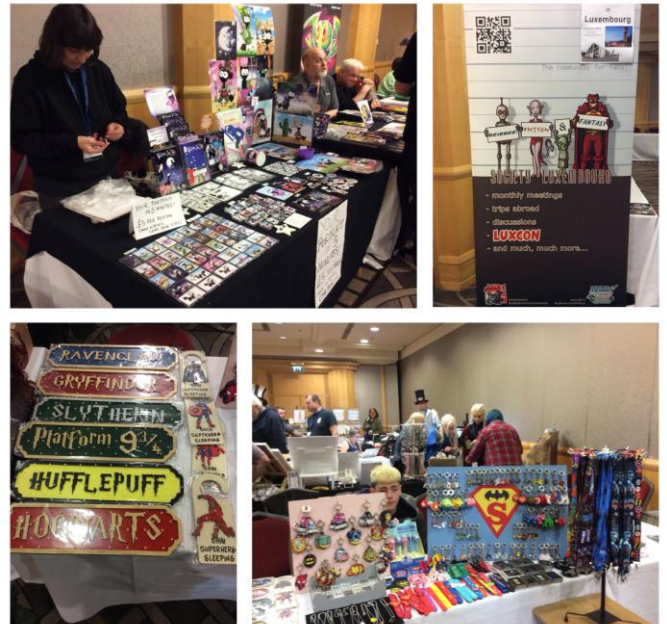


*The Hilton/Waterfront Congress Centre.*

Because of the relatively small acreage of the facilities, attendance was limited to 700 participants and booked solid on opening. Yet another example of the importance of preparing in advance.

Given its size, the Hilton Waterfront, augmented by an auditorium in the connected Congress Centre, proved quite adequate. As befits a proper British Fannish event, the Con Suite was in fact the well-stocked centrally-located bar.

Despite its small dimensions, the Traders' Hall was very decently garnished. Most of the tables offered delightfully exotic local specialty items and handicraft, which was most appreciated by us foreigners.



*The Traders' Hall: quality over quantity.*

As is often the case in non-North-American cons where the working language is English, many of the attendants were from the United States and Canada. I am happy to report that all were at their best behaviour. In fact, it was nice to glance at a fan and not be able to determine the country, or even continent, of origin at first glance.

There was no formal Masquerade, but several Hall Costumes were to be seen over the duration.



*Some of the more colourful fans from near and far.*

The content of the con itself was very decent, with numerous entertaining panels and workshops. The *Game of Thrones* franchise held a considerable weight in the topics, but was by no means the exclusive theme.



*A lot to see and do. The panels were of both the serious and the whimsical kind. Cathy made a leather purse for her gold coins during one of the workshops.*

The Closing Ceremony was also the occasion for handing out various European-specific genre awards, and I must confess that I was not familiar at all with most of them. I am nevertheless certain that they were all well-deserved and look forward to eventually get familiar with the works cited.



*The Closing Ceremony.*

Following TitanCon's tradition, the last day was devoted to a special outing of *Game of Thrones*-related locations for those interested. This year, they went to the Giant's Causeway. We had not reserved for that in advance, as we knew that we would have already visited it on our way in. It turned out that they had much nicer weather than we did, but that day was far from lost for us as we took a very nice tour of the streets of Belfast, seeing many corners that we had missed previously.

The evening concluded with a GOT Feast where the food was abundant and excellent. Nobody died during the event, which was both a relief and a bit of disappointment.



*The Closing Feast was very lavish. I wore my chainmail undershirt and chose the non-poison option.*

## RETURNING HOME

Finally, the dreaded day when we had to leave the Emerald Isle came to be. While it would have been possible to fly directly from Belfast, doing so would have been enormously more expensive, so we needed to return to Dublin. The coach took only a couple of hours, proved very comfortable and even had decent WiFi. We again did well to secure our tickets in advance, as it was full and the people hoping to buy passage at the door were left behind.

The aerial portion of the trip was mercifully devoid of any delays or serious inconvenience and I was able to drop in my own bed in Laval just before Midnight. Tired, but happy.

## FUTURE WORLDCONS

Preparing a Worldcon is a major undertaking, so site voting is done two years in advance. We already mentioned the locations for 2020 and 2021 in the last issue, but that information is already obsolete. As you are no doubt aware, CoNZealand will now be a virtual convention because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Talk about reality catching up with fiction!



*See you virtually there!*

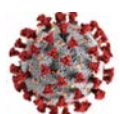
When I started writing Part One of this article, **Chicago** (Illinois) was also the only credible contestant for 2022; but since then, **Jeddah** (Saudi Arabia) has jumped in and it looks very much like they are serious, if unlikely to win.

Two Thousand Twenty Three looks like an even more interesting race; New Orleans and Spokane have dropped out, but **Memphis** (Tennessee), **Nice** (France) and **Chengdu** (China) are still lined up. While the latter is without a doubt the most exotically enticing, the travel costs, current political situation with the host country and fear of Coronavirus will probably turn off many North Americans.

Personally I am routing for Nice, as there is plenty to see in Southern France and I have never been there. As a bonus, it hardly ever rains in this area in August.

A bit further down in the future, the city of **Glasgow**, Scotland, is currently running unopposed for 2024. Having been there once, I can attest that there is a lot to see and do in the area. Plus, I actually like haggis (really!).

All of this is a bit too far away to tell if I will be able to attend any of those, but one can dream...



## Me and my Kindle

or ...

### How I spent the lockdown building up a library of freebie eBooks Joe Aspler

*Important note: Ownership of a Kindle, Kobo, or equivalent reader is not necessary for the enjoyment of your eBook collection. These can be read with free apps on your computer.*

I spent my career as a research scientist in the Canadian paper industry. More than that, my field of research was the science and engineering of printing. I spent many long days (and nights) in printing plants watching newspapers, magazines, books, comics, and other material being printed. And yet ... I love my eBooks, and I love my Kindle. It never left my side during the quarantine/lockdown. And you can learn to love your eBooks too, at minimal cost.

I bought my first eBook a few years ago. Simultaneously I downloaded free apps that let me read them on my computer. My initial eBooks were books that simply were not available on paper. Then, I needed a reference book for a consulting contract. The paper version was five times the price of the eBook – so the eBook choice was easy.

After the first few books, I found out just how inconvenient it is to read an entire book while staring at the computer screen. And so – encouraged by my son – I invested in a Kindle reader.

How do you build an eBook library at low cost? Yes, you have to pay for current titles. Yes, it seems like a lot ... which is why I have bought very few current titles. Yes, it seems unfair that the price of an eBook isn't much less than the price of a paperback book. However you would be surprised at how little the printing cost is as part of the total price of, say, an \$11.95 paperback.

Do not, repeat, do not, go to sites that offer current titles “for free”. That’s not fair to living authors, and besides, you don’t know what else you may “download” from those sites. But don’t worry. There are plenty of sites where you can find more than enough public domain, free eBooks to keep you happy for a very long time.

The first thing you need is a piece of freeware, Calibre, from <https://calibre-ebook.com/>

This lets you centralize your eBook collection. The software also lets you convert among different eBook and digital formats. If you use Amazon, it lets you download non-Amazon material onto your Kindle, since Kindle only synchronizes with Amazon purchases.

The first place to look is ... Amazon itself. Amazon has a huge list of free Kindle books. Start with the Amazon Classics line. Technically, you have to “buy” the books, but you pay \$0.00. There is a wide range of public domain SF and fantasy classics along with many other classics of world literature. Material I’ve downloaded for free include novels by Jules Verne, H.G. Wells, Thomas Wolfe, Jane Austen, Arthur Conan Doyle, and James Joyce, plus a whole bunch of books on the history of science, to name only a few.

One freebie that I haven’t yet had a chance to read has a fascinating title: *Sherlock Holmes: Adventures in the Realms of*

*Steampunk, Mechanical Men and Otherworldly Endeavours*. Another that I’ve wanted to read for a long time – also an Amazon freebie – *The Battle of Dorking*, an 1871 novel about a German invasion of Britain. Yet another that I read when I was at McGill and haven’t seen since: *The reign of George VI, 1900-1925*, a future history novel published in 1763.

Amazon also has bargain prices on eBooks that may technically be in the public domain, but are still hard to find. I picked up the complete works of Lord Dunsany for \$4.99. If that eBook were printed on paper, it would be well over 2,000 pages long. The Jorkens stories (out of print and insanely expensive in their paper versions) alone were worth the price. These were the forerunner of the tall tale/fantasy/horror/mystery story told in a tavern/pub/bar/gentleman’s club, a sub-genre inhabited by many writers including Arthur C. Clarke, Spider Robinson, Isaac Asimov, Larry Niven, and others.

Another go-to: Amazon Megapacks for \$0.99 to \$1.99 each. Some of this material is in the public domain, and some is not. Each volume is either a collection of stories and novels, or a single author collection. Examples: the Henry Kuttner Megapack (\$1.14), the E.E. “Doc” Smith Megapack (\$1.14), the Robert Silverberg Megapack, the complete fiction of H.P. Lovecraft (\$0.99), and more.

I found a reasonably priced (\$1.30) Kindle copy of *The Sunless City*, a 1905 science fiction novel by J.E. Preston Muddock, author of hundreds of dime novels. This is the classic potboiler that introduced Josiah Flintabbatey Flonatin, whose nickname was used for the first city ever named after a science fiction character: the town of Flin Flon, Manitoba. I passed through Flin Flon once. At least, I landed at the Flin Flon airport on my way to the paper mill at The Pas, Manitoba

Amazon has freebies from current authors as well. Some are hooks – they’ll give you Book 1 of a series, in the hope of getting you to buy the rest of the series. Other Amazon freebies are by authors you’ve never heard of. Having sampled a few of those (or looked at the lurid covers), I can understand why I’ve never heard of them.

The next stop is Gutenberg.org; the original public domain download site. They have tens of thousands of volumes which you can download in various formats, including plain text, PDF, ePub, and Mobi (Kindle). One problem with Gutenberg is that since it is volunteer-run, the typography and layout of some of their freebies can leave a lot to be desired. My Gutenberg downloads include the works of Stanley G. Weinbaum (1902-1935), one of the most original SF writers of his time. Had he not died tragically of cancer in his early 30s, he would have become one of the giants of our genre.

Some publishers offer free eBook downloads. Check out Tor

and Baen. Let me know if you find any others!

The Internet Archive is another source for thousands of public domain eBooks and magazines, with further information on where to find eBooks that are not in the public domain. A typical example is the complete run of *Amazing Stories*, at <https://archive.org/details/amazingstoriesmagazine>

This site lists more freebie web sites, including Gutenberg and Amazon. A couple of the links are dead:

<https://ebookfriendly.com/download-free-kindle-books/>

I'll conclude with a word of caution: What defines "public domain"? The short answer is ... there is no short answer. Copyright law has always been a Byzantine field, and recent changes have not made it any simpler. So be warned that there are people who dispute the "public domain" label on some of the sites.

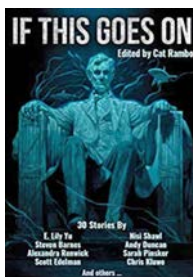
## REVIEWS : From the quarantine Zone

### If This Goes On, Edited by Cat Rambo Reviewed by Sylvain St-Pierre

While browsing in the Worldcon 77 Traders' Room in Dublin last summer, I can across a quite unexpected book. I first thought that it was a reprint of Robert Heinlein's 1940 novella, but it turned out to be even more interesting.

This 2019 compilation of 30 short stories is a delight, even taking into account the rather grim theme linking them. What if all the negative trends that we are currently labouring under should keep going and spiral out of control? Things like pollution, the loss of net neutrality, nationalism, global warming and so on?

We could be heading for a world like the one described in *Green Glass: A Love Story*, by E. Lily Yu, where a very rich woman has to go through incredible hurdles to be able to serve



genuine ice cream at her wedding reception, because uncontaminated milk is nearly impossible to find and the vanilla plant is virtually extinct, among other problems.

*Twelve Histories Scrawled in the Sky*, by Aimee Ogden, expands on the concept of a certain President who keeps rewriting facts. Official history is rewritten several times a day, and citizens are expected to be fluent in the latest version, no matter how much of a departure it is from earlier ones.

For it is painfully obvious that the trends which are expanded upon are those that started with the election of the 45<sup>th</sup> POTUS, even if he is mentioned by name in only one of the stories (*The Dayveil Gambit*, which has a future baloney hamburger named after him).

So, a bit on the depressing side, yes, but cleverly done and entertaining. As long as these are not actual predictions...

### Illustrating Batman : 80 years of Comics and Pop Culture Reviewed by Fernando Novo



The Society of Illustrators / Museum of Illustration had an exhibition on the illustrations and collectables for the comic book hero, Batman. The Museum of Illustration exhibits (3 different collections) are spread out over 4 floors of the building.

Starting from the late 1930's to modern times we witness the evolution of Batman. Original artworks and cartoons are hanging off the walls displayed by different time periods (or evolution periods) of the hero. We can see this over the different decades, 30's, 40's, 50's and of course the 60's evolution from the tv series. The more recent decades are also covered in the exhibition.



Then there is the Chip Kidd's obsessive collection of Batman material also on display. This includes the limited

editions (2006 & 2013) Batman Black & White sketch covers commissioned by Chip Kidd.

The third exhibition is the original artwork of Japanese Bat-Manga! The artwork by illustrator Jairo Kuwata brings a completely different outlook on the comic book hero. This is the first time that a substantial portion of the original artwork has been shown in North America.

Over all I spent about 90 minutes going throughout the 4 different levels of the museum. The staff was helpful and happy to help out. They do serve meals at the restaurant (Tues-Sat) starting at 11:00am. The Entrance price was a reasonable \$15US and a gift shop is available too on the ground floor. The museum is located at 128 East 63rd Street in New York City. They regularly hold different expositions of illustrators art work throughout the year. Also they hold monthly meetings on different illustrating themes.

PS - Unfortunately the Batman exhibit ended October 12, 2019. But you can view Fern's video here:

<https://tinyurl.com/yau3wdt8>

And there are many pictures here:

<http://www.monsjfa.ca/?p=9286>



*Nothing this year that particularly thrilled me – but that can happen, depending on the demographics of the nominating population. However, unlike certain people, I accept that this can legitimately happen. Let's see what there is anyway.*

**“And Now His Lordship Is Laughing”**, by Shiv Ramdas. How much do you know about the Bengal Famine of 1943? It was terrible, and although historians argue over how many different factors contributed, the British regime definitely, and intentionally, made things much, much worse. Millions of people died. Apa is an old Bengali grandma who is very angry, and who uses her tiny bit of magic to get horrible horrible revenge. Very, very rich imagery of what it's like to be a grandma and of how horrible famine is – I could go on at length about the ways in which famine is worse than just starvation. Ramdas does. Justifiably so. But... ultimately, there's not much more than that. Famine is terrible. Colonialism is terrible. Yes. Granted. Points that need to be made, lessons that need to be learned. Ramdas tells this story very skillfully and cleanly. Lots of craft, and easy to follow. But there isn't really very much.

**“As the Last I May Know”**, by SL Huang. There was once a proposal – not made by anyone who had the power to implement it – that the nuclear codes should be surgically implanted in the heart of someone, a child perhaps, who would accompany the President of the United States everywhere. That way, if the President ever wanted to use the codes, he would first have to kill a child. This might, under certain administrations, perhaps not be as great a deterrent as one might think – but no matter, the premise here is that a small country, the only one in the world to have had “sere” bombs used on it, has adopted this policy to restrain its own use of seres. Nyma is the 10-year-old girl who, in keeping with the traditions of her Order, has the codes in her heart, and is the new President's constant companion. And the problem with being a head of government is that other nations will learn everything they can about you, and use that as the basis for their own decisions about dealing with you. Sad little story about war, and about dehumanizing the enemy, and about what this can do to leaders. Strong characterization (which is, of course, the point). Doesn't lead where you think it might – but then, that might be because of where Huang decided to stop.

**“Blood is Another Word for Hunger”**, by Rivers Solomon. Sully is a slave in the American South who kills her owners in their sleep, and then discovers that this had supernatural consequences... namely, she spontaneously becomes pregnant, comes to term nearly instantly, and gives birth to an adult. And this occurs *every* time she kills someone: a life for a life. It's a nicely grotesque concept, especially as Sully's “children” start to form a community of their own, but I'm not sure I like what Solomon does with it. I've praised authors for rich and vivid imagery before, but the details on which Solomon focuses make me a bit uncomfortable. And we don't really see enough about what *happens*.

**“A Catalog of Storms”**, by Fran Wilde. This is not the first time I've read a story by Fran Wilde and had trouble understanding what was happening. There's a small coastal town whose inhabitants are at war with the weather, and some of them are “weathermen”, who have the power to cancel the weather out by yelling at it – describing and naming it – except the weather keeps inventing new weapons so the weathermen have to invent new names and descriptions. These are really really poetic. Tons and tons of metaphors. And also sometimes the weathermen can fight off the weather by turning into weather themselves (the narrator's great-aunt turned into lightning!!!), but once you do that you can't ever really go back to your family. And... I dunno. Family, loss, maturity, sacrifice, man-against-nature... lots of important literary themes, which I'm okay with, but they feel like they're smothering the narration.

**“Do Not Look Back, My Lion”**, by Alix Harrow. Eefa is a healer in a barbarian horde; she is also beloved husband (because *historically* the word ‘husband’ was not gender-linked) to the warrior Talaan, the Lion. She takes care of Talaan, heals her injuries, mends her armor, and raises the children who Talaan births. She also watches miserably as, time and again, Talaan goes out to war at the behest of the Emperor, taking slaves and leaving corpses – sometimes of their opponents, but sometimes of Talaan's own children who followed her into war and glorious death. Talaan is pregnant again, and tells Eefa that this time it'll be different. It will. This time she won't dedicate her baby to the God of War. Really. She promises. An interesting take on the “blood and thunder” subgenre, from the viewpoint of someone who's basically a “camp follower”, but a depressing one.

**“Ten Excerpts from an Annotated Bibliography on the Cannibal Women of Ratnabar Island”**, by Nibedita Sen. I like clever stories. The ‘scholarly document’ technique is one I particularly enjoy, as it portrays a much larger world than would be found within a more standard narrative, even as it paradoxically omits otherwise-important information. This is a clever story, and subtle. It uses ‘scholarly document’, and uses it well – possibly *too* well, though: the story of the (possibly) parthenogenetic, (probably) shapeshifting, (definitely) cannibalistic Ratnabari, of how the British mostly massacred them and took the surviving children away to raise, and of how this backfired horribly, is outlined in only the broadest strokes. There's too much cultural analysis and not enough historiography. That (like with **“As the Last I May Know”**) I want to know more, is good; that I feel Sen didn't tell us enough, is not.



I love plague fiction...especially zombie plague but other plagues are good too, for nice after the apocalypse settings.

Comic books have plenty of plagues. Ignoring Marvel zombies, they are typically just diseases that kill you... Legacy virus for mutants... but there are two different super villains who want to turn everyone into dinosaur men with a genetic engendered plague, Sauron in X-Men and Dr Stegorn in Spiderman. And the Lizard wants to turn everyone into lizard men like himself...there is one Spiderman videogame where all of New York is infected with little venom symbionts. And a comic story where all of New York is infected with a plague that turns everyone into spider mutant things.

The zombie genre of post apocalyptic novels and videogames exploded in The late 2000/early 2010's. There are still really good ones from before then, but having lots come out means a lot of comparisons can be done and the good stuff can easily be separated from the garbage.

Biohazard/Resident Evil is the first zombie game series and all the biohazards are based on viruses, parasites like leeches or tape worms or fungi. My favourite video game is (prototype). It's a zombie virus game where you are the most powerful viral mutant around with all kinds of awesome superpowers...before the twist when it turns out...you are the virus...

My favourite after the apocalypse Zombie book is probably Feed, the first book of the Newsflesh series... The other two in the trilogy are not that great but the first one!!!! The same author

wrote a bunch of short stories in the 'verse...but only two I liked...one took place in a young children's school, and is about the best piece of horror I've ever read,(the day the dead came to show and tell) and the other one took place at The San Diego ComicCon (the last stand of the California brown coats). That second one happens just as the zombie plague hits... None of these stories have happy endings... But they all have survivors...though not many in the short stories.

**Paula Dufour**

Regarding plagues in science fiction, Connie Willis' Hugo and Nebula winning novel "Doomsday Book" is a time travel story with plague at both ends.

This was the first of her novels about the "Oxford Historians": a group that researches history the old fashioned way – first hand. Time travel is a thing in the mid-21st century, subject to not fully understood rules about not interfering with history.

In this story, a major flu epidemic causes chaos in Oxford in the mid-21st century. One of their historians is supposed to be sent to Medieval England, but an error lands her years off course, to 1348: the middle of the Black Death.

**Joe Aspler**

Be sure to check in to Sylvain St-Pierre's on line presentation on plage fiction on our website: <http://www.monsffa.ca/?p=10226>

---

**Movies to pass the time**

In the past month a few sci-fi and fantasy movies have been on my mind.

**Surrogates:** In the near future, people live their lives free of pain, danger and complications through robotic representations of themselves, called "surrogates."

I'm not saying everyone should have their own surrogate but they would be very useful right now.

**Ready Player One:** In 2045, people seek regular escape from life through the virtual reality entertainment universe called OASIS (Ontologically Anthropocentric Sensory Immersive Simulation). I'm sure that at times like these people would love to be able to

hook themselves up and socialize as much as they want.

**The Birds:** The movie focuses on a series of sudden and unexplained violent bird attacks on the people in a small town.

I'm not saying we're in danger but without people and vehicles to scare them off, I'm seeing a lot more wild animals. There is an increase in squirrels, crows and I even saw a wild turkey in my backyard. It ran off before I could get a picture.

I also saw a crow (or close cousin) chase off a squirrel, defending its feeding ground. At least various critters won't get hit trying to cross boulevards and highways.

**Josée Bellemare**

---

**MonSFFAndom: February to April**

**February**

The club held its well-attended February meeting on the 8th, with **Danny Sichel** opening proceedings. By broadening our definition of what counts as science fiction by just a little, Danny began, much of what is not generally thought of as SF, we can label *as* science fiction!

Sesame Street, for example, is not regarded as an SF show, despite its human characters interacting with the decidedly non-human Muppet characters. Several of these Muppets are monsters,

or animals having the amazing capability of human speech; one is even a vampire!

The whimsical creatures of Dr. Seuss' Horton Hears a Who, meanwhile, inhabit Whoville, a city that exists on a spec of dust! These Whos also appear at Christmas, annoying the green-furred, mountain-dwelling Grinch with their noisy, festive cheer. Both the Whos and the Grinch are something other than human, as are the Once-ler and Lorax, characters in Seuss' celebrated story

**Keith Braithwaite**

about the plight of the environment. In *The Cat in the Hat*, the titular anthropomorphic cat releases two beings – Thing One and Thing Two – to wreak playful havoc in the home of two human children before employing advanced technology in the form of an amazing machine to clean up the mess made!

And so, consider: a city of microscopic proportions, assorted bizarre, sentient creatures of varying types, a machine of astounding robotic capabilities – this is all science fiction!

Even when speaking of live-action dramas like the numerous CSI crime-solving series on television, the forensic science employed to positively identify a murderer – and in record time, at that! – is often so wildly exaggerated as to be, effectively, science fiction when compared to real-world procedures and technologies. These CSI shows, then, are science fiction, if interpreted from a certain point of view!

Few would consider *The West Wing* science fiction. But a story about the travails of a President Josiah “Jed” Bartlet might be viewed as taking place in an alternate universe, and therefore, as SF. Historically, we know that there was no President Bartlet, and so he and his administration *must* exist in an alternate reality!

Danny approached his subject with a mischievous sense of humour but convincingly argued that science fiction, *really*, when you think about it, can be found practically everywhere you look.

**René Walling** followed with a look at the interesting trends in genre publishing an examination of statistics can reveal. René is in the middle of a project collecting data on who was writing what kind of “scientific romance,” “planetary romance,” “weird menace,” and fantastic “hero pulp” tales over the decades, and what themes emerged and were revisited dating back to the earliest days of what we now classify as science fiction and fantasy.

For instance, the number of books about space flight, and trips to the moon and beyond, in the first half of the 20th century seems

to correspond with the development of rocket science and, ultimately, the space race and moon landing.

Rene explained his methodology, and noted certain gaps in publishing’s historical record that have hindered his research, and will require that he dig deeper, or perhaps engage in a little bit of educated guessing.

It was interesting to see how events like World War II impacted the genre publishing industry, as illuminated by René’s data – fewer books published during the first half of the 1940s, presumably because many authors went to war. Also, the number of female genre authors as compared to male is pretty close to equal today, but the data showed that, even though women had been present since the very beginning, the number of female writers in the field only began to rise noticeably in the late-1960s, perhaps in conjunction with feminism’s second wave. Science fiction and fantasy had been a predominantly male-dominated field until then.

The afternoon’s agenda was a busy one but club president **Cathy Palmer-Lister** took the time, during the mid-meeting break, to update the gathered MonSFFers on the progress of our search for a new meeting room. We also held our usual fund-raising raffle, awarding lucky winners a number of cool prizes.

Danny stepped forward again to close the meeting with a game of BluF/SF, a bluffing game in which players, given the title of an actual published fantasy or science fiction story, first try to score points by bluffing their opponents with a false plot summary, then try to identify the genuine story synopsis, included among the phony outlines read aloud by Danny. We’ve played this game before; always fun!

We thank Danny, René, and all others who contributed to the planning and successful staging of this, our February meeting.

## March

With the coronavirus crisis developing evermore rapidly, the club held likely its last meeting for a couple or more months on March 7, with costuming/cosplay the focus of proceedings.

Star Trek fan **Dan Kenney** got things started with a detailed and informative overview on the crafting of Klingon forehead prosthetics using latex rubber. With a number of examples on



display, Dan showed how to first sculpt one’s design in modelling clay on a mannequin’s head, then brush on over that the liquid latex, one layer at a time, with the greater number of layers (25 to 30) providing the best, most durable result. He demonstrated live the application of a layer of latex, later carefully peeling it off to

show everyone the result once it had set.

Colouring the prosthetic with make-up, matching to one’s own skin tone, and introducing a wig and hair extensions to complete the piece were detailed, with Dan explaining each step of the process. He was careful to describe what to do, and why, as well as, importantly, what *not* do so as to arrive at a satisfactory end product. Of interest was an in-progress Klingon/Andorian hybrid design he had brought in, complete with antennae!

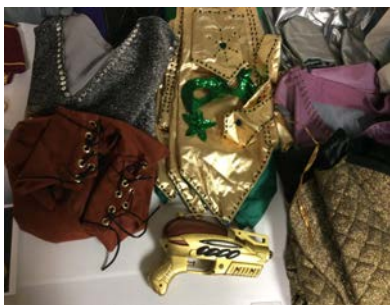
As he spoke, Dan showcased the various products and tools he uses in crafting his headpieces, all available commercially at stores selling arts and crafts supplies. Dan also covered the creation of Klingon uniforms, essentially attaching fabric pieces and painted cardboard “armour” to thrift store-bought clothing. **Lindsay Brown** and **Mark Burakoff** followed with a show-and-tell showcasing some





of the award-winning costumes they have made and worn in competition over the years. Notable was the way in which they mixed and matched store-bought clothing with their own tailored pieces, added accessories (some of these hand-made, or modified from dollar-store toys, etc.) to arrive at impressive steampunk,

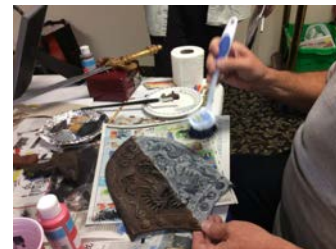
cartoon, and superhero costumes. Having a (usually humorous) skit of some kind when competing in a masquerade was emphasized; presentation is an important element of any successful competitive costuming entry! Also, **Josée Bellemare** offered a similar showcase of some of her fanciful costumes and custom-made T-shirts.



props for fan-film productions. Using a dark wash can bring out

**Keith Braithwaite** closed this busy meeting with his presentation of some of the painting techniques that can be used to quickly and inexpensively upgrade toy water guns and such into more realistic looking costuming accessories, or

the moulded detail on plastic sword or knife handles and blades, for instance, as well as paint on blood, oil, or grease stains. Dry brushing and stippling techniques can add wear-and-tear (simulated rust, nicks and scratches, mud and dirt) to surfaces while brightly coloured plastic items can be painted to look like wood, metal, or stone. Keith had on hand a few examples to show, and demonstrated live a few of the painting techniques of which he spoke, while folk had a go at it on a few of the toys brought in for this purpose.



We thank **Dan, Lindsay, Mark, Josée,** and **Keith** for their most informative presentations/ demonstrations, and give a nod, as well, to all others who contributed to the planning and successful staging of this meeting.

*Dan and Sylvain took many photos during the March meeting, look for them in the members only page of our website.*

### April DIY Virtual MonSFFA Meeting!



Our April club meeting this year was a first for MonSFFA in that it unfolded entirely online!

In brief, we posted on the club's Web site, and concurrently on our Facebook page, expressly prepared content on the date, and at the hour that would have seen our usual meeting of that month take place—April 4, 1:00PM. We described this experiment as “kind of a DIY, virtual club meeting.”

As the scheduled date of April's MonSFFA meeting loomed, we found ourselves under quarantine. The club had earlier issued notice to members that all of our usual gatherings and outings were cancelled until further notice, in accordance with the directives of public health authorities. As we could not meet as usual, the Executive enacted a plan to connect with MonSFFa virtually.

We opened our online meeting with salutations, expressing hope that all of our members and friends were coping well under the COVID-19 quarantine conditions recently imposed. We strongly advised any club members designated “essential workers” to exercise all safety protocols in order to keep as shielded from infection as possible while out working in the coronavirus environment which had descended upon us all not only locally, but across the country, and indeed, the world! An agenda for the

afternoon was presented, and folk were invited to scroll down leisurely, exploring the entertaining, informative, and fun content that had been prepared especially for them. We offered brief snippets like an outline of the “Rainbow Campaign,” along with our suggestion of maybe adding an SF/F flavour to one's rainbow poster, as well as a downloadable (PDF) trivia challenge, which we set up as a contest with points and prizes to be awarded. Throughout, for members' listening pleasure and amusement, we



*That's the spirit! Lindsay gets creative.*

included a number of COVID-19 parody songs culled from the Internet.

**Keith Braithwaite** gave a brief illustrated overview of the art of “Toy and Action Figure Photography,” in which primarily sci-fi subjects are employed to create dramatic or amusing little photographic dioramas. So many sci-fi fans count among their treasures superhero action figures, sci-fi toys, or other such tabletop miniatures that Keith pitched this relatively new art form as something people might want to try as a creative outlet, or simply a distraction while in quarantine. He explained the basics of the hobby; one can get started with as little as a few toys and a smartphone!



Keith also contributed a list of “Pandemic Reading/Viewing Recommendations,” expanding on the few suggestions offered recently in the special “COVID-19 Edition” of *Impulse*. Among them, the films *Outbreak* (1995) and *Contagion* (2011), books *The White Plague* (1982) and *The Death of Grass* (1956), a string of tales about virus-triggered zombie apocalypses like *28 Days Later* (2002), *The Walking Dead* (2003-2019), and *World War Z* (2006), and the classic *Star Trek* episode “Miri” (1966).



Along these same lines, **Sylvain St-Pierre** put up the

afternoon’s principal presentation, an extensively researched, lavishly illustrated overview of “Pestilence in Print,” covering works well known and lesser so. After a brief introduction detailing history’s plagues—Antonine Plague, Plague of Justinian, Black Death, Spanish Flu—which served as inspiration for the fictional pandemics of genre literature, Sylvain encapsulated the “SF&F Plagues and Diseases” of the past 200 or so years. From *Frankenstein* author Mary Shelley’s *The Last Man* (1826), Jack London’s *The Scarlet Plague* (1912), Richard Matheson’s *I Am Legend* (1954), and Andre Norton’s *Plague Ship* (1956) to Quebec writer Daniel Sernine’s Boulevard des Étoiles series (1991), the Batman story arc *Contagion* (1996), Max Brooks’ *World War Z* (2006), and David Walton’s *The Genius Plague* (2017), Sylvain encapsulated over 50 works spanning the 19th-, 20th-, and 21st (to date) centuries.

This DIY Virtual Club Meeting closed with a final coronavirus song parody, but not before a “Cartoon Caption Contest” invited MonSFFen to supply the humorous caption to one of Keith’s current series of *Star Trek* coronavirus-themed cartoons. These KGB-signed cartoons have been running for a few weeks, now, posted routinely on the club’s site. Long-time MonSFFAn Joe Aspler was subsequently declared the winner of this contest; congratulations, Joe!

If you missed all the fun, you can visit [www.MonSFFA.ca](http://www.MonSFFA.ca) and call up the April-4 posts; it’s all there for your enjoyment!

We thank Keith Braithwaite and Sylvain St-Pierre for putting together this online MonSFFA meeting. As the COVID-19 crisis seems likely to continue for a while yet, this will not be our last such meeting.



#### Status Report from Paula Dufour:

Third full week in self quarantine... Catching up on my PlayStation two RPGs...catching some Pokemon, playing dragon city. House is cleaner than its ever been...reading through books...a lot of books...no desire to watch tv or movies...was looking so forward to seeing Blood Quantum...

A very timely viral zombie apocalypse film festival movie that was coming out this month sometime... Wondering if that 3 day deluxe pass to Comicon is going to be usable...

#### Status Report from the Aspler Household:

Joe here. We’re peaceably holed up at home.

Annette has to be careful, since she is in a high risk category due to recent surgery. That makes me the Designated Shopper. I have a shopping routine: put on a mask, go into the store, wash or sanitize hands - depending on what the store has available. Get out ASAP.

Sarah is near the end of her first year in Art History at Concordia. They have made arrangements for the students to finish the year from home. She is also doing art at home.

We go on walks (depending on the weather), and call out to the neighbours from a safe distance.

John and Victoria are holed up in their apartment in Ottawa. They both have jobs where they can work from home. so they’re set. We’re having a video dinner tonight.

Otherwise, I’m catching up on reading and TV shows. One hour of TV = nightly exercise bicycle time.

I’ve had Kindle on my computer for a few years now. I found reading books on the computer to be a pain, so I recently purchased a Kindle reader. I highly recommend Kindle. You don’t have to spend anything. The Kindle reader is FREE to download on your computer. Major publishers have regular freebies, and you can find a huge amount of public domain material for FREE! on the [Gutenberg.org](http://Gutenberg.org) site and even on Amazon itself. One Kindle purchase was \$4.99 CDN well spent: the complete works of Lord

Dunsany. Well, not 100% complete. That would be next to impossible for a writer as prolific as him. Still a huge amount of material for next to nothing.

#### Further updated dispatch from quarantine:

We had our first virtual Zoom Seder. The attendees were us at home, John and Victoria in Ottawa, and Peter and Michele in Sydney.

Of course, with the time zone difference, the Australian participants were having an Aussie Passover breakfast: Matzah with Vegemite.

#### Status Report from Lindsay Brown:

Something I have always strived to do is to keep my personal life separate from my work life. Unfortunately, that is no longer the case as I have no choice to work from home. It takes some getting used to.

However, I am happy to say I have two assistants now: Ripley and Parker.

As you can see, Ripley is a real help with my 'puter issues and Parker tends sneak up on me, which lends itself to quality time together .

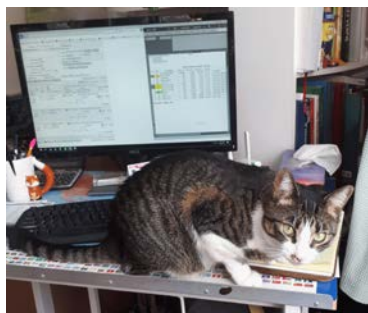
Social distancing has its perks and perils.

Perks? No more unexpected visits from people I really don't want to see... early on a Sunday morning... whilst I still sleep.

Perils? Neighbourhood Watch just got creepy. Crafts? More like Cleaning. A whopping



Neighbourhood Watch?



Ripley and Parker



big Spring cleaning. Closets that are jammed with nonsense, Basement Boxes that haven't been opened in 20 years. Yup – Nova's (used articles store) inventory is about to explode!

Well... back to work – ish.

#### Status Report from William (Pete) Pettit:

I'm in Alexandria Virginia, about 12km from Washington, DC. I'm finishing up clearing out my wife's apartment. Carol's moved to Tulsa Oklahoma – I'll join her there once we get our house in Atlanta cleared out and sold. Who knows how long that

will take.

Most of the DC metropolitan area is self isolating, but major businesses are working as usual. Traffic is delightful! Most small businesses and restaurants are closed, as are barber shops. Ethnic groceries are well stocked – supermarkets, less so. Liquor stores are open and well stocked.

Local TV news is mostly ignoring the misinformational Presidential news conferences. The news conferences held by Gov. Cuomo (NY) are shown in entirety – he tells the truth. The federal government has done absolutely nothing meaningful to help Virginia and Maryland.

So far I've been able to avoid crowded places. Just about everyone is observing the 2 metre rule.

I hope to drive back to Atlanta on Wednesday. The situation in the Atlanta metro area is worse than the DC area, and I'm concerned. I'm 75 and high risk. Tulsa is better, and since Carol's mother is 91, the two of them are sheltering in place.

I think it's likely that the US & Canada are going to have an economic depression, There's not enough liquid capital to finance the restart of closed businesses. And our central banks are printing money....our tax bases can't support a quick recovery.

#### Status Report from Dan(Kvar) Kenny:

Hi..just staying indoors with cats..doing lots of reading...writing...working on prosthetics..Stay safe..take care all..



#### Status Report from Agata Antonow:

I am not an "essential" worker but since Adam and I have been working remotely for a few years now, things (for now) are pretty similar to what they were. If anything, right now there is a greater need for pieces about COVID-19 and more virtual educational material. I am taking a writing class, but it has switched to virtual meetings. We are keeping in touch with friends and family via Zoom, email, and phone calls. So far so good – we hope everyone at MonSFFA is also doing well.

#### Status Report from Barbara Silverman:

I'm extremely fortunate, and I thank the spirits of the universe for this. As an author, I have been working from home for the last couple of decades. The only thing, at the moment I can not run down to the libraries for research, however, I have built up a nice home library over the past couple of years.

With precautions I do shopping when needed, and wash my hands as soon as I return. Whenever the weather is nice I go for a long walk and two or three times a week I hop the metro to Angrignon, visiting with the ducks and geese. I travel mid-morning so there are few people around, walking to and from the metro to avoid buses. As soon as I return home I wash my hands. With all this extra walking I'm losing weight.

The peace and quiet actually suits me and I'm enjoying not

having to run to this and that. I'm one of the lucky few that so far, knock wood, I am not experiencing any problems. I have so much to do at home, especially as Concordia's end of term exam is next week. The University put the lectures on Zoom, so there again, I did not miss anything. So, as I said, I'm extremely fortunate.

#### Status Report from Danny Sichel:

Danny reports that he is doing okay. He has not yet applied for the government grant, but will soon. Val's April trip to Montreal was cancelled, and her refund is being processed slowly. Her company's been declared essential because they print, among other things, packaging for medical goods, so she's still got work.

#### Status Report from Lynda Pelley:

I consider myself fortunate to be working for a company that was on the list of essential services. The digital cameras and sensors that we manufacture are used by some of our customers to do food inspection, and make medical systems. One customer works in the field of gene-splicing and their products are being used to work on the cure for COVID-19.

The production staff who must perform hands-on activities to build the products are going into the workplace/production floor. The ones working in the clean rooms are well protected as they must wear the full bunny suit. The rest of us – designers, engineers, etc. are working from home. I am working from home on my small travel laptop at my dining room table. So far, so good. We were all supposed to return to the office on April 6th, but I expect the working from home will be longer than that.

I am only going out for groceries, and I can get most everything I need, except toilet paper. The shelves have been completely empty for the last 2 weeks and my supply is running low. I am disgusted with the hoarders!

Since all of my activities are cancelled – conventions and model competitions – I am saving the cost of attending such events, and making good progress on the spring cleaning on the weekends.

Here is an article about Isaac Newton having to self-isolate during the Bubonic plague and discovering the science of gravity during that time.

<https://historyhustle.com/isaac-newton-worked-from-home-plague/>

Stay safe and well, everyone!

#### Status Report from Dom Durocher:

Yesterday I went to the office for the last time in who knows how long. Unfortunately, I don't think I'll get as much of that cleaning done as I originally thought. About an hour before I left, the director of engineering called me and asked that I keep supporting production until the 27th. No unemployment for me!

This was my first day working from home. I'm still finding settings in the software that I need to fix, but so far so good.

**Update:** I'm still working, so not getting anywhere near the rest I was hoping or getting this place cleaned up. I'm very busy preparing the engineering so that, once production resumes next month, we can get aircraft delivered quickly to customers and get

money in. (Dom works for Bombardier – editor)

I may actually be eating better now than usual. As I'm not losing 2+ hours commuting, I have more time, am not as exhausted or frustrated, so I actually do a bit of cooking. It's not all freezer-microwave-plate these days. Even my snacks are better.

Here are a couple of things I saw in the last week.

How does Henry Cavill (Superman) spend his time during this lockdown? (sounds like he's in England)

He's painting Warhammer miniatures!

<https://nerdist.com/article/henry-cavill-painting-warhammer-40k-miniatures/>

And someone came up with the best mask to wear when going for groceries. I want one!

<https://nerdist.com/article/homemade-alien-facehugger-mask/>

Has there been any news from Wayne? Take care!

#### Status Report from Wayne Glover:

I phoned Wayne. He reports that he and his mom are doing OK. Mrs Glover has not been well for a long time; Wayne is a full time care giver. They have moved into an apartment. Wayne says the only thing he misses is the pool.

He is working on a model of the Constitution, and he will be sending pictures for the display table of our virtual meeting May 9<sup>th</sup>. At 1/96 scale, it's going to be big!

#### Status Report from Fernando (the Fernster)Novo:

So having been a loner for several years the imposed quarantine measure has not been too hard on me so far. Yes, I do miss going to visit friends and family and the occasional meal at a restaurant. So what have I been doing with the extra time on my hands? First, I have been catching up on much needed sleep. However, I do this by going to bed earlier in the evening. I'm by nature an early morning person so I tend to get up around 3-4am most days.

This was convenient in early March since this allowed me to view the Grand Sumo March Tournament in Japan. This is a sport I started following since I retired in 2014. It is amazing to see how these huge men can move so fast and with power. The tournament this year was a first since the stands were empty of spectators due to the virus. This lasted for 15 days.

I have also been exploring the musical groups from Japan and



Fern says: These ladies are from America and are called "Doll Skin" I saw them just before the lockdown happened.

the Far East. There is a phenomenal number of great rock and roll groups coming out of Japan...Just to name a few of my favourites; Band-Maid, Silent Siren, The Peggies, Keery Talkie, Passcode, Parfume, BiSH, Lucie Too, Pokadot Stingray, Mutant Monster, Doll\$Box, FEMM, Lovebites, Mary's Blood, Scandal, SecondWall, Tokyo Ska Paradise Orchestra,

Pizzicato Five, Brats, Babysitter, Ningen Isu, Fern Planet, Real, Wagakki Band. Personally, I highly recommend Band-Maid, Scandal, The Peggies, Kecry Talkie, Silent Siren, Perfume, Wagakki Band. Each have their own style but are top notch musically. You can check all of these bands on my playlists in my YouTube account (search Fernando Novo) including my video recordings of Band-Maid, and The Beaches concerts that I attended.

More time available for online gaming too..mainly World of Warcraft, and Wurm Unlimited.

If you're interested in playing World of Warcraft for free we have access to a private server running the game. Contact me if you're interested : < Fernster23@hotmail.com>.

**Ongoing activity:**

- Trying to catch up on my books both physical and ebooks.
- D&D campaign: we are trying to form a group to play online.
- Home chores (dull stuff, but it has to be done)
- Putting together a couple of presentations for MonSFFA
- Binge watching TV series online: The Mentalist, Battlestar Galactica (both series), Orphan Black, The Expanse, Ash vs Evil Dead, Defiance, and Dark Matter, just to name a few.
- Putting together a photo album of all the T-Shirts that I have....

Well that's it for me...from the Quarantine zone, stay safe...

**Status Report from Josée Bellemare**

First, during the past month I have been decorating Easter eggs. I'm up to nine and counting. I will send pictures later.

I have also been watching a lot more TV since my cable company has descrambled about a dozen channels, including HGTV, but I am getting tired of white walls and black and white kitchens everywhere.

Second, the tv show you've mentioned was called "Survivors". I thought of it too, especially since the deadly virus in the series started in China.

Hoping to see you soon, take care of yourself.

**Update:** During my isolation I decorated a dozen Easter eggs.



The first one was a dragon egg. Since the thumbtacks I found were gold I didn't want to completely cover the egg so I lightly dry brushed it with red paint and gold glitter. I finished it with a coat of varnish.

Then I did a set of eggs that are shaped like cut crystal and come in the colours of the rainbow. So red, blue, yellow and green were used for the Hogwarts house colours with sequins, the purple was decorated in usual Easter colours and for the orange one I used autumn colors. The rest I decorated with sticker gems from Magi-Prix. I painted them, then applied the gems in various designs. The final one I also used fake flowers.

Done with eggs, I have moved on to painting t-shirts.

**Pictures of the eggs are on our website:**

<http://www.monsffa.ca/?p=10266>

**Status Report from Sylvain St-Pierre**

**Quarantine Day 7** Sylvain St-Pierre

Finally managed to put my vintage pulp magazines in order. 

**Quarantine Day 9** Sylvain St-Pierre

Watched that corny vintage movies DVD I was saving for just such an occasion. Good Heavens! Were people really paying money to see those back then? 

**Quarantine Day 16** Sylvain St-Pierre

Finished my presentation for the First Virtual MonSFFA Meeting. That was fun, but I feel an overwhelming urge to wash my hands. 

**Quarantine Day 19** Sylvain St-Pierre

After all these years, I broke open that contamination mask I bought during the Nippon Worldcon in 2007. Turns out it's child-sized and I cannot use it. Serves me right for not reading the package. 

**Quarantine Day 22** Sylvain St-Pierre

I put that pitiful last patch of snow in my front yard out of its misery. 

**Quarantine Day 23** Sylvain St-Pierre

Said hello to the very first sprouts of garlic chives in my garden. They went well with the Cointreau Chicken. 





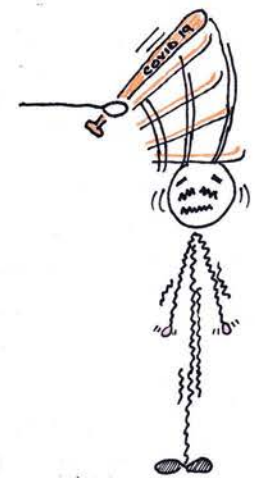
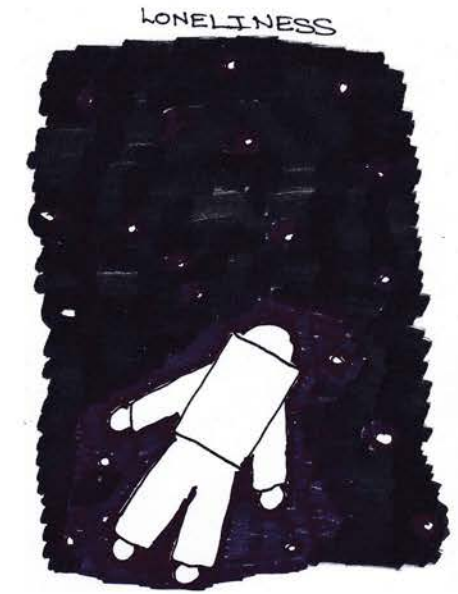
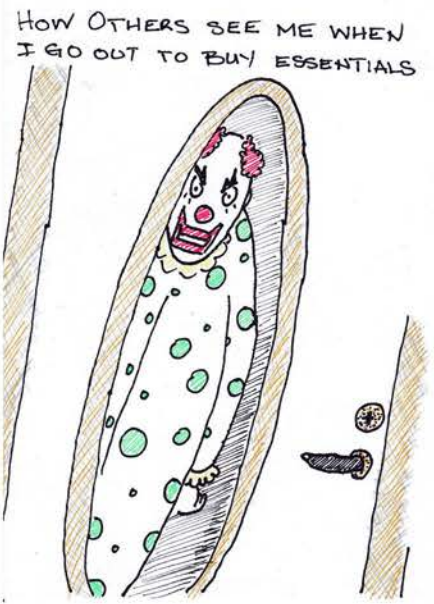
Lindsay sent an artistic update:



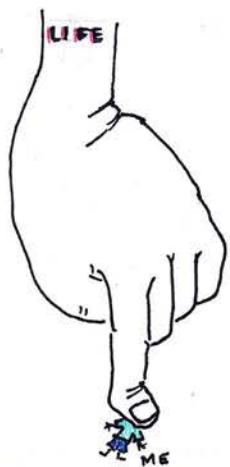
LOSS OF CONTROL



LOSS OF INCOME

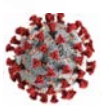


COVID 19'S EFFECT ON ME



LIFE DURING COVID 19 ISOLATION

MY OPINION OF COVID 19





- Mars Attacks!
- Mary Poppins
- Men In Black
- Planet of the Apes
- Quintet
- Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow
- Star Wars: A New Hope
- Terminator
- This Island Earth
- The Time Machine
- The Valley of Gwangi
- Le Voyage dans la Lune
- War of the Worlds
- Westworld
- World War Z

**O**h no! You were watching your sister's kids during the Pandemic, and the little hellions found your collection of custom SF&F movie puzzles!

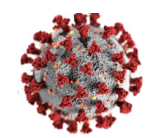
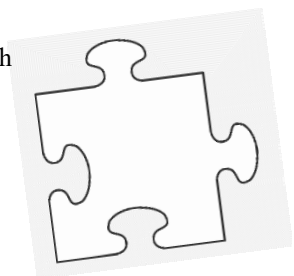
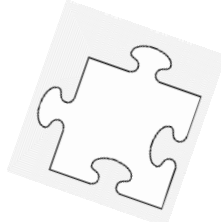
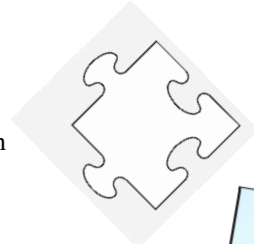
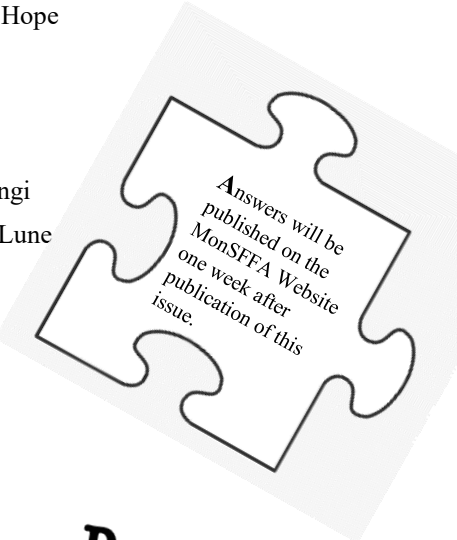
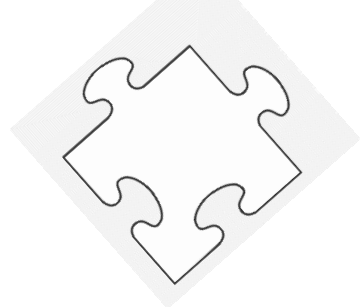
They are all on the same pattern, so it was easy for them to take a single piece from each puzzle and construct this bizarre mish-mash.

Can you put back each piece in its proper box? You have more boxes than there are pieces, so they must have left some of them untouched.

- 2001, A Space Odyssey
- An American Werewolf in London
- The Andromeda Strain
- Avatar
- Beavra
- Beetlejuice
- The Black Scorpion
- Close Encounters of the Third Kind
- The Creation of the Humanoids
- The Day the Earth Stood Still
- Dunes
- Flash Gordon Conquers the Universe
- Forbidden Planet
- Galaxy Quest
- Ghostbusters
- Godzilla
- Gremlins
- Hellboy
- Hellraiser
- How to Train Your Dragon
- Independence Day
- Jason and the Argonauts
- Journey to the Center of the Earth
- Jurassic Park
- King Kong
- Logan's Run



*Compiled and mangled by Sylvain St-Pierre.*



# SCI-FI TRIVIA CHALLENGE

TO BE EMPLOYED IN CASE OF QUARANTINE DURING A PANDEMIC!

Test your knowledge of the inconsequential, obscure, inane minutiae of the sci-fi universe! Win points and prizes! Just print out this two-sided quiz sheet and write in your answers to these 19 questions. Bring your completed sheet with you to the next MonSFFA meeting (date to be determined; check the club's Web site regularly), at which time we'll have ready for you a final 20th question to wrap up the contest! We'll tally all the points and award prizes to our three top-scoring entrants! Non-club members are welcome to participate, too!

Write Your Name Here:

---

## QUESTION 1 (2 points)

"Greetings, my friend. We are all interested in the future, for that is where you and I are going to spend the rest of our lives. And remember my friend, future events such as these will affect you in the future. You are interested in the unknown, the mysterious, the unexplainable—that is why you are here. And now for the first time, we are bringing to you the full story of what happened on that fateful day!" This introduction opens which sci-fi movie, and is spoken by who?

ANSWERS: \_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTION 2 (4 points)

The Hugo Awards are science fiction's most prestigious award; who are they named for, which book won the very first Hugo Award for Best Novel, who wrote that novel, and in which year was the honour bestowed?

ANSWERS: \_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTION 3 (1 point)

An unintentional programming glitch caused the so-called "Corrupted Blood" outbreak to sweep through the virtual world of what online massively multiplayer fantasy role-playing game in 2005?

ANSWER: \_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTION 4 (1 point)

"The Man of Tomorrow" in Alan Moore's "Whatever Happened to the Man of Tomorrow?" is who?

ANSWER: \_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTION 5 (1 point)

Boxer, Binky, Clover, Mollie—which of these does not belong?

ANSWER: \_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTION 6 (1 point)

In the Andrzej Sapkowski short stories and novels, the subsequent Projekt Red video-game trilogy, and now, the recently launched Netflix series *The Witcher*, what is the name of long-lived monster-hunter-for-hire Geralt of Rivia's horse?

ANSWER: \_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTION 7 (2 points)

Claiming that 1984's *The Terminator* was "a rip-off" of an *Outer Limits* episode he had penned in the mid-1960s, this science fiction writer threatened litigation against Orion Pictures and received a sum of money, plus an acknowledgment in the credits of later prints of the film. Who is he, and what was the name of the *Outer Limits* episode upon which he claims *Terminator* was based?

ANSWERS: \_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTION 8 (8 points)

By drawing a connecting line, match sword to wielder:

Atlantean Sword	Ice	Orcrist	Sunsword	Graywand	Sword of Athena	Stormbringer	Rhindon
Fafhrd	Conan the Barbarian	Thundarr the Barbarian	Thorin Oakenshield	Wonder Woman	Peter Pevensie	Eddard Stark	Elric of Melniboné

## QUESTION 9 (2 points)

Star Trek's original starship *Enterprise* has as its registry designation "NCC-1701"; what does "NCC" stand for, and what is the like-designation for doomed sister starship *Constellation*, featured in the classic episode "The Doomsday Machine"?

ANSWERS: \_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTION 10 (3 points)

"Cyberpunk 2020," a '90s table-top role-playing game, is set in which dystopian future year, has as its default setting which fictional West-Coast American city, and was issued by which games publisher?

ANSWERS: \_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION 11 (3 points)**

Who was the first woman to win the Hugo Award for Best Novel, for which novel, and in what year?

ANSWERS: \_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION 12 (16 points)**

Listed here are eight sci-fi film characters. First, write in on the lines provided below each character’s name the title of the film in which said character is featured, then by drawing a connecting line, match character/film to the actor/actress who played the role in that movie:

Stella Star	Colonel Dan McReady	Commander John J. Adams	Cora Peterson	Sinbad	Dr. Clayton Forrester	Renate Richter	Nancy Archer
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Patrick Wayne	Julia Dietze	Allison Hayes	Gene Barry	Caroline Munro	Leslie Nielsen	Adam West	Raquel Welch
---------------	--------------	---------------	------------	----------------	----------------	-----------	--------------

**QUESTION 13 (1 point)**

Racially controversial comic book character Ebony White was a sidekick to which of the following? A) The Phantom, B) The Spirit, C) The Spectre, D) Black Panther

ANSWER: \_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION 14 (1 point)**

What does the acronym S.H.I.E.L.D. stand for?

ANSWER: \_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION 15 (1 point)**

Who authored the stories collected under the “Tales of Known Space” banner?

ANSWER: \_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION 16 (1 point)**

*The Era of Hopeful Monsters, Maniacs in the Fourth Dimension, The Gospel from Outer Space, The Smart Bunny*—what do the preceding titles have in common?

ANSWER: \_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION 17 (1 point)**



*The Neptune Factor* (1973), *Starship Invasions* (1977), *Scanners* (1981), *Firebird 2015 A.D.* (1981), *Sci-Fighters* (1996), *Manborg* (2011), *Code 8* (2019), and *Rabid* (2019)—what do these diverse sci-fi films spanning some five decades have in common as regards their production?

ANSWER: \_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION 18 (3 points)**

Captain America was co-created by who, and first appeared in which comic book, the cover depicting Cap punching out which infamous villain?

ANSWERS: \_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION 19 (3 point)**

The critically-acclaimed television series *The Expanse* is based upon a series of novels and stories by James S. A. Corey; what is the title of the first book in that series, and what are the names of the two co-authors, for whom James S. A. Corey is a pen name?

ANSWERS: \_\_\_\_\_