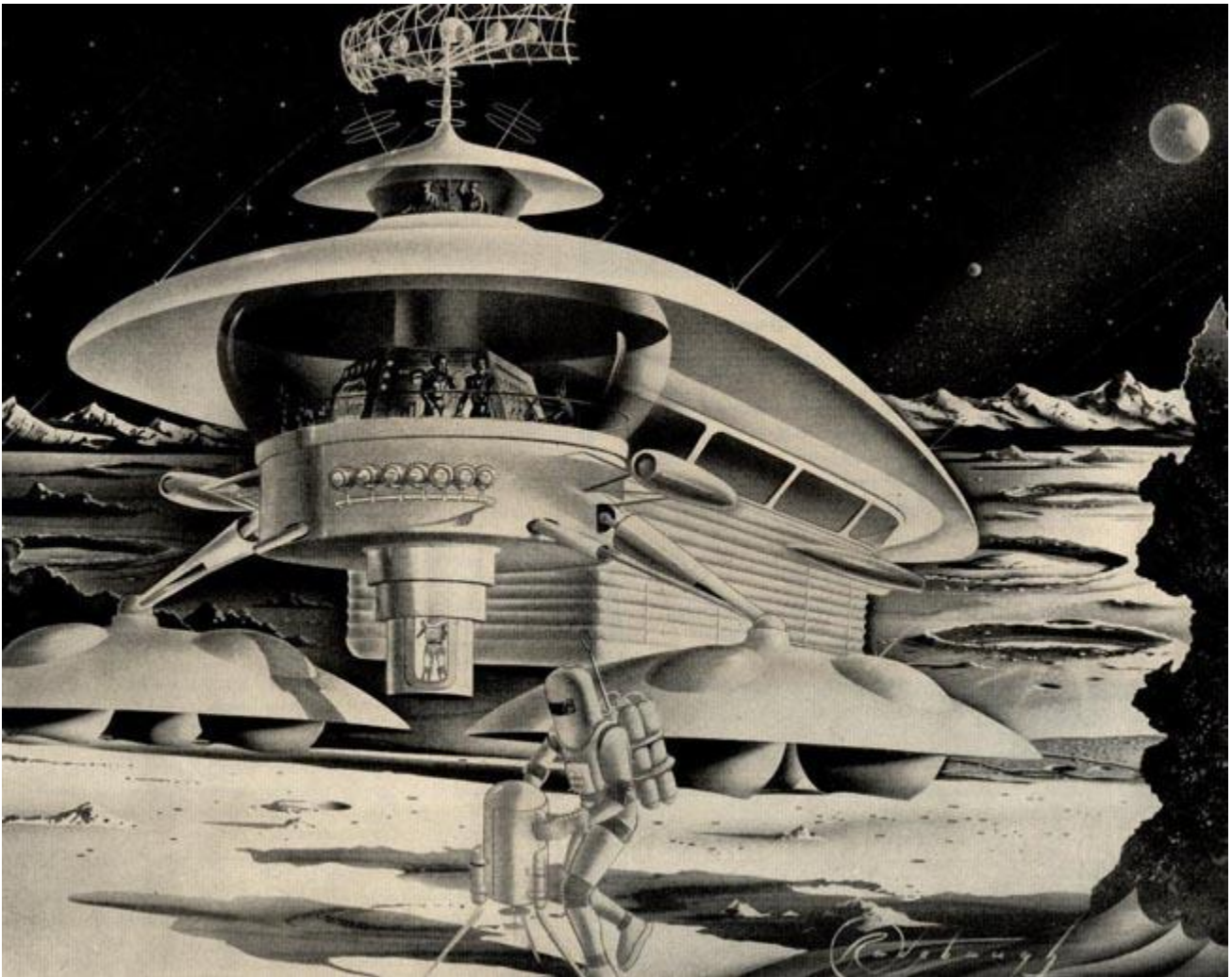


FADEAWAY 67



FADEAWAY #67 is a fanzine devoted to science fiction and related fields of interest, and is produced by **Robert Jennings, 29 Whiting Rd., Oxford, MA 01540-2035, email fabficbks@aol.com**. Copies are available for a letter of comment, or a print fanzine in trade, or by subscription at a cost of \$25.00 for six issues. Letters of comment are much preferred. Any person who has not previously received a copy of this fanzine may receive a sample copy of the current issue for free by sending me your name and address. Publication is (in theory anyway) bi-monthly. This is the February-March 2022 issue



THE COVER ILLO THIS TIME ROUND was created by futurist artist Arthur Radebaugh (1906-1974). I was going to write a biography and critique of this unique visionary artist, but I find that a couple of websites devoted to Arthur Radebaugh have already said it all much better than I could have.

Here is some basic background from **The Future We Were Promised...**

Radebaugh was a top-notch commercial illustrator who worked for companies as diverse as Chrysler and Coca-Cola. He was based in Detroit from the 1930s to 1960s, and much of his work anticipated design revolutions in the automotive and other industries. He once described his work as "halfway between science fiction and designs for modern living."

Radebaugh settled long-term roots in Detroit. He drew ads for major companies from Coca-Cola to United Airlines. As often as not, however, he left art directors and other potential clients utterly befuddled by his futuristic stylings.

His colleagues describe him as a bit of a loner, but also a kind and debonair man who knew how to be flashy and exotic. He once returned from a business trip in New York

wearing a monocle, which he sported along with other outlandish garb: capes, jodhpurs and various strange hats.

Radebaugh's virtuosic airbrush technique created luminous illustrations which conveyed the sleek, streamlined look of the future. From flying cars to glamorous skyscrapers, his renderings were both pragmatic and fantastical, showing possibilities unimagined, derived from the technology of the day.

Radebaugh: The Future We Were Promised is a career-spanning overview of the recently rediscovered artist's illustrations, cartoons and biography.

Arthur Radebaugh, 1906-1974.

In the years before his death, Radebaugh slowly faded into obscurity. After he passed away, he was forgotten by all but a few curious individuals who saw his old ads or magazine covers.

In 2001, 25 negatives of Radebaugh's work surfaced in the collection of historian Todd Kimmell. Todd decided to track the elusive illustrator down, mounted an exhibit of his work, is writing a book, and continues to seek out information on this forgotten genius...



Radebaugh had a 1959 Ford Thames van which he converted into a mobile studio, and he often worked on his cartoons while travelling around the country for sources and inspiration. With its quasi-futuristic accessories, it completed the spectacle of Radebaugh as eccentric avatar of the future. (source: azweasel).



Radebaugh's brief studies at the Art Institute in Chicago (he "found the bright lights more interesting than classes") led to his first experimentation with the airbrush.

He honed his technique with the airbrush while doing more mundane rendering for Crescent Engraving in Kalamazoo, Michigan: designing boxes for chocolate candy and the like.

One of the salesmen there saw Radebaugh's airbrush work and asked if he could act as the young man's agent; he probably surprised them both when he sold one of Radebaugh's futuristic automotive renderings to MoToR Magazine in 1935 for \$450.

After his first break, Radebaugh burst onto the commercial illustration scene, seemingly fully formed, and rapidly got work for Esquire, Fortune, Advertising Agency and other top-flight magazines.

His luminous Art Deco cityscapes complemented a sense of industrial design that was both pragmatic and prescient: he took what was cutting edge, from telephones to travel trailers, and made them more elegant, functional, and fantastical to behold.



His magazine work propelled him to some degree of recognition, and advertising art directors took notice not only of Radebaugh, but of the odd medium in which he worked, and began to respect airbrushing for the first time.

Radebaugh continued to do beautiful work for MoToR magazine, illustrating a special annual issue almost every year for over two decades.





This illustration was done for a leading advertising industry magazine in 1937. It shows off the vertiginously curving roadways and Art Deco style skyscrapers which became trademark Radebaugh motifs.



Radebaugh's 1939 brochure for the Dodge Luxury Liner won him accolades within the auto industry, where he was getting an increasing amount of work.



Radebaugh's rise as a commercial artist was interrupted by the US entrance into World War 2.

He was enlisted into the Army Ordnance Department, where he headed up a Design & Visualization division.

He worked with fellow artists and industrial designers (notably, Will Eisner was working in the same office!), designing weapons of the future.



have

Radebaugh's tenure at the Pentagon seems to have allowed him to hone both his talent for futuristic designs and his penchant for the pragmatic. He helped to develop armored cars, bazookas and artillery for the Army.

He was also charged with developing a method of illuminating military vehicle instrument panels with blacklight, thereby helping to conceal war planes, tanks and trucks from enemies. His involvement with the medium began a long obsession with blacklight and fluorescent paints.

Radebaugh had several occasional syndicated features during his tenure as a Detroit advertising illustrator. His eccentric but clever imagineering made for good copy, and his renderings, such as this bus from 1949, were appealing even in newsprint.



BUSES OF TOMORROW may look like this. This one was designed to give the passengers the comforts of air-conditioning, the telephone and fuller visibility. The driver, who sits aloof and undisturbed, has that T-shaped periscope to provide him with visibility in all directions. To ease road jabs the bus body is suspended on huge air cushions.

According to his illustrator colleagues, Radebaugh was constantly churning out inventions that seemed both pragmatic and other-worldly. Some illustrations were used as promotional material, others were syndicated, and some ended up used in ads.

In 1957, Radebaugh brought samples of an ambitious cartoon about the future to a major news syndicate.

In early 1958, Radebaugh's most ambitious syndicated column, *Closer Than We Think*, was launched to an audience of over 19,000,000 metropolitan newspaper readers.



“Halfway between science fiction and designs for modern living” said Radebaugh of his cartoon.

Radebaugh had an English Ford van which he converted into a mobile studio, and he often worked on his cartoons while travelling around the country for sources and inspiration. With its quasi-futuristic accessories, it completed the spectacle of Radebaugh as eccentric avatar of the future. *Closer Than We Think* ran for four years. In 1962, faced with failing health, Radebaugh retired from the illustrating business. His health had forced him to sell off his cars, a vacation house, and many personal belongings. For several years, we lose track of him entirely, and then he shows up, living in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and decorating furniture for sign painter named Albert Heemstra, who provided him with companionship and care in his last years.



a

You can read more about this remarkable talent at—
<http://arthur-radebaugh.blogspot.com/> and at---
[https://library.osu.edu/site/cartoons/2012/12/27/found-in-the-collection-arthur-radebaughs-closer-than-we-think//](https://library.osu.edu/site/cartoons/2012/12/27/found-in-the-collection-arthur-radebaughs-closer-than-we-think/)

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO POST CARDS?

I don't mean the blank squares of lightweight cardboard the Post Office sells; I mean real post cards, the kind with a colored photograph or a colored picture or cartoon on one side, and half of the other side devoted to space for an address and the left side blank to write some kind of short message to the recipient, something like, "here's a view of our hotel at Avalanche Point Switzerland. We are having lots of fun (At \$200 a night we'd BETTER be having fun here! Ha ha ha!) Earl & Dotty".

You know, the kind of post cards that used to be handed out free at every decent hotel and motel in every town in the country, or available for purchase at every decent tourist spot on the globe. Post cards with full color photo pictures of scenic beauty or historic landmarks, or famous people, or exciting local events used to be sold in every drug store and dime store in town.

Come to think of it, whatever happened to all the dime stores too? Did they all morph into dollar stores or just drop dead? I haven't seen any post cards in any dollar store I've ever been in, and they aren't offered at any of the drug stores I've encountered lately either, which is amazing, considering how much other merchandise is carried in my neighborhood drug stores (or Pharmacies, as they now prefer to be called). Everything else in the world from toys to candles, to snacks, to aisles of makeup for the ladies, to batteries and flashlights, to hardware and stationary sections and more can be found at these new Pharmacies, but no post cards that I can recall.

When did they disappear? I remember seeing them, and actually receiving post cards all the way thru the 1980s and well into the 1990s. I still occasionally got post cards after the turning of the century too, but admittedly, not very many. OK, hardly any.

Mostly the ones I got in this new century came from fans, comic fans in particular, who had their own cartoon or artwork on one side, and a pertinent message on the other.

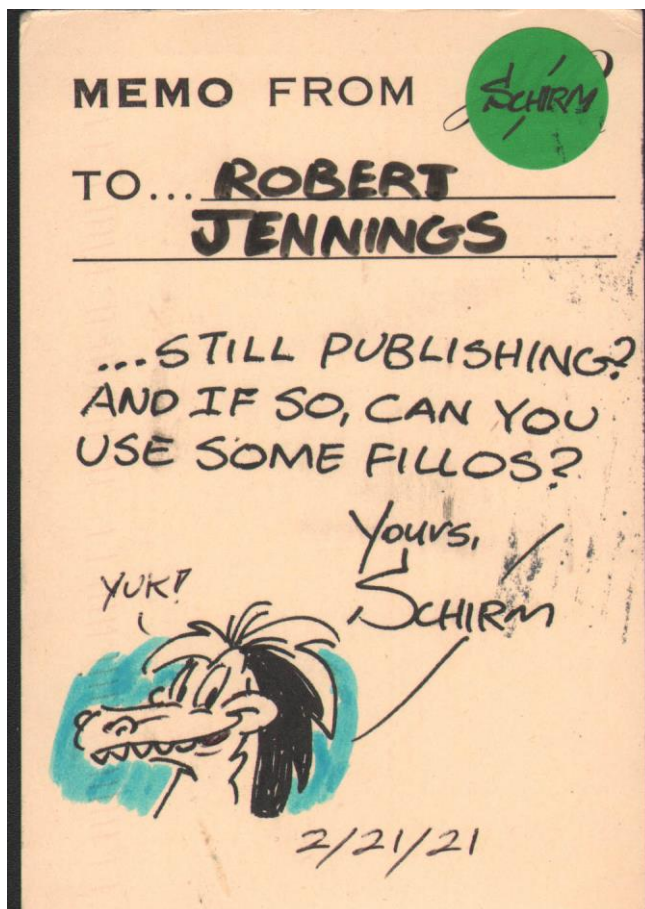
Recently the only post cards I have received came from fan artist Marc Schirmeister. Schirm's mother was frightened by a UNIVAC just before he was born, which had led him to a life-long aversion to computers and a dedicated refusal to use email. Instead he resorts to occasional letters, or more frequently, cryptic post

cards with some of his art on one side, and a hand printed message on the other side which sometimes runs off the end of the card before he can quite get all the words in.

Sometimes I answer those messages, but some other times I don't know what to say. The last one I got from Schirm was back in 2021 when he sent a post card asking if I needed more artwork for *Fadeaway*. Since this was during the middle of The Plague Season and I was running my wheels off filling orders from my mail order book business I never got around to answering that message. Now that I am back doing new issues of the fanzine I haven't heard from him again. This zine always needs artwork. Maybe I should send him a post card.

But, back to the main question, what happened to post cards? There were always advertising post cards around, but that's a separate category. Business post cards with company logos or free offers, or cards with coupons printed on one side are a different breed of animal from the picture post card most people associate with the category and term "post cards". Advertising promo post cards these days are usually a lot larger than the standard post card size, and they are certainly still around.

In my area auto dealers and plumbing repair shops seem to have a near monopoly on those things, altho I got one with a really good offer last month from



Great Clips, a beauty salon that also does men's haircuts. An eighteen buck haircut for \$6.50, that's a real bargain. I redeemed that coupon, altho when I did I was the only male in the shop filled with about six women and young girl customers who immediately stopped talking when I entered and scrupulously tried to avoid looking at me. It was a good haircut too. Maybe I'll go back, since the barber I had previously been using lost his lease and had to move to the next town over.

But anyway, post cards. Why did they disappear, never to return to the American scene? At one time there were a lot of people who collected post cards. Maybe there still are. There were clubs devoted to the hobby, and there were dealers in post cards, with rare cards selling for dollars, sometimes tens of dollars.

Back in the 1990s a friend was helping an older woman clean out her house, downsizing to move in with her children, and she had several shoe boxes full of post cards she had accumulated. She gave them to him along with some religious books, and a few pieces of stone ware. He didn't know what to do with the stuff, so he brought it all around to me.

I didn't know much about post cards, but I figured this many post cards, covering so many different subjects and locations around the US ought to be of interest to somebody, so I contacted a local book and euphoria auction house in the area (since gone out of business). He auctioned the boxes off, and after deducting his generous cut, he delivered \$180.00 back to us. \$90 for me and \$90 for my friend just for handing over three boxes of post cards his elderly friend was going to chuck into the trash seemed like a very good deal to me. It turns out the boxes had been bought by a woman who was a dealer in post cards, and I'm sure she intended to recoup her investment many times over.

During the times when I even noticed post cards it seemed to me that most of them were scenes, either of hotels/motels, or of historic buildings, or impressive scenic vistas. Tourist attractions invariably came with a gift shop attached where you could buy souvenir T-shirts, glasses with lead painted scenes, decorative plates, salt & pepper shakers and a thousand other trashy knick-knacks, and of course, lots of spinner racks full of post cards with multi-dozens of different scenes from the tourist attraction. I suspect that those post cards accounted for quite a bit of the revenue the gift shops generated. Back when I was married my wife liked the T-shirts, and I favored the drinking glasses with the lead painted logos/novelty scenes embossed on one side.

As an aside, those types of drinking glasses are no longer being sold, since there was a fear that the lead paint might somehow become a health hazard. I don't know how that could be, since I never licked the painted illo on the side of any of my glasses, and I don't know anybody else who ever did that either. Maybe the lead paint was supposed to dissolve in the dishwasher and somehow create a health hazard. I suppose if you used sulfuric acid based dish washing liquid that might happen, but I don't think Palmolive or Ivory suds would do much in the way of paint removal.

But I digress. Post cards. They don't seem to be around any more. Is it just a reaction to the new computer age, when it's just as easy to zip out an email to friends and family with one push of a button, or did the steady and relentless rise in postage costs do the format in? Surely there is still an interest in sending home visual mementos of a family's travels?

Maybe it was digital cameras and super-8 Video cams that did the job. "Hi Harry & Maude; we're at Jason's Folly Labyrinth National Caverns, took fifty shots of the interior including the Suicide Plunge where the Indian Princess supposedly took her life. Open the attached files to see everything we saw, and you don't even have to sleep doubled up in this midget camper or fight off the swarms of mosquitoes every night either! Love John and Mary".

I dunno if I would want to open that kind of file in my computer, but then, maybe if I were close friends with John & Mary perhaps I might. I might if I could delete some of the stuff afterwards. Say, fifteen minutes afterwards, or thereabouts.

I don't know if I would save a post card if one were to suddenly appear in the mail either. Of course, they weren't meant to be saved. They were a temporary message, a temporary memento, a brief snap-shot in time, a sharing of some kind of experience with a friend or family member, a way to keep in touch when someone didn't have the time or the imagination to write a long chatty letter. They certainly filled that niche nicely for quite a long time. It seems to me that they would still fill that niche. Does anybody know what happened to post cards?

FUN FACT: If the ivory keys on a piano are yellowed it means the elephant was a heavy smoker.

ELUTRIATION OF A FAILED FICTION WRITER

by

David M. Shea

Lately I've wondered how many people in SF fandom have tried writing fiction. Just among those with whom I used to correspond I know for a fact that Bob Sabella, Janine Stinson, Catherine Mintz, Sue Bursitynski, and Joy Smith all wrote fiction at some point, with varying degrees of success. There were probably more. Gene Stewart, Julie Wall, Patrick McGuire, Lloyd Penney, Sue Bursztynski, and Steve Jeffery all made comments on writing fiction at some point, mainly in response to a section about writing workshops in one of my fanzines, back in April 2000.

Bob Sabella, in fact, once attended the famous Clarion Workshop; and updated an article about his experience for my fanzine. I was once invited to a week-long workshop in California. In the end I decided the cost of airfare alone would exceed any benefit to be gained from the experience. And Catherine send me a small-press collection of her short fiction, tho she was displeased with my review. In particular, we differed widely on the meaning of "story".

Of course there is, or used to be, a distinction between writing original fiction with the intent/hope of getting it published, and writing fan fiction for personal amusement. This defines fan fiction as pieces where the setting, and frequently the characters, are borrowed from television or film---*Star Trek*, or *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* as typical examples. In the days of paper, circulating media fanfic was confined to tiny amateur-fic fanzines. Now, anyone can post as much fanfic online as they like.

If you've watched the popular sitcom *The Big Bang Theory*, you may recall the episode in which characters Penny (Kaley Cuoco) and Bernadette (Melissa Rauch) discovered their friend Amy (Mayim Bialik) was writing and posting *Little House On the Prairie* themes fanfic with herself and Sheldon (Jim Parsons) as characters.

Somewhere between these extremes lie shared-world anthologies, where an existing setting is opened to other writers than the creator of the place. Some are strictly invitational, as appears to be the case with David Weber's shared-world anthologies set in the universe of his "Honor Harrington" books. Others were (are?) at least in theory, open to anyone.

I have always made up stories in my mind, some in SF/fantasy realms, some mainstream in the real world. Now that I think of it, there was some overlap---a hard-SF story set in Brooklyn, New York, or a sort-of fantasy set in Idaho.

In terms of actually putting stories down on paper and letting other people read them, I didn't do that until I became aware of a regular workshop program run by the Baltimore SF Society. There was a workshop at local event Balticon, and two or three others scattered around the year. Every participant how to submit a written story and be prepared to accept critical comment. For anyone familiar with my late fanzine TWINK, this was the basis of an article I wrote under the title "Wasted Time"; subtitled "apologies to D. Henley and G. Frey". One response, amazingly was, "Who are Henley and Frey?"

Response to the stories I brought to the workshop program over the four years or so I was active in the group varied from fair critique to measured approval. Charles Sheffield as the professional adviser at one meeting, said my story was "worth sending out". Oddly, this was the story set in Brooklyn.

The reaction from editors was less promising. Once at Washington, DC event Disclave, there was one of those panels on "How to Get Started". I asked, "How do I get past the form rejection letter and get the editor to actually comment on my story?" And this fat bitch sneered down her nose and said in the nastiest possible way, "If all you get are form rejection letters, maybe you're just a bad writer!"

I remember the fat bitch's name. I choose not to mention it here.

There's an old joke in the field about "where do you get your ideas?" The punch line is "Schenectady". Harlan Ellison used to tell the anecdote that he was asked that stupid question so many times, he began telling people there was an idea company in Schenectady, New York. Send them \$100 and they would send you ten story ideas, and people **believed** it.

Ideas come from where they will. The first story I sold was an example. I had the title for a couple of years: "Daughter of the Oak". I knew it was a good title, I just didn't know the story to go with it. One day I sat down at the keyboard and the story rolled out with almost no conscious effort. I cleaned it up, changed a word or two, revised a paragraph here and there, and the clean second draft was 95% of the first inspiration.

I got two rejections on it and finally took it to the workshop. A friend insisted I should send it to *Marion Zimmer Bradley's Fantasy Magazine*. I joked that I would put her address on the SASE return envelope so she would get the rejection letter.

And they bought it. Go figure. A year or more later I met Bradley at some convention or other, and thanked her for publishing my story. "Oh yes," she said, "that was a good story." Well, I thought so.

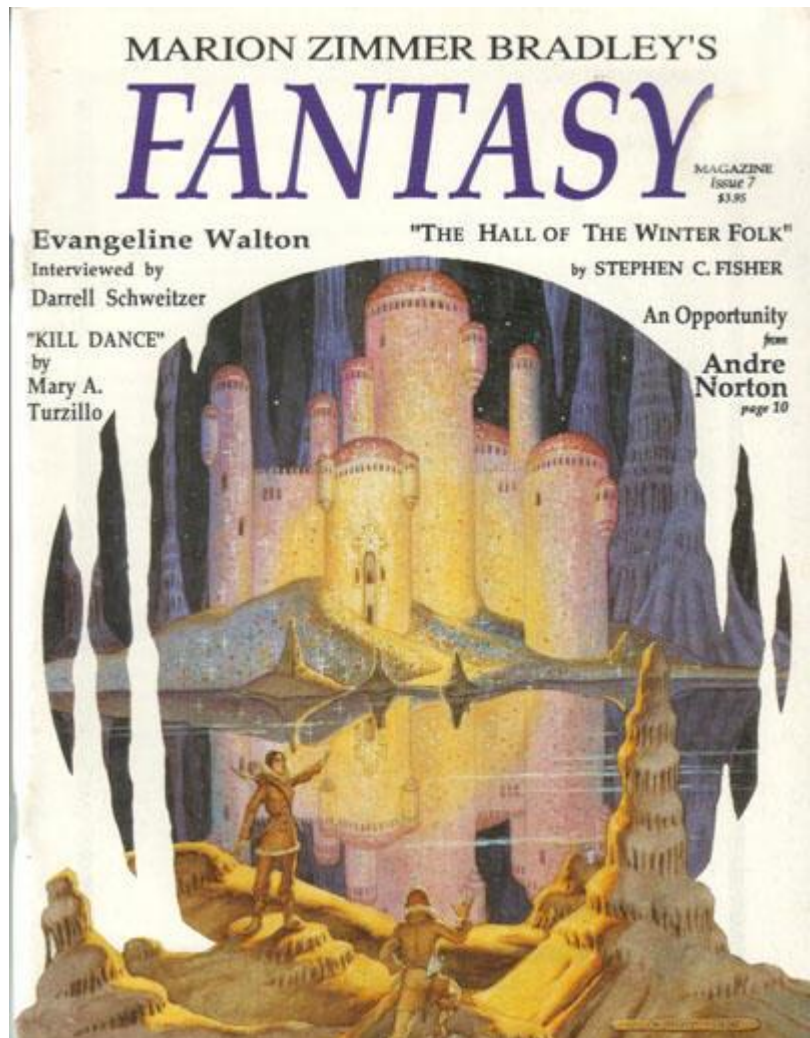
That's not to say my experience with the magazine was all roses. I sent two more stories to them, both rejected. In one case MZBFM asked specifically for ghost stories, 3000 words, for the Halloween issue. I wrote them exactly what they asked for; a story about two figure skaters performing for the ghosts in a haunted ice rink. The music they skated to was "Django" by the Modern jazz Quartet, composed by John Lewis as a tribute to the Belgian jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt. (Don't take my word for it, look it up).

It was a good story. I **knew** it was a good story. I fully expected them to buy it. I got a form rejection letter with "We don't do horror stories" scrawled across the bottom. What!?!? I think I eventually got five rejection letters on that one. It was finally published in a small-press anthology. They invited me to a first release reading at an area bookstore. I read the story, with a preliminary explanation about MZBFM. People seemed to like it.

Another story sent to MZBFM got a form letter with "We don't do stories set in bars!!!" Yes, there were three exclamation points. The otherwise detailed guidelines for the magazine didn't say anything about bars. L. Sprague deCamp wrote a whole series of stories set in a tavern. Spider Robinson wrote the "Callahan's Place" stories. Rod Serling did a Twilight Zone episode set in a bar. Arthur C. Clark wrote *Tales From the White Hart*; a whole collection of whimsical stories recounted in a London tavern. Maybe I shouldn't have put my story in a lowbrow joint with country music. (Not withstanding the black Ferrari in the parking lot...)

That story did not get published.

Where was I on shared-world anthologies? Oh yeah. Back in the day Andre Norton decided to do some anthologies set in her Witch World sequence. At the time I was friends with Ann Crispin who had already done a couple of 'Witch World' novels with Ms Norton's approval. Ann said to me "You know the Witch World as well as anyone. Why don't you write a story, and if I like it, I'll send it on to Andre". I picked out a minor incident involving a secondary



character in an early Witch World novel, and took it off at a tangent. Not my best work, but not terrible.

Ann **really** didn't like it, and said so. At length. When the first book was published, it was clear that my story was **at least** as good as some of the pieces selected. I told Ann. At length.

At some Worldcon years later (I'm tempted to say Orlando?), I gave a copy of the story to Ms Norton. She sent me a detailed letter saying she mostly liked the story, and offered specific suggestions toward how it might be improved by a rewrite. Which I never did. The story was written explicitly as a Witch World story. As the Witch World shared-world anthologies had stopped by then, there was no remaining market. Attempting to rewrite it as a generic fantasy story would have destroyed the purpose and focus of the piece.

Ever read Zenna Henderson's stories of The People? I wrote one---mentioned before, the story set in Idaho. "The Wizard of Daltonville" was the title. No, I don't know if there's a town by that name in Idaho. Except for the central character being a teacher, a standard Henderson trope, there was nothing to show where the story was going. At the very end a character from The People showed up: Valancy, seen in "Ararat" in "Pilgrimage".

Some years later I learned that the New England SF Association had bought or licensed the rights to the sequence, and planned to publish an omnibus hardcover of all the People stories under the title "Ingathering". I wrote to Boston to inquire about the notion of getting up a shared anthology of next generation People stories. I even had a proposed title "Diaspora: New Stories of The People."

I wrote to NESFA twice. They never bothered to reply. I guess they felt that dealing with me was beneath their dignity. I still think it was potentially a good idea. If you want to pursue it you have my blessing, for whatever that's worth.

I never wrote a novel. The longest fiction I ever wrote was about 70 pages, a mainstream story set in Los Angeles, about the lives of two characters. He was an actor, she was an accountant. I have known these characters for many years now. I know much more about them now than appeared in those pages. I know why Paul in his youth was once arrested in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania (the charges were dropped). I know why the guest bedroom in their house is painted red. I designed that house.

I remain fond of those people. They're a nice couple. There is no market for novellas about nice couples.

On the whole I wrote fiction for about twelve years. I had three stories published. The ratio of effort to reward began to diminish my interest. At some Worldcon, on a panel about writing, one author said that writing was hard work, but it shouldn't be a **burden**, something you force yourself to do even if you're not enjoying it or getting much out of it. At that moment, the thought that rang loudly in my head was "**I don't have to do this any more!**" I felt mainly relief.

I still write non-fiction. Writing non-fiction is easier than writing fiction. You just have to present the facts in some reasonable order. It's about truth. In fiction you have to **invent** the facts, and keep them consistent. Writing fiction is about verisimilitude. It's a challenge of a different order.

Maybe the fat bitch was right after all. Maybe I was just not cut out to be a fiction writer. But she was still a nasty fat bitch.

And yes: "elutriation" is a real word. Look it up.



YOUTUBE AND ME

by Rob Imes

I've been watching videos on YouTube for years, even uploading my own videos onto the site since 2009, but I have to admit that I hadn't thought too much about it -- and certainly never contemplated writing an article about it. Like most people I take the website for granted. I often use YouTube like a personal radio-on-demand if I want to hear a particular song, with or without any visual accompaniment. Or if I want to watch something relating to my many interests, such as comic books, old-time radio, history, religion, politics, and so on. It's a way for me to relive the past, as well as to keep up with what's going on now. And to be perfectly honest, it's a way to waste time when I'm bored with nothing else to do, like channel-surfing on a TV set where the channels have no end.

It seemed to me that there were mainly two kinds of YouTube channels: stuff uploaded by corporations (especially big media companies) and stuff uploaded by ordinary people using a video camera. Lately I'd noticed that the videos in the latter group that I saw were looking better all the time, comparing favorably with what one might see on television. As my favorite "amateur" channels uploaded new content, I found myself looking forward to watching the latest "episode" they'd produced with more enthusiasm than, say, anything being discussed in the latest issue of *TV Guide*. These specialized channels were about things that mattered to me, more relevant to my interests than mainstream material produced for a general audience. Of course it's not an either/or situation, and YouTube co-exists with the wider media world, helping to promote its offerings to the widest possible audience. And the bigger the audience, the bigger the payday for the "amateur" YouTuber, too, blurring the lines between the big corporation and the once-ordinary person. In years to come, we may recognize that we are living in the Golden Age of YouTube's existence, or (to coin a phrase) YouTube's prime. How did we get here? What does it mean? And where does it go from here?

IN THE BEGINNING

YouTube was founded in 2005, with the site's first video uploaded on April 23rd. The topic "History of YouTube" has its own Wikipedia page, which is where I got that info. That page (at the time of this writing) describes YouTube as initially providing "for non-computer experts to be able to use a simple interface that allowed the user to publish, upload and view streaming videos through standard web browsers and modern internet speeds." Dial-up internet was common in the 1990s, but in the early 2000s more internet users switched to high-speed broadband that allowed for easier viewing of video content. As internet connection speeds have increased, users are able to watch videos with even greater resolution (picture clarity, better sound) without the frequent "buffering" effect that interrupted the experience in the past. Users today can shoot high-definition video on their smartphones with a slickness and polish comparable to professional output seen on broadcast television. And ordinary people have their own channels, just like TV, with (in some cases) thousands of viewers each week.

I first learned about YouTube in early 2006 when reading comics writer Mark Evanier's blog *News From Me*. At the time, Evanier would regularly post an entry titled "Today's Video Link" where he would embed a video, usually an old TV commercial or comedy routine. For example, his entry on April 3, 2006 had a link to an old Rice Krispies ad, prompted by a mention in the *New York Times* the day before which read: "For the last few months, youtube.com has had available for streaming an

advertisement for Rice Krispies, recorded by the Rolling Stones in early 1964." After watching some of these embedded videos on his blog, I decided to skip the middle-man and check out the site from which they came. Not all of the video links that Evanier had posted were from YouTube, but many were, and I found it to be the most user-friendly of the video sites.



Ted White interviewed by John D. Berry (Part 2)

FANAC Fan History • 139 views

Ted White has been a science fiction fan for over 70 years, as well as an artist, fanzine editor and publisher, professional writer, editor an...



The Eternals comics are also bad. | NerdSync

NerdSync • 107K views

To get Magic Spoon's BEST offer yet, click this link for 20% off: <https://magicspoon.thld.co/NERDSYNCFB> (offer ends 11/29) If...



Unspeakable: Bob Kane Stole all the Credit for Creating Batman

ComicTropes • 148K views

Join this channel to get access to perks: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-...>



The SECRET Black Cat Spider-Woman Connection!

Casually Comics • 16K views

The Black Cat (Felicia Hardy) has long been associated with Spider-Man (Peter Parker). Their flirtatious dynamic has oft been compare...



My brush with Alex Toth

Chuck Dixon • 1.7K views

Who is Alex Toth and why didn't I write to him more? @chuckdixon

On May 6, 2006, I wrote on my own blog: "Two of my favorite music videos from the 1980s have just gotten uploaded to YouTube.com. (I had checked last week and they weren't there, so I was pleased when I checked again a few hours ago and found them there.) Here they are... First up is Jesus and Mary Chain's 'Just Like Honey' from 1985. I don't think I'd seen this video in 20 years...." [Here I embedded a link to the video on my blog's page, which showed up as a little box that readers could play without having to leave my page, like Evanier had done on his blog.] "And next up we have Scritti Politti's 'Perfect Way,' also from 1985 and totally different in sound and style than the video above. But for some reason I really dig them both."

Amusing to me now, in that May 6 blog post (like on that April 2 *NY Times* article) I had used the site's full name, *YouTube.com*. but very soon it would become plain old "YouTube." I wrote an email to my friend Matt Seidl on May 12, asking him if he had seen the site. "They have a ton of stuff on there -- old music videos, intros to old TV shows, etc., etc. I've spent hours on there. Even watched an old 'In the News' segment that CBS used to have on Saturday mornings." Matt emailed back the same day: "Yeah, you can find tons of stuff on YouTube. They're about to start cracking down on the copyrighted content though, I think it's already begun (they've shortened the maximum length of videos, for example). It's great because you never know what you're going to find. There are tons of music videos for my favorite Japanese rock band -- B'z -- how else am I going to see those? And I was finally able to revisit this crazy HBO short that I loved as a kid, hadn't seen it in like 25 years." Whereupon he sent me the link. It should be noted, however, that both his link and my blog's links to those music videos have long since been removed, replaced by later uploads of the same content (sometimes from an official source, like the band's record label).

On November 26, 2006, Matt mentioned YouTube again in an email: "I watched a *Doctor Who* on Youtube [sic] last night, 'Deadly Assassin.' It wasn't too much of a hassle -- of course the video quality left a lot to be desired, and it was broken up into 13 different parts. (you can only post videos of a certain length to prevent this very type of thing) I don't feel too guilty about it, considering that the BBC are dragging their heels on getting these released. It's not like I won't buy the DVD as soon as it's released. I'm not sure what all they have on there, but I plan to watch 'Terror of the Zygons' tonight."

Although many videos get removed from YouTube by either the user or the site, many more from those early days still remain available to view today. For example, on March 1, 2006, a YouTube user named **dckate86** uploaded a video titled "Stefani Live" that was only 51 seconds long. The video featured a then-unknown Stefani Germanotta performing her song "Again Again" at The Knitting Factory nightclub in New York City. Two years later, in 2008, Germanotta released her first album, *The Fame*, under her stage name Lady Gaga. dckate86's 2006 upload of the pre-fame Gaga is still on YouTube, but since the words "Lady Gaga" (or even "Germanotta") are not in the video's title, it is less likely to show up in search results. More likely one will find the same video that was copied and uploaded by another YouTube user in 2013, with the easier-to-find title "Lady Gaga Again Again (Live At The Knitting Factory) [Partial]." In 2012, dckate86 added the following to the description in the original 2006 upload: "Please do NOT steal this video and put it up as your own. I have had to ask YouTube to remove entirely too many. I shot this video and it is my property. I leave it up here only for LG fans to enjoy and be able to see how talented she has always been."

Once again, it was on Mark Evanier's blog where I learned how to save video from YouTube onto my own computer, just in case something I had enjoyed watching later vanished from the site. On March 19, 2006, Evanier wrote: "The video links I've been embedding in this weblog (meaning they play right on this page) so far are all from either Google Video or YouTube. They play here and on those sites



via a player that employs Macromedia Flash to load and play a video file. If you would like to capture any of these video files to your own harddisk, this can be done. Go to **KeepVid** [here he provided a link to that site] and enter the direct URL (webpage address) in the appropriate place and it will decode the internecine links and format the file for your downloading pleasure -- and it also works for many other websites that offer video clips. ... Capturing online video clips is sometimes a good idea because you'll have them even after the link goes away. But you may also want to do it because clips will generally play smoother and without downloading pauses that way."

As it happens, KeepVid itself would be going away eventually. The site is still on the web, but in 2018 it ceased allowing users to download YouTube videos. "In an update to its website," a BBC News article noted at the time, "KeepVid said it had discovered that ripping videos from YouTube was against the site's terms and conditions." Or, as another website stated: "The KeepVid homepage formerly let you download videos from YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook, and more by pasting in a URL. Now, the homepage is full of statistics about online video, and an explanation as to why downloading copyrighted videos is bad. ... Unless this is some kind of fake out for publicity it seems pretty clear what's happened. To switch from offering the means to download videos to advice on avoiding doing so suggests pressure has been applied on KeepVid. And it's clearly worked too. The thing to remember is that downloading videos you don't have permission to download clearly is against the law." There are, of course, other sites out there that will allow viewers to download videos from YouTube. These dodgy sites also allow users the ability to simply download the audio content from YouTube videos, saving them as mp3s. You can then burn the mp3s onto blank CD-Rs (assuming your computer has a CD burner), thus allowing you to make your own CDs without having to buy the album. It's little wonder that the copyright owners would be trying to shut down sites that offer such services.

CREATING MY CHANNEL

In 2008, as I began taking more of an interest in small-press comics and fanzines, I would occasionally watch videos uploaded to YouTube by longtime small-press comics creator Steve Keeter. For example, in January 2009, I'd seen a video Steve uploaded where he talked about a comics discussion-zine that he published in the 1980s, the issues of which had been collected into a trade paperback by another small-presser, Sam Gafford. I contacted Sam about the book and obtained one of the last remaining copies. I emailed the following to another fan-ed on January 16, 2009: "By the way, have you seen Steve Keeter's YouTube stuff about fanzines. He has a cool one called 'My Very First Fanzine' that he put up recently on YouTube where he shows his first fanzine effort, an attempt at an Edgar Rice Burroughs zine in 1969. Fun video. Just search for the word 'fanzine' on YouTube and it should be on there."

Later that month, Steve Keeter posted a link on his Yahoo Group to the first YouTube video by small-press artist Cliff Kurowski. In reply to Steve's post, I wrote: "I think the video got more exciting at the end when he showed his art.... That color illustration of Obama and McCain was great! When he talked about his editorial cartoons earlier in the vid, I thought, 'He should show us what they look like!' Other than that minor critique, I enjoyed it. But it wasn't as exciting as your own videos, Steve (which I have watched multiple times)!" While writing this article, I tried to find Cliff Kurowski's YouTube videos, but apparently they had been taken down. Steve Keeter also took down many of his own old videos (including the one about his very first fanzine), which is a shame since I had enjoyed watching them. This is another example of the temporary nature of YouTube videos (not to mention Yahoo Groups, R.I.P.), which can be deleted by the user at any time, or deleted against the uploader's wishes by YouTube itself. Nonetheless, during this period, Steve Keeter was much more active in uploading videos of himself onto YouTube than in publishing zines. He has since returned to publishing, becoming Chairman of the United Fanzine Organization (UFO), while still uploading the occasional video.

In 2018, UFO member Ian Shires started a YouTube channel called *Periodical Paradise* with the intention of using the platform to promote small-press comics. The channel was "kinda inspired by Steve Keeter's videos," according to Ian, but included "how-to" lessons such as how to make a mini-comic and how to use the image-editing program Gimp. In the UFO newsletter later that year, Ian lamented the low viewing figures for his channel ("just 14-15 views on average, and no one watching the episodes all the way through"). Another UFO member, Larry Johnson (who also has his own YouTube channel) replied that the length of Ian's videos perhaps required too much investment of the viewer's time. "My own channel doesn't have reviews on it," Larry wrote, "my videos are art and photo slide shows, but notice that they average around 3 minutes each." Ian was evidently discouraged by the lack of viewers and hasn't uploaded a new video to the channel since December 2018. This is the fate of many YouTube channels, which start out with high hopes due to YouTube's potential but then lay dormant for years, abandoned by their creators. Many other channels, however, such as Larry Johnson's, continue at a more leisurely pace, with a new video uploaded every few months at the creator's whim, without much effort at trying to build a following or take over the world. In the case of those channels, the lack of views is less frustrating to the creator, since the channel exists simply as an outlet for their creative impulses, regardless if anyone else is watching.

I started my own YouTube channel (simply titled "Rob Imes") in August 2009, the first video consisting of clips I'd taken of the demolition of my old elementary school in 2007. The second video was titled "French reprints of American comicbooks" and established the format that I would use for most of my subsequent videos: seen from my POV, looking down at the item as it sits on the table in my living room. I don't show my face in my videos, only my hands as I'm turning the pages of the



book that I'm discussing. I figure that people don't need to see me in the videos, and would prefer to see the object being discussed instead. Besides, I have no wish to be a media personality and dislike having my picture taken, even at family gatherings.

In these early videos that I uploaded, I was simply using the video button on my digital camera, which seemed sufficient to me at the time, but nowadays looks and sounds horrible -- almost unwatchable. For the next few years, the quality of my videos didn't improve. A June 2012 video titled "A look at SF fanzines and prozines," where I showed various issues of *Algol*, *Galileo*, *Fosfax* and *Locus* in my collection, was at the same low level -- jerky hand-held camera, fuzzy picture quality, and an annoying humming sound throughout. Still, the channel was not a priority for me, and I only uploaded around 30 videos total prior to 2019. In 2017, however, I began using my smartphone to record the videos which resulted in better picture and sound, although the phone's 2GB memory card limited the videos to only 20 minutes before it would run out of space. I was pretty happy with my September 14, 2017 video titled "My collection of Region 2 DVDs," since buying DVDs of classic U.K. TV series was an obsession for me at the time and the resulting video looked just how I wanted. I was able to "show off" the DVDs (which, being U.K. imports, are hard to find in the U.S.) and talk about each of them in a concise, intelligent way within the time limit.

In 2014, I learned how to upload stuff that I had recorded off TV back in the 1980s and 1990s. My family had first gotten a VCR in early 1989, and I was frequently recording random material that years later didn't seem to be available online. I figured out that using my DVD recorder, I could copy material from my old VHS tapes onto blank DVDs, then pop the discs into my computer and upload the video content onto YouTube. I decided to create a second YouTube channel just for this TV stuff, since it hadn't been created by me and if the channel got blocked or removed from the site, it wouldn't affect all of my original user-generated videos. This second channel is much more popular -- one of the videos has over a million views -- and has far more subscribers than my regular channel. However, since it consists of footage that I myself didn't create, is not allowed to be monetized. (More on that topic later.)

I can imagine a lot of things, but one thing I never would have imagined occurred because of this second channel. In 2016, John McLaughlin, the host of the long-running political talk show *The McLaughlin Group*, passed away. One of the first things I ever taped on my VCR back in February

1989 was an episode of this program, and in March 2014 I uploaded the episode to my second channel. At the time, it was the oldest episode (or even clip) of the show that could be seen on YouTube. (Older episodes have since appeared.) So, in 2016, when McLaughlin died, TV news organizations naturally looked on YouTube for clips of McLaughlin in his prime and found the video I had uploaded.

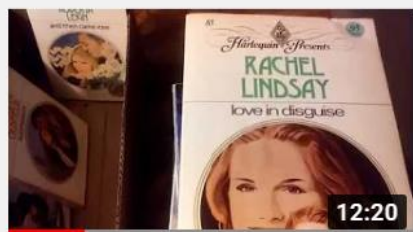
		
A look at SF fanzines and prozines 101 views • 9 years ago	My Digest Collection 148 views • 9 years ago	My Paperback Books 648 views • 9 years ago

As a result, a short clip from the video was shown on national news programs, including the *CBS Evening News*, which I watched that night. Even before McLaughlin had died, however, a short clip from my video was shown on an episode of *The McLaughlin Group* itself, as an example of the variety of things to be found online. It was bizarre to think that something I had seen on TV in 1989 was now being shown again on TV (and seen again by me) because I had taped it off TV. It felt like a cartoon "infinity panel" of a person watching TV and seeing himself watching TV, *ad infinitum*.

Despite the surreal nature of that event, I found the uploading of VHS airplay more cumbersome than simply showing something that was sitting on my living room table, and I haven't uploaded anything to the second channel since 2017. In 2018, I became a fan of romance novels after buying a huge haul of them at a thrift store (over 1,200 paperbacks) and subsequently began immersing myself in the history of the genre. Unfortunately I didn't make a video of my 1,200+ book purchase (I was too busy buying the books and didn't think about that) nor did I bother making a video showing the books after I had acquired them (since I was too busy listing them for sale on eBay). I only kept 10 of the books, selling the rest. Later in 2018, I acquired another huge haul of romance novels and sold most of those as well, without taking any videos to show off the collection. In retrospect this was a mistake, since many fans of the genre love seeing the covers of the old books, and would have been mightily impressed by my hauls. So, in October 2019, I began a series of videos titled "My Romance Novel Collection," showing off the books that I have in my possession or have recently obtained. The first episode currently has 5,731 views, the most views by far of any of the videos on my main "Rob Imes" channel. (The least-viewed video on my channel, incidentally, is one that I uploaded in 2012 titled "My 'New York Review of SF' haul" that has only 17 views.)

In November 2020, with episode #25, I began using a phone holder with an attached light that my sister bought me for my birthday. This device clamps onto the table to stabilize the phone, and has a ring-light that shines overhead to improve the lighting, as well as allowing me to finally use both hands to move the books around in the video. (Previously I had to use one of my hands to hold the phone, which led to a shaky picture.) I'm currently up to episode #36 in "My Romance Novel Collection" series, which was uploaded in November 2021. There's a community of readers on YouTube known as "**booktube**," whose members upload videos of themselves talking about books they've read, but I haven't watched many of them. Generally I look to Goodreads when I want to see what people think of the books they've read, not watch YouTube videos where it takes the person several minutes talking about their life before they finally get around to showing us the book. (I don't talk about my life in my videos.)

My video skills are very primitive, but in 2021 I decided to make a second series of videos about the history of romance novels using a free program, Adobe Spark. I felt that there was a void on YouTube



My romance novel collection
Part One: HARLEQUIN...

5.6K views • 2 years ago



My latest comics and book
haul (June 1, 2021)

58 views • 7 months ago



HISTORY OF THE ROMANCE
NOVEL (episode 1): The Ear...

370 views • 8 months ago

about the genre's history, since most of romance "booktube" is focused on talking about current releases, not old books. I decided to use a slideshow format to show covers of romance novels in chronological order, alongside info about their authors, to demonstrate the genre's evolution over the decades. This involved no "filming" by me -- simply loading cover scans into a timeline with music accompaniment (from a selection of free music options provided by Adobe Spark). So far I've done two videos in this "History of the Romance Novel" series, and have been quite proud of the results, but despite promising a third episode at the end of the second one, I've not uploaded another due to the tremendous amount of work that was involved.

MONETIZATION

My main "Rob Imes" channel, unfortunately, doesn't qualify for monetization because it doesn't meet the viewer and subscriber thresholds. In order for a channel to start receiving payment from YouTube, it must have at least 1,000 subscribers (I currently have 186) and at least "4,000 public watch hours" (whatever that means; I have 792). "We'll send you an email when you're eligible to apply," the site says. This is nice work if you can get it, and many people are making money by making YouTube videos. People are also making YouTube videos telling you how you can make money making YouTube videos (which brings to mind another infinity cartoon). As noted above, my second channel is ineligible for monetization because it doesn't contain original content. Some YouTube channels get around this by mixing their own original content with previously-recorded material made by others that they are "reviewing" or commenting on. This is why there are so many videos like "My first time listening to *Bohemian Rhapsody* by Queen." There are a lot of people searching for the song on YouTube anyway, so this user's "**reaction video**" will show up in the search results and get a lot of views -- far more than they would receive if, say, they were reacting to an obscure song. (Or, needless to say, if the video was about a song they wrote themselves. Many struggling musicians will use the same tactic in order to get people to watch their videos, by covering another person's song. But this is a time-honored tradition, predating the internet.)

At times it feels a bit manipulative or contrived: Has this person truly never heard this famous song before? And is their passionate reaction to what they've just heard really credible after a first listen? I know that sometimes it took several listens for a song to grow on me, and that my initial reaction didn't match my later response to the material. It took years for me to appreciate Bob Dylan's 1965 song "Gates of Eden" because I found it hard to get past the way he was singing it, like he was trying to sing notes that were too high for him to reach. But years later I gave it another listen and loved the lyrics, and now it's one of my favorite songs that he wrote. I cringe to think what my first time reaction to the song would have been like, had that reaction been recorded and uploaded for all to see.



R My romance novel collection (Part 33): Old...
Rob Imes
104 views • 2 months ago



R More dollar box finds from my local comics shop
Rob Imes
30 views • 3 months ago



R My latest haul of dollar-box comic books
Rob Imes
153 views • 3 months ago

Another problem with the "reaction" videos is that the YouTuber is usually a young person reacting to something outside of its original context -- a period in time that they may be wholly unfamiliar with, long before their birth. It's interesting to see how someone now, coming to it "cold," will respond to it, but I've found that (especially with songs) these reaction vidsters have a tendency to be too literal-minded when analyzing the words. I'm reminded of how in 2018, I went with my sister to a theatrical showing of *2001: A Space Odyssey*, one of my all-time favorite films. The movie came out in 1968, before either of us was born, but I generally prefer older films to recent ones. She doesn't share my bias and had never seen the movie, so I suggested in advance not to think too much about trying to understand what she was seeing on the screen. You can think about what it all might mean later (which film critics have spent many years doing). The late 1960s was an experimental time in media, and the occasional "freak out" was meant to "blow minds" on their initial impact, a process that is disrupted by a line-by-line interrogation. Creative works are meant to be experienced in the moment while providing food for thought for the future, not immediately categorized and summarized in the manner of a middle-school student's book report. There is a tendency today to cast firm and lasting judgments on people and products with a disturbing immediacy, and evaluating things based on the received opinions of others. But a silent pondering wouldn't make for a good "reaction" video, so instead we get an instant definitive response, supplemented (in the better videos) by a few garbled quotations from Wikipedia.

However, I have enjoyed and subscribed to several YouTube channels that one could accuse of being a "parasitic" channel, i.e. providing original content but which is reliant on established content created by others for its existence. And any "fan" channel, where a fan talks about a favorite artist, is parasitic in that respect. We are watching the channel (if we are indeed watching it, and not watching something else instead) because the artist is a favorite of ours, too. We may have found the channel because we were searching for videos relating to that artist. So, the artist has helped bring their fans together through their mutual interest in the artist. But not all fan channels are the same, some are much better than others, and one fan can ultimately become a fan of a fellow fan's channel. Just as a fan might be excited to see a favorite artist in concert, or listen to their latest record, or read their latest novel, the same fan might also be excited to see the latest video uploaded by a favorite fan talking about that latest concert/record/novel. When one subscribes to a YouTube channel, its latest video is shown in one's YouTube feed. Even while writing this article, I noticed that a new video had been uploaded by one of my favorite channels, and I stopped writing this for a little while to watch it. It's almost like taking a break from something to watch a favorite TV show, although YouTube uploads usually don't adhere to a predictable schedule (but then neither do the lives of many people today).

Music is perhaps the main draw for viewers of YouTube, offering free access to an endless library of songs without having to download them onto your phone or computer, without having to "join" or



 **Tales of the Teen Titans #44 (Dave's Weekly Update...**
Cerebus Online
202 views • 3 weeks ago



 **Church and State and Gerhard (Dave Sim's Week...**
Cerebus Online
2.9K views • 6 years ago



 **Ask Chuck Dixon #93**
Chuck Dixon
1.2K views • 11 days ago

"sign up" for a music service, and without having to visit a dodgy illegal website. Another advantage to YouTube is that its links are easily shared with others on social media. Want others to hear a song you like? Simply post a link to the YouTube page on your Facebook or Twitter account, and your friends can hear the song at the push of a button, without having to download an MP3 or open an audio player to hear it. For many years YouTube users uploaded copyrighted music to the site and it was either left up or taken down depending on how aggressive the record company was in defending their copyright. Sometimes these fan-made music videos could be quite creative, but other times there was no visual accompaniment at all except for a photo of the artist or the album cover.

In January 2009, a YouTube user named **azcarf44** made a video for the 1991 Billy Bragg song "Cindy of a Thousand Lives" consisting of a slideshow of work by the photographer Cindy Sherman, about whom the song had been written. Billy Bragg saw the fan's video and wrote about it in the May 2009 issue of *Q* magazine: "It was one of the most impressionistic tracks I ever recorded but when plans were made to release it as a single, the record company was unable to secure permission to use her photos in the video. Disappointed, I drifted away from her work. A couple of months ago, I came across a clip on YouTube. Someone had made a montage of her work using my song as the soundtrack. As I watched the images fade into one another, I was struck by their power. New photographs appeared that I had never seen before, still full of that weird beauty and attractive menace. So hats off to you azcarf44, you've made the video clip that I always wanted to and you've enticed me back to the work of Cindy Sherman." This was an example of the singer appreciating what the YouTube uploader had done with their song. No word on what Cindy Sherman thought about the unauthorized use of her photos, though.

I've made a few "fan-made" music videos myself, which consisted simply of a montage of photos as the music played. One of them was for a funny Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme song from the 1960s that I had on a vinyl record, which I noticed wasn't available on YouTube. I undertook the complicated process of transferring the audio of the vinyl record to a digital file that I could then insert as an audio track onto a video slideshow. The slideshow consisted of photos of Steve & Eydie that I found on Google. The resulting video lasted less than 3 minutes, but took me several hours to make -- and in the end, I took the video down a few years later because I wasn't happy with the sound quality of the vinyl transfer. Unfortunately, that means the song itself is once again unavailable on YouTube.

Many fan-uploaded videos are removed or blocked by YouTube, replaced these days by legitimate uploads of the audio tracks provided by the record company or copyright owner on the artist's official YouTube channel. For example, the official Beatles YouTube channel allows listeners to hear their recently remastered Super Deluxe editions in full -- not only the regular album tracks, but the bonus



The image shows three YouTube video thumbnails arranged horizontally. Each thumbnail includes a video player image, a title, a channel name, and view/viewer information.

- Thumbnail 1:** A woman smiling. Title: "PR Disaster?". Channel: bowlestrek (formerly). Views: 192K views • 4 years ago.
- Thumbnail 2:** Brad Pitt with a red lightning bolt and a cartoon character. Title: "Eternals is a Forgettable DISASTER and Marvel's...". Channel: Nerdrotic. Views: 251K views • 2 months ago.
- Thumbnail 3:** A superhero character. Title: "The fall of Marvel Comics | New Warriors is nothing...". Channel: YellowFlash 2. Views: 361K views • 1 year ago.

songs of previously-unreleased takes and demo recordings. Each video in the description says "Provided to YouTube by Universal Music Group." Why would the record company allow you to listen to their songs for free on YouTube? Because YouTube is monetized, and so every time someone clicks the link to hear the song, the record company makes money. Beginning in 2013, YouTube "clicks" were also treated like radio "spins" of a song, counting towards a song's placement in the *Billboard* charts. As *Billboard* noted in 2020, this change signified "the chart's shift from a measure of pure sales to a consumption model." Incidentally, there are also YouTube channels like **GoldenBillboardCharts** that post the latest *Billboard* charts each week, with a snippet of each song and showing whether it's gone up or down that week. These chart videos are a good way to keep up-to-date with what's happening in current pop music, if one is so inclined.

Prior to MTV, singers would often perform on variety and music TV shows, and many of these live (or mimed) performances are available to watch on YouTube. The official YouTube channel of **The Ed Sullivan Show** frequently uploads material from the long-running series, some of it as far back as 1949. **Beat-Club** was a West German music TV series in the 1960s-70s featuring U.K. and American pop & rock artists, and its official YouTube channel has been regularly uploading rarely-seen clips from the program for years. The same is true of **TopPop**, the official channel of a Dutch music TV show of the 1970s and 1980s, similar to Britain's *Top of the Pops*. A library of classic rock performances can be viewed now at the click of a button. These channels offer a nostalgic appeal for older viewers as well as a glimpse of what they missed for those too young to have experienced it at the time.

The music equivalent of "booktube" is the "**vinyl community**," or "VC" for short, consisting of record collectors who upload videos showing off their collections or recent acquisitions. No gathering of individuals these days is free from charges of toxicity, however, and even here there are occasional accusations of elitism and snobbery. For example, one video uploaded by **Channel 33 RPM** is titled "Tired of grown men picking on kids with Crosley record players," about the tendency among some audiophiles to belittle newbies who purchase an inexpensive entry-level turntable at their local Walmart. Not to be ignored, or perhaps anticipating a future trend, there is also a nascent "Cassette Community" as well as the occasional video aimed at the "CD Community." It turns out that a digital showcase like YouTube is a great way to share one's love for physical media.

For vintage music recordings of the pre-rock era, there are few copyright problems since much of it has fallen into the public domain. Record collectors are able to share their 78RPM recordings by filming themselves playing it on their turntables or making a digital copy that they can then upload. The channel **warholsoup100** has uploaded hundreds of songs from the 1920s and 1930s by now-obscure singers like Ruth Etting and Annette Hanshaw. It's similar with old-time radio, where the channel **Old**



Time Radio Researchers has hundreds of broadcasts available to listen to, not only well-known ones like *Suspense* and *X Minus One* but lesser-known series like *The Strange Romance of Evelyn Winters* and *My Son Jeep*. Prior to the advent of the internet, I was genuinely concerned about the lack of visibility (no pun intended) that old-time radio (OTR) received from the public. I had bemoaned the fact that most people had apparently never heard of *Suspense*, for example -- a series that ran for 20 years (1942-1962) and frequently featured legendary Hollywood actors. The only way to hear the show was to acquire episodes from small-time OTR dealers or stumble upon occasional rebroadcasts on radio. Today, however, anyone can hear online nearly any surviving OTR program for free. The YouTube channel **Old Time Radio Archive** has a *Suspense* playlist that contains 910 episodes. And OTR episodes with famous stars show up in YouTube search results whenever someone does a search of the star's name --increasing OTR's "visibility" for those who might have overlooked it in the past.

Some YouTube channels serve as an archive for interviews with notable people, preserving their recollections for posterity. **The Bobbie Wygant Archive** uploads the raw footage of the celebrity interviews of the longtime Texas entertainment journalist from the 1960s to the 1990s. Here you can view her conversations with Dick Powell (in 1961), Sharon Tate (1967), Art Fleming (1970), Ida Lupino (1972), Harrison Ford (1977), Paul McCartney (1984), George Lucas (1994), Leonardo DiCaprio (1995) -- the list of famous names goes on and on. The **Television Academy Foundation** **INTERVIEWS** channel features clips of their in-depth interviews with actors and other personnel who worked on classic TV shows. A channel about comic books called **The Comic Archive** similarly preserves the thoughts of people who have worked in comics through short interview segments, including Joe Kubert, Joe Sinnott and Denny O'Neil, among others.

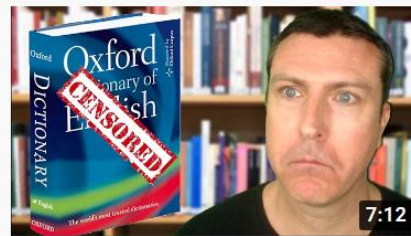
Silent movies are also available to view on YouTube channels such as **silentfilmhouse**, **silentmovies** and the amusingly-named **I Demand Complete Silents**. Of course, many old-time radio shows and silent movies can also be found on the Internet Archive (www.archive.org) as well. There are also YouTube channels that offer old TV and (non-silent) movies, such as **Moviecrafft Inc.** which has uploaded such oddities as a 1953 episode of the TV soap opera *Search for Tomorrow* featuring Don Knotts before he was famous. The **Free The Kinescopes** channel has episodes of 1950s TV series like *Lights Out* and *Studio One*, among others. The entertainment output of the 20th century has found new life in the 21st century. In fact, there's so much old material now so easily available that one can't help but wonder what effect this might have on the creation of new product -- if there's really no need today for new music or new movies or new TV shows with so much great old stuff on hand, constantly being recycled and remastered. However, so far it seems that both old and new are able to happily co-exist, that there will always be an appetite among audiences for fresh material reflecting a current perspective.



Biden Wants NO WHITE People or Men | Supreme...
 Michael Knowles ✓
 19K views • 3 days ago



Peter Dinklage Kicks and Screams Over Fairytale Creatures
 Matt Walsh ✓
 191K views • 2 days ago



They're Coming for the Dictionary!
 Mark Dice ✓
 255K views • 2 years ago

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY

When it comes to channels on YouTube, there are channels to serve every taste, and no single article could cover them all. Indeed, even though I have some favorite YouTube channels, I haven't seen every video that they have uploaded, or enjoyed every one of their videos that I've watched. And new channels are discovered and created all the time, so a comprehensive list would be impossible. But I will mention here some user-generated channels that I have watched and found interesting, as well as noting how many subscribers (roughly) their channel had when this article was written (in February 2022). Some of these channels I recommend checking out if they sound up your alley, while others mentioned below are not necessarily recommended but notable nonetheless (hence "the bad and the ugly" phrase above).

When it comes to collecting vintage paperbacks, probably no one has a better channel than U.K. collector **Jules Burt** (14,500 subscribers). I'm not a fan of *Star Trek* novels, but I found the first episode (March 7, 2021) in Burt's series of videos about the 1970s Bantam paperbacks to be interesting and informative. As it happens, I visited a used bookstore shortly after watching the video and found several of the novels that he showed, which gave me a better understanding of where they fit in *Star Trek* publication history, causing me to buy a couple of them myself.

Gary Lovisi (869 subscribers), the publisher of the long-running *Paperback Parade* magazine, also has his own YouTube channel. A recent video (January 17, 2022) was about the writer Ron Goulart, who passed away on January 14. In another new video (January 20), Gary says "I'm on my way to the printer to pick up the latest issue of my book-collector magazine," i.e., *Paperback Parade* #114. It's a short video, less than a minute long, where he talks briefly about what will be in the new issue. I think more editors ought to promote their latest issues in this manner, to increase awareness of them; whenever a new issue is coming out, one could post a video about it and that video will show up in one's YouTube subscriber feeds. In the comments section of this particular video, one person asked how to obtain the issue via a money order or check, and Gary replied, giving his P. O. Box address. (Incidentally, I've seen some of the previously-discussed "reaction" video channels provide their P. O. Box address as well, so that viewers could send them stuff so that they could do future videos about things they received from viewers in the mail.)

Parlogram Auctions (20,900 subscribers) sounds like the name of a corporate channel, but it's actually just a fancy name for a record dealer named Andrew whose knowledge of Beatles records is impressive, with special emphasis on matrix numbers scratched into the inner grooves and the names of the people who cut the records at the pressing plant. It's information way beyond the interests of the casual listener, which is one of the great things about the internet -- allowing a fan to dive deep into


		
 Advanced Algorithms (COMPSCI 224), Lecture 1 Harvard University ✓ 10M views • 5 years ago	 1. Introduction to Statistics MIT OpenCourseWare 1.2M views • 4 years ago	 Einstein's General Theory of Relativity Lecture 1 Stanford 5M views • 13 years ago

their specialized interest. The videos are straightforward, polished and professional (and getting better all the time, as the song says) with a clear and precise speaking style from Andrew (i.e., no mumbling or emotional outbursts). If I had to pick one video of his to try, it might be the Nov. 7, 2021 video about the DeAgostini Vinyl Collection releases.

There are several other YouTube channels by Beatles fans that I watch, among them **Pop Goes the 60s** (Matt Williamson), **John Heaton** (who has the wonderfully vérité intro to all of his videos showing his empty chair before he walks over to it after pressing the record button on the camera), **Andrew Dixon**, **Elliot Roberts**, **Matthew Turnage**, **Vinyl Rewind**, **FabFourArchivist** and others. I don't always agree with their opinions, but they are worth considering. Having one's channel devoted to an already-popular topic (such as The Beatles) is a good way to attract a lot of viewers (and therefore money), but these particular folks are so knowledgeable that they would probably be talking about the subject to an empty room if that was all that was available to them. Lucky for them, YouTube provides a wider platform than they'd probably receive anywhere else.

I'd never heard of **Rick Beato** before until his videos started showing up in my YouTube feed. He's a gray-haired music producer that looks the part, who obviously knows the recording studio well since most of his videos are filmed with him sitting in one. He comes across as a guy who knows his stuff and whose opinions are fair and reasonable and backed by decades of experience -- kind of like a music equivalent of the late Anthony Bourdain. I think people watch him because they may be looking for validation for their own judgments about music (i.e., if Rick Beato agrees with me, then I must be correct). I think his most interesting videos are when he looks at someone else's "top 10" list -- whether it be the most-played songs on Spotify or the most recent list of Grammy nominees -- and goes through each song explaining whether it deserves to be there or not. With nearly 3 million subscribers, Beato has the most popular channel here.

A lot of the user-generated channels about comic books appear to be from the speculator/dealer side of the hobby. I have to admit that I never heard of "pressing and cleaning" comic books until watching some of these videos last year, where collectors buy and sell their "slabbed" "key" issues. Before sending the comics in to be graded (and sealed in a protective case), the collectors have their comics put in a pressing device to flatten out any creases, and have the covers cleaned of any dirt that might have accumulated over the decades, all in the hope of receiving a 9.8 or 9.6 grade from the slabbing service. The difference between, say, a 9.8 and a 9.4 can be hundreds of dollars, so they try to make the comic look as good as possible before it's sent in to be graded. (Incidentally, a comic that isn't slabbed is called a "raw" book, something else that I learned while watching these videos.)



The image shows three YouTube video thumbnails. The first is titled "THE GILDED AGE EXPLAINED IN 12 MINUTES" with a duration of 12:28. The second is titled "THE ORIGINS OF RUSSIA" with a duration of 15:39 and features a map of Eastern Europe with labels for "972", "Novgorod", "Kyiv", "Pechenegs", "Volga", "Aghar", "Bulgarian Empire", "Volga Bulgaria", "Khazars", "Kievan Rus'", and "Byz". The third is titled "Late Roman Empire: The Decline of Cities" with a duration of 55:05 and shows a scene from a historical film.

The Gilded Age Explained in 12 Minutes
Captivating History
220K views • 8 months ago

The origins of Russia - Summary on a Map
Geo History ✓
1.2M views • 7 months ago

Late Roman Empire: The Decline of Cities
Thersites the Historian
368K views • 1 year ago

Last year I happened to watch a video by one collector about "10 Blue Chip Key Comics of the Future" which mentioned that a *Batman* comic from 1988 was "hot" because Todd McFarlane had drawn the cover. The cover looked familiar to me, and it turns out that I had bought the issue in a dollar box a few years ago. After watching the video, I dug out the comic, put it up for sale on eBay, and a week later had sold it for \$200. So, it pays to watch!

A channel named **Comics by Perch** (27,800 subscribers) uploads a few videos to YouTube every day, all of them about the current comics industry. One recent video (Jan. 20, 2022), titled "The numbers at DC are terrifying," was about how only two of DC's releases among the top fifty best-selling comics in December were not Batman-related. "Seriously, that is insanity," he says in the video. "No part of that is good news for DC." He doesn't show himself in his videos, it's simply his voice being heard with a still image accompaniment relating to the topic he is discussing. He's opinionated, and brings to mind someone that you might hear hosting a radio talk show, except that it's all about comics.

No matter how slick and professional a channel's videos are, the words that are spoken can be the thing that determines whether I can recommend it or not. For example, there's an impressive-looking history-oriented channel called **NerdSync** (521,000 subscribers) that often discusses comics and movies, but the host is so glib and going for laffs, that ultimately I find it more annoying than entertaining. One of his videos has the clickbait title "The Captain America cartoon Marvel wants you to forget," which was about the 1966 animated series. After watching the beginning of the video, I wrote on Facebook: "Saw a little bit of this video, but I can't stand to watch it because it's so irritating. The host appears to be under the impression that the 1966 Marvel cartoons are 'forgotten' and hard to find. I think this may have something to do with the YouTuber's age. The Marvel cartoons were rerun on TV throughout the 1970s, and some of the theme songs are familiar to people of my generation for that reason. In the VHS era, several of the 1966 Marvel cartoons had official videotape releases. And while they haven't been officially released on DVD in the US, they were released on Region 2 DVD sets several years ago." In a follow-up post, I wrote: "Watched a little more of the video and the guy finally got a bootleg Region 1 DVD of the Cap series from eBay, but then he didn't have anything to play it on. He eventually was able to watch the bootleg DVD on an Xbox and he was surprised at how good the picture quality was." The fact that the guy didn't even own a DVD player, and was making a big deal about how he didn't know what to do with the disc, was particularly annoying for someone like me who prides himself on his extensive DVD collection.

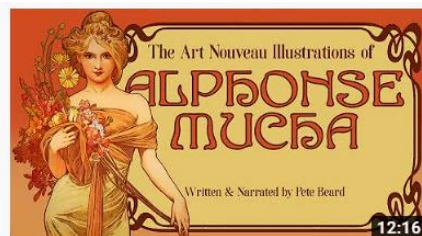
Another of NerdSync's videos was about how Jack Kirby's "The Eternals comics are also bad" (to quote the title) which was mainly about making fun of the "ancient astronauts" theory that inspired the series. His video about another Kirby comic was titled "I found the worst comic book." The channel's provocative titles certainly caused me to click them, and the polished production kept me watching (for



 **Scribes Of Ancient Egypt: The Art Of Egyptian...**
Perspective
28K views • 2 days ago



 **Vincent Van Gogh's The Starry Night: Great Art...**
Great Art Explained
1.9M views • 7 months ago



 **THE ART NOUVEAU ILLUSTRATIONS OF ALPHONSE MUCHA HD 1080p**
pete beard
190K views • 1 month ago

a while anyway), but eventually the host's comedic treatment of the subject matter grew tiresome and forced me to switch to something else. Apparently, however, the frivolous or (allegedly) funny videos are more popular with viewers than videos addressing the topic in a sober fashion.

I'm not opposed to humor in such videos, even if they do have clickbait titles, as long as the host seems sincere and I feel like I might actually learn something from listening to them (instead of having the opposite feeling, that I should be the one explaining things to them). For example, on August 28, 2020, a user called **Mint-Hunter Comics** (12,400 subscribers) posted a video called "Top 10 Reasons Why Collecting Batman SUCKS!" After seeing the video, I posted the following review on Facebook: "Amusing video that was posted a year ago on YouTube from a Batman comics collector. The obvious drawback, that he relates, is that there are so many issues featuring Batman or Batman-related characters (Nightwing, Catwoman, etc.) that one needs to focus on a couple specific titles in order not to be overwhelmed. Also one ought to focus on a certain time period because some older books will never be obtainable for most collectors outside of reprint editions. This collector looks like a younger guy... I can't imagine trying to collect every comic published by a long-running character nowadays."

The **Casually Comics** channel (132,000 subscribers) also uses humor in her videos about vintage comic books, but what makes them enjoyable is the sense that she has genuine affection for them, even as she recaps their illogical plots and wacky dialogue. My favorite of her videos is "Hawkeye Sassing Captain America Off The Avengers For 6 Issues Straight" (March 1, 2021) about how Hawkeye's relentless complaining about Cap in 1960s *Avengers* comics constituted a hostile work environment. (Unmentioned in the video is that writer/editor Stan Lee was probably trying to replicate the success of the "bickering superheroes" formula of *The Fantastic Four*, but with less success.)

One problem with these videos is when the (usually) young hosts are explaining the history to us, but without giving credit in the video where they got all this information from. It reminds me of how TV news anchors deliver information with an air of authority, when most of the time they are simply reading words off a script, the actual research and reporting having been done by others. There's a monetary incentive in producing as many videos as possible -- to increase traffic to one's channel -- and in some cases YouTubers are simply reading aloud news articles that they saw on a webpage, interjecting their own opinions between the lines. With comics history, much of it can be found in Wikipedia articles with footnotes attached to the source of each statement -- but not many people bother to read the notes at the bottom, much less bother to remember who to publicly credit for having originally dug up the info.

Case in point: In March 2020, the channel **ComicTropes** (173,000 subscribers), a.k.a. Chris Piers, did



The image shows three YouTube video thumbnails. The first is titled "THEY ARE AMONG US" with a duration of 12:08. The second is titled "Carl Sagan On Alien Civilizations" with a duration of 5:41. The third is titled "IS TIME TRAVEL POSSIBLE?" with a duration of 26:47.

Video Title	Channel	Views	Time Ago
Nasa Detects New Alien Life Radio Signals From...	Tech Space	63K views	8 hours ago
Carl Sagan On Alien Civilizations	Neil deGrasse Tyson Videos	1.2M views	7 years ago
Is Time Travel Possible? Episode 206 Closer To...	Closer To Truth	1.9M views	7 months ago

a video about "The Origin of Comic Books in the Platinum Age," i.e., pre-Golden Age, a subject that longtime comics dealer Robert Beerbohm has researched and written extensively about, including for the *Overstreet Price Guide*. In the comments section of the video, Beerbohm posted: "Waaaay too much info conflated into that technical military term FUBAR. You have a LOT yet to learn if you think you can teach about the history of comics." Over on Facebook, Beerbohm wrote: "This Comics Tropes guy has figured out how to flow with his viewers. He understands the psyche. That said, his Platinum Age clip came thru my flows. I watched it. I reviewed it. Parts of it sound like I wrote it as in lifting data. It is also chock block full of error, misconception, I winced a few times."

Regarding another ComicTropes video, one that had made a questionable claim about how Jack Kirby was treated by Marvel, I wrote on Facebook: "The video (which, as I said, was just posted yesterday) now has over 60,000 views (!) and nearly 900 comments in the comments section. So, things that are stated in that one video have a reach beyond pretty much any Facebook post on the subject, any recent book or magazine article about it, etc. The reach of these YouTube videos is fascinating to me... and their influence on the perception of the public is perhaps not yet fully appreciated or understood. If someone wanted to inform the largest number of people about a subject these days, their best bet would not be to write a book, it would be to make a YouTube video." (I checked today, nearly two years later, and that one video has now had over 310,000 views and over 2,000 comments.)

It's easy to see why the ComicTropes channel would be so popular. Despite the occasional error and the omission of credit for where his information originated, Piers' personality in front of the camera is likable, his speaking style friendly and his words easily understood. The channel even has its own impressive animated opening sequence, with a cartoon Piers re-enacting scenes from famous superhero comics. And the channel covers a wide range of topics in comics history, not just Marvel and DC. It's worth checking out, but it's also worth keeping in mind that the host is not an infallible source of information, despite the authoritative impression he conveys. The same can be said about all of these YouTube channels.

Cartoonist Kayfabe (56,300 subscribers) is another comics channel, hosted by indie cartoonists Ed Piskor and Jim Rugg. They appear to have grown up reading comics in the 1980s and, despite their indie cred, unashamedly have a lot of love for certain mainstream comics of that decade. Initially each of their videos was shot from overhead, so that the focus was squarely on the comic book being discussed, with only the hands of the two artists shown as they turned the pages. In their more recent videos, the two cartoonists can be seen sitting together in front of the camera, like they are on a Zoom call -- a technique that has become more common (even on TV) since the pandemic.

Back in 2009, Dave Sim (creator of *Cerebus*, one of the most-popular self-published comic books of



the 1980s and 1990s) began a series of videos on his website, called *Cerebus TV*, which basically featured Dave staring into the camera as he talked about comics. The videos would premiere on the site on certain days, but the connection was a little glitchy most of the time. Unlike everyone else mentioned above, Dave himself is not actually online, having restricted his communication with others to phone calls, letters and faxes. Dave's fans, however, stepped into the void to help facilitate his weekly video updates with the world on the web. By 2015, the videos had thankfully moved onto YouTube (as I think I had recommended to him early on) with his channel **Cerebus Online** (1,460 subscribers). The number of subscribers is surprisingly small for someone of such importance in the history of indie comics (certainly more so than Piskor and Rugg, mentioned above), but I suspect this is due to the low-budget look of Dave's videos, the slow delivery of his monotone voice, and a face made for radio. Despite his efforts in the beginning to emulate the language of television by having his videos organized into seasons, no one would mistake them for a real TV show. It's too bad, since I've found Dave to be a generous person with his time, even to complete strangers like me, but his ability to promote product and communicate with his audience is best achieved on the printed page.

More successful, I think, from an entertainment standpoint, is the YouTube channel of comics writer **Chuck Dixon** (5,180 subscribers), best known for his work on Batman in the 1990s. Chuck has a series of videos titled "Ask Chuck Dixon" where he answers questions from his fans, often going on at length about his memories working at DC Comics, and his opinions about any subject under the sun. What works well about these videos is that Chuck himself does not appear on camera. We only hear his voice talking, and the images we see are the topics that he is talking about, shown at the appropriate time when he is discussing them. It's basically like a podcast, but the still images help to illustrate the words that he is speaking -- as well as being able to reach an audience that might not listen to podcasts. It works extremely well, and would be a better model for Dave Sim to follow with his videos. (Chuck's voice also sounds friendlier than Dave's, which helps.)

One drawback that perhaps both Chuck and Dave may have in connecting with viewers is their age (born in 1954 and 1956 respectively). Many of the other channels of this type are hosted by younger people who feel comfortable chatting into webcams, and hip enough to avoid making "dad jokes" or sounding out of touch. This generational divide may partly help explain the backlash that oldsters Robert Silverberg and George R. R. Martin received from younger viewers of the 2020 Hugo Awards live stream. What seems to the old guard like a fond remembrance of days past, a celebration of a shared history, sounds to a younger audience like cranky old white guys trying to erase the progress that has been made in recent years, and they have no similar desire to wax nostalgic for the bad old days.

The intense focus on a niche interest that YouTube provides can admittedly have a highly negative aspect. When the topic is about entertainment (music, books, etc.) it's normally just harmless chatter

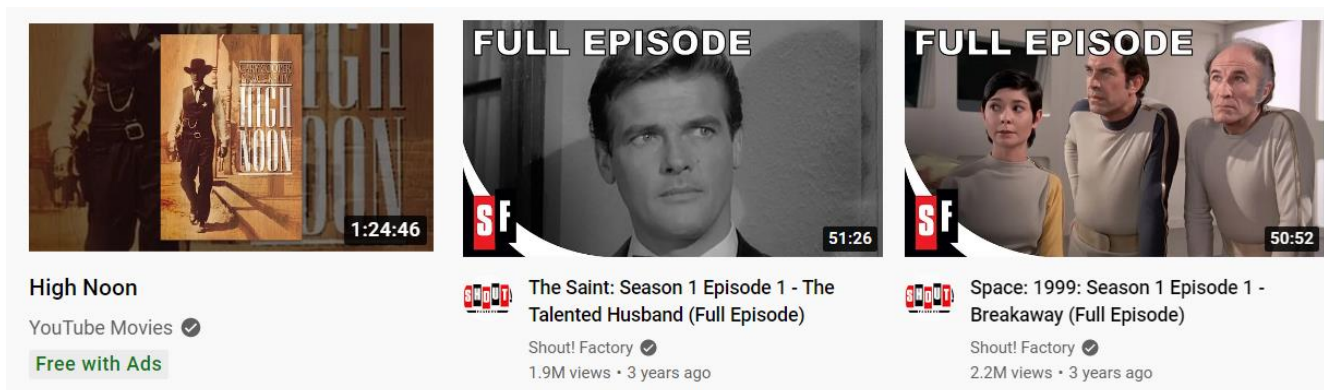


amongst fans. Increasingly, however, there is a political element to mere entertainment where fans may find themselves divided along party lines, or feeling disenfranchised by their former faves in pop culture. Comics artist Ethan Van Sciver's **ComicArtistPro Secrets** (147,000 subscribers) evidently generates more views than other comics creator channels due to his vocal opposition to efforts at gender diversity in the industry. People who share his viewpoint can follow his videos as a form of solidarity, regardless of any particular interest in his artwork.

The channel **Nerdrotic** (400,000 subscribers) also complains repeatedly about "woke" creators ruining superhero comics and movies. Another user, **bowlestrek** (43,100 subs) similarly complains about current *Doctor Who* for its progressive approach, but in a bitter-sounding way with constant jibes of sarcastic humor and blunt insults. (I've yet to see any of the Jodie Whittaker episodes, so I don't have an opinion myself.) You may wonder why someone would subject themselves to a TV program that they clearly despise in order to trash it on YouTube in numerous videos. But expressing anger is a good way to get attention, and the more traffic that one receives, the bigger the payout. Outrage and negativity drives up the numbers a lot more effectively than happiness does.

One aspect of the ugly "Gamergate" controversy some years ago played out on YouTube when feminist critic Anita Sarkeesian became the subject of harassment from her ideological opponents. Sarkeesian's YouTube channel **Feminist Frequency** (217,000 subscribers) offered videos where she criticized the messages in popular entertainment, particularly video games, in a way that would be uncontroversial in academic circles but sounded like a crazed attack to many young male gamers. A YouTuber named **Thunderf00t** (1 million subs) uploaded his own videos that (according to him) "destroyed" the arguments of Sarkeesian and other feminists. Admittedly, however, I haven't bothered to watch either channel in many years, since all of the controversy eventually died down.

It often seems like a pop-culture parallel to the heated political debates taking place in the wider world, dividing people even within families. There are plenty of channels devoted to pure politics out there, of course, unconnected to fan concerns. Many of the most popular political-opinion channels have become big business, such as Ben Shapiro and Joe Rogan, and YouTube is simply one more avenue to extend their reach. The populist right-wing YouTuber **Mark Dice** (1.7 million subscribers) uses mean-spirited humor to attack his liberal foes, aiming particularly at CNN's Brian Stelter by overdubbing a squeaky high-pitch voice over video of Stelter speaking. Dice is a fitting spokesperson for the Trump era of Republican orthodoxy, his characterization of Dick Cheney as a warmonger consistent with Trump's own view (and quite unlike how Cheney used to be regarded by conservative pundits). Such commentators have evidently taken Saul Alinsky's advice in *Rules for Radicals* to heart that ridicule is an effective weapon against one's opponents -- ironically the "radicals" using this tactic now are on the far right.



Right-wing commentator **Michael Knowles** (814,000 subscribers) has a more serious and earnest (albeit condescending) demeanor, vaguely reminding me of Dr. Drew Pinsky, though with a sly smirk that suggests it's all a game to him anyway. **The Jimmy Dore Show** (945,000 subs) hosted by comedian Jimmy Dore, who used to work for the liberal *Young Turks* channel, has moved so far left that he's gone far right. Like Dice, Dore's entire shtick is about mocking people with whom he disagrees politically. I've always thought that communication was a positive thing, but these channels cause me to wonder if modern online communications -- and videos like these -- give voice to a rage that would be better left unsaid.

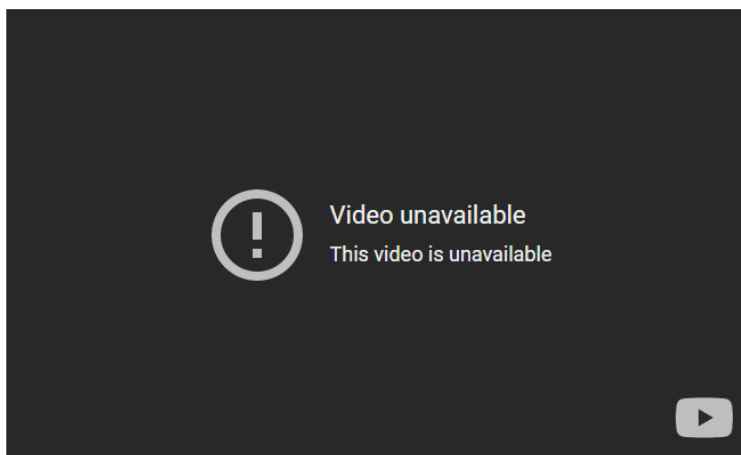
Some of these "talking head" shows look like cable news talk shows, while others resemble a Zoom call or a recorded convention panel. This article has focused more on channels about comic books than, say, science fiction due to the fact that I haven't watched many SF channels. Searching YouTube while writing this piece, I stumbled upon the channel **Fast Forward: Contemporary Science Fiction** (2,440 subscribers) which features Zoom style interviews with SF writers, although it's not updated often (only 20 videos in the past 2 years). I also see **FANAC Fan History** (968 subs) that features old footage from conventions as well as new Zoom interviews. This channel has uploaded 44 videos in the past 2 years.

Looking through the list of channels that I've subscribed to on YouTube, I see there are some that I'd forgotten about, probably because they haven't uploaded content in a few years or so. One was called **TikiTrex** (80,300 subscribers), where a woman visits and explores abandoned buildings, most of which are falling into disrepair. Watching her lone investigations into these scary looking locales, always shown from her POV, gives the viewer the vicarious thrill of seeing a potentially dangerous situation (like a collapsing house) from the safety of one's armchair.

Nowadays when someone wants some technical instruction, from home repair to hooking up a BluRay player, the first stop for many people is YouTube, where someone will show them how it's done. The channel **Antenna Man** (191,000 subscribers) is interesting to a fan of broadcasting like myself, even though I'm not in the market for buying an antenna (since most of the channel's videos feature reviews of various antenna models). Last year he took a road trip to Pennsylvania to visit a RadioShack store (which are no longer open in many areas) and another time he took a portable TV to try and pick up the signal of a station that was still broadcasting an analog channel (even after the digital switchover in 2009). He also helpfully debunks manufacturer claims that a home TV antenna has a range of 100 miles or more, which is bogus due to the curvature of the earth. As a fan and proponent of over-the-air

free TV, having dropped my increasingly-expensive cable TV service in 2014, I appreciate Antenna Man's efforts in spreading the word about the alternatives.

Even God can be found in this machine. **ReligionForBreakfast** (408,000 subscribers) features videos educating viewers about various aspects of religious history. For example, one video titled "Gospel of Thomas: Why Is It Not In the Bible?" is about one of the later gospels excluded from the New Testament.

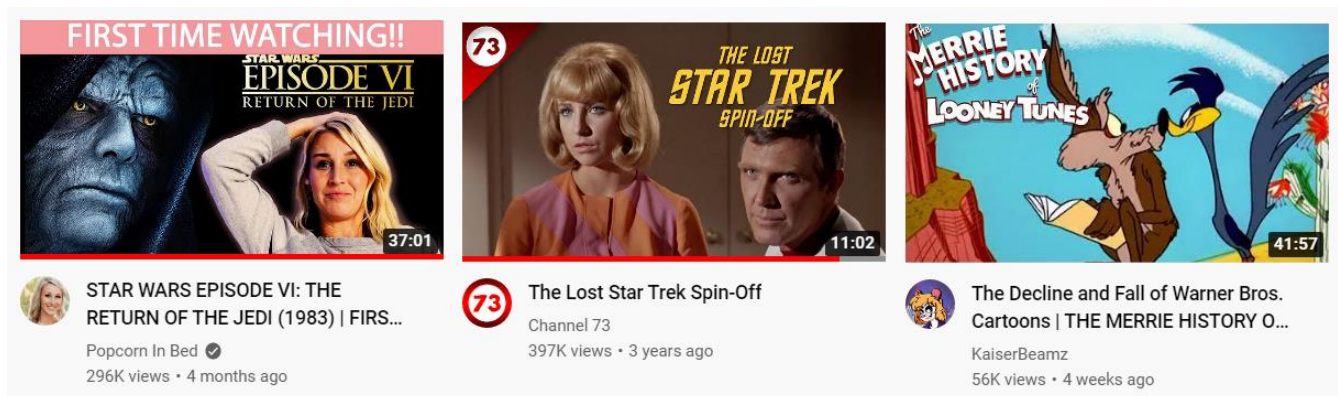


People are obviously curious about such a question, since that video has had nearly 2 million views. He has also produced some fun videos like "What is Mario's Religion?" (about the Nintendo video game character). **UsefulCharts** (992,000 subs) is another educational channel dealing with religion and history, including a multi-part series of videos titled "Who Wrote the Bible?" that deals with both the Old and New Testaments. Each video simply contains the host's voiceover and basic graphics, but tackles the subject in a way that makes it easy to understand -- and more clearly than any TV documentary I've seen about religious history.

Finally, if you just want to hear someone talk at length, there are plenty of lectures to watch on YouTube -- not just someone talking into the camera at you, like the folks above, but actual lectures with a person standing in front of a lectern addressing an audience on (usually) a scholarly topic. In this time of COVID, with remote learning often replacing in-person instruction, it makes sense to be able to listen to lectures in this way. But even before COVID, many people found it interesting to hear experts in their fields deliver a speech, imparting their wisdom and insight. The best known of these is the **TED Talks** channel (20.7 million subscribers) which has an even more popular spin-off channel, **TEDx Talks** (33.9 million subs). Colleges and universities like Harvard, Stanford, MIT, and so forth have their own YouTube channels featuring professors lecturing on a variety of subjects. Even small-town libraries have YouTube channels featuring talks by visiting published authors or librarian readings for children's story hour. YouTube's potential for the betterment of mankind through the spread of information is limited only by our willingness to engage with it, by the choices we make concerning what we watch.

IN THE FUTURE

As I mentioned before, I can imagine a lot of things, so here I'll put my imagination to work on what the future might hold for YouTube, by looking at what has happened in the past and projecting it into the future. There are several future possibilities to consider. An obvious idea, using the past as a guide, is that YouTube will eventually die out, or morph into something unrecognizable. I mentioned earlier the late, lamented Yahoo Groups. This was a web-based home for numerous discussion forums in the first decade of the 21st century, where users had the option of receiving the group members' posts via email instead of having to visit the webpage to read them. By the second decade of the 21st century, Facebook (which started its own "groups") eclipsed Yahoo Groups in popularity, so the latter redesigned their site to resemble the former. This redesign, however, removed some useful functions like search capability, frustrating those who had preferred things the way they had been. The change had the effect of accelerating its own demise, and Yahoo closed down their groups in 2020 -- eventually erasing over two decades' worth of user postings from the internet, as if they had never happened at all.



A similar fate could befall YouTube, since the motto "if it's not broke, don't fix it" is rarely followed. We take YouTube for granted, for some reason assuming that it will always be around. The simplicity of its design and the site's popularity perhaps lead us to a false sense of security about its future. But superior functionality is no guarantee of survival, and already we have seen new streaming services like Sling TV become just as strongly identified with video entertainment. YouTube's unique advantage is in its user-uploaded content, but if a competitor was able to replicate their success in that area, YouTube's popularity could dwindle just as fast as Yahoo Groups did when Facebook arrived on the scene.

Another possibility is that YouTube's popularity might fade due to increased specialization offered by competing sites. One can already see this with the existence of YouTube-like pornographic websites, which flourish elsewhere since porn is prohibited on YouTube. YouTube also blocks some copyrighted material from being uploaded, but there are other sites which have less stringent rules in that area (as used to be the case with Dailymotion, based in France, until copyright crackdowns there). Some right-wing users have complained about YouTube removing their videos due to its political content and have promoted a conservative-friendly video site called Rumble as an alternative. Evangelical Christians have their own thriving subculture, in an effort to self-isolate from what they deem to be harmful messages from the secular world. In 2007, the site GodTube debuted, which functions like a Christian version of YouTube. It's possible that further fragmentation will occur in the future, perhaps even the elimination of ordinary user-generated content from YouTube due to the risk of controversial material being too easily disseminated.

If this occurred, YouTube would be tossing away their biggest advantage over other video-sharing sites. But it's not like YouTube hasn't thrown out useful advantages before. In 2017, YouTube eliminated the Video Editor function from the site which allowed users to combine shorter clips that could then be uploaded to the site as a single video. For example, say that you had gone to an amusement park and you took several short videos on your phone of the various rides there. You could upload all of the short individual clips to YouTube and then combine them into one long clip titled "My day at the amusement park." Evidently it was later decided that users can do such editing on their own video editing software, so the site's Video Editor was removed in 2017, eliminating that capability for users who don't have their own video editing software, or who use a program that saves the videos in a format that YouTube doesn't recognize. It's a small thing, but indicates that YouTube is not above "breaking" something that had been working fine.

Another possibility is that more content on YouTube will be posted behind paywalls, so that only those who are paid subscribers can view them. YouTube already has movies on the site that can only be watched through a "buy or rent" option -- in addition to all of the free movies there (sometimes



provided by the studio itself, with commercial interruptions every 10 minutes to pay for it). When uploading a video, the user has the option of making the video "unlisted," meaning that it won't show up in the search engine, and can only be viewed by people who have the video's URL (internet address). Many amateur/semi-pro YouTube channels have links to their Patreon pages for paid subscribers, or a "Thanks" donation button next to the "Like" button on their videos, offering additional exclusive content for them.

Increased specialization could mean that the "communication" aspect of YouTube diminishes, with the closing of comment sections. For example, one former TV host was recently on Twitter promoting their new social network on a site named Locals, inviting everyone to join, promising an "uncensored, unfiltered community" where "you won't be censored for accurately fact-checking the CDC." But in order to post a comment on the site, one must be a paid member. This exclusivity is likely to filter out the "non-fans," since presumably they would be unwilling to give money to support a well-known "social influencer" whose views they find problematic.

Rather than being a Wild West of free speech, the result of such fragmentation and exclusivity is more a safe haven for those of like mind. Communication is still the stated goal (and "uncensored" at that) but a one-way street, everyone saying basically the same thing. When YouTube users look into the camera and talk directly to the viewer, there is an illusion of intimacy even though the speaker has no idea who might be listening. The viewer, however, having found the video in their pursuit of material that reflects their interests, may feel like the speaker is talking specifically to them. YouTube allows users to stream live video with the ability to respond in real time to viewer comments in a text-chat window alongside the live video feed, which increases the sense of intimacy between the viewer and the speaker.

It doesn't take much imagination to foresee the problems that could arise from this interaction -- from the encouragement of petty crimes to heinous acts of violence. Manipulative leaders can use the false intimacy that the technology offers to enflame their followers beyond what a written manifesto has the power to accomplish. The prospect of such misuse, or even just plain old misinformation spread by a camera-friendly speaker, could result in laws and lawsuits in the years to come that change the way that YouTube operates. In 2020, YouTube changed the process so that uploaders must now designate whether their video is intended for children, to comply with laws governing advertising aimed at kids. Certain site functionality is also disabled for those videos. It's entirely possible that concerns about the behavior of adults could eventually result in similar changes to how the site operates.

Will YouTube still be around 20 years from now? It's hard to say. The site has existed for nearly twenty years already, but changes outside its control (or even those within its control) could lead to a less-satisfying experience for its users, causing an exodus to other platforms and then to obsolescence



or non-existence. The site's long history could work against it, as it becomes clogged with old low-resolution videos (like my own older videos with their fuzzy picture quality) that are increasingly unacceptable to watch for viewers today accustomed to high-definition. People will go where they want to go, and if YouTube is no longer worth going to, the site will dwindle and die out.

But that is using common sense to try and predict an outcome. Sometimes things occur that defy logic, such as when a large company is bought by a much larger company -- not to improve it, but to absorb it within itself, rebrand it, or even simply to eliminate it (if it was a competitor). YouTube is owned by Google, which in 2011 attempted its own social network called Google+ in order to compete with Facebook. That effort failed, despite all of their promotion, so Google shut down Google+ in 2019. It's conceivable that in the far future Google could decide to rename YouTube to bring it more closely under the Google brand, throwing away the advantage of its familiar name for some Google-related replacement. The argument could be made that a new name would revitalize the site, and perhaps it would, but there's also the risk (as with Google+) of failure and closure, too. Time will tell.

The impermanence of the internet, and of YouTube videos in particular, is why I haven't bothered to include URLs for the videos or channels mentioned in this article. As with the Steve Keeter and Cliff Kurowski channels I mentioned at the beginning, stuff is disappearing from the site all the time, and it could be frustrating for readers of the future who may want to follow the links to be lead to a succession of dead links. At any rate, I hope that this article has been informative and thought-provoking on the subject, like a text version of a YouTube talk. Unfortunately, I have no "like" button here, and I can't ask you to hit that "subscribe" button to see more articles like this one, and no "comments" section below where you can spit out a reply or sarcastic joke in response. But I'd rather read a thoughtful LOC anyway. There are still advantages to a slow-motion communication like ours, without all the bells and whistles.



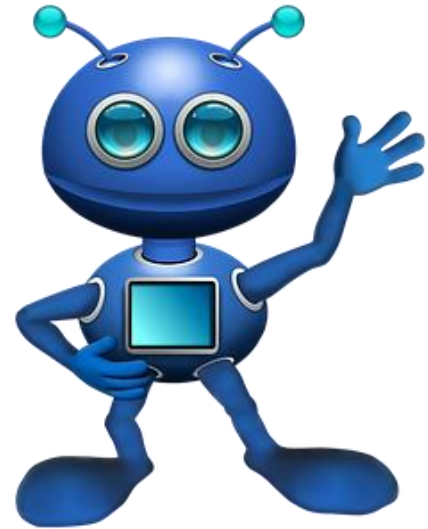
OUR ESTEEMED ART STAFF & WHERE THEIR WORK MAY BE FOUND HEREIN:

Arthur Radebaugh---Front Cover, pgs 2, 3, 4, 5

Jeff Stahler---page 34 from his Moderately Confused comic strip
all other illos are clip art taken from the intent

Back Cover---*Electric Experimenter* February 1916

READER REACTION



Jefferson P. Swycaffer; P.O. Box 15373; San Diego CA 92175
abontides@gmail.com

Thank you for sending me a bright and colorful pdf copy of *Fadeaway* 66. I like the "paperless" version. I really like the cover art, which is nice and vivid, and a bit cheesecakey...but, c'mon, what true fan of 50's style space art doesn't like a little cheesecake? At least the central figure isn't wearing high heels!

Fun "April Fool's" essay on scissor sharpening and left-handed scissors. As a matter of fact, not only do I know someone who sharpens scissors, at a little kiosk in front of a big-name chain hardware store, she is part of a network of such kiosks, run by a bit of a Fagin. He arranges the kiosk, buys you your tools, and you give him a part of each day's takings. Charles Dickens lives...

Not so much fun, but very thoughtful and insightful essay on the Culture Wars, especially in SF and Fantasy fandom, and the perhaps exaggerated complaints of those who would be social justice warriors. In a world where some authors are blatantly racist or homophobic, it seems a bit over-the-top to condemn someone for not knowing how to pronounce someone's name. Names are tricky, as I can attest personally! And in some cases, the favored pronunciation is startlingly counterintuitive. (Did you know that Mt. Everest should be pronounced "Eeve-rest?") When people are actually getting shot dead in the streets, it seems that mispronunciation is of a lower degree of concern.

Fun (again!) history of "The Thing" in stories and movies!

And MUCH fun to go along with Gary Casey shopping for books and collectibles! As far as I can tell, the San Diego area doesn't really have a ripsnorting good books and collectibles store, although we have some mighty fine comics stores. (And the Comic Con, back this year in a reduced-scale version!)

Astonishingly fun essay about *Guilty Pleasures*, and about "Black Max," the WWI combat melodrama, with the evil warlord "The Bat" and his enormous pet bats, flying around and downing brave and loyal Allied airmen. One can almost hear the boos and hisses from the simulated audience! And, yes, absolutely, there is a great joy in reading "trash" like this, just to relax, to enjoy a page-turner, fully knowing your emotions are being manipulated, fully knowing you're consuming a high-cliche diet. And...not caring! Trash adventure fiction is the junk food of literature, and junk food is perfectly okay in small amounts!

Fun internal illos, but my fave is the closing fillo, of a contented chap in a comfy chair, feet up, at leisure, reading...just reading... I honestly believe that literature -- and movies -- are getting better and better. When I look at older material, I often groan in dismay. As much fun as, say, the Hopalong Cassidy radio dramas were, they were grievously immature, simplistic, childish, formulaic, and hokey. Compare these to the immense collective story-cycles of today's Marvel and DC world-building, which is none of those bad things, and, instead, brilliant in sophistication. The world of the arts, in general, is getting better, and there is no reason that trend should not continue. The Best Is Yet To Come!

///Hot babes in space-suits have long been an attention grabber in classic science fiction, and the tradition continues with some modern paperback covers. But not too many. Apparently appealing to a male audience with

eye candy is considered sexist in some circles these days, and lowers the legitimate literature status the science fiction genre is attempting to establish in this new century.

Considering how inexpensive a pair of scissors are these days I have a hard time understanding why anybody would want a pair sharpened. I could see going to the expense for something specialized, like pinking shears, for example, which are used to cut cloth and must be absolutely sharp in order to function properly, or maybe surgical scissors, but otherwise, why bother when the cost of sharpening is close on to the price of a new set. I am amazed that your friend has a job doing something like that.

I'm not so sure the guy who is bankrolling that operation could be termed a 'Fagin'. He is putting up money to build the station, buy all the supplies, pay the rent, provide the insurance, train the staff, and more. He is trying to avoid state payroll taxes and an unemployment contribution by making the workers a commission partnership, which has been a legit method of doing business for centuries. My suspicion is that there isn't a whole lot of business in that kind of operation, so paying anybody a regular salary would be more expensive than setting it up as a partnership.

I think the problem of acute woke-ness, being overly cultural sensitive has run amok in fandom today. The uproar about George RR Martin's Hugo speech is just the latest in a long line of similar actions by people who are bending over backwards to be hyper politically correct and are making absolute idiots of themselves in the eyes of everyone else. There is being polite, being sensitively of other people's feelings, and then there's being a jerk in the name political correctness. In my opinion there are way too many of those types around the hobby these days.

I'm not sure that all things in the entertainment spectrum are getting better and better in this new century. I agree with you that there was plenty of utter crap back in Yer Olden Times a mere thirty, forty, fifty, or sixty plus years ago, but there is still plenty of truly awful material being turned out these days too. The ability of the entertainment industry to create crud is apparently infinite, and in my opinion a lot of that is naturally gyrating toward the TV and movie biz. Sure, there's a lot of great new science fiction and fantasy on film and the TV tubes these days, but there is some absolutely putrid stuff out there as well, material that is still making money despite its lack of plot or substance or believable acting. As long as the public supports that kind of thing it will continue to appear. To repeat one of my pet mantras: if you pay good money to support bad movies, the producers will just take your money and use it to make more bad movies. Break the Cycle! Pay heed to critics, reviews, and comments from friends before spending your time and money on any film.///

Gary Brown; 6306 Tall Cypress Circle; Greenacres, FL 33463



Thanks for the PDF version of *Fadeaway* #66. It's been a while since I've seen a copy. I love the illustration on your cover/first page, but I didn't see any credit for the outer space battle scene.

I guess I'm not as surprised at someone getting a paid of scissors sharpened as you were, since my mom and dad always had a variety of sharpeners for scissors, knives and other such pointy things. My dad was a cabinetmaker and handyman of all things, so scissor sharpening was a piece of cake for him.

By the way, the so-called rumor of Russia developing a jellyfish capable to firing an AK47 has been debunked. They actually were using a slug, capable to firing such weapons on land or in the water. But it seems slugs were far too slow, so they gave up on the special project.

Regarding mispronunciations, I remember back in the 1970s when the fairly new Science Fiction Channel announced it was changing its name to the SyFy Channel. I'm not so sure now, but back then most science fiction fans HATED the abbreviated "sci-fi" term for science fiction. And morphing that into SyFy was even worse. I always thought as long as the public clearly understood what SyFy was, it was successful.

Thanks to Tom Feller for his lengthy look at *The Thing* -- from John Campbell's original story back in 1936 to the various incarnations on the silver screen. I still recall watching the original movie version at the Essex Theater in Hialeah, Fla., as a young kid. It was scary, especially so in a theater filled with my peers on a Saturday afternoon.

Gary Casey's piece on Mr. K's used book store and other assorted things was fun. I still enjoy going into a used book store I've never been in before, wondering what I might find tucked away on the shelves in a back room.

I'm guessing "guilty pleasure" was a good title for your article on old battle fliers. There is something thrilling about the time when men were men and flying was a new art. Many of the fictional fliers were akin to knights in armor, doing battle up in the sky where the loser would meet his death upon crashing into the ground. The piece also reminded me that the pulps covered a LOT of topics during their heyday.

Bill Plott; 19 Crestview Circle; Montevallo, AL 315115

Happy New Year. Hope you are well. What a nice end/start of 2021/2022 to find a *Fadeaway* in the mail.

On page 4, you wrote: "Hello? Where did everybody go?" Yes. As clever as the piece was, it wore me out about halfway through it!

Jeanne Grace's piece on the current state of feud-dom in fandom was very interesting. While I have some opinions about some of the goings-on of late, I've stayed pretty much away from them. I was out of fandom far too long to know all of the backstory in some of these disputes. I do know that any consideration I might have given to DisCon went away with their horrendous treatment of Toni Weiskopf. Not to mention that screed against George R.R. Martin. I fear the state of fandom today is reflective of the generally uncivil times in which we seem to live. This has some genesis in politics, but also in the fact that fandom is no longer the literary institution that attracted us old farts. It is a multi-media subculture with many varied facets of participation. At my age, I am content to enjoy the Southern Fandom Press Alliance, the occasional non-apa zine like *Fadeaway* and the occasional relatively small gatherings like the DeepSouthCon.

I do have a question about Jeanne's photo, though. Did she know there was a ghost hand on her shoulder? It reminds me of an image I saw once in an antique store. It was a 4x6 b&w photo in which some had clearly been excised out of, leaving a hand on the shoulder similar to this one.

Tom Feller, as usual, provides a definitive history of The Thing. I always loved the original movie and viewed the remake with disdain. I bought a copy of *Who Goes There?* A couple of years ago when I learned that the latter was closer to John W. Campbell's story. Afterward I had to agree that they were essentially two different films altogether. My lingering complaint with the remake was the gratuitous violence, but that's just a part of movie making today.

Gary Casey, in his latest book hunting saga, wrote: "Don't be shy about plopping down in the middle of the floor so you can paw thru the books on the bottom shelves." It is not a matter of shyness, Gary, it's a matter of being able to get up again. One of the local thrift stores with a lot of books has them on shelves that are about two feet deep. That means you have to get down on the floor to even see the titles of the books on the bottom shelf. I tried to explain that to a clerk but she seemed oblivious to the problem. Sadly, this is a store that used to shelve books by genre but now just throws them out there. I really don't have time to wade through hundreds of James Patterson fiction factory products in hopes of finding one keeper -- even if the store will provide two people to lift me off the floor.

I don't know that you should classify your Black Max fixation as a guilty pleasure. There's nothing wrong with finding something you enjoy and staying with it. Besides one of the pleasures of getting older is enjoying something like that and not giving a damn about what somebody else might think. I've carried Rick Norwood's *Comics Revue* into a lot of waiting rooms.

Following up on Rich Dengrove's piece on Boris Karloff in the previous issue.... I went online and found a reasonably priced two-disk box of "Colonel March of Scotland yard." I finally got around to opening it a couple of days ago. Imagine my surprise when the disk 1 box contained not Karloff's TV series but a B gangster movie called "X marks the Spot." I watched it anyway. It was a passable story about World War II tire black marketing rather than booze racketeering.

I then watched two of the four Colonel March stories in the second box. They were okay but the quality of the film was very poor, a lot of graininess and washed out scenes. This was produced by Alpha Home Entertainment for a company called oldies.com. I have not decided whether it's worth making a complaint against the company and/ or the vendor.



It's nice to see that someone else not only hates music that drowns out dialogue but also is driven nuts by supposedly smart people who use flashlights instead of simply flipping a light switch when they enter a dark room or a house that is almost certain to be dangerous.

A random thought on the decline in comics...anime and manga seem to thrive with younger people while comics overall may be fading. Also, what up with Archie? I am always amazed at how many of those digest-sized comics flood the supermarket checkout aisle. That may be the last truly four-color comic still being produced. I bought the 80th anniversary issue last fall and found it a rather sloppily reproduced retrospective. I have reviewed it as such in my SFPA zine *Sporadic*. Who is the audience for Archie? Is it middle schoolers? Whoever it is, the comic shows no signs of going away. There are at least two new ones every month.

To Joe Napolitano, I would say the word "demon" would not be out of place when referring to Donald Trump. He is an incredibly evil man and you should be concerned about whether or not he returns to power. Always a fun read, Bob, thanks for your effort.

///There have always been squabbles and arguments within stf fandom, but it seems to me that the scope and depth of the bombastic disagreements in this new century are far and away more vitriolic and vicious than fan disagreements in the past. Altho I have opinions on some of the issues under discussion, like you, I am really not interested in getting involved in most of that.

The "phantom hand" in the Jeanne Jackson pic was my doing. There were several people in the photo, so in the interest of getting it focused and down to fit into the space for the mini-bio, I cropped everyone else but Ms Jackson out. Her and the hand anyway.

The unnecessary violence is the main reason I was not happy with the "Thing" remake. The gore and violence didn't advance the plot, it was just there to pander to the sadistic pleasure of the theater audience that seems to dote on those things. I can't even complain that this is a modern phenom or something we can blame on today's depraved youth. The human race has been fascinated with blood, gore, and torture since any kind of records have been around, and well before that. You don't need to look at the offerings of modern cinematography or contemporary literature when the records of the human fascinations with brutality and mutilation are there for anyone to see, from the era of the Roman stadium "games" thru the Aztecs' bloody religious ceremonies, to the treatment of accused criminals during medieval times, right up to the record of Nazi and Japanese atrocities, and plenty more is there for everyone to see. Sometimes it seems to me that civilization is in a never ending race to curb and control the vicious instincts of the human animal, and more often than not, it has been a losing race.

Alpha Video/Oldies Inc specializes in taking movie/TV/music that is supposed to be in the public domain and turning out DVDs and CDs of the material. They are not particular where their prints come from, and I suspect some of their stuff comes directly from films posted on the web, including YouTube posts. They keep their material up for sale until and unless a true copyright holder actually makes an objection. Sometimes they get around that by buying a ton of the studio's own produced DVDs. It's hard for movie studio Z-Films to object when Alpha is selling videos of some of their crappier early 1930s detective movies that hardly anybody cares about, material that the studio itself may not even have prints of, when Alpha just placed a wholesale order for a pallet load of their authorized newer DVD movie titles.

You can buy Col. March thru Amazon Prime streaming video for about \$21.00 per season, with the prints theoretically cleaned up and at least partially digitized. Everything else is apparently pirate copies, since the BBC has never authorized any kind of collection of the series for sale to the public. There are also episodes posted for free on YouTube. I find the series interesting with generally good stories, but featuring a production hampered by a clearly miniscule budget.

I am not sure who the audience for Archie comics is these days. The original market was teen and pre-teen readers dealing with the many problems revolving around young love and school. Some long time collectors continue to buy the comics, but the whole look of the comic and the story focus seems to have changed. I suspect the company is making most of its money with TV rights and reprints of the classic stories.

I realize there are a lot of fans of anime style comics, but most of that leaves me cold. There are any number of Japanese comics produced with realistic art that I find very good, but the anime art does nothing for me. On the other hand a lot of anime comics seem to focus on the problems and tribulations of teenage romance and school, so perhaps they have supplanted the Archie line with younger readers. The anime comics



seems to generally offer more pages of art and story for a comparable price than American comics, and the readers don't seem to mind whether the artwork is in full color or plain b&w.///

Rich Dengrove; 2651 Arlington Drive, #302; Alexandria, VA 22306



Let's start my LOC on *Fadeaway* 66 by commenting on the mutant jellyfish, Pringles and left-handed scissors conspiracy. They were great conspiracies. It shows we are too involved with the facts. It would be neater if we showed more imagination. As a further example, I give the Boxtop Badman, who will make all our currency worthless. I came up with the idea by watching "The Rocky Show," starring the Rocky the Flying Squirrel. What more evidence do I need for a really neat plot? Everyone thinks boxtops have been required by radio and TV sponsors as proof you have purchased their product, and are eligible for the premium. Maybe a Superman t-shirt. However, I really like the idea box tops have secretly been the basis for our currency. If they are worth zilch, our currency is worth zilch. On "The Rocky Show," the boxtop bad man wanted to do just that by counterfeiting box tops. Although Rocky claimed he caught Boris Badenof, I think Boris is still around trying to wreck our economy.

Next, we come to the article "Is This War Really Necessary" by Jeane "Sourdough" Jackson. She's obviously a really nice person. Fandom would have been real easy if all fans were like her. Unfortunately, a lot of fans I have met haven't been very nice. It helped that they were young. A feud could be started over anything. Looking at someone the wrong way, for instance. Fortunately, as we got older, such feuds disappeared. It was no longer the Hatfields and the McCoys for fans my age.

Is all peace and flowers in fandom these days? Not on your life! I was going to discuss the politics of politics in fandom these days, but I am too angry about it. As opposed to Jeane, whom I would never be angry at.

In the third article, we come to Tom Feller's article, "The Thing: The Story and the Movies." Tom tells us about all about the people who made movies of John Campbell, Jr.'s "The Thing from Outerspace." It included other movies that they made and what positions they had. What he has done is a great service. Maybe he should compile all his articles into a reference book. It's amazing what movies the people he talks about made. You wouldn't think there was any relationship among them, but often there was. There was no SF ghetto, romance ghetto, action adventure ghetto, western ghetto and character study ghetto. However, there must have been some connection or they would not have been chosen for the movies they played a part in.

In the fourth article, which has a title I can't read, Gary Casey talks about book collecting at a South Carolina used book store, Mr. K's. Not all book collecting; but certainly science fiction, fantasy, and maybe even westerns. If he had the \$150 to spend, he would have purchased the volumes of Will and Ariel Durant's *Story of Civilization*.

What can I say? It doesn't matter that Gary is 'under educated' and I am way 'over educated.' We are nonetheless lovers of books. I have spent many days in book stores too. It began at nine or ten. I remember perusing Schulte's Bookstore in New York City, and I came to the science fiction table. There were only ten or twenty novels there but, in my young head, it was a gold mine. From my memories of those books, I finally read Fritz Lieber's *The Green Millenium*.

Another book collecting adventure took place in the 1990s, I remember one used book store in Alexandria, Virginia where I hit a jackpot. A book I had been looking for. It purported to be a history of astrology, but it was actually the story of the person still named as Hitler's astrologer, a position that never existed. Also, it was the tale of how by a series of misunderstanding he came to be considered Hitler's astrologer.

In the fifth article, Bob, "Guilty Pleasures," you write about a comic book serial which takes place sort of in World War I. An evil German aviator knows a secret weapon he can use against the allies – giant bats. Once more, in a horror story, the square-cube law is ignored. There, the bats have no trouble destroying English airplanes. Was the serial naked nationalism? No. At the time it was written, the '70s, no one was going to bring back World War I; and, as action adventure, it sounds like fun. I notice, like Tom does with American efforts, you discuss the history of that comic in particular and British comics in general. Also, the writers and artists who made it possible. Thus, you are like Tom in some ways, except for having firmer views.

I think I have said enough for one letter about your articles, Bob. However, let me just make a few comments about the letters. My first subject is, of course, my article on Colonel March of Scotland Yard. I have to tell Jefferson Swycaffer that Boris Karloff avoids overacting as Colonel March. He's very likable, in fact. Next, I have to tell Bill Plott that I saw all 25 of the episodes on Amazon Prime, I don't know if that's available to Bill or not, though. Actually, while being likable, Colonel March is very clever, and the plots of the episodes are very clever. As for Mr. Wong, I liked the Colonel March series a lot better than the one Mr. Wong episode I saw. Boris did fine as a westernized Chinese but the plot seemed same old, same old.

Also, I would like to say to tell Bill Plott something he might already know. My experience with interlibrary loan is that it is of two types: within the library system and outside of the library system. For research, I used to get photocopies of journal articles from outside the system. Also, books. However, you have to be very careful with any book borrowed that way.

Finally, I would like to wish Lloyd Penney luck in getting his two gigs back again. I guess that's about it. I will catch you next ish, Bob.

///The value of a currency based on boxtops is no more ridiculous than a nation's currency being based on gold bullion held at a central government vault, or in credit assurances created and supposedly guaranteed by a central bank overseeing the creation and distribution of the currency supply. In theory the nation's supply of money is being controlled and regulated by central banks, but money is only worth something if the citizens of the nation believe in it. When they stop believing in its validity then comes hyper inflation, and rapid panic trade-offs for other currencies issued by other nations whose value the people will believe in.

One would think we had learned from all the monetary problems across the globe in the 20th century, yet in this new century we are faced with the reality that anybody can create their own money supply without the permission or even facing the sanctions of established nations. Crypto currencies are being created by individuals and groups of interested people who establish their own rules for how the imaginary crypto currencies are generated, how they are handled and how they can be spent. And vast numbers of people are rushing to buy into this new monetary concept. I suppose it's no bigger a bubble than paper credit issued by banks or paper money issued by a government. As long as people believe it will work, then it works. When they stop believing in the illusion, the bubble bursts.

Some of the people who make movies are chosen for various projects because they specialized in a certain genre, or because they did an outstanding job with one specific title, but a lot of times I think it comes down to who is competent, who is available, or who the producers or studio can afford on short notice. There have always been directors and actors, and even studios who specialized in a particular type of movie, more so in the old days than now I suspect. I think the days when Republic Studios could specialize in westerns and Roy Rogers would only appear in westerns are gone. Today the people who make moving pictures have to stand on the reputations they made, with their most recent work being the determining factor in most cases.

I get most of my science fiction books thru the library these days, since the house is full of stuff already and I don't want to buy books that I will probably only read one time. Inter-library loans are easy in my part of the world. I never realized, but to get books from outside the local system, there is a charge the library has to pay, running up to about eight bucks. For books really outside the system, as several states away or even farther, the library gets charged \$25 per book. I was horrified when I learned that. I somehow envisioned all the libraries generously sharing all their materials with each other, but I guess the transportation costs, and postage for out of state orders mounts up, plus the cost of packing material too. Since then I have pretty much avoided ordering any books that are outside the regional system. Libraries have enuf problems making expenses in these Plague ridden days without having trans-state charges adding to their deficient. There are still more new SF/fantasy book releases ordered by the libraries within the local system to keep me reading for years and years.///

AND THEN RICH WROTE---



About boxtops, I doubt they're as good a currency as any. Not because of anything intrinsic, though; more because any boxtop proponents would be laughed at. It doesn't have anything to do with the intrinsic value of box tops, dollars or gold. No, it depends upon what people laugh at. U.S. government approved money, even if it isn't paper anymore, is regulated by the government. Most people have confidence in it. They take it seriously. Then, there is

bitcoin, and other crypto-currencies. A minority has confidence in them because they are unregulated. They are liberated currencies that will make their boosters rich. They take their money seriously too.

Compared to the above, forget box tops because most adults laugh at them. They consider them greasy kids' stuff.

About the actors in the movie industry these days, the powers- that-be have overdone the idea that any good actor can play any role. I recently saw a movie entitled "Being the Ricardos" (2021). The actors generally didn't look at all like those in the original "I Love Lucy" show. For instance, the fellow playing Desi Arnaz didn't. He wasn't even handsome. I do not know where they got him. I do know where the powers-that-be got several actors – from a recent series "Goliath" It concerned a lawyer who drinks to surfeit but marks up great victories in the public interest. The one who played Ethel Mertz, Nina Ananda, played a lawyer in "Goliath". However, she looked too young and good looking for Ethel Mertz. By the way, I found out that, in "Goliath," Nina did short takes from her famous role, "Venus in Furs." That was one role she looked the part. The one who played Fred Mertz, J.K. Simmons, in "Goliath" played a drug mogul who sold narcotics as non-addictive drugs. He looked nothing like the original Fred Mertz, William Frawley, except they were both old.

About interlibrary loans, you're right that libraries often charge other libraries an arm and leg for them. It is another issue whether libraries need to charge such prices. On the other hand, as my agency librarian, I had to use interlibrary loan to do my job. I was given a library with worthless books and other materials; and, for the most part, I had no budget. After a while, I wasn't even allowed to keep track of the publications the other offices were purchasing. Fortunately, it really helped that I was a government agency's library. I was never even charged for my interlibrary loans.

Also, once, I struck it rich. A librarian at the National Library of Medicine decided that I could do the whole process much more efficiently, so he gave me a password for Medline. What can I say? I got the PDFs of articles within a day. For such great service, the research branch of my agency really loved me.

Lloyd Penney; 1706-24 Eva Rd.; Etobicoke, ON; CANADA M9C 2B2



Many thanks for *Fadeaway* 66. I would have gotten to this issue a lot sooner, but I took a good portion of December off to edit/copyedit/proofread a large e-book. That gave me some brainstrains for a while, but now, it is done, and I am way behind. Must catch up!

I remember men walking the neighbourhood I grew up in, ringing bells and pulling their portable grindstones behind them, offering to sharpen knives. That occupation is long gone, for the knives, scissors, and anything else with a sharp blade is of much better quality, and rarely need any kind of sharpening. Occupations like that one did have value in a bygone age, and I guess I do wish they were still around, of nothing else but to remind me of that era.

Even something as simple as a Worldcon has been politicized, like so much in American society. Our last Worldcon was the Reno Worldcon in 2011, and our first one was Chicon IV in 1982. We went to as many as we could afford, but after Reno, they simply became too expensive for us. We did go to London twice after that, but we saved like crazy to go, and we had a better time. Add in all the political controversies, and there really isn't much incentive for us to return to Worldcon. I hear of the GRRM problem, but mispronunciations and misspellings can happen. There is no intent to offend, but then people are so easily offended, another reason (of many) why we won't return.

I would love to have a store like Mr. K's near where I am. So many bookstores, new or used, have gone away. The rents are soaring, and the pandemic rages, and empty stores are everywhere. I might not buy much there, but the smell of used books and the hunt for something you might like to find are always great reasons to go.

The local... Trump and Caligula, a fair comparison. Now that the January 6th uprising is a year past, let's hope there isn't another year gone by before justice is done. I have seen online several times now... Trump didn't lead the uprising, but then, bin Laden didn't fly the planes. My letter...I think radio drama could still be interesting, but it has never returned to the CBC Radio One schedule. We had COVID, we now have three shots and our regular flu shot, and there is still danger of catching the Omicron variant, and still, the majority of people who live in our building will not get vaccinated, or even wear a mask. Some people we used to see without a mask are no longer seen anywhere here. I wonder...did they move out, or did they catch something?

Done for the moment, and I see this issue is the current one. I look forward to your next one.

YESTERDAY'S WORLD OF TOMORROW---

Maybe somebody could explain to me why, after centuries of vehicles with four wheels, so many magazines in the first half of the 20th century that that two wheels would somehow be better than four.

