

N'APA

September 2022



The Official Organ

#260

Next deadline: November 15, 2022

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

Procedure: Please Read:

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

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

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

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

In this issue:

Front Cover: Public Domain Space Art

The Official Organ #260

Intermission 123, by Ahrvid Engholm - 16

Archive Midwinter, by Jefferson P. Swycaffer - 3

Intermission 124, by Ahrvid Engholm - 14

Snow Poster Township #6, by Heath Row - 6

Synergy 41 September 2022, by John Thiel - 7

Ye Murdered Master Mage 259, by George Phillies - 4

Samizdat... Ish #14, July/Aug 2022, by Sam Lubell - 5

King Charles XII of Sweden recognised Ukrainian independence already in 1711!

INTERMISSION #123

E-zine by Ahrvid Engholm, ahrvid@hotmail.com, for EAPA, N'APA & others, but Mr Vladimir Prickhead is fanzine blockaded! Follow @SFJournalen's [sf/f/h&fandom](#) newstweets. Hi-Mars sets you free on planet No-To-War! Typos typically tickle - take heed! Slava Ukraini! July 2022.

Editorially: More Space, Finnally Abroad

In #122 the History Corner covered the probably first public space flight exhibitions in history, in Kyiv in 1925, then Moscow in 1927. How we all wish Ruskis had stayed with developing rockets for space, and not for leveling cities and murdering their innocent citizens! (STOP that! Do you hear!) I there mentioned the world's probably first space-themed amusement park ride too, in Coney Island, so in #123 you'll hear more on what I have found out about "A Trip to the Moon", as it was called.

And we may just as well stay in space, with some more stories from the Royal Library's newspaper vaults. There are after all right now a lot of space stuff happening 100+ km above our heads! NASA will shortly premiere their Space Launch System rocket, for the Artemis back-to-the-moon program. And SpaceX will provide the moon lander with their Starship, which is also due to fly Real Soon Now. The James Webb space telescope has now begun paparazzing stars close to big-banging. The Chinamen are building a heavenly hut in orbit. Mars rover roams, bringing us spectacular selfies. New stellar planets pop up. Waves of gravity are discovered in mile long laser tunnels. Space probes cuddle the asteroids. And meanwhile, the Lapland space base Esrange continues work towards launching the first satellites from European soil - not counting Russia - this autumn or early 2023. Move over, Santa reindeers!

Despite space talk, *Intermission* tend to lack space for detailing everything going on. (Like my April visit to the meeting of the Swedenborg society on Öland Street. But see at least the picture here, and <https://swedenborgsbiblioteket.se/>) But I'll squeeze in some brief views from recent Finncon. Due to certain microorganisms landing from space or maybe escaping from Mexican Corona bheer, it was the first trip abroad for your editor-in-chief in over two years! And in #124 I'll report from



Swedish scientist, philosopher, esoteric religious thinker Emanuel Swedenborg 1688-1772 invented flying machines, speculated on life in the universe <https://swedenborg.com/emanuel-swedenborg/explore/life-on-other-planets/> He has groups of followers all over the world and Yours Truly heard their very interesting lecture last spring.

coming Swecon (Aug 13-15, <https://okon981639779.wordpress.com/> if you need to know). Sf cons are finally back! I hope fandom's all-important fanzines will return too. Do your duty and publish a fanzine! And why not join an APA, eg those you see last. As you know, this international, intellectual culture and news publication has put Vlad Putin under fanzine blockade, and you should join it! But to do that you must publish a fanzine to blockade with...!

The Russians struggle, ammo depots blow up, the morale of their shanghaied soldiery sinks, in many cases they refuse to fight, their pilots don't dare to fly over Ukrainian land, and their vehicles are demilitarised in the hundreds if not thousands. The fanzine blockade seems to have an effect!

Alas, we still have to suffer this senseless, brutal war the Kremlin f*cker started. We must stay with and even increase our support for the brave Ukrainian people! The Swedish government just



PM Magdalena Andersson handed over 1711 Royal letter to Zelensky recognising Ukrainian independence.

launched their 6th (I think it was) aid package to our yellow and blue brethren. And our Prime Minister Maggie Anderson had a unique gift on her recent Kyiv visit: a 1711 letter by then king Charles XII recognizing the independence of Zaporizhzhia (Ukrainia's core land, <https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-society/3521982-copy-of-charles-xii-of-swedens-letter-recognizing-independence-of-zaporizhzhia-sich-brought-to-ukraine.html>). It may have been history's first international recognition of Ukrainian independence. The king instructed the Swedish ambassador in Istanbul to work for the Ukrainian cause. The Swedes and the Ukrainians were allied, but were unfortunately beaten at the battle of Poltava in 1709. We'll win at Poltava II, however! We've sent Ukraine 10 000's of anti-tank launchers, sea missiles, guns with ammo and more.

Just wait for when the nazi invaders are thrown out, inflation and oil price and food prices drop back and Ukrainians can live again. Hopefully we will also get rid of that shithead Vlad the Prickface.

Іди ебати себе росіяни! Slava Ukraini!

Moomin, Eelducks and Taxfree

The last two years' Finncons were cancelled due to a little medical problem invading the world. (The Omicron is still around but has mutated to something like the common cold. It spreads easily but effects are like the cold. The "excess deaths" are low, comparable to our usual cold virii and our Health Agency reports only ca 1/day go to ICU, just like the ordinary common cold.) As the Finns now could begin conning again I took the ferry across the Baltic. These soft-headed ferry companies now have compulsory cabin-booking for tickets, which makes it more expensive, but it became cheaper to go through Turku + train, so I did that. (Besides, the Helsinki ferry was fully booked. In fact so were all ferries my preferred day, so I only made the con Saturday-Sunday. Finncon was only open for 4 hours during Friday anyway.) I noticed that if you are single person



Posters in Moscow. Uncle Sam plays with Pippi and Moomin.

booking you get an entire four-bed cabin for yourself! I bought some appropriate liquids in the taxfree shop, sat on down on the deck with an E-book and enjoyed the sun, wind (ferries are windy) and some ohlut - Finnish for bheer - on the way to



The convention entrance.

Moomin land. It's a period of contemplation. I sat and thought of that we'd soon booth be members of Nato, dammit! How strange. Just a few months ago that would have just been a fictitious plot-twist in an alternate history war novel by Tom Clancy.



Presentation of Åland fandom. fantasy Åland vaguely visible top right.

Did you know that some jolly pranksters have now covered Moscow with posters showing Uncle Sam using Sweden's Pippi Longstocking and Finland's Moomin as marionettes. We're just puppets of Washington, you see, as if Putin and his gangsters had nothing to do with it...

This year's Finncon was in Espoo, which is like a suburb of or a twin city to Helsinki. The Helsinki metro goes there and I noticed the local transport system had laid down new tram tracks in Espoo so that Helsinki's streetcar service will soon connect to it. Great - I love trams.

The con was at the Aalto University, named after the famous architect Alvar Aalto (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alvar_Aalto) and I estimate that 1000-1500 fans turned up. They used to be more, but perhaps some aren't used to con-going after all suffocating

"restrictions", and they no longer co-organise with Animecon which used to attract thousands of 13-year-old girls dressed up as Japanese comics characters. Only a few of those strange figures could now be spotted. It's a relief not to appear like a peddo con! About eight Swedish fans were present (we're usually 15 or more) and maybe other foreigners, but if so I missed them. One of the Swedes, Johan Anglemark, was interviewed by Finnish TV's Swedish section, and it can be seen here: <https://arenan.yle.fi/1-50957372?autoplay=true> He only appears for a few seconds saying that "Finncon is a big convention" or something (and it is big to our standards). It's otherwise a rather long report. It covers eg the Åland club and manages to spot probably every manga-dressed teen present. I think those silly dresses are a problem, because media is drawn to them like iron-filings to a magnet, and it gives a totally wrong impression of what sf fandom is about.

I set up my computer at a table in a corner, but had trouble getting into the local free Wifi. I had to "tether" my machine through my mobile, which made it slower and prone to go down occasionally, so I decided to skip newstweeting from the con (otherwise you hear from me through @SFjournalen). This Finncon seemed a little more low key than usual (I should know, having been to all) but there was still six program tracks, one constantly in English and I counted to 5 or 6 program items in Swedish. Not that I usually attend much of the program. I did though I think three items, to that maybe half a dozen counting some I sneaked into for just a few minutes.

One of the items I sat through was the presentation of the new Åland fandom, ie with the fans on the semi-autonomous Finnish but Swedish-speaking island between Sweden and Finland. (And the reason our ferries can sell booze taxfree. If the ship makes a short stop on Åland there's some sort of exemption from that inter-EU trips don't qualify for selling stuff taxfree.)

We learned that there are about 20 fans in their club, which they call Åland ("Eelduck"), the name of a made-up fantasy animal consisting of a duck and an eel... They have a Facebook group with a couple of hundred followers and apparently contacts with a local gaming club with also some hundred members. But as usual, one should be careful to mix with gamers and masqueraders: they aren't sf fans, they aren't into literature, they are media fans on the fringe who deal with..."sci-fi".

You may get the chance to go to Åland in 2025, when they bid for hosting a Eurocon in the form of Archipelacon 2 (there was an earlier Archipelacon in 2015, which managed to get 800 !! attendees because they had GRR Martin as GoH). See <https://file770.com/finland-bids-for-2025-eurocon/> Finncon took up two floors, the big lecture hall and many other rooms in what was an annex to the university. The sun shone through the weekend. I saw some (not many) with those by now not very necessary face masks, one being Tero Y who claimed he was "mitigating danger". Maybe there're extra reasons for him, but generally the common cold shouldn't scare you.



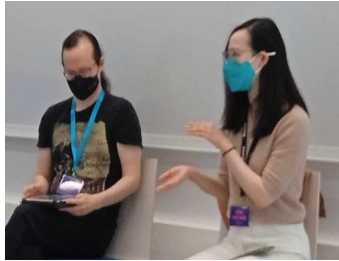
Me and legend Toni Jerrman, ed of Tähtivaeltaja.



Finnish TV interviewing J Anglemark.

First prize however went to the program couple (don't remember topic, p'haps games or movies) who sat 10 yards from the audience and did their whole presentation fully masked - both of them. See pic.

Both floors were full of hucksters, selling books, magazines, fantasy jewelry, t-shirts etc. There were a number of what the Finns call fanzines, though I'd call a publication with four-colour cover and glossy paper a semi-prozine, at least. The three leading ones (that I'd call magazines, not semi-prozines) are *Portti* (where I once had a short story, I hoped to sell them more from my new collection but I didn't find editor Raimo N there), *Tähtivaeltaja* (ed Toni R was there) and the Turku group's *Spin* (the oldest one, they had a big table on the con). Most literary material was in Finnish,



They took no risks. At all.

decent English assortment. I bought only 3-4 books, to leave room for bheer buying on the ferry back, among them a story collection by the superb Poul Anderson and a strange book which I'd call alternate history, by Nevile Shute: *What Happened to the Corbetts* (from 1938), it deals with a family trying to survive when their town is bombed to ruins in an imaginary war. That was what happened just a couple of years later in the Blitz, and what Ukraine has to suffer through now.

I didn't go to the "official" Saturday night party, too high bheer prices and level of sound, but primarily because the Swedish women's national football team had an important game that evening, at the Euro championships. (They did 1-1 playing the "ruling" Dutch champs. The Swedish girls were among favourites, but lost the semi after one offside goal - a striker too much forward influencing the game! - and two major goalie errors... Still they did grab a bronze medal. Our girl's team is better, much higher ranked, than the men's.)

Another thing I sat through was KJ Norén's attempt to describe Swedish fandom's history through filk music. He didn't get everything right... He speed through and nearly missed David Nessel's & Erik Andersson's epoch making filk, a big oversight, and that fandom dived in the late 1980's wasn't due to "lack of confidence". It was specifically because of the huge scandal when guys-we-know-who-they-are forged 34 "votes" in the (then collapsing) Scandinavian fan



Finncon had plenty of booksellers, mostly Finnish stuff - but also some decent tables with English books (The Nordics don't dub TV and have English from early on in school!)

fund, and helped themselves to a substantial lump of dough. Further: fanzines were rare through the 1990s – and even rarer now - simply because mimeograph consumables dried up! You couldn't get mimeo ink or stencils any more, and lasers, inkjets etc were simply too expensive for extensive printing. Our SFF APA struggled and went belly up two decades ago. More: Sam J Lundwall with his 1966 LP was hardly first with professional sf-themed recording. Atomic bomb songs were popular from the late 1940's and on (see <https://thebulletin.org/2018/12/pop-music-and-the-bomb/>) soon joined by Sputnik creating space hits. See the Swedish guitar band Spotnicks, playing "Rocket man" (1961) in space suits! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=la3O1L_Vaf8 Time to return to Earth...



Beautiful sunset in the Baltic Sea.

On the ferry back I for a few seconds was struck by the thought, as the orange sun settled in the archipelago maze: What if Putin attacked this ship now? If a MIG appeared with a missile or the maniac sent a sub with a torpedo, to make it an M/S Estonia II? *To be or Nato be*. I sighed, took a sip of bheer and returned to the Poul Anderson book I'd now begun.

A fine writer like Poul, a glowing sunset and some brew can make the gostak distim the doshes and you forget about war.



The Spotnicks played in space suits. They were big in Japan!

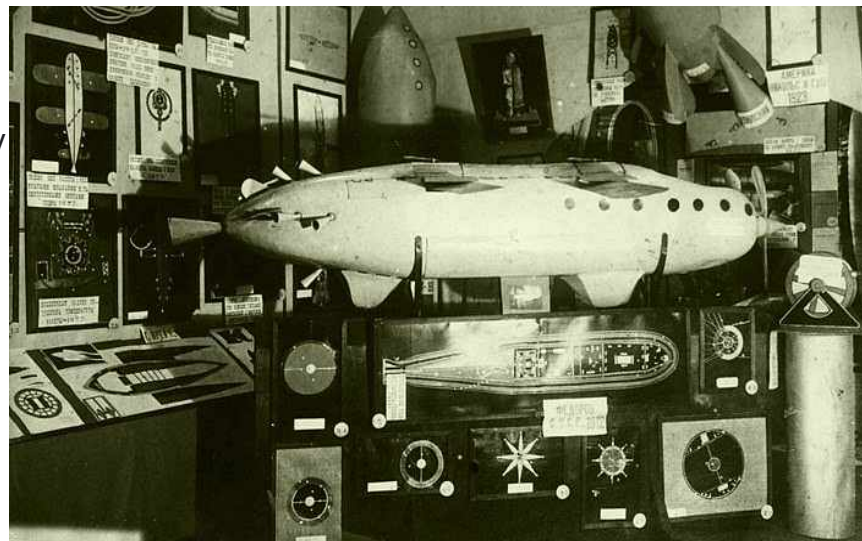
History Corner

During the 1920's short thaw in the communist dictatorship Lenin thrust on the Russian people, it was possible to have exhibitions in the USSR on technology - without it being deemed a military secret – that wasn't silly communist propaganda. As reported in last History Corner the Soviets had the first space flight exhibitions in Kyiv 1925 and Moscow 1927. After all, it was the home turf of space pioneer Konrad Tsiolkovsky. While investigating this I stumbled upon other early public space activities.

A big spectacle was Jacques Offenbach's 1875 operetta "A Trip to the Moon" (orig "Le Voyage dans la lune") loosely based on the Jules Verne novel. But unlike with Verne, who just went around the Moon and never landed, Offenbach takes us to the lunar surface where we meet the Selenites. The Earth travelers are shot out from a gun à la Verne. Verne originally complained about plagiarism, but the issue seems to have been solved. Offenbach later did a version of Verne's Dr Ox, with Verne's permission

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Le_voyage_dans_la_lune_\(opera-f%C3%A9rie\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Le_voyage_dans_la_lune_(opera-f%C3%A9rie)) . The Lunar play was a success, the original staging had 185 performances, and the year after in 1876 it was also set up in both London and Vienna, and in 1877 in New York (which also staged the musical "A Trip to Mars" in 1893). There have been several other stagings up to modern times, eg as late as 2016 in Reims, France.

When I found a poster for it I realised it must have been a major inspiration for Georges Melies ground-breaking 1902 flick "A Trip to the Moon". The idea of having the moon inhabited is the same and the big gun looks like borrowed from Offenbach. Wikipedia tells us about Offenbach's piece:



A picture in lastish from the 1920's Soviet space flight exhibitions.



Artist impression of a scene from Offenbach's moon opera.



Poster. Georges Melies borrowed the big gun.

No expense had been spared on the scenery...The 24 majestic sets by Cornil, Fromont and Chéret replicated places (such as the Observatory of Paris, a high-furnace, a lunar passage or a volcano) and created original architectural conceits (such as a glass palace or mother-of-pearl galleries). The use of "trucs", trap-doors and artifices accentuated the surprise-effects on the spectators. The producers even borrowed a dromedary from the Jardin d'Acclimatation. The 673 costumes were designed by Alfred Grévin, and the two ballets choreographed by M Justament.

The play starts with a Prince Caprice, son of King Vlan of an unnamed country, wanting to go to the Moon, and scientists Microscope constructs a huge gun to achieve this. On the Moon the Selenites observe a black spot coming from the Earth they thought uninhabited. The projectile crash lands and King, Prince and Scientist emerges to meet the Selenites. A lot of internal twists and turns now comes in the plot. Eg Prince Caprice teaching Moon Princes Fantasia what love is - Selenites are strangers to this-, a Volcano eruption and other things. It must have been great fun for the audience!

Visits to the moon have had a long tradition in literature. Lucian of Samosata was perhaps first already a couple of millennia ago, claiming it was "A True Story", but in reality it was a satire about his own world. Cyrano de Bergerac and Johannes Kepler wrote about trips to our gleaming companion in the night sky. There has always

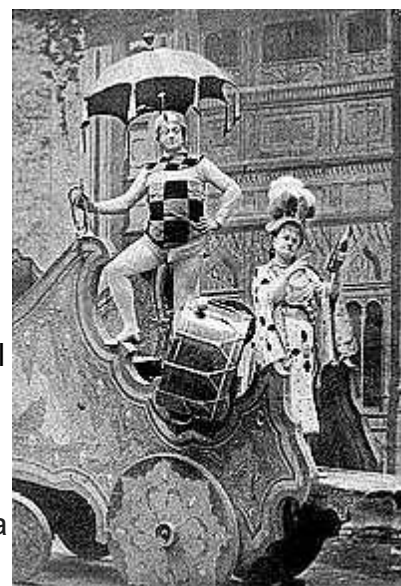


Photo from the moon opera.

been something magical about the moon and it has been seen suitable to be used as a mirror of laughter and satire about contemporary Earthly societies. Another example is the long poem "Månan" ("Moone", using old spelling) by Sweden's "national poet" Carl Michael Bellman (1740-1795, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Michael_Bellman) from 1760. Bellman lets everything on the moon be reversed: the shoemaker preaches, women handle war, horses can fly and so on. I did myself produce a carefully modernised - with modern Swedish spelling - version of it, with a foreword, which you can find through the Projekt Runeberg site, <http://runeberg.org/manan/>. The original is also available there <http://runeberg.org/bcmmanan/0003.html>



Carl Michael Bellman's moon satire from 1760.

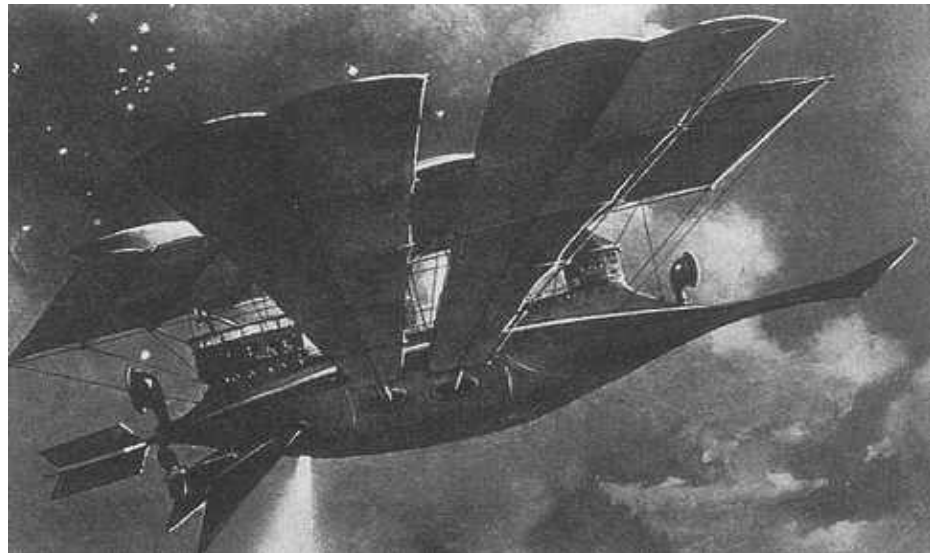
We should also count activities from planetariums and science museums among early space-related events, but they have been straight, serious astronomy and science and not speculative and covering space flight with a science fiction angle like the exhibitions in Kyiv and Moscow. But last time I mentioned that a "A Trip to the Moon" act was offered in the New York amusement district Coney Island, from 1902 and on. It wasn't an exhibition but an amusement park ride. I've been digging a little more about it...

The "A Trip to the Moon" ride began at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo in 1901. One Frederic Thompson (1872-1919), co-founder of Coney Island's famous Luna Park (<https://www.westland.net/coneyisland/articles/lunapark.htm> *), went there, saw it and decided to do his own version, first in Steeplechase park in 1902, and in 1903 in Luna Park, both in Coney Island. In *Amusing the Million - Coney Island at the Turn of thee Century* (by Fred A Kasson, 1978) we read:

In 1901 he visited the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York, and was captivated by the dramatic cyclorama, "A Trip to the Moon." Here visitors entered a spaceship in the middle of a large building for an imaginary ride to the moon. Peering out of portholes, they beheld a series of shifting images that gave the illusion of a flight into space, a sense reinforced by the rocking of the ship itself. After supposedly landing on the moon, passengers left the spaceship to explore its caverns and grottoes, where they met giants and midgets in moon-men costumes, the Man in the Moon upon his throne, and dancing moon maidens, who pressed bits of green cheese upon them as souvenirs of the lunar voyage. The "Trip to the Moon" was thus an especially elaborate ride promoting a sense of fantasy and escape. A philanthropist of those days George C/ Tilyou brought both the cyclorama and its creators, Frederic Thompson and Skip Dundy, back to Steeplechase (I'll only give you the book titles, not where I found them, since it probably are suspicious pirate sites. You know how it is...) President McKinley took the ride, senators, cabinet members, governors, and

also Thomas Edison, who was inspired and toyed with the idea of inventing a spaceship himself. *The Kid of Coney Island - Fred Thompson and the Rise of American Amusement* (by Woody Register, 2001) also writes about Thompson's extravaganza:

*A Trip to the Moon would be his most famous and profitable amusement... Historians have described A Trip to the Moon as a "dramatic" or "fantasy cyclorama," but such comparisons do not do justice to its elaborate construction or dramatic action. Although the undertaking was large and complicated (the building itself occupied thirty-four thousand square feet /Ed: ca 3200 sqm/, its component technologies were not unusually advanced. The moonship was "a green and white cigar shaped thing, the size of a small lake steamer with a great cabin in the middle" and three fan-shaped canvas wings that flapped on either side. Thompson produced the apparent passage across time and space with an array of clever scenic tricks. The floor beneath the ship was painted to represent the distant ground below, so passengers had the sense that they already were high in the air when they boarded. Passengers entered at one end of the ship, where the scenery depicted an aerial view of the fair, and once the flight ended, exited at the opposite end, where the scenery was that of the principality of the Man in the Moon. Once the flight began, the orchestrated manipulation of scenic screens, which surrounded the ship and were painted to represent clouds, Earth, and the Moon, prompted the sensation of rising, forward, and descending movement. (The experience was much like the disorienting impression of forward movement one gets today when sitting in a stationary airliner, awaiting departure from the gate as a neighboring jet backs away.) Colored lights and stereopticons created visual effects such as lightning during flight. The ship itself was suspended by guy wires from a central pole, which gave it the buoyant movement of a boat at dock; it seemed to be floating in the air, and rocked as passengers boarded and swayed with the movement of the flight. A hidden buzzer duplicated the sound of the wind, and fans concealed inside the ship simulated forward movement by blowing air on passengers' faces. After paying their dimes, voyagers gathered in a darkened auditorium, where a guide from the Aerial Navigation Company explained "in pregnant phrases" the "great secret of anti-gravitation and aerial flight" and "the extraordinary nature of the adventure on which they are embarking." The pseudoscientific lecture may have been an important element in establishing the plausibility of the illusion... With the proper magical mood ingeniously established, the audience saw the moonship Luna descending through starry space toward Earth. Julian Hawthorne, writing about the ride in *Cosmopolitan*, expected at this point to watch a conventional stage show on the "various chapters of the journey," and was surprised when the guide ordered the members of the audience to participate in the drama. After filing through a narrow passageway, they took their seats on the moonship. "Slowly," wrote the guidebook author Barry, the Luna "gathers a long undulating motion." The exposition grounds recede, Buffalo /Ed: He went to the first version/ becomes a "sprawling" mass of blinking lights, and the "roar" of Niagara is heard as the ship passes over it. The Earth becomes a "great globe," then "a ball, then a mere speck and finally sinks from sight." The ship rushes through a storm, and as the clouds pass, the "moon is seen to sink across the line of sight from above and a seared countenance, the face of the Man in the Moon is plainly visible. Rocks and lava pilings, stained red and yellow and green as though by fire and decomposition, are just ahead." The ship slows, turns, and lands in "a yawning hole in the moon's side, the crater of an extinct volcano." On the Moon, Thompson constructed a topsy-turvy world in which the "normal" in appearance and scale was disturbed. A group of "midget" Selenites greeted the voyagers with "queer twitterings" and hors d'oeuvres of green cheese and led them down a long avenue of "illuminated foliage of fantastic trees and toadstool growths," past a row of lunar stores (with show windows displaying the riches of the lunar civilization) and the "Moon Calf-Avenging Spirit of the Moon," to the palace of the Man in the Moon. Passing the sentry of giants patrolling the gates, the voyagers took their seats in the cavernous throne room, where they were surrounded by "huge jewels and masses of gold and weird vistas and abysses." Here they were treated to a regal entertainment of moon maids dancing amid spewing fountains and dazzling incandescent lights. Then the guide led them back "into the familiar daylight of the Midway." Of course, A Trip to the Moon-with its plaster façade, its pseudoscientific lecture, the flimsiness of its props, the tricks of its theatrical trade-was an obvious hoax...by all accounts, Thompson's trip was one of the*



An artist's impression of the moon ship in Fred Thompson's moon ride.

sensations, if not the sensation, of the entire exposition. There were reports of motion sickness and fainting, and a correspondent for *Cosmopolitan* left with a woman who "expressed alarm and could not be convinced by her friends or the attendants that the air-ship was stationary." According to Barry, men placed wagers on whether the ship actually left the ground. The sure winner, though, was Thompson, who later claimed he "cleaned up" five times his original investment and continued to rake in the dimes over the next decade with the same illusion at Coney Island... The Trip was au courant in a number of other ways that suggest reasons for its popularity. For one, its tricks and iconography exploited the new technologies of incandescent lighting. With the proximity of Niagara Falls and the recent completion of the first hydroelectric plant there, electrical current was one of the exposition's main attractions... Thompson's trip to the Moon constructed a parallel narrative of journeying from the dark present into an electrically illuminated future of ease and play. His destination was in tune with the marvels of a consumer-oriented economy, although it still complemented the productive wheels of industry and the "high and holy" attractions on display in the exposition palaces.



A moon cave in Coney Island, from the "A Trip to the Moon" ride.

<https://gizmodo.com/in-1901-you-could-pay-50-cents-to-ride-an-airship-to-t-5914655> says it was:

a thirty-seat spaceship ...a cross between a dirigible and an excursion steamer, with the addition of enormous red canvas wings that flapped like a bird's. The wings were worked by a system of pulleys and the sensation of wind was created by hidden fans. A series of moving canvas backdrops provided the effect of clouds passing by and the earth dropping into the distance. Lighting and sound effects added to the illusion.

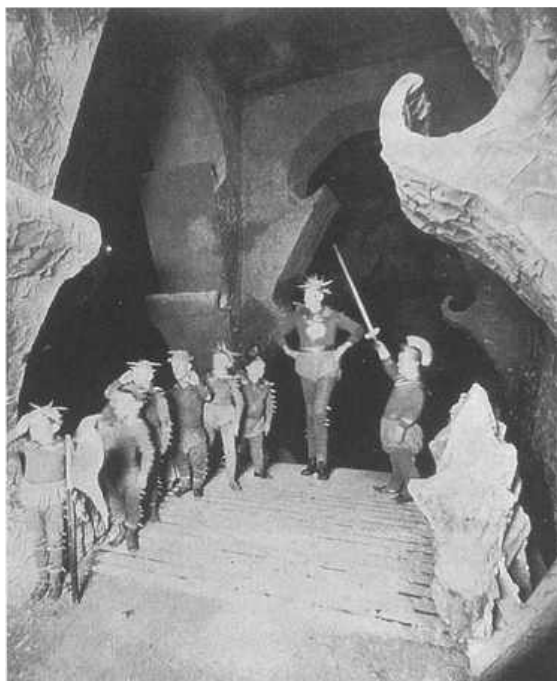
Thompson had twenty employees running the ride, in addition to 200 actors - including the 60 little people who played the Selenites. Every half hour, at the sound of a gong and the rattle of anchor chain the /ship/ rocked from side to side and then rose into the sky under the power of its beating wings. The passengers, sitting on steamer chairs, see clouds floating by...the entire planet earth comes into view. Soon, the ship is surrounded the twinkling stars of outer space. After surviving a terrific - and spectacular - electrical storm the "Luna" and its passengers sets down in a lunar crater. As the passengers leave the spaceship, they are greeted by Selenites who guide them through a maze of stalactites and "crystallized mineral wonders" to the "City of the Moon". There (like any visitor to Disney World a century later) they find souvenir shops, samples of green cheese and "mooncraft demonstrations". They are finally admitted to the palace of the Man in the Moon and a spectacular stage show featuring illuminated fountains...and the journey is over. The return to Earth was via an anticlimactic rope ladder.

The Luna Park article (* above) adds:

The voyagers entered the building's sumptuous lobby and to the craft's dock which was fitted like a railroad station's waiting room. From there they could glimpse "Luna," a brilliantly lit green and white cigar-shaped craft, lying quietly in the moonlight... Suddenly everything darkened almost to complete darkness. Lightning flashed across the sky, thunder rolled and there was a fierce rain on the awning overhead. "We are passing

through a storm," shouted the captain, "we are quite safe." After the rain slackened and the stars came out, it was morning. When the ship finally reached the moon and dropped through a sea of sunlit clouds, it flew past canyons and craters stained red, yellow and green. It then slowed, and veering right, landed in the crater of an extinct volcano.

The passengers were met by midget moon men, Selenites, whose backs had rows of long spikes. They sang refrains of "My Sweetheart the Man in the Moon," then escorted them through stalactite caverns, across chasms spanned by spidery bridges to the underground city of the Moon. There at the entrance of a broad avenue lined with the illuminated foliage of fantastic trees and toad stool growths, were the walls of a castle beyond a moat. They were led to the throne room where there were seats for the Earth visitors. Bronze griffins flanked the sides where the "Man in the Moon," a giant, sat on his splendid throne. On the stage in front was the Geisler electric fountain that displayed all the colors of the spectrum through its cascading water pulsing in a rhythmic dance. As the visitors departed moon maidens in the green cheese room offered them tasty pieces of their cheese. Of course back then, everyone was certain the moon was made of green cheese.



The Selenites you'd meet in Coney Island. Thompson employed dwarves to play them.

Billboard magazine called the moon trip "a great success, that could make a great deal more money if it had the capacity. The mistake was made in constructing a building with so small a capacity for visitors." "A Trip to the Moon" in Coney Island costed \$52 000 to construct we also learn, and it's claimed Thompson earned 250 000 from it..."although it is unlikely. Millions were said to have taken the trip. However, according to an affidavit of Thompson's auditor given in 1912, A Trip to the Moon averaged revenues of \$20,000 annually, which, at ten cents apiece, meant two hundred thousand riders. The first Buffalo version had costed 50 cents. The author Woody Register has more:

In the 1890s a popular "illustrated lecture" called "A Trip to the Moon" attracted audiences in New York. Although it appears no claims were made for life on the Moon, the lecturer used glass slides, scenic drops, colored lights, and a large plaster moon to produce close-up views of the Earth and of the Moon, giving spectators the sensation that they actually were only two to three miles above the lunar surface. Regardless of whether Thompson's Trip was more or less fraudulent than this lecture, it exploited the same curiosity about and longing for what Flammarion called "other worlds." /Thompson drifted further into space more, after going to the Moon!! For instance, he designed his first Hippodrome production, A Yankee Circus on Mars, much as he had his Trip to the Moon; he already knew where the circus troupe would go before he had a reason for it to go there... The curtain rose to reveal

a small but fully appointed tent circus in performance in Jayboro, Vermont, before a crowd of hicks, rubes, and children. ...The company is in arrears and a group of disgruntled worker - the Fat Lady, the Wild Man of Borneo, and others - want to strike for unpaid wages. The Tattooed Man quiets the unrest, but conditions deteriorate further when the local "sheriff arrives to auction off the assets. Then from out of the sky a gleaming airship arrives and from it emerges a messenger dispatched by King Borealis of Mars to bring a Yankee circus to entertain his pleasure-loving planet. The emissary settles the circus's debts and gathers the members of the troupe to deliver them from the hostility of Yankee land to Mars, where the strange people have not forgotten how to play On Mars the "barbaric splendors" of the Elysian Gardens slowly emerge out of the "moonlight shadows." In the background two gilded dragons, fifty feet tall, form a reptilian arch for the anticipated performance. The royal astronomer paces the vast stage, searching the sky for the spaceship. Then a chorus of Martians, garbed in Edel's fantastic costumes, marches on stage "in groups of thirties and forties, each one more glittering in peacock hues of its robes and equipments than the one before" - royal guards, Amazon guards, councilors, aristocrats "with nothing at all to do!" Elephants motor onstage, wearing goggles and driving automobiles hauling the Milkmaids of Mars. The ensemble, numbering some three hundred in all, joins in a chorus: "We work and we sing a song / We call it play!" The airship whirs in from above the stage, hits the floor, and explodes, knocking the monarch of Mars, King Borealis, from his throne and into a romantic tangle with the Saucy Soubrette of the circus, Aurora. If she will be his Aurora, he tells her, he will be her Borealis. A waltzing incandescent love song follows with the glimmering opalescence of the northern lights cast against the backdrop. The army of scene-shifters arrives onstage, the Yankee circus performs, and then comes the Martian finale, the "Dance of the Hours" from Ponchielli's La Gioconda, with 150 young women dressed in costumes representing morning, day, evening, and night, and different lighting effects for each hour. "It was breathless," the New York Sun recounted, "the shifting tender beauty of it; it was unearthly." The ballet and chorus "fairly made the crowd go mad with the intoxication of sound and sight"



From "A Yankee Circus on Mars", which seems to have been more of a stage show than a simulated interplanetary trip.



A scene from the Mars show.



Colour drawing from the moon trip.

This Mars show was a later, somewhat changed version of the Moon ride set up in the Hippodrome Theatre, which Thompson also founded and operated. There he went from balloon to aeroplane. Mr Register register this:

By that time the novelty had worn off, and Thompson had even eliminated it from his park at one point, only to bring it back later in the updated form of A Trip to Mars by Aeroplane... Thompson's originality lay in creating the first electrical and mechanical space extravaganza, the forerunner of all amusement park space rides.

Could Walt Disney (1901-1966) have been inspired by it for his amusement parks' space rides? He was too young to have taken the Moon trip, but perhaps the later Mars version? Remember how Disney in the 1950's did space TV shows with Wernher von Braun. Now, lets return to the newspapers, which was how my History Corner column began (with going through the digital newspaper archive of the Royal Library in Stockholm). After Sputnik in 1957 the world went into space craze! Here a page from Expressen, Nov 5 1957, with no less than three interesting, but rather speculative articles (a couple of columns rearranged to save...space). First, "Volunteer Russians Got No. Veteran Stapp - I'm Ready to Go":

The Soviet-Russian embassy in London on Monday had to explain for upset British dog-lovers that many Russians had volunteer to crew Sputnik II, but that "such a sacrifice was unacceptable" and that they therefore selected the patient, ragged dog Damka. First secretary Yuri I Modin calmed the delegation from England's Dog Protection Society that a dog crew was of temporary nature and that humans would take the place of the dog as soon as they know how a human being reacts in space. Modin says he had no idea of if it was possible to get the dog unharmed back to Earth again. He explained to the members of the delegation that the dog had been launched on its flight around the world in "the service of mankind". Modin added that the dog had been especially trained for its mission and that measures had been taken to make the dog as comfortable as possible in its sealed container in the satellite. /Stapp: I'm Ready! USA's foremost authority regarding

FRIVILLIGA RYSSAR FICK NEJ



Så ser rymdhunden Damka ut i sin rymdfärd, som den är inpackad i för att kroppen skall tillfredsställa tryckförhållningarna vid start och eventuell återvändning. Bilden publicerades i går i ryska tidningar.

Veteranen Stapp: Jag är redo att resa!

LONDON (AP). Den 40-åriga ambassaden i London förklarade på måndagen för upprörda brittiska hundälskare att många ryssar frivilligt hade ställt sig till förfogande som bemanning i Sputnik II, men att "en sådan uppoffring inte kunde accepteras" och att man därför valt den lilla tålmodiga raggiga hunden Damka.

Förste sekretären Yuri I Modin lugnade ned den uppvaknande delegationen från Englands hundskyddsförbund med att säga att hundbemanning bara är av övergående natur och att människor kommer att inflyttas till platsen så snart man vet hur en mänsklig varslas reagerar i rymden.

Modin uppger att han inte hade en ömning om till det var möjligt att få ned hunden välbefället på jorden igen.

Han förklarade för delegationsmedlemmarna att hunden hade stämts ut på sin världens runt-flygning "i människligt tjänst".

Modin tillade att hunden har tillvit speciellt dresserat för sitt uppdrag och att den skall ha det så bekvämt som möjligt i sin bemanningsutrustning i satelliten.

— Ryssarna tycker om hundar, förklarade han.

Stapp: Jag är redo!
OMAHA, Nebraska (AP). USA's främsta astronauter på "rymdmissioner" berättade John T. Stapp, som på måndagen att han tror att ryssarna skall kunna skicka ut en människa i världsrymden mycket snart.

— Det beror bara på om de vill skicka i väg någon frivillig utan att bekymra sig om han kommer tillbaka eller ej, sade överste Stapp, som är chef för amerikanska flygarmarskalkens medicinska avdelning.

Bekänt inte Sputnik II, som nu smurtar omkring jorden med en hund ombord, har särskilt tjocka vägar, skulle en liknande satellit med en mänsklig ombord inte behöva vara mycket tyngre, sade översten. Han anade också att följande stegen ligger över Sovjet har det gäller experiment med människor i rymden eller under rymdfärd förhållanden.

— När kommer man då att skicka ut en människa i rymden?
— Det kan jag inte säga, svarade överste Stapp, men jag är redo att gå med i väg upp så snart någon ber mig.

Stapp, som utmärktes som "rättdoms snabbast man" efter sin rekordstafett i 1 300 kilometer i timmen, var chef för det forskningsföretag som skickade upp raket David S. Simeon i höjd till en höjd av 31 000 meter.

Månraketen med vätebomb kan redan vara på väg

Av ARNE THOREN
NEW YORK (Expressen). Amerikanska raketexperter har framkastat teorin att ryssarna planerar ett "fyrvärkeri" som verkligen skall slå alla rekord för att fira 40-årsminnet av revolutionen 1917!

Den ryska raket som nu mycket väl kan vara på väg till månen för att anlända dit på torsdag medför en vätebomb som exploderar vid nedstapet!

En sådan explosion skulle få en ljusstyrka många gånger starkare än en fullmånen, heter det.

Flera amerikanska vetenskapsmän har förklarat att det inte alls är sannolikt att ryssarna någon gång under veckan sände i väg en raket med månen som mål. Helt enkelt är det 4-5 dygn och nästan månen är så nära i väg någon gång under torsdagen eller söndagen för att kunna färd till månen.

Det är den 23-åriga raketexperten doktor Fred Singer — docent i fysik vid Marylanduniversitetet — som berättat vad som skulle hända om man sände en vätebombs till månen.

Bländar jorden
Dr Singer förklarar att om raketen med vätebombslasten nådde månen så skulle ljusstyrkan i explosionsögonblicket bländas som när på jorden. Men resultatet skulle bli en mycket obehaglig komet. Dr Singer, som är chef för de experiment utav det värsta amerikanska rymdenöver tillägg harvet sände upp raketen till en höjd av över 4 000 km, anser att USA skulle kunna nå månen med de raketer man nu har till förfogande.

Dr Singer förklarar att det inte finns någon som helst risk att en sådan explosion skulle rubba månen ut dess svårare bana.

Flera amerikanska vetenskapsmän diskuterade på måndagen livligt möjligheterna att en rysk raket redan är på väg till månen. Själv efter kl 1 på torsdag svensk tid börjar en månfilmsändning, som man då kan se på tv i västra Amerika. Den italienska filmvisningen väntar i 2 timmar och 20 minuter men blir synlig bara i Alaska och östra Asien.

Det uppger att den amerikanska satellitbevakningen skärpta de senaste dyggen i förhoppning att upptäcka en av månraketen, men inga rapporter har kommit att denna bevakning gjort några resultat.

De amerikanska spekulationserna ökade i intensitet allt eftersom allt fler ryska rapporter inkommit om vetenskapsmän i Sovjet, som förutsett förflytt till månen och till Mars från Gudsriket väntar i 2 timmar

Skäppt bevakning

USA gissar på bränslet allt från solstrålar till alkohol

NEW YORK (Expressen). De amerikanska vetenskapsmännens diskussioner kring möjligheterna att ryssarna funnit en ny form av raketbränsle varierade på måndagen från en ytterlighet att man bara använder en ny sorts batterier för att driva satellitens instrument till en annan ytterlighet som vad man skulle kunna låta GVV-bränslet utnyttja Gud-Vet-Vad-bränsle.

En av USA's ledande fysiker förklarar att allt det som de amerikanska experterna är överens om att de amerikanska bränslen som används tillräckligt — inklusive de nya väte- och borsen, och tillfyllningsvaror som man experimenterar livligt med just nu — inte utvecklas tillräckligt snabbt för att driva upp ett föremål av Sputnik II's anseende till de höjder som ryssarna nått.

Atomklyvning

Denne forskare förklarar att den ryska satelliten kan betyda att ryssarna har löst problemet att utnyttja atomklyvning för att driva upp raketen och att detta i så fall vara en "fantastisk bedrift".

På grundval av artiklar i ryska vetenskapliga tidskrifter har man i USA kommit fram till att ryssarna har förhållande bränslen som bygger på kvävsföreningar, alkohol, fetter, salpetersyra och flytande syra.

Under klassificeringen GVV håller man gissningar om att ryssarna upptäckt antingen att man driver raketer med hjälp av ljustrålar — en metod som författare på Science-fiction-området länge rekommenderat.

Fluor ökar effekten

Men de mycket lite kända ämnen som de amerikanska vetenskapsmännarna nämnt i samband med raketbränslet är: flytande, förfärad, utvattad, JP-4, vätskeväte, deuterium, tetraerans, pentaboran, diboran, kvävsflytande väte.

I denna lista ingår bränslen som kan "bränas" med syre **2.5 million parts, all from the lowest bidder. → A miracle it flies!**



"spacemen", colonel John P Stapp, on Monday said he believes the Russians will send a man into space very soon. "It only depends on if they want to send a volunteer without worries about if he comes back or not," colonel Stapp said, chief of the aero-medical dpt of the American air force. Unless Sputnik II, which now orbits Earth with a dog aboard, has especially thick walls, a similar satellite with a human wouldn't have to be very much heavier, the colonel said. He claimed the US was ahead of the Soviets when it came to humans in space or in space-like environments. When will they then be able to launch a human into space? "I can't say," colonel Stapp answered, "but I'm ready to go as soon as anyone ask." Stapp who has the label "the fastest man in the world" after riding a rocket sledge at 1523 km/h was the chief of the research company that launched major David Simons in a balloon to a height of 31 000 metres. (Caption: What the space dog Damka looks like in its spacesuit, tied with cords so the body will cope with the pressure changes at the start and a possible salvage. The picture was published yesterday by Russian newspapers.)



Colonel Stapp riding a rocket sledge. He volunteered to go to space already in 1957.

More on this illustrious colonel Stapp here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Stapp
 Note how the article got the name wrong of the first dog in space. The name was Laika, not Damka. The reason could be that the news was misheard as it went through a "shouter". Reporters of news organisations on a distant assignment would call their editors and literally *shout* their article through the telephone lines (which had a sound quality much worse than today). It's possible Laika became Damka this way. The next article is more sinister: "Moon Rocket with a Hydrogen Bomb Could Already Be on Its Way":

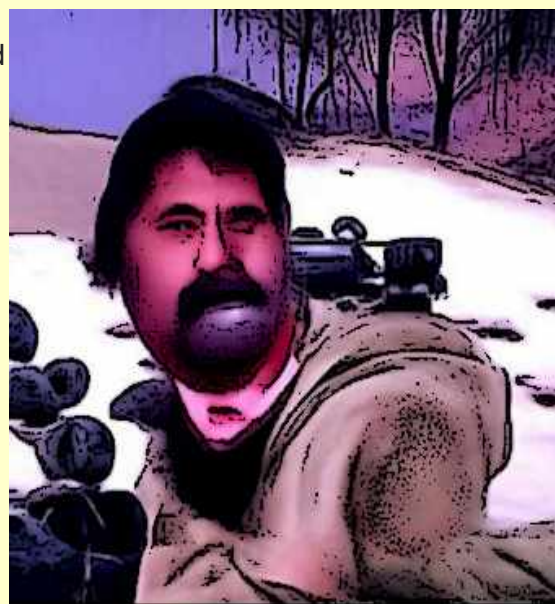
American rocket experts have launched the theory that the Russians plan a "firework" to break all records to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the 1917 revolution. The Russian rocket that's launched could be on its way to the moon to arrive on Thursday and could carry a hydrogen bomb which will explode at the crash. Such an explosion would be several times brighter than a full moon, it is claimed. Several American scientists have explained that it's not impossible that the Russians some time during the weekend launched a rocket aimed for the moon. The travel time is 4-5 days and the rocket must have been launched some time during the Saturday or Sunday to be there in time on Thursday. It's the 33-year old rocket expert Freed Singer - PhD in physics at the University of Maryland - who explained what would happen if you sent a hydrogen bomb to the moon. /Blinds Earth/ Dr Singer explains that if the rocket with the hydrogen bomb reached the moon the brightness at the moment of explosion would blind us here on Earth. But the result would be a very insignificant crater. Dr Singer is boss of the project by with the Americans recently send rockets over the Pacific to a height of 4000 km, and thinks that USA could reach the moon with the rockets they now have at their disposal. Dr Singer ensures us that there is no risk at all that such an explosion could alter the orbit of the moon. /More monitoring/ Other American scientists had a lively discussion Monday on the possibility that a Russian rocket already is on its way to the moon, Just after 1 am Swedish time there will be a lunar eclipse, which can be seen in eg western America. The total eclipse lasts for 3 hours and 28 minutes and will only be visible in Alaska and eastern Asia. It is stated that the American radar surveillance has beefed up in recent days in attempts to try to discover a possible moon rocket, but there are no reports if this has given any results. The American speculations became more intense as Russian reports came about that Soviet scientists predicts trips to the moon and Mars with in a near future.

The Gostak Distims the Doshes!

Miles Breuer had a story in *Amazing Stories* (March 1930) "The Gostak and the Doshes", where the "protagonist pops into an alternate world in which the phrase is a political slogan that induces sufficient umbrage throughout the populace to declare justified, righteous war" (did Putin Boy read it?). It made "the gostak distims the doshes" a popular phrase in fandom, but it's not fannish from the beginning. Aunt Wiki says it - <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gostak> - "was coined in 1903 by Andrew Ingram, but is best known through its quotation in 1923 by C K Ogden and I A Richards in their book [The Meaning of Meaning](#)". Read about Breuer, with a link to his story

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miles_J._Breuer. It is explained that the doshes - if you wonder - is just the thing by which Gostak is distimmed. Distimnation is what Gostak does to the doshes. But what does it all mean? We were helped by an Artificial Intelligence! "Dall-E" <https://creator.nightcafe.studio/dall-e-ai-image-generator> is an AI artist which gives you a picture from a description. When entering "The Gostak distims the doshes", to the right you see what we got:

Mr Gostak in full swing with the doshes - the "balls" on the ground? - with the help of a machine in the background, which would be the distimator, one would presume.



There never came to it that the Russians (or Americans) nuked the moon. The last of the three articles is pretty wild in its speculations. What powers the Russian rockets? "USA Guesses the Fuel Is Everything from Sun rays to Alcohol":

The American scientists discuss the possibility that the Russians have found a new form of rocket fuel, and on Monday went from one extreme about having inventing a new type of battery to power the instruments of the satellite, to another extreme about what you could call GOK fuel, meaning God-Only-Knows fuel. One of the leading physicists in USA explains that an increasing numbers agree that the chemical fuels used this far - including the new compounds of hydrogen, boron and lithium, now experimented with very much - don't give enough energy to thrust and object the size of Sputnik II to the altitudes the Russians have reached. /Ed: Sounds like nonsense! The fuels available were quite sufficient./ Atom splitting/ These scientists explains that

the Russian satellite could mean that they have solved the problem of using atomic splitting to power the rocket and that would in such a case be a "fantastic achievement". Based on articles in Russian scientific journals they have in the US come to the conclusion that the Russians have improved fuels based on hydrocarbons, alcohol, kerosene, nitric acid and liquid oxygen. Being classified as GOK you only find guesses that the Russians have discovered anti-gravity; that they power rockets with beams of light - a method authors within the area of sf long have recommended. /Ed: Huh?! /Flour increases the effect/ But the very little known substances that American scientists mention in connection to rocket fuels are: hydrazine, furufal, JP-4, ethylalcohol /Ed: common blog.../, lithium hydride, decaboran, beryllium hydride and hydrogen. In the list are subjects that can be "burned" with oxygen. /Ed: All very confusing. The writer is a science analphabet.../ Some American rockets are right now powered by liquid oxygen and some explosive substance. If they were burned with flour instead of oxygen some American experts think the effect would increase quite alot. The American experts note that the Russian reports talk about "a new power source", not about "a new sort of power". This implies, they say, that the Russians improved the engines already existing and haven't found a new sort of power which would be unknown for science outside the iron curtain.

USA redo att dryfta rymdraketkontroll Dulles vill diskutera saken med Sovjetunionen

NEW YORK (Expressen). Utrikesminister Dulles meddelade på tisdagseftermiddagen att Amerika är redo att med Sovjetunionen diskutera etablerandet av internationell kontroll på jordsatellit- och rymdraketområdet.

Dulles förklarade efter en timlång konferens med president Eisenhower att om Sovjetunionen ville så skulle USA gå med på att diskutera problemet skilt från de tidigare förslag som Amerika lagt ned i nedrustningsfrågan.

Dulles uttalande på eftermiddagen stod i direkt kontrast till ett annat uttalande som bara några timmar tidigare gjorts av en talesman för Dulles eget departement. I detta uttalande som kom på fredagsförmiddagen hette det att USA trots den ryska jordsatelliten stod fast vid de förslag som legat fram under nedrustningskonferensen i London.

Man ville under inga förhållanden inleda några bilaterala förhandlingar med ryssarna inom satellitområdet.

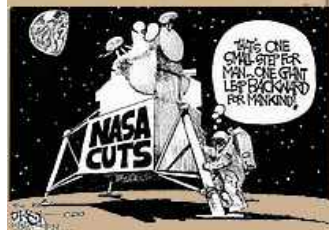
Rysk framgång

Dulles uttalande föreföll att kunna tydas som ett accepterande av det anbud som Chrusjtjev på tisdagen gav i en intervju med New York Times' James Reston i Moskva. Chrusjtjev föreslog där att satellit- och robotproblemet skulle diskuteras bara mellan Sovjet och USA och att man skulle försöka nå en överenskommelse på bilateral nivå. Dulles förklarade att det inte är någon tvekan om att ryssarna propageradammässigt vunnit en stor framgång med sin jordsatellit, men han tillade att han inte ansåg att deras vinst gick mycket längre än så.

Amerikanerna visste

Han tillade att USA kommer att följa i Sputniks spår inom kort. Dulles sade också att president Eisenhower kommer att ämna diskutera denna fråga utförligare vid den presskonferens han skall hålla på onsdagskvällen (levensk tid).

Det meddelades från andra håll i Washington att amerikanska underättelseväsendet visste sedan en tid tillbaka att ryssarna var mycket nära den tidpunkt då de skulle sända i väg sin första jordsatellit. Det uppogavs i Washington att underrättelseväsendet bara tog fel på två eller tre månader vad det gällde fastställandet av den dag då den första satelliten skulle sändas från Sovjets territorium.



afternoon said that America is ready to discuss establishing international control in the area of Earth satellites and space rockets with the Soviet Union. After an hour long conference with president Eisenhower Dulles explained that if the Soviet Union was ready to discuss the problem, separate from other proposals America has made regarding disarmament. Dulles statement in the afternoon was in contrast to an earlier statement just a few hours earlier made by a spokesman for Dulles' own department. In that statement from Friday morning it was said that USA despite the Russian Earth satellite stood by the proposals presented during the disarmament conference in London. /Russian success/ Dulles statement seems to be interpretable as accepting the offer made by Khrushchev made on Tuesday in an interview by James Reston of the New York Times in Moscow. Khrushchev suggested that the satellite and missile problem should be discussed only between USA and USSR, trying the reach a bilateral agreement. Dulles explained that The Russians without doubt have won a propaganda success with their Earth satellite, but he added that he didn't think they've had won much more than that. /The Americans knew/ He added that USA shortly will follow in the tracks of Sputnik, Dulles also said that Eisenhower intends to discuss this question in more detail at the press conference he will hold Wednesday evening (Swedish time). From other sources in Washington it was said

Nuking the moon. Strange rocket chemistry. World's fastest man aiming for space. Sputnik caused a lot of hullabaloo!

And we learn that, as we read in Expressen 9 October (1957), "USA Is Ready to Talk About Space Rocket Control - Dulle Wants to Discuss It with the Soviet Union":

Secretary of State Dulles Tuesday

Engelsk elektronhjärna skriver kärleksdikter

LONDON (TT-Reuters). Dr. A. D. Booth vid Birkbeck College i London har lämnat en skildring av de märkliga prestationer som en av institutionen konstruerad elektronhjärna är i stand till.

Inte nog med att den just nu är i full färd med att fastställa den ryska jordsatellitens exakta bana, den kan också översätta invecklad franska till begriplig engelska (och håller på att lära sig tyska) — för att inte tala om att den kan skriva kärleksdikter och kärleksbrev, låt vara att dessa såsom någon påpekat kanske närmast har intresse bara för andra elektronhjärnor.

Meningen är att man nu också skall bygga en elektronhjärna som skall komponera musikstycken.

— Jag har hört en del på sådant sätt åstadkomna melodier i USA, och jag får upprättigt säga att de föreföll att vara mycket bättre än vad mänskliga kompositörer många gånger åstadkommer, sade dr. Booth.

that the US intelligence community since some time back already knew that the Russians were very close to the point in time when they would launch their first Earth satellite. It is claimed in Washington that the intelligence was only wrong with 2-3 months about fixing the day when the first satellite would be launched from Soviet territory.

And it's true the Americans knew, not the least - as noted here earlier - since the Russians announced they'd launch a satellite during the "geophysical year" of 1957. BTW, the Americans also announced they'd launch a satellite well in advance. The US could have beaten the Soviets, if they had left it to von Braun's group, and not relied on the navy's Flopnik, which at first try exploded on the pad, if you remember.

Now, I'll leave space and rockets for just a moment, since Expressen newspaper had another interesting piece the same day: "English electronic brain writes live poems":



The Booth couple constructing electronic brains. One of their designs became a commercial success, selling in ca 100 copies in the late 1950s. A lot, when the world market could only take five!

Dr A D Booth at Birkbeck College in London have described the remarkable feats an electronic brain constructed at the institution has achieved. Not only is it right now establishing the exact orbit of the Russian Earth satellite, it can also translate complicated French to understandable English (and is now learning German) - not to mention that it can write love poems and love letters, though these as someone has noted may only be of interest for other electronic brains. They now intend to also build an electronic brain that can compose music. "I have heard some melodies done this way in the USA, and I must honestly say they seem much better than what human composers often can achieve," Dr Booth said.

Kathleen Booth, the Doctor's wife, was one of the early pioneers of British computing, involved from 1946 and on, meeting von Neumann, writing assembler code, helping in constructing several early computers together with her husband:

Ryssarna först till månen åtminstone tror de det själva

Den tyska pressen har på sista tiden överväldnats av artiklar om rymdraketer, som en utgör den populäraste läsningen i Sovjetunionen. Artikelflödet har tagit ganska egenvärd om Sovjetunionens tekniska framsteg, vilket frapperar, då ju ryssarna inte brukar vara särskilt öppenhetliga i sådana här sammanhang. Men i år har man sagt rätt överflöd på artiklar om rymdforskning och hur rymden skall utvecklas.

De tyngsta informationerna har stått i sådana publikationer som "Veitenskap-Kraft", "Teknik för ungdom", "Den unga teknikern", "Kommunistiska Pravda" och "Trod". I tidningen "Molnyj Mir" har man t. ex. kunnat läsa att amerikanerna tänker avlysa en atomslutsk rakets med instrument till månen före 1963. "Det där kan vi göra innan värn 1960", säger artikelförfattaren Chibevitj.

Enligt den tyska raketexperterna von Braun, som nu är verksam i USA, arbetar man där på ett projekt, som går ut på att bygga en konstgjord satellit i form av en ring med 80 m i diameter, vilken skall sväva i rymden på en höjd av 1700 km. Sateliterna skall byggas vidare med hjälp av stora trestegsraketer, med en vikt av 840 ton vardera, vilka emellertid endast kan medföra en vikt av 20 ton. Cirka 1400 avlysnings med dylika raketer krävs, innan satelliten kan byggas. Detta projekt av von Braun, framhåller Chibevitj, är brådskande av orsaker tekniska och ekonomiska problem, som en nation ensam knappt kan lösa. I Sovjetunionen har man varit inne på samma tankningar och är kommit fram till betydligt billigare och enklare lösningar. Man har sålunda tänkt sig att man skall kunna släcka upp en modellrakets till månen, omedelbart efter medförande av TV-kameror till jordytan, därifrån man skall kunna kontakten med andra planeter skön

TV-utsändning 1960

Mars och Venus kan göras på samma sätt. Här för erfordras bara några tusen ton termoelektriskt bränsle i stället för de tiotals miljoner ton, som det amerikanska projektet kräver.

Mot månen i tre stapper

Till en början skall man enligt den tyska skrivelsen avlysa TV-utstrålning till olika delar av månen. Innan de detaljer räknar man med att de skall ge noggranna bilder av månens yta, dvs den del som "vetter" mot jorden. Man hoppas vidare kunna göra upptäckningar av månens andra sida - den som ännu ingen sett - med hjälp av raketerna som har till uppgift att passera runt månen.

Laboratorievagn på månen

Vidare tänker ryssarna landa en TV-styrd laboratorievagn på månen, där vagnens rörelser skall manövreras via en elektromagnet på jorden. Sedan raketerna kommit upp i månens närhet ändrar den på radiokommunicerande farten och körjer raka sig parallellt med månen. Därefter släpper den sig under inverkan av månens dragkraftskraft raka på himlakroppens yta. Det kortvarande radiokommunicerandet riktar raketerna mot Plutoniumkärnan. Det är en större raket på månen, som släpps sig för placering av laboratorievagnen. De bilder från månen, som fotografierats såväl till observatorier på jorden, som från tips om bästa ställe för landningen.

I detta stadium av månoffensiven krävs fem trestegsraketer, som väger 80 ton, och de frigras från astronauterna. Av dessa avlysnings raketerna som brändes för den första, som skall placeras i laboratorievagnen på månen.

Den andra stappan kräver i likhet med den första fem trestegsraketer, som väger 80 ton, och de frigras från astronauterna. Av dessa avlysnings raketerna som brändes för den första, som skall placeras i laboratorievagnen på månen.



MAN SEER en grovt schematiskt bild av laboratorievagnen som skall utföra TV-utstrålning och fotografiering med satellitkamera och satellitfotoblixt.

Ulla denna första rymdvandring på månen i sina TV-apparater. På laboratorievagnen finns också instrument, som ger uppgifter om atmosfären, temperaturen och källan till månens yta.

Den viktiga stapp för månoffensiven kan genomföras före månen.



LABORATORIEVAGNEN med TV-kamera på hjul är utrustad med strålkastare av för den månens utrymme utrustat format.

1960, påstår ryssarna. Därefter är stegen till upptäckandet av en vetenskaplig observationspost med personal som utlyta efter



(cont Left, then Right)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kathleen_Booth, "a remarkable achievement due to the size of the group and the limited funds at its disposal" Aunt Wiki says. More on Birkbeck College computing:

<http://blogs.bbk.ac.uk/bbkcomments/2020/08/25/a-short-history-of-computer-science-at-birkbeck/>

Back to rockets and space: "Russians First to the Moon - Or So They Think Themselves - On TV 1960" says Aftonbladet September 28 just before Sputnik in 1957:

Russian press has lately been flooded with articles about rockets, by now the most popular reading in the Soviet Union. The authors don't hesitate to talk about the technical achievements by the Soviet Union, which is noticeable as the Russians usually aren't especially open in things like this... The best information has been in publications like "Science-Force", "Technology for Youth", "The Young Technician", "Komsomolskaya Pravda" and "Peace". In the magazine Novy Mir you could eg read that the Americans will launch an automatic instrument carrying automatic rocket to the moon before 1962. "But we can do that before spring 1960," says article writer Chlebezvich. According to the German rocket expert Werner von Braun, who now works in USA, they work on a project for building an artificial satellite shaped like a ring with a diametre of 80 metres, flying in space at an altitude of 1700 km, the same writer also writes. The satellite will be built with the help of three-stage rockets weighing 6400 tons each, that however can only carry a payload of 25 ton. About 1000 launches of such rockets are needed before the satellite can be built. This project by von Braun, Chlebezvich stresses, is full of huge technical and economic problems, that one nation can hardly afford by itself. They have touched upon similar thoughts in the Soviet Union and there reached a much cheaper and simpler solution. They have thought of launching a medium-sized rocket to the moon, unmanned but carrying a TV directed tracked vehicle, operated from Earth. The first contact with other planets like Mars and Venus can be done in the same manner. This all it requires a few thousand tons of thermo-chemical fuel, instead of the millions of tons that the American project requires. /To the Moon in Three Stages/ In the beginning several TV operated rockets will be launched to different parts of the moon. Before they explode /crash landing?! they count on they will give details of the surface of the side of the moon facing Earth. They further hope to make records of the other side of the moon - the one no one has yet seen - by rockets with the task of passing the moon. /Laboratory Car on the Moon/ The Russian also intend to land a TV operated laboratory car on the moon, and the movement of the vehicle will be manoeuvred by an electronic brain on Earth. As the rocket comes close to the moon it will change speed with a radio command and start moving parallel to the moon, After that it lowers itself slowly under influence by the gravity from this heavenly body. A correcting radio message directs the rockets towards the Ptolemai Cirkus. It's a big canyon on the moon, and a good spot for the laboratory car. The pictures of the moon, which has previously been transmitted to observers on Earth, will give tips on the best spot for landing. At this stage of the moon offensive it takes five tree-stage rockets of 50 tons each. They won't take off from Earth but from a stratosphere aeroplane used as a trampoline for the first thrusts of the rocket. The second stage like the first five three-stage rockets weighs 50 tons each as they leave the stratosphere plane. Four rockets will carry the fuel used by the fifth one, which will place the laboratory car on the moon. /TV camera/ The laboratory car is equipped with a TV camera placed on an arm which can turn in all directions. On the vehicle there are more instruments operated from Earth by radio. By this the residents of not only the Soviet Union but all countries can follow this first tour in their TV sets. In the laboratory car there are also instruments that tell about the atmosphere, temperature and climate on the surface of the moon. This important step of the moon offensive can be done before 1960, the Russians claim. After that it's a small step to establish manned scientific observation post with staff being rotated after a while. Unmanned radio-TV-operated rockers will be sent to the moon with everything humans need for living: water, air, fuel, food, clothes and collapsible, hermetically sealed houses with light and heating, where the obseration staff can live. The rocket weight per individual doesn't need to be more than 500-1000 kg. /Moon Conquered in 5 years/ The most expensive equipment for the moon rockets stay on Earth, and the one that deals with directing the rocket, done with an electronic brain. The costs for transporting the humans won't be more than for the two first transports. All the three stages for "conquering" the moon will need 250-300 times less fuel than sending an expedition from an artificial satellite according to the von Braun project. And in five years the Russians will this way have conquered the moon. But it is already advisable to prepare for trips to the planets of the solar system, to begin with Mars and Venus, Chlebezvich explains in the end. (Captions: The laboratory car with TV camera on flexible arm and spotlights of powerful type adapted to the need. Big illustration: here we see a schematic picture of the laboratory car with its movable TV camera and the three stage rocket with the Soviet star as national marking.

"Munterhet" i Moskva men ännu ej dementi

MOSKVA. Ryktet om att Sovjetunionen hade sänt upp en bemannad rymdraket mottogs med munterhet på officiellt håll i Moskva, där man trodde att det hade uppkommit genom att en science fiction-film hade tagits för en dokumentärfilm.

Man avböjde emellertid på tisdagen att dementera uppgiften och nöjde sig med att säga att det inte fanns några meddelanden om saken. Journalisterna fick intrycket att Sovjetledningen var angenämt överraskad över att ha fått gratisreklam för sitt lands tekniska framsteg.

Västmaktskorrespondenterna anser att experiment med raketer som medför mänskliga rymdresenärer pågår men att det ännu återstår mycket arbete innan man kan lösa problemet med att låta dem komma levande tillbaka till jorden. Detta lyckades som bekant inte när det gällde rymdhunden Lajka, och det troliga är att man fortsätter med hundexperimenten till dess en lämplig metod har utforskats innan människoliv riskeras. En talesman för Sovjetambassaden i London sade på tisdagen, att Sovjetunionen ännu inte var redo att sända upp människor i rymdraketer. Uttalandet gjordes då en delegation från brittiska antivivisektionssällskapet med sin ordförande, fröken Lind af Hageby, i spetsen besökte ambassaden. Delegationen protesterade mot experimenten med djur och hävdade att sovjetforskarna hade 275 specialtränade hundar som väntade på sin tur att göra rymdresor. (TT-Router).

It was typical of von Braun to think big! 1000 rockets of 6400 tons each is Elon Musk and Starship territory! It may have been more expensive than the Russian plan, but von Braun really wanted a space station, which would have further use later as stepping stone for going to Mars (as he described in Disney TV shows). The Russian plan of landing a vehicle on the moon 1960 was a bit...delayed. It took until 1970 with Lunokhod 1, were still first with a Lunar rover. (AFAIK the Americans have *never* landed a mobile, unmanned probe on the moon.)

It would take five more years for the first manned space flight and a dozen for the first moon landing. But rumours flew around much earlier, "Moscow 'Frolicing' But No Denial Yet" as Dagens Nyheter reported January 8, 1958:



Astrochimp Ham was the first primate in space.

The Rumour that the Soviet Union has launched a manned space rocket made officials in Moscow frolicing, and they believed it had come from mistaking an sf film for a documentary. But on Tuesday they didn't deny the story and kept to saying there were no official reports on the subject. Journalists had the impression that the Soviet leadership were positively surprised to have free PR about their country's technical progress. Correspondents from the west believe that experiments with rockets to carry human passengers are going on but that it still remains a lot of work before you can solve the problem of letting them come back to Earth alive. As you know, that wasn't the case with the space dog Laika, and it is probable they continue with dog experiments until a suitable method has been developed, before human lives are risked. A spokesman for the Soviet embassy in London on Tuesday said that the Soviet Union wasn't yet ready to lunch humans in space rockets. The statement was made as a delegation visited the embassy from the British anti-vivisection society, lead by Miss Lind af Hageby. The delegation protested against the experiments with animals and claimed the Soviet scientists had 275 especially trained animals now waiting for their turn to make space trips.

The Americans meanwhile trained apes for space, like Ham the "astrochimp" who January 31st 1961 became *the first primate* in space [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ham_\(chimpanzee\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ham_(chimpanzee)) - before Gagarin – and he was actually brought back safely. Ham lived a long, interesting life until 1983.

Well, time to stop monkeying about. More space later in *Intermission*, but perhaps not in nextish. Speaking of an APE, why not join an APA - ask me for info! - like the ones of my...

...Mailing Comments

First EAPA then N'APA. Listen, it's your fannish duty to do a fanzine. It's easy, fun and nourishing!

Henry Grynsten: *"Mankind is going to go extinct within a short while even if we save the climate. There are too many people and we are using up our resources too quickly." No, I don't think so. Earth can easily sustain present population and more, and after 2050 or so the population will begin to shrink (according to UN expert prognoses). And as I noted before, we don't really "use up" resources. Atoms aren't destroyed! It just takes energy (which we can get plenty of, from the Sun or as nuclear power) and ingenuity to reassemble them into whatever we want. ☆☆ "One is not born, but rather becomes, a human." To a degree. There are always a lot of our properties that we're born with. One such trait I come to think of is how "territorial" we are, ie having the urge to stake out an area and defend it against intruders. Many animals are territorial and here we show we're just the same. Evolutionary, being territorial has an advantage. You get food in your territory and if you can keep intruders out, your offspring and relatives (which you also have in your territory, they have partly your genes) are kept safe. This has evolved into being territorial on a bigger scale, when we gang together in something called "nations". And it is this built-in property of humans we see in Putin's attack on Ukraine. That asshole wants to increase his territory. The basic ingredients of sexuality are also built into us, and as you have also noted the basics of using language, to name a few things. It's an interesting observation that baby boys gravitate towards "boyish" toys, and baby girls towards "girlish" toys, both in-built. The genders are more different than feminists would admit. ☆☆ The ideas that "there must be a god" also comes from within us. To survive we must construct reasons and explanations to understand and predict things, so we can protect ourselves. The idea of a god (or several) is an attempt to find the "ultimate" explanation. I think particle physicists, astronomers and cosmologist ultimately will be much better at finding the ultimate explanation.*

William McCabe: *On genre: an interesting subgenre of British skiffy is the disaster story, from Wells, Wyndham, Brunner, Christopher, Ballard and others. I think it's a reaction, a "phantom pain" from seeing the British Empire dismantled. ☆☆ Pulp mags were usually not available in Sweden. But the owner of our own pulp Jules Verne Magasinet- which translated stories from US pulps - was an agent for such material and would get copies of pulps through their professional channels. ☆☆ The word pulp refers to "paper mass" used to make paper, and not ballast. And the word for this wood pulp then came to refer to the the special low-quality paper of the pulp magazines.*

Heath Row: *Sometimes I wonder if you are a London airport... ☆☆ Ambitious news listing! I do such myself and know it takes time. (Did a newszine on paper for ca 35 years, now transformed to the Twitter*

account @SFJournalen, also as news postings on my mailing list SKRIVA.)☆☆ Right, sf isn't into the prediction business. It's into the business of intellectual stimulation and Expect That Things Change Unexpectedly!☆☆ Very interesting list of genre soundtracks!☆☆ Yes, I know Intermission is damn long... Still, I skip a lot of things I have (the events gallery I used to have, for instance, not having LoCs keeps size down also). The zine began to grow with the History Corner column, but I honestly think that's worthwhile reading. But I try to limit the issues, this is 2 pages shorter than #122..☆☆ Fanac.org can have my Frome PDF if they want, but remember it was a "quick and dirty" job, due to being short of time. Anyone with spare time is welcome to edit and "clean" the pages.☆☆ Interesting about David McDaniel/Ted Johnstone writing UNCLE books. I should check them for "tuckerisms".

Garth Spencer: Putin's war now more resembles 1914, not 1940...☆☆ PDF Stapler is a good PDF Merger and works with laptops. <https://www.softpedia.com/get/Office-tools/PDF/Neechsoft-s-PDF-Stapler.shtm> .☆☆ Interesting idea to write the scenes of fiction in reversed order! Maybe I should try it.☆☆ Do you know Esperanto? Perhaps you even "speak Esperanto like a native", just as Harry Harrison...

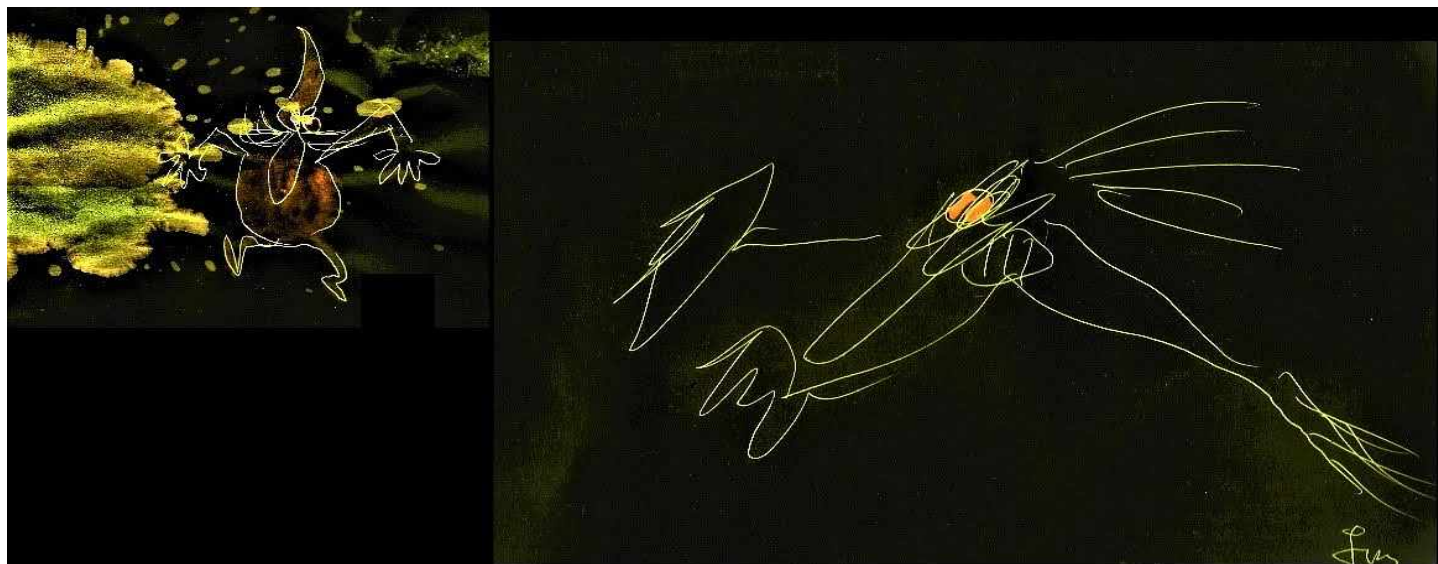
Jefferson P Swycaffer: No, I think Ukraine will win. Putin has huge problems recruiting soldiers without formally declaring it as a war. High losses, material problems from corruption and Himars, bad tactics, shrinking morale among his troops and increasing strain on the Russian economy due to sanctions, means the Russians' huge problems will only get far worse. When Ukraine get more Western weapons and are trained on them, they can and will strike back - and they are highly motivated. Long range Himars and MLRS have already begun to have effect. In 150 days of snail "offensive" the Russians have managed to advance ca 100 km, or a mere 650 yards per day. The ammo depots and command centres are being smashed. I wouldn't be surprised if there's even a coup against Putin, due to all his monumental mistakes and the increasing problems. There are indications of trouble, eg oligarchs who have been found "mysteriously" dead, presumably murdered for daring to question their deranged Fuhrer.☆☆ If the allied had formed and trained armoured divisions and placed some opposite the Ardennes, WWII would have been shortened by five years...

George Phillies: Yes, I know about the Campbell and the Bomb story. I covered it in an earlier Intermission, as the story was even mentioned in the Swedish press right after the war. It's rumoured that Wernher von Braun was an Astounding reader (claimed by eg Harry Harrison). von Braun is said to have received ASF via a "drop box" in Sweden. I wonder if Willy Ley was involved, being in the US at the time? The two knew each other since long before the war.☆☆ I'm dissatisfied with Nebula and many other awards, that seem to award authors based on minority quotas rather than the success of their efforts. Middle-aged white men are the majority of sf writers but are systematically cast aside, authors who usually are among the best (eg having a science background which is at the core of what science fiction is about). That literary awards are politicized means ideology but not achievements are rewarded, and that's very damaging for the genre! The quality and relevance of the sf genre will be compromised.☆☆ After this I get four blank pages. An editing error?

John Thiel: "Futurian War Digest" was a logo borrowed from Michael Rosenblum's important British WWII zine.☆☆ Yes, we should be very afraid of nukes! (But I don't think Putin dares to press the button. His own folks would stop him. There are 2-3 levels between him and igniting rockets.)

Will Mayo: RAFNTCBCUTGW! (Read And Found Nothing To Comment But Keep Up The Good Work.)

Samuel Lubell: The IBM PC came in 1981 and with all its clones dominated the 1980s - and still does! Every Windows machine around is basically a later, more advanced IBM PC. Everyone who has an Intel-based Windows computer can boot it with the original PC-DOS 1.00 from 41 years ago.☆☆ The US must have more gun regulations. There seem to be a mass shooting in America almost every day! It's intolreable!☆☆ You know, of course, that "samizdat" is Russian for "self-published", the underground "press" in USSR, often done by typing using several layers or carbons. Hectographs were also used, but mimeos were scares and guarded.☆☆ Time to sign off. Please comment. I may pub LoCs if you have a correction or something extra interesting to add. Glory to Ukraine!



Artist Lars LON Olsson's interpretation of celestial beings. The Drake equation goes into overdrive!

Слава Україні!

Archive Midwinter
a zine for N'APA 260

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17 July 2022

Comments:

Cover: Jose Sanchez: Lovely bit of aerospace combat! Interstellar craft may be more advanced than our jets, but we have control surfaces exactly tailored to our atmosphere, and can make tighter turns. (Oops, unless one holds with some claimed observations of UFOs making tighter turns than we can make.)

Ahrvid Engholm: Last I heard, Turkey has withdrawn objections, so, Welcome to NATO. Like having a life insurance policy, one hopes it's never actually needed!

re ABBA, I've heard of them, but have never actually heard a note of their music. For me, the "top ten list" covers 1650-1820 AD!

Fun clippings of "the future of the past," or "the will be that was." Mars by 1960? Alas, not in our history. Possibly just as well, for nuclear-powered spacecraft (like nuclear powered electricity generating plants) never really figured out the radioactive-waste problem. At least at generating plants we can *store* the waste, even if we can't dispose of it intelligently.



re computers, and translation in particular, there are still numerous glitches and errors, many of which are hilarious. A guy named "Dick Rogers" recently got his posts banned on a social media platform, because the word "Dick" can be offensive in some contexts. The management immediately reinstated him and started fine-tuning their censorship algorithms. Working out the context of words is very close to "understanding" language, and translation software is getting better at that at an astonishing pace.

And, yeah, I well remember when it was firmly stated, without any possibility of disagreement, that computers could never play chess. They couldn't play it at all, let alone play well. Now? Chess has been totally mastered by computers. Thumb in the eye of the blowhards who claimed it could never be done!

Ahrvid Engholm: "You're not a trufan if you don't like space." I, personally, quite agree! I'm an old fart and started paying attention when John Glenn made his orbit. I even remember the panic regarding his "failed" heat-shield. Scary listening on the radio. (Before my family had a TV.) I'm a big space-fan, although I fall into blasphemy, in many people's eyes, by favoring the "robot"

program, sending probes to far-off locales where we can't send humans. I do admire the Space Station, and I'm not strongly opposed to visiting the Moon again. I see it as a rather wasteful endeavor, but it will have its side-stream benefits. China is also likely to visit, and I don't object in the slightest. The discoveries and advances will benefit us all.

re the National Mimeographic Society, I applaud! I can't apply for membership, as my fanzine activity started in the Xerox era. I never sniffed corflu. But in my collection of fanzines I do have some old classic mimeo productions.

More fun musing on the "Future of the Past." I'd never heard of Federov's spaceship. Thoroughly implausible, of course, but an inspiration nevertheless. "A man's reach should exceed his grasp."

George Phillies: The Lion's Share of the credit for the N3F's growth and progress in the past few years goes directly and almost solely to you. The growth of the Short Story Contest is purely your work, and I'm very, very grateful to you for that. Promotion/Marketing/Publicity is a field entirely alien to me, and I can't (or won't) work in it; I'm very glad for those who can, will, and do!

Your exclusion from Facebook is frightening. It doesn't make any sense to me, and I hope the issue can be resolved. Is it similar to the banning of the guy named "Dick," or the various bans on discussions of breast cancer?

Good, gripping first part of the first chapter of your next book! Hooray! "I wasn't dead any more." Okay, that's a plot hook of the first magnitude! I look forward to more, but, much more than that, I look forward to the finished product, so I can read it all at once! Serializations are fun, but my memory is so faulty, I have

trouble connecting up a story that I read over a period of months. Congratulations on setting forth on a new book! Bon Voyage!

Four blank pages?

Heath Row: Interesting discussion of when a work becomes "dated." One form of "dating" in SF is when the "futuristic technology" is outpaced in reality. This happened a lot in 70s and 80s SF with regard to computers. Also, of course, such things as the canals of Mars and the dinosaur swamps of Venus... But, yes, "dating" in a work of fiction is also (usually painfully) evident when cultural values are superseded. "The Forever War" was one of the first SF novels to deal with the normalization of homosexuality, and, even as it was forward-looking (and shocking) at the time, it is, now, terribly dated, as the gay rights revolution has brought us to a completely different realization of human socio-sexual diversity. Probably a better one, as Haldeman's vision was a touch dystopic.

Fun lists of magazines and soundtracks!

rect me, alas, I have no memory of what E.E. Doc Smith book it was that I started to read, when I was so put off by the two characters taking so much time telling each other what a "light year" was. I rejected the book as unreadable, and never have read a single word of Smith since. Life is too short and there are so many, many books!

re perception of time, it is fascinating to me how very accurate our time perception can *sometimes* be. Not always! But several times, I've awakened with a jump, only two minutes before the alarm clock was about to go off. That's hauntingly accurate! Perhaps I'm just exercising selective perception, not taking into account the hundreds of times I've awakened nowhere near the alarm hour!

John Thiel: re organization page roster, I don't know what happened! I guess I deleted it without noticing! That's embarrassing!

Aikido is a nice discipline, somewhat akin to Yoga, in that it is accessible to older folks who aren't as flexible as teens and college-age kids. Old farts like me *can* do Aikido. (I, personally, don't, but it is nice to know it's still an option!)

I don't know if fandom has always been at war, but war-themed SF has certainly been a major staple. It says something very sad about our species that we cannot conceive of a future without war.

I am a big fan of the "Weak Historical Principle," that suggests that, as humans become more economically interdependent, and as humans yearn more and more universally for democracy, the future will consist of economically unified democracies, trading happily with each other, in a sustainable future of relative peace and plenty. I see only two conceivable alternatives: a 1984-style tyranny and despotism, self-perpetuating, like Chinese communism, from which mankind never emerges....or mere annihilation.

I grew up on Edward Lear, although I was always disappointed by his habit of using the same line to open and to close his limericks. It took me many decades to learn what a runcible spoon actually was!

Will Mayo: How, please tell me, could any meaningful scientific study demonstrate that consciousness persists beyond death? Who other than The Christ has ever come back from being dead? (And Jesus didn't go into any details on the experience!) Such an hypothesis seems to me to be the very exemplar of the term "nonsense."

The "Simulation" hypothesis also comes dangerously close to being "nonsense," although not quite definitionally so. The best way to determine the truth of the hypothesis would be through glitches, failures, breakdowns, and flaws in the simulation. It behooves the Fortean in us all to watch for little errors in our world, to try to spot software failures in the master simulation program.

Samuel Lubell: re SF, agreement. In many ways it is better today than ever before, but in a few limited ways, it just isn't as good. As I mentioned above, we've lost the canals of Mars and the dinosaur swamps of Venus: we've lost a "sense of wonder" that came from innocence and naivete. We're (slightly) more sophisticated today, but tht also means we find it a little harder to dream and to indulge in gratifying "science fantasy." And, of course, this isn't only true in SF. Westerns and Mysteries are also suffering, a little, from both the immense competition from the past – all the good stories have already been told, or so it seems sometimes! – but also from growing reader awareness of truth and facts. Mysteries are a lot harder to write than in Agatha Christie's day. But, in part, it's because the readership demands more plausibility and realism.

(I recently read Christie's "Death on the Nile." A fun book, filled with fascinating characters! But the actual "murder mystery" doesn't work! It's bunko! The explanation of "how it was done" is a total washload of crapola! It *could not have happened* that way! A delightful story, but today, an editor would send it back to the author for a re-write.)

I had the joy of meeting Theodore Sturgeon once, outside of the convention environment: he and I were both having copies made at an all-hours Xerox shop. He saw that I was copying a fanzine, and we chatted a bit.

re "Creation," I hadn't known Gore Vidal wrote historical fiction of this variety! It actually sounds like fun!

INTERMISSION #124

E-zine by Ahrvid Engholm ahrvid@hotmail.com for EAPA, N'APA & some others who don't know what hit them. Enjoy sf/fan history in the issues and ed's sf/fandom newstweets from @SFJournalen. Join NATO, Nagging Anti-Typos Organisation, and support Ukraine's struggle! Comments welcome, maybe in a LoCol if important info (eg sf/fanhistory). Late August 2022.

Editorial: Little Big Con, Bookday

I usually write something about Putin's insane war here. But any news will be old by the time you read this, so I'll just urge you to *keep supporting Ukraine!* A little higher price on petrol and bread, just for a while, is a small price compared to that we need to *stop the Hitler of today*. This fanzine will continue its *devastating fanzine blockade* against Kremlin until the bastards give up.

But stuff about Russians is in the main story of this's History Corner. Beside learning about the Swedish poet who upgraded from a Turkish prison to Hollywood, you'll hear how Russian Mafia sabotaged Swedish sf writers, in the story of the not too successful Swedish SFWA attempted in the 1990's. Scroll down for this strange story! To this I add other history snippets on authors and literature.

I was on the Stockholm Culture Festival's book table day last week, met Mika of *Futurum* fame and heard horror writers Michael & Gunilla

- hard-working Cultists whom I've known for four decades (as old-time fen) - and made some bargains, among them Vladimir Semitjov's (1930's sf writer covered here earlier) rare non-fiction *How The Universe is Arranged* (1938), a first edition of Harry Martinson's Aniara-prequel *Cikada* (also intermissioned earlier) and essays by Albert Einstein.

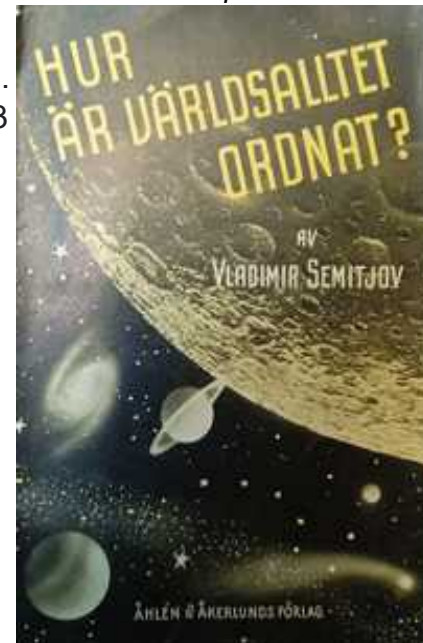


Adding to space in Russia (in #122): Konrad Tsiolkovsky with "steel dirigibles in his garden", a sort of spaceship? Not part of the 1920s space exhibits.



Met famous author Göran Greider at the book day. We've met before. He likes sf, BTW!

And the week before we had Ökon 3 (Swecon) here, a streetcar ride from downtown Stockholm. It was really a minicon (1 and 2 had 40-50 attendees) upgraded to a Swecon. The blasted virus gave zero bids for the 2022 Swecon, but as Ökon was still on it was upgraded. As an upscaled minicon, it had ca 100 con-hungry souls (incl 2.5 foreigners, 1 Norwegian, 2 from UK, but one lived in Stockholm) and local writer GoHs Torill Kornfeldt and Boel Bermann. The sun blazed and I think



Semitjov explains our universe!

most longed for a con again. I grabbed an electricity outlet and managed to produce about 10 tweets from Ökon (check @SFJournalen on Twitter). Random notes:

"When science turned into horror" panel was as much these days very pessimistic, but not from Putin's war - but the merry hypothesis of "global warming". Whatever we do, we can't control the Sun's magnetic field, which



Writer GoH Boel Bermann (r) interviewed on Ökon 3.

decides clouding and albedo by how much cosmic particles reach our atmosphere. The disaster to worry about is a very dangerous, tragic war. *Slava Ukraini! Fucka Ruski!*

The "Changing fandom" panel spoke a lot about net-based cons. I think we should make it simpler. Put a webcam towards main stage and just let it run. Don't charge anything, don't try interactivity, and it can be done in 10 minutes. They also talked about "including" costumers, gamers, toy collectors and the like, to which I'm skeptical. It's silly fringe things and not literature! Then I heard a discussion on "sawmill fantasy", steampunk in this case from the northern east coast of our country where many sawmills popped up in the 19th century. The reception had a box of free copies of the early 1970s classic LP sf paperbacks. I grabbed a bundle with tears of nostalgia. I saw some promoting a new realtime geography GPS game called Turf, which I didn't understand.

One Jesper Stage talked about multi-generation starships, which he thinks will fail when their supplies dwindle as they can't recycle. I think that at the time we can even construct such ships we can manipulate single atoms at will, and we basically never lose atoms. All it takes to *recycle anything* is atoms + energy + ingenuity! While entropy says everything

deteriorates you can overcome it locally by adding energy. Just load your starship with a fusion reactor and enough fuel - if you don't scope it up buzzard jet-like as in Poul Anderson's fine *Tau Zero*.

The yearly Alvar fan award went to Oskar Källner at an award session and some pandemic-postponed Eurocon awards were handed out. I only caught parts of Martin Rundkvist's lecture "Chivalrous knights in the age of steam", but he is usually interesting. I attended the kaffeeklatsch - or we call it *fika* - with Torill Kornfeldt and the GoH interview with Boel Bermann, who is very prolific with short stories! There are 90 (!) of Boel's stories for free - in



"Fika" - what we call a coffee break - with GoH Torill Kornfeldt: Miss X.

Swedish, alas - on her site <http://boelbermann.se/>). An explanation is that she's in a writing group that often runs short "writing challenges", and the stories resulting - some are just fragments - ends up on her site. I then heard a little of the panel "Humanoid robots" and I believe most of the discussion on how to revive mammoths. Being a restless soul I tend to pop in and out on con program items.

The book auction had very varied prices, from 0 to a couple of hundred SEK. I didn't get most I bid on, but five rare 1960s sf mags for 5 SEK (€50) was a bargain. We also had the traditional slide show (patent pending Lars-Olov Strandberg!) even if it's JPGs today. It's always popular, with witty comments from onlookers. Picture shows also work as intro for neofan and train them on what true fandom is.

There were two program tracks (I saw perhaps 1/3), in Swedish since foreign fans were virused away. Ökon 3 was rather nice, reminding me on how cons were a couple of decades ago, when they lacked much of that bureaucracy that infests many bigger cons now. But I missed informal, fannish program: quizzes, games, fannish humor! More fannishness! Roscoe demands! --Ahrvid E, ed (*Late PS on Mikhail Gorbachev. Brave, pragmatic, started reforms which the 1991 coup attempt killed. He had a human face and a place in history for ending the cold war. He would never invade Ukraine, I believe. RIP.*)



Ökon freebies, that once brightened our youth!



Ökon entrance & reception. But who put THAT there?

History Corner: Swedish SF Writers Vs Russian Mafia!

This History Corner will have some newspaper clips last, dealing with literature. But I'll start with exciting stories that perhaps *could* have ended up in the newspapers! Headlines would be something like "The SF Writer Who Went from a Turkish Prison to Hollywood" or "How the Russian Mafia Killed Off Swedish Science Fiction"! It's all connected to the Swedish SF Writers Society (In Swedish, "SF-Författarsällskapet") I with the help of some buddies started in the early 1990s.

I wrote and write short stories myself, first in fanzines, later "pro" debut in *Jules Verne Magasinet* in 1984. I was the short story editor for the pop science mag *Teknikmagasinet*, with an sf story in each issue, as well as editing the *Nova SF* magazine for some time - until others there crashed it by involving themselves in the big fan fund fraud.

Plans for the society were ambitious, but ebbed after about 1.5 year. It showed that very few where really interested. Of ca 25 mailing in the form to show interest only 5 voted in the last election. And I was myself too occupied with many other things: sf newzine, articles, a BBS, nurturing contacts with Baltic fandom and work on the *Conscience* 1993 and 1995 cons, etc. Our fandom was also in deep slump after the fan fund scandal, which also may have contributed.

But for a while we had meetings, with at most half a dozen attendees, a memberzine titled *Futurum* (4 issues, editor Mika Tenhovaara), plans for an E-mail list, a manuscript bureau and a short-lived APA, called SKAPA (it means "create"). I think a

couple of meaningless mailings were produced. The idea was to publish stories and texts to get comments, but people are always lazy with text comments and

analyses. A constitution was proposed, debated and approved by vote...but ballots and paragraphs and such bureaucracy maybe contributed to the society's decline. I've always seen true sf fans as fanarchistic individuals not apt to follow rules or the lead of others. (Sidenote: I'm rather worried about that bureaucracy is growing in convention organising, e.g using unnecessary "Codes of Conduct" that belittles constitutional rights of expression and exclude fen, ignoring *Lex Nycon* 1939.)

My *SF-Journalen* newzine had a circulation of about 300 at the time, in 1992, and of course mailed out a form for readers to show their interest. Mika recently found at least these 22 names below from a bundle of forms he had in a binder. I don't think he found all or later forms, so there were probably more, say around 25:

Michael Andersson (Malmö), Robert Andersson (Södertälje), Bengt O Björklund (Stockholm), Anders Blixt (Solna), Kjell Borgström (Bandhagen), Patrik Brinkhäll (Norrtälje), Jörgen Danielsson (Färjestaden), Ahrvid Engholm (Stockholm), Pär

ETT SVENSKT SF-FÖRFATTARSÄLLSKAP!

I Finland finns ett framgångsrikt sf-författarsällskap. Det vore på tiden att vi försökte starta något liknande i Sverige. Science fiction har det svårt just nu. Folk som vill skriva sf har det ännu svårare. Om man är ung och tycker om att skriva sf-noveller finns få ställen att publicera sig.

Det är också svårt att komma i kontakt med andra som gillar att skriva. Och få goda råd och kritik av ens alster.

Alla dessa problem skulle ett sf-författarsällskap kunna lösa! Strax följer mina tankar om hur det bör fungera. Stödjer du det så fyll i formuläret sist, och skicka in det. Du antecknas då som preliminär medlem och får senare mer information per post.

FÖRSLAG:

- Sällskapet bör vara strikt seriös, och för både amatörer och professionella. Inget fan-tjafs. Syftet skall vara att uppmuntra skrivandet av "fantastiska" noveller (sf, fantasy, horror och liknande).

- Vi utger ett litet medlemsblad, vi har datormöten via E-postnät, och vi har en matrikel där medlemmar anger sina specialintressen inom skrivande och om de är villiga att läsa andras noveller för att ge lektörsomdömen.

- Medlemmar kan skicka noveller till villiga lektörer och få tillbaks dem med omdömen. Man kan själv skapa brevkedjor för att få novellomdömen eller skriva s.k round-robin-noveller.

- I övrigt kan vi - i mån av ekonomi - utge enkelt tryckta novellsamlingar med de bästa alstren. Kanske utdela ett novellpris, hålla skrivarseminarier, och annat.

- Administrationen bör vara så enkel som möjligt. Tre ansvariga som sköter all löpande drift. De väljs av medlemmarna via poströstning. Alla frågor som inte gäller löpande drift avgörs också av medlemmarna via poströstning.

- Medlemskravet skall vara att skicka in ett eget litterärt alster och att erlagga en låg medlemsavgift (ca. 50:-) för att bekosta medlemsorgan och matrikel.

Är du intresserad så fyll i nedanstående enkla formulär. Uppgifterna går till den första matrikeln. Skicka med 10:- i sedelform för att täcka nästa utskick. Du räknas som preliminär medlem i och med att du skickar formuläret.

Flyer for the SF Writers Society, mailed with of SF-Journalen. On its back was...

PRELIMINÄR MEDLEMSANSÖKAN:

Namn: PATRIK BRINKHÄLL

Adress: HOLLANDS 2 A

761 40 NORRTÄLJE

Telefon: 0736 - 107 25

Eventuell elektronisk adress: pbr@diab.se

Villig att ge omdömen om andras noveller som lektör (ja/nej?): JA

Några ord om mina skrivintressen:

SIFTER HELT INSLÄP & LÄSER SF MED GLÖD & INLEVELSE. INTRÄLLITAS ÄR OCH INTERESSERAD OCH ATT LÄSA MITT SKRIVANDI MED SF SKRIVER NÅGANT

Övriga synpunkter om sällskapet: FÖR OMRÖSTNINGEN ÄR FÖRKLÄDDAS

MICKELET GOD IDE! HÄRER MED DE SKRIFTLIGA PRINCIPIER ÄR

UPPSTÄNDAS SIDA, SKRIVE VÄRKLIGT ETT BUNDIGT OCH OCH

FÖRSLAG: VÄRKLIGT ÄR INTRÄTT ETT "FÖRSTÄTT" OCH SKRIVER MED

Sänd in formuläret till: ALSTER? F.Ö. KAN OCH MEDLEMA ATT

OCH ÄR MEDLEM AV EN INTRÄLLITAS

Ahrvid Engholm

Renstiernas Gata 29

116 31 Stockholm

TEL 08-641 34 05

FAX 08-665 31 32 (jobbets; ange AE som mott)

BBS 08-642 40 77

EMAIL ahrvid@sfbbs.edvina.se

Intresserade kallas också till Contact 92 på Nya Epicentrat, 4 januari

kl 18.00 (Obs! tiden). Där kommer planer och förslag att diskuteras och

utarbetas.

HÄRER GILLAN KOMMITT - HAR TYVÄR

NR MEDVIGHET. SORRY!

... "Premilinary membership application": Name etc? Wanna comment stories? Writing interests? General comments? This copy from Patrik Brinkhäll. "Very good idea" he says. Later you'd get the final application form, with ballot for constitution, officers etc.

Gustavsson (Luleå), Magnus Jacobsson (Umeå), Stefan Mankefors (Uddevalla), Anders Moe (Norway), Bengt Nyman (Stockholm), Hans Persson (Linköping), Joachim Persson (Göteborg), Nils Segerdahl (Uppsala), Raimo Sillanpää (Bromma), Tommy Silverros (Malmö), Dan Strömberg (Haninge), Rolf Strömgren (Saltsjö-Boo), Gunnar Waldestedt (Bromma), Mika Tenhovaara (Södertälje).

There were also some in the periphery. You could pay a preliminary membership fee of 10 SEK (ca 1 Euro or Dollar or Pound) and get the right to vote in preliminary elections of officers and to approve the constitution. It had to be approved by two votes according to its own paragraphs. You could then become full member by paying 5 Euros (ie 50 SEK - cheap, isn't it!) and filling in a form, describing your writing with max 50 words and submit a piece of work, a poem or a fragment of a longer work.

At the time I didn't think it was much of red tape and that 5 Euros was almost symbolic. Near a dozen voted in the first election, but by the second ballot only five bothered.



Me (l) and Mika (r), as we are 2022.

We had a couple of meetings at my place attended by half a dozen.

The most important was a special session during my "microcon" Contact 92, early January 1992, where the draft of the constitution was discussed - at least one thing was amended - and ideas for what the society should do were aired. Before the formal start of the society, I had tried to run a writing study group ("studiecirkel"), among others attended by the famous writer, artist etc - being on TV all the time! - Carl Johan De Geer. He once invited us to a tour of his Meyer Studios, where he and companion Håkan Alexandersson did their Avant Garde films. (Among them was the sf dystopian "Res aldrig på enkel biljett" - "Never Travel on a Single" - where I happened to be thrown in as an extra. But that's another story.) Among others involved early on I remember eg Kjell Borgström (Swedish fandom's outstanding sf poet), Björn Gustavsson (hacker who helped me when my PC had a glitch, later in the 1990s he moved to S:t Petersburg), Håkan Alfredsson (also talented artist, later moving to New York, USA), Rolf Strömgren (who in the 1990s also joined our little group who went to Lithuanian sf cons) and I think - not sure - Hans Bruggener (amateur filmmaker and horror specialist). I remember Hans helped me with my *Filmfandom* project, a 3 hour VHS collecting Sverifandom fan films. With him I also had a brief, never finished, novel project. Mika Tenhovaara was one of our best fanzine

50 ord om mina skrivintressen

ANSÖKNINGSFORMULÄR FÖR MEDLEMSKAP:

Namn: Kjell Borgström

Adress: SEMPERV. 12 13 5-4430 BANGÅSEN

Telefon: 04/86274

Ev. elektronisk adress: _____

Villig att ge omdömen om andras noveller som lektor (ja/nej): Ja

50 ord om mina skrivintressen: Förutom oräpplunden dagbok och diverse, best. att skriva orimade, ometröda dikter utan versfötter med alla slags fantasy och/eller spaceopera-er i bland andra rumen, men gång politiska var eller mindre, kanske skrivit cirka 2000 verser 400 förfvaran när jag var cirka 30 år sedan utlämnat till en (politisk) bokstav som hade en slags personlig kränkning. Ett betalt (sitt eget) antal av dikterna, kanske 5 eller 6, samt ett betalt, mycket läst (av Sam J Lindvall) och också genom honom fått några publicerade i en utbok utgiven av Achille och Kyrrekuil, de mända inte som ett gratiex som betalning trots luffen (från Sam J. Stadsförlaget anger att du skall skicka in ett eget litterärt alster också. Det behövs du dock inte göra just nu.

REOSTNING:

På annat ställe i denna publikation presenteras ett stadgeförlag för sällskapet. Förlaget skall antas två gånger med två tredjedels majoritet. Till detta förslag röstar jag:

() Ja () Nej

Styrelsekandidater för de tre olika posterna anges nedan. Du kan rösta på kandidaten eller på en egen icke-nominerad kandidat (en så kallad write-in). Enligt stadgeförlaget skall också en revisor finnas, som hämtas från föregående styrelse. Eftersom det inte finns någon föregående styrelse får vi denna första gång välja revisorn, så ett förslag på revisor lämnas också.

Redaktör:

() Mika Henry Tenhovaara

()

Datoransvarig:

() Ahrvid Engholm

()

Kontaktperson:

() Bengt Björklund

()

Revisor:

() Raimo Sillanpää

()

[Också vem är RAIMO SILLANPÄÄ]

The story of Billy Hayes' unbelievable courage... It couldn't happen...but it did!



The cult movie with a member of our best fanzine of the SF Writers Society.

Finally, "Form to apply for membership". Name/address/tel/E-mail? Want to comment stories? Writing interests? Then follows stuff to cast votes for. This form is from poet Kjell Borgström.

publishers, and excellent short story writer, eg with the short story fanzine named... *Omikron!* He never came to our meetings but was persuaded to do the memberzine, which was named *Futurum*, the grammatical term for "future tense".

But we also had Bengt O Björklund!

This was a special little episode for the SF Writers Society. Bengt was and still is a poet and, shall we say, hippie. In a recent mail exchange he says it was an interesting period for him when he read a lot of sf and also wrote quite a few of the skiffy stuff. He attended a couple of meetings and I have met him in recent years, eg at the screening of a film about him (more film shortly!) and also at the Book Machine poetry anthology evenings, a DIY publishing outfit where you can print your own books cheaply if you do much of the work yourself. But now...wait for it!

Bengt is also a central character in a Hollywood movie! One of the characters in "Midnight Express"!

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0077928/> is partly based on him. We read: *Billy Hayes, an American college student, is caught smuggling drugs out of Turkey and thrown into prison.* The film is based on real events and its character Erich is based on Bengt. He was in the same Turkish prison and had also been caught smuggling a small (less than an ounce, he told me) amount of

hashish. He just passed through Turkey and planned to go to India, as all hippies do. I heard the story the very first time we met. The Turkish police smashed his hotel door late at night, due to a tip from the pusher or someone in that circle, to claim some award, as a service to win points with corrupt officers, or something like that.

A documentary was made about Bengt, "My Moon" (29 min, 2017, dir Bahador Shahidi) <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt7286494/>: "A documentary about the artist, poet, musician and hippie Bengt O Björklund who gets 12 years and three months in prison for possession of 30 grams of hash in Istanbul."

It can be found here: <https://vimeo.com/415912959>

He was later transferred to a Swedish prison and released after half a year.

Today he has bushy white beard, and reads poetry at the Book Machine events.

See <https://www.lexikonettamanda.se/show.php?aid=23571/sv/item/?type=person&itemid=531838> (short biography and list of works) and https://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bengt_O_Bj%C3%B6rklund He has written about these adventures too, in the form of the autobiographical poetry book *I Missed Woodstock* (2009), also printed in English by Human Error Publishing 2020. It's an interesting touch to write an autobiography as poetry. Bengt became one of the officers (official contact person) of our society. But his connection to a famous movie wasn't the only odd thing with us...

Enter the Russian mafia!

Fiirst a little more about what we did. Mika recently found files for the four issues he did of our memberzine *Futurum*. I have tried to reconstruct the issues from the files as PDFs, and from this and my so-and-so reliable memory a number of our activities come to light. (Ask me for the *Futurum* PDFs if your interested, but beware: they are in Swedish. *Futurum* #3 seems to be less complete.)

In *Futurum* #1, early 1992, we have the constitution draft, which I wrote. Officers to be elected were an editor (Mika Tenhovaara, as said), a computer manager (me) and a contact person, which Bengt Björklund became, in practice a sort of chairman or secretary to handle daily affairs and correspondence. This informal "board" would run things through correspondence (also E-mail, which now began to spread) but all important



Bengt O Björklund today, reading poetry.



Bengt's autobiographical poetry collection.



The film about Bengt's life.

issues would be voted upon by members after being presented in the memberzine. There was no "chairman" and all in the board would be equal. In an editorial text Mika writes:

Many are skeptical to computers, me too not long ago, but after being acquainted with the word processing software Word Perfect 5.1 I became convinced of the superiority of these machines, at least when it comes to writing... The possibilities are virtually infinite for manipulating the text and producing newsletters and books becomes possible also for amateurs... The memberzine is entirely produced with the help of a computer; the contributions are mailed on diskettes; the layout is done with word processor software, and the stencils are cut with a matrix printer - the cheapest alternative for use at home.

Today Mika commented to me that he *"doesn't really understand how I managed to put A STENCIL into my matrix printer without breaking it, but obviously it was possible."* (I remember using a daisy wheel printer to cut stencils for a time. You just had to be careful with cleaning out all wax dust.)

The first issue suggested activities for the society, such as: reviewing short stories, writing round robin stories, conferences and study groups on writing, having story contests, publishing (such as anthologies - more later), E-conferences. The last pointed to attempts with starting E-mail lists. It was noted: *"Members take part in the activities they find interesting. Every activity shall be financed and administrated by the members themselves in the form that seems suitable"*. I explained the thoughts behind the constitution in a separate article, which also took up ideas from the earlier Contact 92 session. An auditor was added to the draft, as suggested there. All administration would be via mail (later E-mail, I thought, as I saw computers becoming important) since that would be the only way to involve people from the whole country. I also presented a plan for starting a manuscript bureau and finally there is a ballot form for approving the statutes including two different suggestions for our name, either "society" or "association"), to elect officers and setting the membership fee.

Fan Tony Eriksson has a column in *Futurum #1* where he discusses writing and talks about a novel in progress, which I learn later became his successful *Damsels in Distress* (2007) reviewed in most of the big papers! He had a rather inspiring article about the writing process:

I've been working on Merry Days in Hällybrunn for four years now. Progress is extremely slow. /Mentions working for a local newspaper, but for fiction:/ ... So much more must be said in a novel. There must be so much more in every word, every sentence than in /a newspaper/ article. Literature is concentrated while newspaper language is having the text chatting... /But/ Science fiction isn't really literature, but a sort of disturbance in the brain... Without my science fiction deficiency in the brain I couldn't write. I wouldn't be able to write about my childhood in Hällbybrunn without the tool of science fiction. The option to go wild. Working across all of the ring. Like a boxer. Waving wide when describing the teeny-weeny. Science fiction is a basis of sorts for fiction, good fiction... You must be standing somewhere when you throw yourself into the unknown. If you write science fiction with spices you must make an effort to make it realistic. If you remain in the reality you can concentrate on the spices.

Futurum #2 came around the summer 1992 and showed that 11 prospective members had voted (officers mentioned already, one Raimo Sillanpää became auditor, an added officer). In this issue one Jörgen Danielsson announced his willingness to handle the manuscript bureau. He gave all details of how it was to be run and there was a form to send in with manuscripts. The bureau never amounted to much, unfortunately.

As the computer guy I wrote a lengthy article about software to help you analyse your prose. I describe a Swedish style analysis application called KIX and shareware programs like Pscribe, PC-Text, PC-Style, Critic and Styled, all for MS-DOS. I offered the members the software if they sent me

FUTURUM nr 1

Futurum är medlemsblad för SF-Förbundet i Sverige. Föreningen verkar för skönlitterärt skapande inom science fiction, fantasy, horror och angripanande områden. Bidrag om skrivande, och om användning av datorer för skrivande, är välkomna, utrymme på popper efter på 360 KB 3 1/4-tums disketter i enst. ASCII-format. Detta nummer redigerat: Mika Tenhoviainen, Gröndalsvägen 91 Nr. 131 42 Skövde. Ståta eventuella bidrag till honom. Deadline för nästa nummer är dess utse fastställt.

DATORN SOM HJÄLPMEDEL

På senare år har datorrevolutionen gjort att många författare börjat övergå till att använda datorn som redskap i sin arbete. Många är skeptiska till datorer, vilket jag själv var för inte så länge sedan, men efter att ha utfört bokutskap med databehandlingsprogrammet Word Perfect 5.1, blev jag helt övertygad om dessa maskiners förtärlighet, ämnessvar vad gäller skrivande. I databehandlingsprogrammet kan man se på datorn som en extra avancerad skrivmaskin, där man ser texten på en skärm i stället för direkt på papperet. Möjligheterna är praktiskt taget oändliga att manipulera texten, och producerandet av nyhetsblad och böcker blir möjligt även för amatörer.

Jag var ändå mycket skeptisk, och det berodde helt enkelt på att jag inte riktigt visste vad det innebar att arbeta med datorer.

Kanske var man lika skeptisk till skrivmaskiner en gång i tiden, men det är ett ofrånköligt faktum att de underlättade många sekretärens och författares arbete. Numera är det nästan oenkelhet att skicka in handskrivna manuskript till bokförlag, trots att det var det enda alternativet före 1870-talet, när de första skrivmaskinerna började komma i allmänhet bruk. Lektorerna fick stängla igenom handskrivna blankflikade sidor med skrivstift för att se om de lämpade sig för utgivning. Kanske refererades många dock utan att ha blivit lästa, som fallet ofta är idag.

Datamaskinen underlättar förvisso skrivandet, men det är givetvis ingenting som säger att det därmed blir lättare att producera Stor Litteratur. Det har framfört kritik om att man blir plöjrigare, och skriver slarvare, när dator används. All kritik i

världen kommer dock inte att hindra utvecklingen. Vi kan lika lite överge en innovation som vi kan gå tillbaka till stensåden för att undvika mjölkförsöring - däremot inte sagt att jag är en fransösklänningar, men mångklingheten kan helt enkelt inte frivilligt överge uppfinningar och "förhittningar".

Det kan tyckas att det inte finns något annat alternativ än att anpassa sig till utvecklingen, men det finns inget som hindrar en att skriva för hand. Man kommer inte att strättas som en dmonstratör för det.

Jag vill ändå rekommendera användandet av datorer för skrivande, ämnessvar om man gör det regelbundet. Detta medlemsblad är helt producerat med hjälp av dator; bidragen är inskickade på diskett; layouten är framställd med hjälp av databehandlingsprogram, och stencillerna är utskrivna med en matris skrivare - det billigaste alternativet för hemmabruk.

Att vi använder stenciler, som trycks på en minograf, är dock en återgång till en äldre, numera praktiskt taget utdöd teknik.

— Mika Tenhoviainen

FÖRSLAG TILL STADGAR:

1. Sällskapet (samt avgees genom nämning) skall främja skönlitterärt skapande inom science fiction, fantasy, horror och angripanande områden.
2. Medlemskap beviljas efter ansökan till den som är intresserad av att skriva, och som med ansökan bifogar ett eget skönlitterärt eller annat uttryck till motiv. Gällande medlemsavgift utläggs efter att ansökan godkänts och gäller ett år. Inträdesavgiften skall stå till sällskapets förfogande för publicering.
3. Löpande ärenden sköts av en styrelse bestående av en redaktör som utger ett medlemsblad, en

diskettes and postage. Sweden was advanced in computing, I noted, but had an disadvantage "due to our exotic language, with its strange extra letters that no Americans understand. Possibly with the exception for heavy metal bands." I also wrote about electronic communication, at the time modem based, and suggested we'd start an E-mail list. I mentioned the *SF-Lovers* list, the oldest one on ARPAnet started in the late 1970s. ARPAnet became Internet so it's the oldest E-mail list anywhere, I believe. My interest in E-communication began with visiting the BBS world in the late 1980s, and I got Internet in 1990 (sent my first Internet E-mail March 6, 1990). Earlier *Intermissions* covered how old-time fan Jacob Palme was involved in early E-comm, and he guested our 1995 Conscience.

I had used a PC for several years and knew such things would be important. I had started a Bulletin Board System of my own, called SF-BBS, on a 286-PC and the BBS software named Waffle. The unique thing with SF-BBS was that it had Internet connection, sort of! Twice a day the computer "polled" a Unix machine with Internet and received and sent Internet E-mail. I believe I also had Fidonet connection, the alternate mail system for hobby computers. (SF BBS ran for a couple of years until the hard drive crashed wildly and I was too occupied to have time to set it all up again. But E-mail had then begun to be offered more widely.)

Rolf Strömberg had a column in *Futurum* #2 about why we read and why we write, eg attacking boring "symbolism" in literature. He mentioned an acclaimed writer who received much praise in high-brow, stuffy reviews but when Rolf tried his book, he found "*Boring paranoia repeated over and over again by a grumpy old man who couldn't distinguish between fantasy and reality*".

I wrote a short piece on the "*bow-wow, pooh-pooh, ding-dong and yo-he-yo!*" theories about how language started (check <https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2015/5/30/1388932/-Origins-of-Language-The-Bow-Wow-Pooh-Pooh-and-Ding-Dong-Theories>) and there's a LoCol, with letters from Stefan Mankefors, Rolf Strömberg and me discussing the constitution. The other two wanted some minor adjustments (too complicated to go into details here). Last is a ballot for the second vote on the constitution and a manuscript bureau form to fill in for stories you sent.

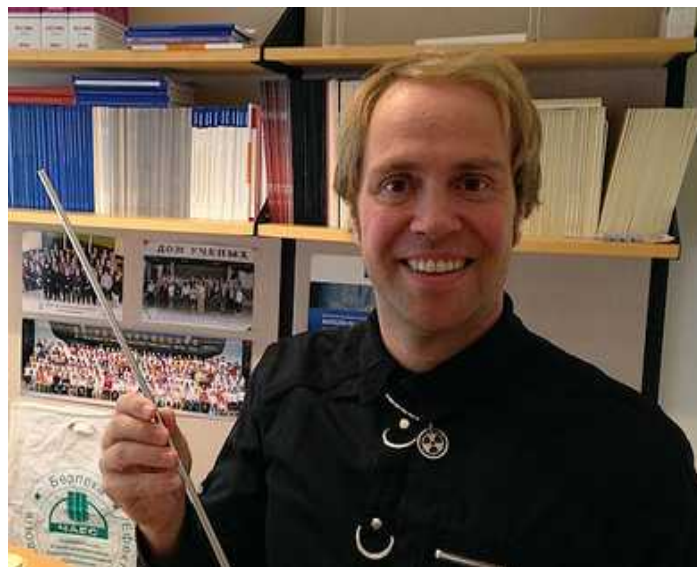
Futurum #3 probably came around the shift of 1992/1993 and there I have another computer article, presenting more software of use by writers (MS-DOS based, as much of it was before Windows 95) and announcing that SF-BBS now had started an Internet E-mail mailing list which I called *Sfwrite*, with instructions on how to use it. I think it must have been the *first* fandom-connected E-mail list in

Sverifandom, though not used much. It would however point to later E-list activities.

Here we also learn about that the sf convention Conscience 93 is planned (by the Binary Bar gang, see the "Spacetime" collection) and I suggest that we should have a writers workshop during it. I give a quite detailed sketch for such a workshop, like that attendees would provide story texts to be analysed (and those could also be entries in the general short story competition for the convention), writing exercises, lectures by authors from the con and a panel on writing. It would be four sessions for a total of six hours. But I ask someone else to volunteer to do it. I would myself have my hands full with the convention. Nobody came forth to arrange the workshop, so it never came to be alas. It was beginning to become clear that the interest

in the SF Writers Society was rather low...

Futurum #4 reported that only five, down from 11, had sent in ballots. Of these four were the officers already... The issue has poetry by one Monica, I was as always full of ideas and suggested we should start a writers APA (Amateur Press Association, for co-distributed small fanzines) to be named SKAPA ("Create"). Mika presented a long useful list of literary style and form terms. That was great



Nuclear professor, ex editor of sf mag and fan Janne Wallenius. Swedish fandom's Dr Strangelove!

stuff, which I later would make a slightly expanded version of, but all original research was his.

And now we're getting close to the Russian mafia! In the issue we read:

THE SWEDISH SF WRITERS SOCIETY WANTS ANTHOLOGY CONTRIBUTIONS

From Janne Wallenius who plans to publish a Swedish sf magazine printed in Estonia the Writers Society's Ahrvid Engholm has been offered to print a Swedish sf anthology in Estonia. Printing would cost around 5.50 SEK/copy /about \$€€0.5/ if you print 1000 copies. It would be a two-colour cover paperback."

Ideas for the distribution is discussed and all details about contributions are given: 20-40 000 characters (over here we give text lengths in characters, not "words"), computer files or on paper, the anthology would have space for about ten stories, and deadline was February 15, 1994:

It must be worked-through short stories, with credible characters, living dialogue, exciting ideas, good settings etc. Pure sf is preferred to fantasy or horror. It's preferable with a Swedish setting (perhaps a future one) but so called punch-liners are NOT encouraged.

I had contacts with Janne Wallenius, earlier a fanzine publisher and member of the Trollhättan fan group, and in the 1980s winner in TV's "48 000 SEK Question" on the subject particle physics. He was at the time planning the sf magazine *Aniara*, as he had lived in Estonia and established contacts with a cheap print shop there. The Baltic countries were much cheaper than Sweden (with all the taxes we put on top of everything!) especially in the immediate post-USSR period. Janne is now professor of reactor physics at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm and runs the company Blykalla designing Small Modular Reactors. That's a new generation of nuclear power, which offers dead safe operation and much more short-lived waste - 1000 years of waste storage instead of 100 000 years! Blykalla has recently received a big government grant to build a test plant. Here's Janne on Radio Sweden talking about his nuclear plans, in Swedish though:

[https://sverigesradio.se/avsnitt/1714108:](https://sverigesradio.se/avsnitt/1714108)

Janne Wallenius' nuclear plants - science fiction turns into reality... at age 12 Janne Wallenius decided to develop the environment friendly future nuclear power..In Trollhättan highschool Janne and his friends did an sf fanzine they mailed to their friends. Later studying in Estonia he had a publishing house for sf.

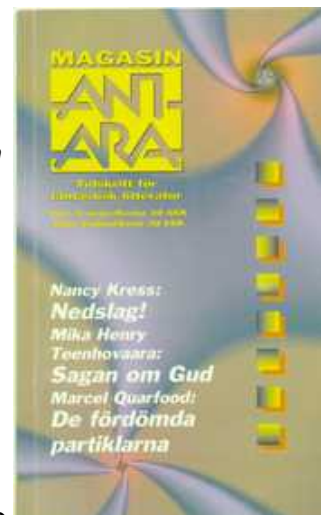
Janne and his co-editor Chris Loneberg launched their *Aniara* magazine in 1994, named after Harry Martinsons space poetry cycle. And the same print shop would do our anthology. Our deadline was one year in advance, so there was plenty of time to write and select the stories, edit the book and so on. I was naturally quite enthusiastic. It would be the second only anthology with original Swedish sf stories, after Sam J Lundwall's *SF på svenska* ("Sf in Swedish", 1977). But what happened was that someone from the local Russian mafia one day walked into the Estonian print shop and said:

"You have nice print shop here. It would be a pity if something happened to it..."

I don't know all details. But those guys had Kalashnikovs, could be "careless with a cigarette" near flammable printing fluid, bribe officials to cause a lot of red tape and trouble, and so on. The printers suddenly began to add huge extra costs to the invoices, Janne told me, no doubt to give the mafia a generous cut. *Aniara* was forced to fold after #2, which was a pity since I and Mika had written a story accepted for the next issue... And of course, there was no anthology either.

As noted our SF Writers Society met a dwindling interest. Few seemed interested. I think Mika was rather tired of doing *Futurum*. The E-mail list had little activity. There was no interest in the suggested workshop. I don't think the manuscript bureau received many stories. Maybe there was too much bureaucracy too, with constitutions, ballots and everything.

We should also remember that at this time there were very few sitting in their chambers and writing science fiction. In the 1980s I had tried to get Swedish stories to *Teknikmagasinet*, and later *Nova SF*, but noted that there were amazingly few manuscripts coming in. I remember my very first attempt to inspire young writers with an early 1980s *Jules Verne Magasinet* article, "How Do You Write, Dude!" (or a similar title).



Aniara, printed in Estonia, pre-Mafia.

Today it's quite different. There are scores of local sf and fantasy writers, some by self-publishing, others published by everything from small to medium to big publishers. A lucky few are even selling abroad! (Stories from the SKRIVA story contest have also appeared in foreign prozines.) I believe the success of Nordic Noir crime fiction to a degree must have overflowed to our fantasy fiction field.


For my own part - promoting the society, coming up with ideas, etc - I was very, very occupied with lots of things. I wrote and translated computer articles (for a time also edited one of the bigger computer magazines), I wrote a couple of computer books, an unfinished How To Write book, fanhistory articles for US zine *Mimosa*, I had my newszine *SF-Journalen*, SF-BBS, other fannish projects like *The Fandbook*, *Filmfandom*, a Nordic fandom E-mail directory called *NESFAD*, the Conscience convention took a lot of work. There wasn't much energy left for the society.

But I think our society could have survived if the anthology project had come through. It was such an interesting and needed thing that I might have tried to borrow some energy from one of Professor Wallenius' atomic power plants to finish it. And if the Russian mafia wasn't around there might have been a second anthology and a third. *Aniara* would have survived too, which would be good. (My and Mika's co-written story has only recently come in my new short story collection *Rumtidensligt*, "Spacetimey".)

The SF Writers Society disappeared without anyone noticing or regretting it. But the mid to late 1990's was a time when Internet grew exponentially. Fen were getting E-mail accounts to an increasing degree, even if it in the beginning was mostly through modems. E-mail was becoming something, to the cosy noise of *squickerty-beep-scuickerty-throosh-beeep* over the phone. So I started a new E-mail list in the spring of 1997, now named SKRIVA ("Write"), the name being a parallel to SKAPA, the earlier mentioned writers APA.

I have always seen the SKRIVA E-mail list as the successor to the SF Writers Society and it's still running. Most folks go to F***book, Inst*gr*m, Tw*tter etc, but though I'm also on Twitter I have always been fonder of E-mail lists. E-mail has distributed architecture, difficult to censor by private companies' made-up extra censoring "rules" that tend to ignore your constitutional freedom of expression rights. E-mail lists were the first "social media" begun already in the 1970s, and their basic nature and low system demands means they will be the last parts of Internet to go down when Putin the Pig Pushes the Button. E-mail also tend to benefit longer texts, where you take your time to think, instead using of short meaningless babble that bounce back and forth as in other E-media. It's true that E-mail lists are out of fashion and have limited following, but why the heck must you follow what is "popular" like a band of sheep? Less is more. There's a quality in the small.

SKRIVA took up the previous society's idea of a competition. In the year 2000 we began our rather big yearly short story contest, usually getting 100+ entries. It still runs 2022, and is even getting sponsorship for modest cash prizes (from another society, *The Short Story Masters* - nothing to do with our society). I have often noted how writers taking part in the contest have later published a book



CONSCIENCE 93

*A convention about
the future, cyberspace
and the possibilities of
the electronic frontier!*

Jerry Pournelle
Our Guest of Honour, well known science fiction-author and columnist in the computer magazine *Byte*.

Mike Jittlov
Special Guest of Honour, maker of the classic film "The Wizard of Speed of Time".

Swedish Guests: Jacob Falme - earlier sf- and mystery author, later known as the "Father of the Korn systems" for computer conferences, Ralph Lundsten - electronic composer, philosopher of life, Carl Johan Die Geer - artist, underground filmmaker.

Baltic Guests: A total of seven science fiction activists from Lithuania and Estonia will come, among them the editor of the Lithuanian sf magazine, Rolandas Mazkolinas, and the editor of Estonia sf magazine, Indrek Rõhmets. They will participate in the founding of the Baltic SF Convention.

The Program includes panels, films, technical demonstrations, exhibitions, bookroom, etc. The convention hall also has a licensed restaurant, and Medborgarhuset is 50 yards from the Metro station "Medborgarplatsen".

Address: Conscience 93, c/o Stådje, Örningsringen 55B, 132 33 Saltjö-Boo. Tel: +46 (0)8 641 34 05. E-mail: cons93@sfbs.edvina.se

Conscience is arranged by Svenska Arbetsgruppen för Algoritmforskning (SAFA), Science Fiction Journalen and Societälja Trellens Society Maradim. Fee at the door: 300 SEK (for Fri., Sun. 100 SEK ea, Sat. 150 SEK).

MEDBORGARHUSET
The Citizen's House

AUG
13-15

Address: Conscience 93, c/o Jörgen Stådje, Örningsringen 55B, 132 33 Saltjö-Boo. Epost: cons93@sfbs.edvina.se

This con sucked up much of my energy, which unfortunately became a bit detrimental to the writers' society. See how our GoH Pournelle shot the tank-busting Carl Gustaf in #119. We also had half a dozen Ukranian fans guesting!

Bradbury och framtiden

DET VAR 1953 som Ray Bradbury gav ut sin nu översatta novellsamling *Solens gyllene äpplen* (Norstedts, 17:-) i Amerika, samma år som han låt trycka de skräckfyllda framtidsromaner "Fahrenheit 451". Det skulle knappast tro, men det kan vara lärorikt att konstatera faktum. "Fahrenheit 451" är allt mörke och vända, i "Solens gyllene äpplen" finns det knappast mer än en historia som har den stämning berättelsen om den obotliga fotgängaren som en dimmig kväll å 2033 tas om hand av Psykiatrisk institutet för studier av regressiva tendenser. Visserligen finns där också andra noveller om kommande ogemymtighet, det är bara det att tonen är en helt annan. Någon gång framdeles råkar en man under vård för att han i protest mot alla terroristiska bekvämligheter har tagit sig till att mörda sina radioapparater, sin telefon, sin TV — "den där Medusan som förvandlar en miljard människor till sten varenda kväll så att de bara sitter och fänbligar". Men den historien är satir och komedi: i sin cell kommer vettvillingen äntligen i åtnjutande av den tystnad som så länge har berövats honom. I en annan novell blir själva världsundergången, det definitiva atomexperimentet, en underlig, spröd saga. "erspektivet har sitt centrum hos tre små tanter som sitter på en veranda och broderar och i alla fall är färdiga att blåsas ut.

Nej, någon renodlad skräckförfattare är Bradbury inte — om man inte beslutar sig för att se ett fasans yttersta, förrådiska raffinering i det milda ljus vari han inte sällan höljer det ondas blommar och dödens svampar. Men riktigare är det nog att uppleva honom som en författare med snabba lynneskast och någonting fruktbart oppklarar i sitt förhållande till den genomgripande förändring av livets villkor som han anar. Han känner hemlängtan till den gamla goda verkligheten, och han förfasar sig inte över kejsaren av Kina då denne på sin tid låter avrätta flygmaskinens upp-



Ray Bradbury.

finnare. Men han är fascinerad av allt det okontrollerbara som är på väg, av de sprickor som öppnar sig i tillvaron och låter luft från främmande planeter strömma in. Och han låter ovissheten om framtid och gränser verka tillbaka också på det förflutna, göra dess trygghet och rationalitet skenbar: tänk om det hemskaste och det ljuvaste som människor drömt om alltid har varit möjligt, fast dolt bakom andra symboler? Så rör han sig framåt och bakåt i tiden, piller litet med verkligheten, får oss att hicka till eller le osäkert när den plötsligt invaderas av Det Främmande.

Men det kan också hända att han inte rör sig alls, att han stannar här och nu och berättar en enkel historia, t ex om hur det går till när man på rent vardagsrealistiska grunder kommer underfund med att man har sett en människa för sista gången. Sedan är han förstas inte så litet av illusionist och virtuoso, leker ibland obeckymrat med skrämsel och ap-rilhäxeri, blandar symbolerna med samvetslöst fantasierande. Man vet aldrig var man har honom om man inte helt enkelt nöjer sig med att fastslå hans befintlighet i den moderna litteraturens avdelning för suveränt artisteri.

Det finns många goda historier i "Solens gyllene äpplen". Priset tas kanske av "Åskmuller", som handlar om en tids-safari år 2055 — eller riktigare med år 2055 som utgångspunkt. Vid det laget kan man nämligen resa bakåt i tiden, fast självfallet bara under jakttagande av stor försiktighet; safarideltagarna kan genom ren okun-

Cont from below:
nåstan sannolikt och väl värt att läsa så som Bradbury har berättat det.

I sitt senaste novellurval, *The Day it Rained Forever* (Hart-Davis, London 1959, 16s), ger Bradbury nya belägg för sin solidaritet med grundläggande mänskliga värden men framför allt för sin oroliga och mångtydiga framtidsbesatthet. Han sysslar mer än någonsin med framtiden, den möjliga eller omöjliga, men troliga och skojar mindre ofta än förut. Han är uppenbarligen övertygad om att vår västerländska civilisation är dödsdömd. I en av bokens längsta och styvaste noveller befinner sig ett amerikanskt par på djungelresan den dag då det meddelas att ett blixtrik har dödat största delen av befolkningen i USA, Västeuropa och Sovjetunionen. Omgivna av jublande infödda blir de två plötsligt bärare av hela den krossade vita rasens skuld; pessimismen är inte total, även om man knappast får något intryck av att de färgade värld kommer att bli bättre än vår. Människolivet och dess outnyttjade chanser består i alla fall, även om de på längre sikt inte kan tryggas annat än genom att föras vidare till andra planeter och kanske andra solsystem. Det är denna övertygelse som kommer Bradbury att skriva så mycket om rymdraketer och främmande världar. Man behöver inte avfärda det som harmlös science fiction. Rycker vi på axlarna åt "Aniara"?

Bradbury förkunnar inte den absoluta tomheten, men inte heller någon sorts tillförsikt. Han vet — liksom vi andra — inte vad han skall tro. Han provar alternativ, mer eller mindre sannolika, mer eller mindre fantastiska. I en novell från Mars är minnena från jorden, själva sakerna från jorden, det enda som gör kolonistörernas liv uthärdligt; i en annan förvandlas de smärtfritt till Marsmänniskor, milda, mörka och gyllenögda, och det är minst lika så gott. Det kan finnas skräckplaneter där den sovande är utlämnad åt gammal mördande ondskan. Det kan finnas planeter som är paradiset bara man inte förgriper sig på dem, bara man älskar dem som man älskar en kvinna. Vi vet inte. Men vi håller på att stiga in i en tid där ingenting är otänkbart utom vår återvändo. Om den tiden berättar Bradbury — mild och gyllenögda, och nu nästan alldeles allvarlig.

BENGT HOLMQUIST
Cont from right:

säger man? — det självupplevda prägel. Men det fatala är att man Eckels gör ett litet felsteg. En fjärril omkommer tillsammans med den utvalda jätteödlan som i va-fall skulle ha dött någon minut senare, och vid hemkomsten till tjuguförsta seklet visar det sig nej, det tål inte refereras. Men det är kusligt och omöjligt och

or two. I hope and believe that the present big interest by emerging writers to hack away in the fantastic genre, to at least some degree has been inspired by SKRIVA's short story competition. When it began 23 years back the present writing boom had not really started. But since then there are a lot of new books by local talents, many new writing sites other short story competitions have sprung up, and we've seen dozens of more anthologies. But our anthology would have been the original first in the new wave, hadn't it been for the Russian mafia!

Which brings us to another pioneer, journalist and film aficionado Torsten Jungstedt, who was a pioneer anthology editor in the 1950s. Beside running our lone TV channel's film review for years, he did the radio horror show "The Man in Black" and edited several excellent anthologies with horror and the "fantastic", including sf, from his radio programs. He was also into skiffy in a pioneer presentation of the genre on radio, a half-hour lecture

"From Werewolf to Space Rocket" November 27, 1953 (the breakthrough year in Sweden for these raygun and space yarns) reviewed in Expressen Nov 28:

Torsten Jungstedt's program on sf and its origin was quite skilfully made. Jungstedt had researched it rather thoroughly but had missed that the genre was cultivated in Germany around the turn of the century with partly decent literary results. A knowledgeable listener could have made the reviewer aware of that one of the best of these German books is translated to

Torsten Jungstedts program om science fiction och dess upprinnelse var rätt skickligt hoptrimmat. Jungstedt hade forskat grundligt i skrifterna, men det hade undgått honom att genren odlades i Tyskland kring sekelskiftet, delvis med hyggligt litterärt resultat. En kunskapig lyssnare har gjort recensenten uppmärksam på att en av de bästa av dessa tyska böcker finns översatt på svenska: "På två planeter" av Kurd Lasswitz. Lika rafflande som böcker om varulvar och Marsinvånare är följelungen "Jesper Klint's underliga resa". Den håller inte måttet psykologisk-litterärt, men man följer den med barnslig spänning ungefär som favoritserien i dagstidningen.

19.45 Från varulv till rymdraket Något om science-fiction och dess traditioner av Torster Jungstedt.

17.10 Nere i Ray Bradburys källare. Torsten Jungstedt intervjuar den amerikanske science-fiction-förf. 17.50 Maurice Larcanges dragspels-orkester (gram).

TORSTEN JUNGSTEDT

Mannen i svart



RABEN & SJÖGREN

"Man in Black" (1955) Jungstedt's anthology (from the radio show).

Swedish: On *Two Planets* by Kurd Lasswitz. Just as exciting as werewolves and Martians is the serial "Jesper Klint's Strange Journey". It's lacking in the psychology-literary but you follow it with childish excitement in the same way as your favourite comic strip in the newspaper.

So we also learn that radio had an sf show for kids (I find no info, but author was probably George Eliasson, who wrote such things at the time). I had more on Torsten Jungstedt in eg *Intermission* #108 and #113, but also stumble upon Jungstedt meeting Ray Bradbury, interviewing him on radio "Down in Ray Bradbury's basement" in Program 1 (we now had a P2 too!). April 16 1960: "Torsten Jungstedt interviews the American sf writer". I found no info on that program, but there is a long article by Jungstedt meeting Bradbury in 1959, that probably is from the same meeting, covered in *Intermission*

#108. In there Bradbury talks about eg LA fandom and meeting Ingrid Bergman, if you're interested. Bradbury was becoming quite respected at the time, as we see in Dagens Nyheter November 11 1959, "Ray Bradbury and the Future". It begins by describing *Fahrenheit 451* and *The Golden Apples of the Sun* and continues:

*He's not a dedicated horror writer - if you disregard an ultimate, treacherous refinement in the mild light by which he often envelops the flowers of evil and the mushrooms of death. Its more correct to see him as a wizard who quickly changes temperament, having something useful and unfinished in the fundamental change in the terms of life that he suspects. He feels a longing for the good old reality, and he startles at the emperor of China when he at the time let the inventor of the flying machine be executed. He is fascinated by everything uncontrollable arriving, by the cracks opening in existence and lets in air from alien planets. And he lets the uncertainty on future and borders go backwards to the past, make it's safety and rationality illusionary; what if the most terrible and wonderful man has always dreamt about have always been possible, but hidden behind other symbols? So he moves forward and backward in time, adjusts reality a little, gives us hiccups and an uncertain smile when it's suddenly invaded by The Unknown. But it also happens he doesn't move at all, that he stops here and now and just tells a simple story, eg how it goes when you based on everyday reality come to the conclusion you have seen a human for the last time. And then he is of course somewhat of an illusionist and virtuosis, sometimes plays around with scare and bewitching without any bother, mixes symbols in unscrupulous imagination. You never know where you have him unless you're satisfied with placing him in the department for superior artistry. There are many good stories in *The Golden Apples of the Sun*. The top one is perhaps "Thunder", about a time travel safari the year 2055 - or rather starting in 2055. You can then travel backwards in time, but of course only if you observe great care; the safari members may through ignorance disturb the evolution of species, with immeasurable consequences for the future they return to. The devoted hunter Mr Eckels has shot most things, and now he wants to shoot a Tyrannosaurus. The tale about his adventures millions of years ago seems notably realistic. It seems - what to say? - being something experienced. The fatal thing is that Eckels makes a little mistake. A butterfly is killed together with the selected dinosaur, that otherwise have died a minute later, and coming back to the 21st century it shows - no, it can't be told. But it is scary and it would impossible and almost probable, worth reading in the way Bradbury tells it. In his latest short story selection *The Day It Rained Forever* Bradbury gives new evidence for his solidarity with basic human values, but most of all for his worries and ambiguous obsession with the future. He deals with the future more than ever, the possible or the impossible, but has less magic and kidding than before. It's obvious he's convinced our western civilisation is doomed. In one of the longest and best stories we have an American couple travelling in the jungle the day it is announced that a Blitz war has killed most of the population in the US, Western Europe and the Soviet Union. Surrounded by cheering locals the two suddenly becomes carriers of all the guilt of the crushed white race; the pessimisms isn't total, even if you don't get the impression that the world of coloured people will become better than ours. Human life and and the unexploited possibilities still remain, though it in longer pererspective can't be upheld by other means than by being transferred to other planets and perhaps other solar systems. It is this conviction that makes Bradbury write so much about space rockets and alien worlds. You don't have to denounce it as harmless so called sf. Do we shrug at Anlara? Bradbury doesn't preach absolute emptiness and no confidence either. Like all of us he doesn't know what to believe. He tests alternatives, more or less probable, more or less fantastic. In a story from Mars the memories from Earth, the very objects from Earth, are the only things making the life of the colonists bearable; in another they are painlessly transformed into Martians, mild, dark and golden-eyed, and that is just as good. There may be horror planets where someone asleep is left to an ancient, murderous evil. There may be planets that are a paradise as long as you don't abuse them, but love them the way you love a woman. We don't know. But we are entering a time when nothing is unthinkable except our return. Bradbury tells about that time - mild and golden-eyed, and now almost completely serious.*

A very respectful piece. Bradbury was even mentioned as a possible Nobelist later.

We had a real Nobel laureate - but in physics - who wrote science fiction. Hannes Alfvén was a Swedish physicist who won the 1970 Nobel Prize for his work in magnetohydrodynamics. But he also wrote the dystopian-computers-take-over *The Great Computer* (1968). Mathematics professor and long-time Harry Martinson fan Tord Hall covered it in Svenska Dagbladet December 10, the very day Alfvén received his prize ("from the Kings of His Majesty the Hand"...), "*Hannes Alfvén as Author*". The article starts saying its common for scientists to write popular science, like one Eddington whose "language of atoms" inspired Harry Martinson. You should know that Hall called our genre "vetesaga" (approx "sci-saga"). I skip the intro, and then it goes:

*Hannes Alfvén has beside plasma physics and cosmology also had time for both popular science and sci-sagas. His first book of this kind came already 1950 and was called *Atoms and People*. A new printing with some additions came in 1964 as *The Atom, the Man, the Universe*. Then 1966 came *World - Mirrorworld* and the same year *The Great Computer or The Tale of the Great Computer*, using the pseudonym Olof*

Johannesson. The end of this series, so far, is M70, that came in 1969 and written by the couple Hannes and Kerstin Alfvén... With exemplary clarity and pedagogy Alfvén covers a huge field. The style is simple with a certain naive innocence, which won't exclude satire... World - Mirrorworld can be seen as continuing the previous book. Oskar Klein's cosmological theory is presented, which is then expanded by Alfvén himself. Two theories on the origin of the universe have dominated the debate for several decades, the explosion theory and the theory of the static universe. But that neither cosmology take into account the atomic physics symmetry between "ordinary" matter and so called antimatter becomes clear. (Then a discussion of the science of this.) Alfvén uses cybernetics in the form of sci-saga in The Great Computer, on society and its future. Just like that he creates a new word for the "electronic brains", it's one "data", several "dator" It's a pity this term hasn't been adapted by the nomenclature central which instead has chosen the heavier one "dator", several "datorer" \Words for computer used in Swedish today/ To explain the origin of the computer the author makes an original move: nature can't directly construct a computer with its complicated electronic circuits. He therefore takes a shortcut through biology and and starts the development chain from the first molecule complex to humans. Then begins what the author calls the time of symbiosys - it has just started - and the shift of power goes fast. The basis of the growing dominance of the computers is the mathematical theorem called the sociological complication theorem. Put simply it means that humans aren't competent to to organise

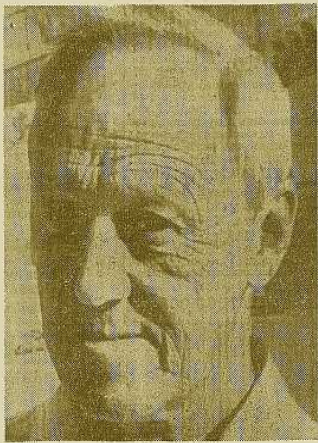
Grunden för datorernas växande dominans ligger i en matematisk sats som kallas det sociologiska komplikationsteoremet. Det innebär kort och gott att människorna inte är kompetenta att organisera samhället. Masktystad, klassintressen, nationella fördomar osv, reser överstyrliga hinder. Men de objektiva datorerna lider inte av sådana mänskliga svagheter. När de vill har blivit varma i plåtarna forskar de rationellt med ökad takt. Storstäderna avskaffas och författaren gör här en träffande jämförelse mellan jättedatorerna och miljonstäderna: "I båda fall megalomanic experiment som snart skulle visa sig vara misslyckade". Skolor och universitet försvinner också, sedan man genom "teletotal" utan vidare från en "central biblioteksdata" kan få reda på vad man behöver veta, "ex. för lössändet av ett korsord". Sedan kommer turerna till riktssvendet och till människans hälsa - härliga apparater lokaliserar och borrar de flesta fall också bota, från normalbetendet avvikande handgrev. Till sist avskaffas, på grund av beprövad "inkomplexens, de olika staternas och planernas regeringar.

Jorden i en motsvarighet i våra nuvarande bisonskredes Val. Boken börjar i sagostil med "Det var en gång" och slutar med "Vi kommer att leva lyckliga i alla våra dagar". Men det är en ond saga, där själva intet nationella fördomar osv, reser framförs i en mild ton av närmast olympisk uphöjdhed. Den skildrar i själva verket ett hot mot vår civilisation. Men Alfvén, som är sociolog, svarar för de sociologiska avsnitten i denna bok. Men det hindrar inte intrycket att M 70 på det hela taget är en tillämpning på vårt nuvarande samhälle av de idéer som utvecklats i de föregående böckerna. De tre stora boken är nu - som alla västvästbomben, befolkningsexplosionen och miljöförstörelsen. De tillhör bokens huvudämnen, men dessutom diskuteras mycket annat, t.ex. att bo i rymden, aggression som biologiskt arv, vår ökande otumlighet och kulturutvecklingens grunddrag. Analysen av befolkningsexplosionen har en obarmhärtig skärpa - än så länge har människligheten förskottat sig en hel del, samma exponentiella som gäller för t.ex. smönan och mögelvapnarerna. Den övriga analysen är lika klar, fast den nödvändigtvis måste bli kortfattad. M 70 bär stunder av en så hög är intresserad av samhällsfrågor. Den undersöker ett livsbevårande problem, som lätt en poetisk "Konvergera framtidens integral eller inte?"

Men man behöver inte kunna någon högre matematik för att läsa Hannes Alfvén's här berömda skrifter. De behandlar tillgängligt och med stor klarhet flera av de viktigaste problemen inom både naturvetenskap och sociologi.

Tord Hall

SVD 10. 70



Hannes Alfvén.

under strecket:

Hannes Alfvén, en av årets Nobelpristagare i fysik, hyllas i dag för sina vetenskapliga insatser. Universitetslektor Tord Hall vill i denna artikel komplettera bilden genom att belysa hans verksamhet som populärvetenskaplig författare. Förutom ren populärvetenskap har han ägnat sig åt vetsagan bl. a. i Sagan om den stora datamaskinen, en satir skildrande det hot som vi kan möta i en inte alltför avlägsen framtid.

Av TORD HALL

HANNES ALFVÉN SOM FÖRFATTARE

Det är numera ganska vanligt att forskarna själva populariserar sin vetenskap utveckling eller senaste landvinningar. Bland lyckas försöken över förväntan. Astronomer och fysiker som Edington, Jeans, Hovlev och Gömow har blivit hästa över hela världen. Författare med naturvetenskapliga intressen har fått många uppslag av denna populariseringskonst. I t.ex. har Harry Martenson i Antara tagit intryck av Edingtons uttågningar om "atomernas språk". I mer sällsynta fall har vetenskapsområden också givit sig in på allmänna litterära fält. Det gäller då nästan alltid vetenskap, och ofta uppträder författaren under pseudonym.

Hannes Alfvén har vid sidan av plasmafysik och kosmologi också haft tid över både för populärvetenskap och vetsaga. Hans första bok i dessa ämnen kom redan 1950 och hette "Atomener och människor". Den nytrycktes med en del tillägg 1964 i "Atomen, människan, universum". Sedan kom 1966 "Världen - Spelvärdn" och samma år "Sagan om den stora datamaskinen" under pseudonymen Olof Johannesson. Årslängder över förväntan. Astronomer och fysiker som Edington, Jeans, Hovlev och Gömow har blivit hästa över hela världen. Författare med naturvetenskapliga intressen har fått många uppslag av denna populariseringskonst. I t.ex. har Harry Martenson i Antara tagit intryck av Edingtons uttågningar om "atomernas språk".

Det väl förstås är ren populärvetenskap. Titeln "Atomen, människan, universum anger i själva verket denna boks disposition. Vd författaren med en villfullen term kallar "kompilationsens långa kedja" börjar med elementarpartiklarna, som sammansluter sig till atomer, molekyler, celler, växter, djur och till sist till mänskliga samhällen med förmåga att utforska universum.

Under flera decennier har ju två kosmologer, explosionsteori och teorin om det stationära universum, dominerat debatten om världens skapelse och utveckling. Men ingen av dessa kosmologier tar hänsyn till den ur atomfysiken alla klarare framträdande symmetri mellan "vanlig" materia och s.k. antimateria. Styckan hos den Klein-Alfvéniska symmetriska kosmologin ligger bl. a. där, att den bygger på detta empiriskt konstaterade faktum. "Världen" är uppbyggd av den för oss väikända materien, medan "Spelvärdn" - den andra halvan - antas vara byggd av antimateria. Kanske består varannan galax - eller t. o. m. varannan stjärna i Vintergatan - av antimateria. Vi har än så länge inga säkra möjligheter att avgöra den saken.

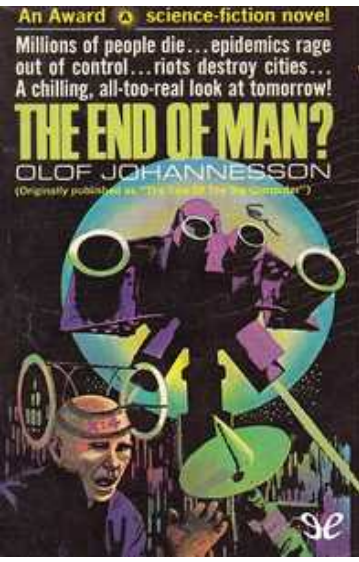
Det är svåra saker Alfvén skriver om i denna bok. Men fastän han är hörschullig engagerad av sitt ämne glömmer han för den skull inte bort pedagogiken. Vi får inte bara en lysande introduktion till den symmetriska kosmologin utan också en översikt av tidigare kosmologier, av materiaens tillämpning på kosmiska frågor.

Världen - Spelvärdn står i samma klass som Världarnas utveckling av Svanete Arrhenius, den första svenska nobelpristagaren. Hans bok utgavde i 1906 års bokförfod med Nils Holgerssons underbara resa, och slog ut både Karlqvist och Levertin. Den överträfs sedan till sju språk. En jämförelse mellan dessa två böcker skulle belysa både författarskapet och kosmologins utveckling. Men det är närmast ett ämne för en framtida seminarieuppsats.

Jag vill i stället belysa Alfvéns inställning till naturvetenskapen med ett citat: "I själva verket kan man väl knappast begrunda komplikationernas långa kedja utan en viss religiös förtärg vidhäftning för naturens under. Och detta under blir så mycket mer fascinerande, som undret inte är något enkelt boksk-pokus. Varje del i kedjan är liten, enkel och självklar - åtminstone är den just nu bortsl - och sedan går det snabbt undan med makroförståningen.

society. Hunger for power, class interests, national prejudice etc create insurmountable obstacles. But the objective computers don't have such human weaknesses. Once their metal casings get warm rationalisation goes fast. Big cities are abolished and the authors here makes a striking comparison between dinosaurs and million cities: "In both cases megalomaniac experiments that soon showed to be failures." Schools and universities also disappear as we with "teletotal" easily can access whatever you want to know from a "central library computer", eg for solving a crossword puzzle. / He does NOT foresee Internet, with distributed architecture - it's sf's old central computer idea./ Then it's time for law enforcement and people's health - shrewd machines map and can in most cases treat individuals who deviate from normal behaviour. Lastly the different states' and planet's governments are abolished, due to proven incompetence. What's then left, beside computers and a collection of happy idiots? Well, of course bureaucrats, who now are servicemen, control panel operators etc for the computers. Through a beautiful combination of Parkinson's Law and the well-known fact from cybernetics that feedback systems easily can get into violent fluctuations the author creates a global disaster, threatening to annihilate human unity, since nobody can or know anything after the computers have gone silent. But the situation is saved by the colonies on Mars, where they work under different circumstances and haven't been as dilapidated as on Earth. Through information from our neighbour planet a laborious rebuilding begins, and when the book ends the computers have full control over the situation. They analyse what to be done with humanity. They are deep down kind beings with a mind for reverence, and mankind can most likely stay on the planet in an equivalent to buffalo reservations. The book starts like a fairy tale with "Once upon a time" and ends "we'll live happily ever after". But is an evil fairy tale where the satire

isn't veiled, even though it's presented in a mild manner at almost Olympian height. In reality it describes a threat we may have to confront in a not too far off future. That the step from sci-saga to reality often isn't very big is underlined by M70. We may assume that Kerstin Alfven who is a sociologist is behind the sociological parts in this book. But it doesn't stop the impression that M70 all in all is an application on our contemporary society, of the ideas described in the three previous books. The three big threats presently are - as we all know - the hydrogen bomb, population explosion and environmental destruction. They are among the main topics of the book, but much else is also discussed, eg to live in space, aggression against our biological inheritance, our increasing ignorance och the basic cultural questions. The analysis of the population explosion has a merciless edge - this far mankind has reproduced under the same exponential law valid for amoeba and fungus. The other analyses are also that lucid, but it must be brief out of necessity. M70 should be studied by anyone interested in social questions. If you investigate a life-changing problem you have a mathematical phrase: "Will the calculus of the future converge or not?" But you don't need to know any higher mathematics to read Hannes Alfven's writing described here. They describe several of the most important problems of science and sociology, accessibly and with great clarity.



I've read *The Great Computer* (long ago). It's an interesting vision with a satirical edge, describing how computers can make us stupid and even take over, if we don't watch out. Alfven had foresight, it's a topic that has surfaced today! The book is available for free in English as *The End of Man?* under his original pseudonym and a ghastly space opera cover! <https://archive.org/details/the-tale-of-the-big-computer> Recent news is an opera based on *The Great Computer* to be staged in December (auto-translate this Swedish info <https://www.kth.se/om/nyheter/centrala-nyheter/nobelpristagaren-hannes-alfvens-visionara-framtidsskildring-om-datorer-blir-opera-1.1142644>) It's as I understand based on unfinished work by composer Karl-Birger Blomdahl who earlier wrote the *Aniara* Opera. He died before he could finish the Alfven opera. Blomdahl must have liked computers and space. The opera will play in the old R1 reactor hall of the technical institute, the place for the first Swedish nuclear reactor (a test plant) operating 1954-1970.

Professor Wallenius knows the place, I believe.

Finally, a note from the 1985 Swecon, which I was involved in. I did the press releases and was press contact, which were rather successful getting several articles (also radio plugs if I remember). Having worked with magazines etc I have some clues on how to reach out, which our cons today seems to totally miss. Today's Swecons gets virtually no press coverage. This was in Svenska Dagbladet August 16 1985 (there were other articles on Swecon 85 too), and as hinted I remember they did call me:

Christopher Priest the well-known English author is one of the invited guests to the international sf convention Swecon 85, taking place in Stockholm August 16-18. During three intensive days participants from practically the whole world /Hm, Europe and I believe two from the USA.../ take part in debates, lectures, film shows and an art exhibition around the literary genre sf. Swecon 85:s press secretary Ahrvid Engholm thinks that the press has treated the biggest Nordic sf event of the 1980s /Helsinki's King-Kong 82 was bigger, but with 275 fen this was second until then/ in a bantering way and notes that "sf is a literary branch with critique of tendencies in todays society and science, we give saucers and green men to the UFOlogist, and all this will be discussed on the convention."



Next History Corner may return to space. NASA will have a new shot at the halted Artemis moon flight. A SpaceX Starship launch should be up RSN. The Webb 'scope goes paparazzi in space. So space is hot despite 3 degrees Kelvin!

Mailing Comments

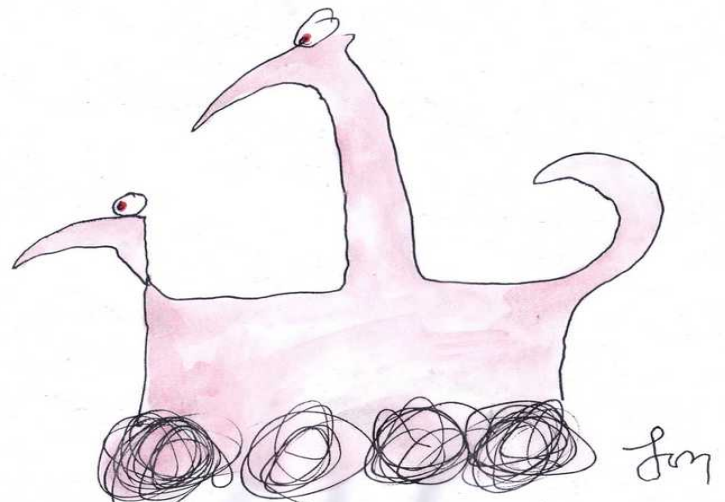
Henry Grynsten: As for "*mimeographs aren't real*", Mike Moorcock once claimed zeppelins weren't. He did it eg in a TV program made by Lars Helander (also an sf fan, working for Swedish TV) from I the late 1960s. I don't believe Mike M was serious. It was probably only a stunt to gain attention or possibly a way to indirectly comment about flying saucers, which people also claim to have seen in the sky. Moorcock claimed zeppelins were only illusions, Venus, reflection from birds, etc. ★★ "*But if the state would make a profit from smokers dying early, it would be hard to sell it to the public: We allow smoking everywhere because increased deaths of smokers profits the state, calculations have shown. What's the next stage: We will kill every 10th baby born*"

because calculations have shown that it increases GDP by 0.3 %" It's not the task of a government to "sell" laws to the citizens and "allow" them things. They shall adapt laws that are necessary by some reasonably strict standards, and those will "sell" themselves. Everything must be "allowed" by default, unless it reaches a certain serious level of necessity for a ban. You don't "allow" people to do this or that. We must have the right to do *anything*, unless it inflicts on the fundamental rights of others. Bans must be backed by strong reasons but it's doubtful if use of everyday substances reaches that criteria. (I'm *not* including narcotics, which is more serious as it fucks up your mind heavily.) Any illness from eg tobacco comes after *several decades* and also relies heavily on genetics. And it's far from the only thing people take long-term risks with. Ban fat food too! Ban ladders, hundreds fall to their death every year. And ban cars - lack of exercise kills, so make people walk. And as illnesses have genetic components, maybe all babies should be DNA-tested so you can decide what they can and can't do for the rest of their lives? No, let people themselves evaluate risks that aren't acute (=close in time). And more: legislation isn't for the purpose of the state's economic profit, it's for the benefit of the individual. Few things are of more benefit than respecting the individuals and letting folks run their own lives, incl the right to decide about risk themselves. If you respect individual's rights they become happier and more creative, which *all* benefit from. The positive effects of happy, creative people weighs heavier than any benefit from banning their own risk assessments. ★★ The only things I see that could wipe out humanity are a huge asteroid hit or an all out nuclear war. You say a static society elludes dangers? Wrong, I'm afraid. If it is static, frozen as the situation is *now*, it's a world with 7000+ nuclear warheads. A static society is so boring and give people so limited opportunities that major dissatisfaction is inevitable - and that's bad with 7000 nukes! A flexible, changing, developing society could on the other hand change along the lines of finally getting rid of nukes. (As well as improving asteroid spotting, which makes space tech a good thing!) ★★ That *"artistic creation always mirrors its creator"* sounds very likely. One reason I'm not too impressed with writers claimed to be great in "portraying people" is that writers have characters that are only aspects of the writer. And why should that one single person be so interesting? BTW, I think your short stories were excellent, also when you entered the experimental stage. A pity you haven't written more. ★★ Your analysis of Putin is on the spot! The talk about the "Russian World" is the idea that Russia has a special, superior position in the world...just as the nazis thought they were superior. Claiming Ukranians are "nazis" is a sort of confession that Putin is that himself.★★ I hadn't heard the expression "REVERSOPROP" before. Seems to be useful.★★ What did Blyton, Wodehouse, Simenon get out of writing hundreds of similar but entertaining books, you ask? Answer: a feeling of satisfaction! Even if the books aren't Nobel class or get good marks by high-brow critics, you do get a very good feeling of deep satisfaction if you manage to entertain. And that's not a bad reason for writing. You feel warm when you write a great story you think readers will enjoy!

William McCabe: Yes, a lot of things happening in space now! I'm just waiting for Artemis 1, the first (but unmanned) test flight of the new NASA moon rocket. We wait for SpaceX flying their Starship. I'm also waiting for Erange in Lapland announcing they will really launch that satellite, reaching space from Swedish soil! (A "microsat", but still.) ★★There are probably "cracked" versions of Windows 7 to download, but it'd be too complicated to use that to solve your problem. (Microsoft's idea of "invalidating" software is paranoid. Let people run things on their computers, in 99.9% of cases legally. Computers come with Windows in a legitimate copy.) Skip Word, download and use Open Office which you may download for free! I've used it for years.

Roger Sjölander: Nice, long autobiographical chatter. Though I've known you for 4+ decades, I learned a things that were new for me.

Garth Spencer: I believe in Roscoe...★★Putin's military has suffered from eg the huge level of corruption in the Russian society. And also from that authoritarian leadership works badly in the field. The Ukrainian soldiers have trust in their NCOs, with gives a much better fighting spirit and flexibility.★★ I'm not too interested in zines as a "general art form", only sf fanzines! I go to a yearly comics festival in Stockholm and see a lot of comics fanzines. They are totally different and uninteresting, for me at least. And I don't see other fanzines than those by sf fans as very creative. Sf fans have more humour, creativity, interactivity and a long history through which our (true) fanzines have evolved. There seem to be many more UK and US fanzines still published than we have over here. Lucky you! I and *SF-Forum* are more or less the only gedneral sf zines in Sweden.



What is this? A cyborgic self-driving car? A doodle by Elon Musk? Ask artist Lars LON Olsson. Only he knows...

Time to stop! Tack och hej, leverpastej!

--Ahrvid Engholm, your friendly local faned

Слава Україні!



Snow Poster Township #6

Sept. 2, 2022

Snow Poster Township is an apazine published by Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax. Banner artwork by Henry Chamberlain. *Snow Poster Township* is prepared for contributors to N'APA and select others. (Previously, it was prepared for FAPA. My previous N'APA apazine was titled *Snow Poster City*, and this effectively combines both.) A recent copy can be requested for The Usual.

Branches of Science Fiction I

This item originally appeared in Telegraphs & Tar Pits #20 (June 15, 2022), for APA-L:

This feels a bit silly, but I've been thinking about the *science* aspect of science fiction this week, perhaps inspired by my question last ish about sf elements in *Mission: Impossible* and whether speculating on technology was sufficient. While I fancied myself an amateur scientist as a youth before I became a professional journalist, some of you—and other LASFS members—might be more scientifically inclined than I am currently, so I welcome commentary and feedback. In any event, this is mostly just personal list making in public as I begin to organize my thinking somewhat. I'm not entirely sure where this might go.

Apparently, there are 12 branches of science: astronomy, biology (including human biology), botany, chemistry, geology, meteorology, oceanography, paleontology, petrology, physics, and zoology. You can also consider science in terms of formal, natural, social, and applied sciences—each of which can be broken down further.

Formal science includes data science, decision theory, information science, logic, mathematics, statistics, systems theory, and theoretical computer science. Natural science embraces the physical sciences (chemistry, Earth science, physics, and space science) and life sciences (biochemistry, botany, ecology, microbiology, and zoology). Social science includes anthropology, archaeology, economics, human geography, linguistics, political science, psychology, and sociology. And applied science relates to the application of those above sciences in terms of invention and technology. (That comes close to what I saw in *Mission: Impossible III*.)

Theoretically, people have written science fiction about *each* of those sciences, perhaps some more than others, sometimes more than one at a time, and perhaps even with some cultural waxing and waning as various sciences rise and fall in theoretical and public attention.

Which sciences do you think have been addressed most actively in your reading and experience? Are there any sciences that you think have gotten short shrift? Any authors that you think specialize in a specific science particularly well?

Branches of Science Fiction II

This item originally appeared in Telegraphs & Tar Pits #21 (June 23, 2022), for APA-L:

Last issue, I started thinking through the various branches of science in an informal but structured effort to reorient how I might think about the science aspect of science fiction. Since undertaking that exercise, I've been anecdotally striving to at least *be aware* of which branch—or branches—of science might be addressed in a given story or book.

So doing, I've recently been giving thought to hard sf and soft sf. I've never really considered myself a hard sf reader, but this approach to thinking about sf might be better suited for the hard side of the genre. (And I might be more of a hard sf reader than I previously posited!) So it might be useful to give some thought to the different kinds of science fiction, as well as science.

You all already know this, but bear with me. I welcome debate, feedback, and soft ribbing as I consider this topic. Most simplistically, one could consider two types of sf: hard sf and soft sf. Hard sf is characterized by the science or technology taking center stage, with a focus on realistic scientific concepts. In soft sf, then, realism is less important. Fair enough, but different branches of science could still come into play even if the details of a science in

an example of soft sf aren't as specific—or realistic—as they might be in hard sf.

Various online sources offer further categories for sf. Some lists are short, and some are quite long. For example, Noble Newman's blog limits his list to seven types: hard, soft, apocalyptic, dystopian fiction, military, parallel worlds, space opera, and steampunk—most of the latter which seem like they could be hard or soft, depending on the story or book. MasterClass suggests there are eight subgenres and genres related to sf: cyberpunk, dystopian fiction, fantasy, space opera, space western, steampunk, supernatural, and utopian fiction. Again, it seems like most of those could also be coded hard or soft depending on the work. (And one is a genre all on its own, to Marty's displeasure!) *Worlds Without End* proposes no fewer than 40 sf subgenres, and its list is hardly mutually exclusive. And Wikipedia—generally suspect as a source to cite, but a good place to start—suggests 46 sf genres. Again, they are not mutually exclusive.

Using those limited, easily accessible sources as a base—hardly comprehensive or exhaustive—removing items that warrant their own genre (e.g. fantasy and horror), and deduplicating the options without truly disambiguating similar items, we initially end up with two primary types (hard and soft sf) and more than 70 (73 to be exact) categories that are not mutually exclusive. A 2010 *TechRepublic* article suggests additional options, so I might need to poke around a little bit more as I craft the list.

That takes us to Isaac Asimov. In his 1953 article, "Social Science Fiction," in the book *Modern Science Fiction*, Asimov suggested that every sf plot falls into one of three categories: gadget, adventure, or social. Gadget-related stories focus on the invention itself. In adventure stories, the invention is used as a dramatic prop. And in social sf, the story concentrates on how an invention affects people's daily lives.

So a rough starting rubric for classifying sf might entail two types (hard or soft), three plots (gadget, adventure, and social), and the gnarly list of more than 70 non-exclusive categories. Furthermore, it just struck me that that rough list as it currently stands might be an awkward assortment that combines *elements* of sf, as well as subgenres or subcategories. That warrants further thought.

As I said in the previous ish, I have no idea what the point of all this is, or what the end result will be. But it's been a fun thought exercise so far.

The ComicDex: *Weird Science*

Inspired by Jon D. Swartz's sercon article addressing the EC comic book *Weird Science* in *The National Fantasy Fan* Vol. 81 #7, I recently turned to some scanned editions of the comic book I have on hand. This item is a brief index of sorts focusing on the first year's worth of issues.

***Weird Science* #5 (January-February 1951)**

On a cover by Al Feldstein, a rocket ship launches into space just in time to escape a mushroom cloud that obliterates much of northern Mexico. "The atomic war has started! ... Now, we scientists must find another planet and begin civilization anew ... one of peace, not war!" The cover text echoes recent discussions in N'APA about atomic bombs and the relative merits of love and hatred.

"Made of the Future!" was written by Bill Gaines and Feldstein, and drawn by Feldstein. The eight-page story focuses on time travel and android spouses, reminding me of Murray Leinster's "The Runaway Skyscraper" (*T&T* #16) and Ray Bradbury's "Marionettes, Inc." (*SPT* #5)

Gaines and Feldstein again wrote "Return," which was drawn by Wally Wood. The crew of a spaceship left Earth 500,000 years ago to escape nuclear destruction. Their return home might very well precipitate another such event. Having seen so much of Wood's humor-oriented artwork over the years, I'd forgotten what a craftsman of action he was, as well.

"The Last War on Earth" was written and drawn by Harvey Kurtzman. "Doesn't history show you that wherever men will be, wars will be?" "[A] threat of danger from outside of Earth would make all the countries on Earth band together in a harmonious group!" Perhaps, but only because we'd focus our collective hate on the outsider, in this case, an not-unknowing Mars.

And "Killed in Time," written by Gaines and Feldstein and drawn by Jack Kamen, is a fun time-travel story in which a man is run down by... his own self driving a car. The story even includes a detailed schematic of the looped sequence of events, a "simple explanation."

***Weird Science* #6 (March-April 1951)**

Al Feldstein's cover portrays a needle-shaped rocket ship bearing down on a cratered planet populated by bug-eyed monsters. "See the incredible horrors that inhabit the cloud-covered mystery planet... Venus!"

"Spawn of Venus," written by Bill Gaines and Al Feldstein, and drawn by Feldstein, makes good on the promise of the cover, complete with steaming craters,

lush vegetation, and threatening BEMs—as well as “a huge amoeba” that devours “everything in its path.” One of the astronauts picks a flower bud before returning to Earth, and its blossom spawns a similar “shapeless mass of doughlike protoplasm.” The military blows it up with an atomic bomb (there we go again!), which only breaks it into smaller pieces, which then grow and grow and grow... Whoops!

Harvey Kurtzman’s “Man and Superman!” riffs on the classic Charles Atlas beach body self-improvement gambit to comedic effect. The muscle man just doesn’t eat enough to maintain his physique!

A one-page text story, “Dilemma,” in turn riffs on the King Midas story, with a Mr. Fafnir Bledsoe turning everything he touches into moonshine. “Someone might think of a way out of his dilemma, he hoped. Can you?”

“Sinking of the Titanic!” was written by Gaines and Feldstein, and drawn by Wally Wood. Similar to “Killed in Time” above, a man travels back in time to save the Titanic from disaster, only to cause it himself. While helping the passengers evacuate—he saves his own life, on the ship as a child!

And “Divide and Conquer,” written by Gaines and Feldstein, and drawn by Jack Kamen, focuses on a scientist who’s discovered a way to cause subdivision and replication in animals. His unfaithful wife tries to kill him, but he takes his revenge—resulting in many, diminutive unfaithful wives. “There she is! Take her! Take all of her!” This piece was inspired by Donald Wandrei’s 1934 *Astounding* story, “A Scientist Divides,” though no such credit is given.

Weird Science #7 (May-June 1951)

This cover comes about as close to a perfect 1950s sf illustration as you can get. Al Feldstein’s portrayal of the slim rocket in the background and bubble-helmeted astronauts in the foreground—the woman wearing a skirt!—is beautiful. A craggy planetscape punctuates the background, and several other celestial objects dot the distance of space.

“It Was the Monster from the Fourth Dimension,” written by Bill Gaines and Al Feldstein, and drawn by Feldstein, posits a protoplasmic intruder to our reality. A scientist named Willy proposes that it’s an entity from another plane poking through the fabric of existence, even drawing a schematic before poking his fingertip through a hole in the paper to demonstrate. They cut the thing off, effectively. This story was inspired by Donald Wandrei’s 1935 *Argosy* story “The Monster from Nowhere.”

Gaines and Feldstein wrote “Something Missing!,” which was drawn by Jack Kamen. Somewhat similar to “Divide and Conquer” above, a henpecked husband

becomes close to his much younger assistant, a student of his. He uses a ray on her to hide her from his wife, but when he reconstitutes her, a piece is missing. The results are horrible.

“Miracle!” is a one-page text story about a miner whose chewing tobacco spit is radioactive. “You’re a living Uranium factory...!”

Harvey Kurtzman’s “Gregory Had a Model-T!” focuses on an automobile enthusiast and his vengeful, then suicidal car. “Why Clem! Don’t you know? My Model-T is human!” Nobody tell Stephen King that this six-page story predates his novel *Christine* by more than 30 years. Theodore Sturgeon’s “Killdozer!” was first published seven years before this issue. While Wally Wood is able to adjust his drawing style to meet the needs of his subject, Kurtzman’s work remains consistently comedic in his character design and page layout.

Finally, “The Aliens!”—written by Gaines and Feldstein and drawn by Wood—suggests that Martians and Venusians land on Earth, mistakenly thinking the others are native to the planet. Meanwhile, their departure is witnessed by an Arab, and both groups pledge to destroy the “warlike” third planet.

Weird Science #8 (July-August 1951)

There are BEMs galore on the cover drawn by Al Feldstein. We’ll see if they show up inside!

The standard issue format continues, with the first story, “Seeds of Jupiter!,” written by Bill Gaines and Al Feldstein, and drawn by Feldstein. Whatever you do, if you’re a sailor, don’t chew on a peach pit that fell from the heavens. You might just birth a tentacled creature that suddenly extracts every drop of water from your body before slinking into the sea. While the story as a whole is an enjoyable melange of *Alien* and the kraken, the ending is a nod to the sewer alligator urban legend, which dates back to the late 1920s.

“The Escape” was written by Gaines and Feldstein, the tireless scribes, and drawn by George Roussos, a newcomer to these pages. Astronauts trapped on a spaceship draw lots to escape a certain doom. A loser shoots the others in order to parachute to Earth—from space?—only to be shot in turn by a farmer who mistakes him for a Martian.

“Invasion!” is a one-page text story about a crashed flying saucer that turns out to be a promotional prop.

Gaines and Feldstein wrote “Beyond Repair,” which was drawn by Jack Kamen. An astronaut returns home to take up with his roommate’s girlfriend, only to learn she’s a robot. “Marionettes, Inc.,” anyone?

And “The Probers,” written by Gaines and Feldstein, and drawn by Wally Wood, is a fun

“turnabout is fair play” cautionary tale. Astronauts experimenting on animals in space crash on the surface of planet. There, the natives... experiment on them. “To these monsters... we’re just guinea pigs!”

***Weird Science* #9 (September-October 1951)**

A rare—for this title so far—Wally Wood cover offers some glorious BEMs facing off against fighter planes.

Mixing up the pacing of the contributors a little, the issue opens with “The Gray Cloud of Death!,” written by Bill Gaines and Al Feldstein, and drawn by... Wally Wood—not Feldstein! A mysterious vapor emitting from a distant planet threatens a spacecraft of astronauts. The story ends unresolved, but it’s obvious what will happen. Oh, the foreboding!

“The Martian Monster,” written by Gaines and Feldstein, and drawn by Jack Kamen, features an imaginative, *Weird Fantasy*-reading boy who befriends an alien in the forest. The alien encourages him to kill his father, only to be later revealed to be his mother’s lover—making for a tidy crime. No one believes the boy when he claims an alien shot his father, and the unfaithful lovers meet a BEM of their own. Which reminds me: Crime does not pay. This piece was inspired by Anthony Boucher’s 1945 *Weird Tales* story “Mr. Lupescu.”

Gaines and Feldstein wrote “The Invaders,” which was drawn by Wood—a rare doubling up of artists’ contributions in a single issue. Citizens of a beleaguered country launch into space to forge a new society. “We’ll go to another planet... start a colony... begin again!” Somehow, they end up returning to Earth, where they’re mistaken for alien invaders.

And “The Slave of Evil!,” written by Gaines and Feldstein, and drawn by George Olesen, a newcomer to these pages, offers a *Manchurian Candidate*-like story of mind control, robbery, murder, and robotics. When you’re a robot, it’s not just mind control.

***Weird Science* #10 (November-December 1951)**

This issue’s cover features another Wally Wood illustration showcasing a rocketship, bubble-helmeted astronauts, an alien landscape, celestial objects, and a BEM. It’s all there.

“The Maiden’s Creed” was written by Bill Gaines and Al Feldstein, and drawn by Wood. Astronauts land on planet 205-D to find it populated by beautiful humanoid women with membranes under their arms and hideous smaller men. The women are attracted to the astronauts, who decide to stay—only to learn that the women’s offspring are ravenous.

The Gaines and Feldstein-written “Reducing... Costs” was drawn by Jack Kamen. Sporting event promoters try to compete with a nearby stadium. An

inventor’s partial-gravity insulator and a complicated apparatus help them reduce the size of people so they can fit more in their facility—20,000 instead of 5,000. That goes about as well as you might expect in a comic book like this.

In “Transformation Completed,” written by Gaines and Feldstein, and drawn by Wood, an overprotective father and scientist tries to keep his daughter from marrying her boyfriend by injecting him with a gender-reassignment serum. They end up getting married anyway because, well, she also injected herself with serum.

Gaines and Feldstein also wrote “The Planetoid,” which was drawn by Joe Orlando. Space-faring astronauts encounter a mysterious planetoid that’s part of a miniature solar system. They encounter what they think are pesky insects and take off again. The ending is quite a surprise. Because you see, those astronauts were 3,500 feet tall, and the planet they landed on was... Earth!

My only complaint about reading these issues of *Weird Science* is that my PDF scans were made from Russ Cochran/Gemstone reprints—cover price \$2—and don’t include all of the one-page text stories and other editorial content, such as the “Cosmic Correspondence” letter columns. Regardless, the stories are excellent reading, the artwork absolutely beautiful, and I recommend the comic highly.

From the Reading Pile: *Occult Detective*

Not that long ago, I learned about *Occult Detective* magazine, an annual periodical focusing on short fiction featuring “psychic investigators, mystics and meddlers” similar to those popular during the Victorian and Edwardian periods. Originally published as *Occult Detective Quarterly* in 2016, the magazine changed its title after co-founder Sam Gafford died in 2019. As of the end of 2021, there have been eight issues, and these remarks are based on *Occult Detective* #8 (December 2021).

Edited by John Linwood Grant and Dave Brzeski, the 227-page square-bound edition—the magazine is also available on Kindle—14 short stories, three nonfiction pieces, and reviews of related books. So far, I’ve read three stories in this issue. Paul St. John Mackintosh’s “Ghost Trainspotting” focuses on “Scotland’s only insurance adjuster for ghost-related claims” and details the sighting of a tank engine and a “string of ironclad camouflaged wagons.” The story is well written by an author who might very well be a railfan himself, if not an insurance adjuster.

Cristina L. White's "Becoming Art Deco" is slightly less satisfying. Written from the point of view of a "registered psychic investigator," the piece focuses on a sculpture that mysteriously appears in a hotel fountain. The investigator, one Solas Bierman, connects with the sculpture—of a woman—and transcribes her explanation via automatic writing.

And "Tahdukeh" by Carsten Schmitt features Commissioner Charrois, who smokes a "mixture of Chandu opium and Tahdukeh" to see visions that enable him to determine the murderer of a stable boy who'd cosorted with a prince. The story ends unsatisfactorily in terms of justice—but quite well in terms of characterization.

You can learn more at <https://tinyurl.com/mrjfdbz2>. A hard copy of the most recent issue costs about \$13.

Comments on N'APA #259

Jose Sanchez's **cover**, though an older piece, is a good work. One hopes that the fighter planes are responding to hostile action on the part of the alien craft rather than merely meeting the unknown with violence. I'm not quite sure what to make of the protuberance on the bottom of the craft: an entrance? I was intrigued by the title, "Incident over Africa." Is the piece inspired by an actual sighting?

In N'APA #258, seven participants contributed a total of 68 pages. Ahrvid made up about 53 percent of the mailing. This disty's **Official Organ** indicates that seven participants contributed 66 pages. Ahrvid's material made up about 48 percent of that.

In *Intermission* #121, **Ahrvid** might have coined the phrase "Fanzines Are Fandom's Eternal Backbone (FAFEB!)" Hear! Hear! Instead of listening to Abba, you said you read "Asimov, Clarke, Vance, JVM"—who is JVM? The History Corner this was great fun: Swedish speculation about UFOs in the 1940s and other old clippings. I particularly enjoyed the 1960 "Well, actually..." letter from a fan to *Svenska Dagbladet*. I appreciated learning about Jacob Palme, developer of the KOM messaging system. What a wonderful assemblage of vintage mainstream coverage of our genre and fandom!

Your remark to William McCabe about how to define science fiction intrigued me. Do you still have that paper? I wonder how your thinking has changed over time. In *Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #20-21 for APA-L, I started developing an outline of the branches of sf, which seems to be leaning toward an understanding of the types, plots, categories, and elements of sf. I'll reprint those items in this issue above to see whether you and others have any input,

but I haven't given it any thought since June. It's not definitional, per se, but it's worth thinking about.

Jefferson's *Archive Midwinter* offered mostly comments, which are welcome. To paraphrase Fuzzy's Law, you've got to give comments to get comments. I'll have to check out Jerry Pournelle's *King David's Spaceship* and *The Mote In God's Eye*. Inspired by you, I'm listening to Vivaldi's *Greatest Composed Moments* by the Vilvaldi Philharmonic Orchestra as I write this.

Since last ish, I've watched the *Battle Angel* anime and read two different *Battle Angel Alita* manga volumes, reviewing them in *Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #29 for APA-L. The anime is pretty true to parts of the manga, focusing on the most interesting aspects and avoiding much of the combat and sports elements that seem to predominate. I'd never heard of the *Odd Bodkins* comic strip; I'll have to check it out!

In *Intermission* #122, **Ahrvid** offered a piece entitled "National Mimeographic Society." You might be interested in the International Printing Museum in Carson, Calif., south of Los Angeles. (<https://www.printmuseum.org>) I'm young enough that my first self-published comic books and fanzines were photocopied rather than mimeographed, but old enough that I remember carbon copies of school fliers and circulars. I enjoyed the History Corner's reportage on spaceflight exhibitions, the Coney Island amusement attraction, the play, and the Sputnik prank.

I shall inquire whether people who aren't members of LASFS can participate in APA-L. We could use some new members, and when Marty isn't dealing with his current health issues, I'll ask. Garth Spencer asked me recently, too, so you might both be interested! It is a printed and mailed apa, so you'd have to fund the printing and mailing of your weekly submissions—and satisfy minac, which I wouldn't expect to be a problem in your case—to participate.

Your contention that there is a fringe fandom, a media fandom, and a real fandom made me gasp in shock and surprise. Not really. Below, I contend the opposite—that for fandom to survive and thrive, we need to think of it as One Big Fandom with enough room for all to play. The common thread, I think, is correspondence culture, but even that is changing with a widening gap between online and offline correspondence and their respective norms and mores. Not to mention quality of content, but that's where I agree with you. I prefer this mode—apahacking and fanzines—more than online discussion forums and other such comments-driven culture.

In *Ye Murdered Master Mage* #259, **George** updated us on the National Fantasy Fan Federation's activities and membership growth needs, as well as his

challenges using Facebook. He also offered a couple of pages of comments. I was intrigued by your discussion of *Astounding* and atom bomb stories. It reminded me of the 1990 United States Secret Service raid of Steve Jackson Games because of a purloined Bell South document available on bulletin board systems.

Participating in the Tolkien Reverse Summer Bang challenge, I wrote my first short story in a long time in recent months. The idea of the challenge is that artists are paired with writers, and writers develop a short story inspired by the piece of art. I plan to submit it to the N3F's short story contest later this year. I also sent another, much older piece to the Writers' Exchange for comments and advice. I've yet to return to revising that piece, but it might have potential, as well.

John's *Synergy* #40 continued his consideration of the vortex from the August issue of *Ionisphere*, balancing the yin and yang of love and hatred as he seeks a oneness with the many. I'd love to learn more about that Russian sf society, John. When did that article run in *Pablo Lennis*? Is *What Mad Universe* a real movie? I know it's a Fredric Brown novel.

Your remark on studying con attendees made me wonder whether anyone's already done an ethnography of sf fen or cons. A brief search yielded David Axler's 1977 masters degree thesis, *Fandom is a Way of Life: A Folkloristic Ethnography of Science Fiction Fandom*. (<https://tinyurl.com/55drpdpr>) Albert Berger's "Science-Fiction Fans in Socio-Economic Perspective: Factors in the Social Consciousness of a Genre" from a 1977 *Science Fiction Studies* also looks promising. (<https://tinyurl.com/mryz2uhe>) More recently published, Neta Yodovich's "Defining Conditional Belonging: The Case of Female Science Fiction Fans" (<https://tinyurl.com/msd9v55h>) might lend some color on the advent of media fandom and its resulting gender diversity. And Rachel Anne Johnson's 2015 thesis *For Fans by Fans: Early Science Fiction Fandom and the Fanzines* (<https://tinyurl.com/57f9vp92>) falls somewhere in the middle. I'd welcome a more recent study considering current fen of all stripes, online and offline, media cons and sf cons.

I think studying the staff of cons might be easier. More commercial media cons are run by businesses, with paid staff. And the more traditional sf cons—even role-playing game cons—are run by volunteers and sometimes clubs. Those volunteers might be a representative sample of the fen themselves, or at least active members of the sf club running the con. That view might be overly simplistic.

I haven't been able to make it to any LASFS board meetings yet, so I don't yet fully understand the inner

workings of the club or its con, Loscon. The club's by-laws (<https://www.lasfs.org/lasfs-by-laws/>) define various director, officer, and other positions. The standing rules (<https://www.lasfs.org/lasfs-standing-rules>) offers more detail on Loscon bid processes.

In response to George, you ask, "Why should fandom be broken up into specialties?" Similar to Damon Knight's 1940 article "Unite—or Fiel," I've been thinking about fandom in terms of the language used by the Industrial Workers of the World. One big union? One big fandom. In *The Zine Dump* #55, Guy Lillian recently remarked, "I'm a bit dismayed; do games belong in o*u*r fandom?" I'm sure he was being facetious, but my answer is this: Hell yes. Science fiction, fantasy, urban fantasy, young adult, literature and media, fanzines and podcasts, offline and online, volunteer-run cons and professional cons, liking and disliking—there's enough room for everyone and everything in fandom. As long as it comes with love, not hatred, back to John's opener. (But we do need to better understand the broad spectrum of fen, as John also suggested.)

In *The Contents of a Good Life*, Will shared that Nick Bastrom, David Chalmers, and Elon Musk contend that we live in a computer simulation, with odds ranging from 25 percent to "near certainty." Part of me thinks that that is utter poppycock. Bullshit, even. And another part of me thinks that, even if that were true, there's no better invitation and excuse, then, to not care at all—to not give a shit, as it were—about what happens on this planet. *That* is the true poppycock. What better way to distance yourself from real-world impact or personal responsibility for the outcomes of your actions than to choose to believe that the world is really one big World of Warcraft game? What defines winning: Responsible allocation and use of resources? Earning as many coins as you can to decorate your igloo? No wonder the world's becoming a first-person shooter. The idea might be thought provoking, but I don't find it that interesting—and even find it distasteful or irresponsible.

And in *Samizdat* #14, Sam offered brief mailing comments. On the *Sonic the Hedgehog* vs. *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* debate, I think you're right, Sam. I remember finding the case you made compelling, and after checking it out myself, concur. Disney it is. I love the idea of a magazine or award nominee discussion group; thank you for sharing more information about the Washington Science Fiction Association—I'll include some of those details in the next installment of my sf club column.

I also read and enjoyed your brief profile of Theodore Sturgeon, comments on gun violence, and project progress reports.

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MAILING 260



Let us recognize the practice of Synergy, or Soul Fusion, as a guiding tool which as it progresses brings about health and happiness on a universal scale. Anyone can benefit from it.

This is the Napazine of John Thiel, residing at 30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette, Indiana 47904 and available via kinethiel@mymetronet.net .



EDITORIAL



Can Economics Solve Things, or Do We Need Something Spiritual?

I'm going to turn a leaf by saying that I don't think spiritual pursuits can do anything for any of us, but on the other hand good economics can put us all in a Utopia. We are people who can march forward to the beat of an economic drum, while we snub the spiritual and put it away from us. A man who takes on spiritual considerations ends up in a fog, but a follower of economic principles has certitude with him, the certitude of cold, hard cash. He can buy his way into a solid, boxed future in which he experiences a perfect existence without being too ostentatious about it. Of what interest is this to science fiction fandom? It's of minor interest, but it is somewhat interesting.

This publication is devoted to spiritual things, but I am not myself similarly devoted to such matters, which makes for a good balance.

A look at the future: Futures are always appreciable, until we all arrive at them, and then they turn into smutty, decadent, fallen cultures, unless we proceed with a good will. I'd like to follow such a practice as good will, and be a nice guy. That's my ambition, to be a fairly nice guy. But it wouldn't help me out with anything else to be that.

The future of cultures is a scientific matter, requiring a scientific appraisal for the consideration to be appreciable and orderly. A requirement of early SF was that a story be set out scientifically, or have a rational outlook if one prefers the term, but that at the

same time be highly unusual, or as the titles of magazines suggested, amazing, astounding, or astonishing. By definition it might not have been an interesting literature, but what was wanted by the editors, following the lead of *Amazing*, was stories that would transcend normality and leave the commonplace and prosaic behind. Probably *Amazing's* editor was amazed by science and scientific findings, which is not always the reaction to science. I think a lot of science fiction evolved, and evolved by way of custom, so that one magazine of this sort begat or elicited others. There was eccentricity involved, and people have commented that Hugo Gernsback was eccentric. Eccentricity isn't perpetuated, but reacted to, and eccentricity was at the source. Now we have people digging through the private lives of authors, and what they seem to me to be looking for is an explanation of what they wrote and for the facts about what science fiction is. Science examining itself produces a stall, and that may be what we are caught up in now, when there seems no real progress in science fiction. "What, exactly, has this all been about?" might be a question many readers of it have.

Economics is scientific, and spirituality is in the realm of fantasy. We find fantasy clinging to science fiction like a form of osmosis; the uniting factor has been both fantasy and science fiction being unusual and off the beaten trail, with novelty to both of them and a sort of drive away from what might seem mediocre and stagnant. The editor of *Amazing* saw fit to develop a companion magazine called *Fantastic*, which was devoted to fantasies he was receiving which had no scientific perspective, the writers having been attracted by the unusualness of the magazine. *Astounding* also developed a companion magazine of fantasy called *Unknown*, and a magazine came about advertising both, *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*. Later the magazine *Infinity* developed a companion which was more oriented to fantasy called *Science Fiction Adventures*, the term *Adventure* meaning to him a sort of nullification of the scientific content, or diminution of the scientific content, just as archaeology tends more toward fantasy and adventure than to science. Dan Brown's more recent works show archaeology as being fantastic, with science trailing behind.

Spirituality is not like fantasy because it is essential and aimed at knowing things in a non-materialistic manner, and here we find a kinship in it to science, but it is considered far from science by scientists, who might wonder whether spiritual people are hypnotists, mesmerists and spell-casters. There is a considerable conflict between science and spiritualism, which we can see ourselves when we get involved in such argumentation. So my point and purpose in this editorial is to write of fantasy and sf.



Don't these people seem better to you, or do you find some fault with them?

MAILING COMMENTS

It's always interesting to read Ahrvid Engholm's views on warfare. Reading the Swedish outlook is a refreshing change over the ordinary news. It's a perspective of which I had not had any awareness. I am glad that he concludes that warfare is a terrible thing. Bur here, I'll write something to him directly:

INTERMISSION: It's not likely fandom would exist without fanzines.

ARCHIVE MIDWINTER: Kind of bad luck to predict the end of a war in the Ukraine.

Literature in practice is something which avoids mood swings, but it is rare these days in the consideration of literature to find consistence in interpersonal relations.

There's much examination going on of the authors as people, with a particular emphasis on their problems and vices; to me it's better just to read the books. People can't be figured out much at long distance anyway.

INTERMISSION: Your writeup of mimeography and fandom deserves a wide circulation. However, there doesn't seem to be much circulation any more.

YE MURDERED MASTER MAGE: I would wonder what I've got that you do not have, in relation to the Facebook problem.

I find four blank pages in running through the mailing. I wonder what these could be.

Very terse, incisive writing in chapter 1. I like exploration of physical reactions to violent circumstances—mostly it is unexplored territory.

SNOW POSTER TOWNSHIP: A very esoteric title. Somehow my awareness of Los Angeles fandom has vanished from my perspective, particularly LASFAPA, but here's a return of information about them. I remember one time when Robert Coulson wrote to them, "Why send that to me?" It's a sort of rift appearing in fandom where segments of it drift away from one another. Perhaps fans are more organized and less freelance today, and the equivalent of business machinations sunders them.

I doubt if Omnis Vivandi would score well in the short story competition. I don't think its subject matter would ring a clear bell. It interprets witchcraft, which I have not found to be anything anyone interested in fantasy is looking for. I think its scenes of violence are enjoyable, but may go against the grain of the reader. Just suiting myself in what I write there, and that's the very opposite of a contest winner.

SAMIZDAT: Pablo Lennis is paper only and has a wide variety of contents and is independent. Sturgeon's Law is gone over in its pages in the current issue by Jeffrey Redmond.

Sturgeon had a whammer in every story, which was highly appreciated by readership in the 1950s, but in the 1960s SF readers seem to have taken to fireworks.

That's all for this issue, but I'll see you in the next mailing, and as I've had something to say in this issue it may be that I'll continue talking about the same things in issues of Synergy to come. It's been my pleasure to produce an issue of it, and to have put together what I consider to be a fanzine.

Let's face it, "See you real soon!"

Ye Murthered
Master Mage 259

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N3F Lack of Progress

Last month I commented on the positive changes in the N3F since I became President back in 2005. Now I would like to point instead at some recent trends. These are not negative; these are the way things are.

The most important change is that we are not adding new activities very often. We have reached a certain limit with ten fanzines, web pages, a series of social media sites, limited advertising outside the N3F,... But we reached that limit a while ago and have not changed much since.

I would like the N3F to continue to grow, but do not know how to make it happen.

The range of activities that can be supported by a club of 400 members is much larger than the range of activities that can be supported by a club of 40 members. It is by expanding our active membership, increasing the number of fen who put time and energy into N3F activities, that we can become a better club. If you want a better N3F, you need to speak up to your fellow fen.

Issue Comments

Cover: UFO versus jet fighters. The UFO is not doing very well. We have to my knowledge one case in which a fighter aircraft was able to close to point blank range and engage a UFO with cannon fire. The aircraft was iirc a Sukhoi being flown by a South American air force. The pilot indicated that the rounds went in, but nothing happened as a result. After his one successful clever turn, the UFO from then on stayed out of his line of fire.

I searched and could not identify the roundel on the fighter. Five-pointed blue star does not appear to be in use, as opposed to a blue six-pointed star.

Intermission: Interesting bit on Swedish defense material and NATO. I am inclined to say that the Ukraine War is showing the value of all sorts of drones. In addition to flying drones, I have now seen video of a drone on treads mounting what looked to be a Karl Gustav or the like.

In the historical material, I see that it took a while for SF to become established. The more or less first SF magazine, Kapitan Mors, is substantially lost, because period German universities viewed popular literature as being unworthy of their attention. Two World War paper drives destroyed almost all copies. Indeed, I have never seen one.

Archive Midwinter: We shall see what happens in the Ukraine War. At the moment it appears that precision long-range attack weapons and drone reconnaissance are waves of the future, with attacks on munitions dumps, bridges, and command posts wrecking the opposing army. My own favorite, perhaps not practical, would be attacks on railroad locomotives, as there are few of these even in a big country.

I agree it is wonderful that there are a couple thousand books a year, meaning that The N3F Review of Books needs to get up to publishing 200 book reviews in each issue if completeness is to be attained. I do not expect that we will succeed with this in the near future.

With that publication level, prizes for best novel are going to be a bit scattershot; many books are not going to be read by even one Neffer.

“...read every book ever written. In chronological order!” At the current end, he is probably losing ground, even if he is only reading SF.

Intermission: We now have a NASA effort to launch moon missions, a private effort to launch moon missions, and probably a Chinese effort to launch moon missions. There is really not much there to justify the trip, but with chemical rockets that is about all that can be done. Perhaps trips to the inner solar

system are possible. The NASA Artemis is a recycle of space shuttle technology. As several of my undergrads demonstrated before the shuttle program collapsed, shuttle missions were absurdly expensive relative to what was promised. Elon Musk's machines that reuse their lower stages promise to be absurdly cheaper than Artemis.

Much interesting material on early SF of all sorts. I did not realize that the creator of the Metropolis series was outside Russia now. For a year, the N3F had a Russian member who sent us fascinating material on Russian SF, but then she stopped writing for us.

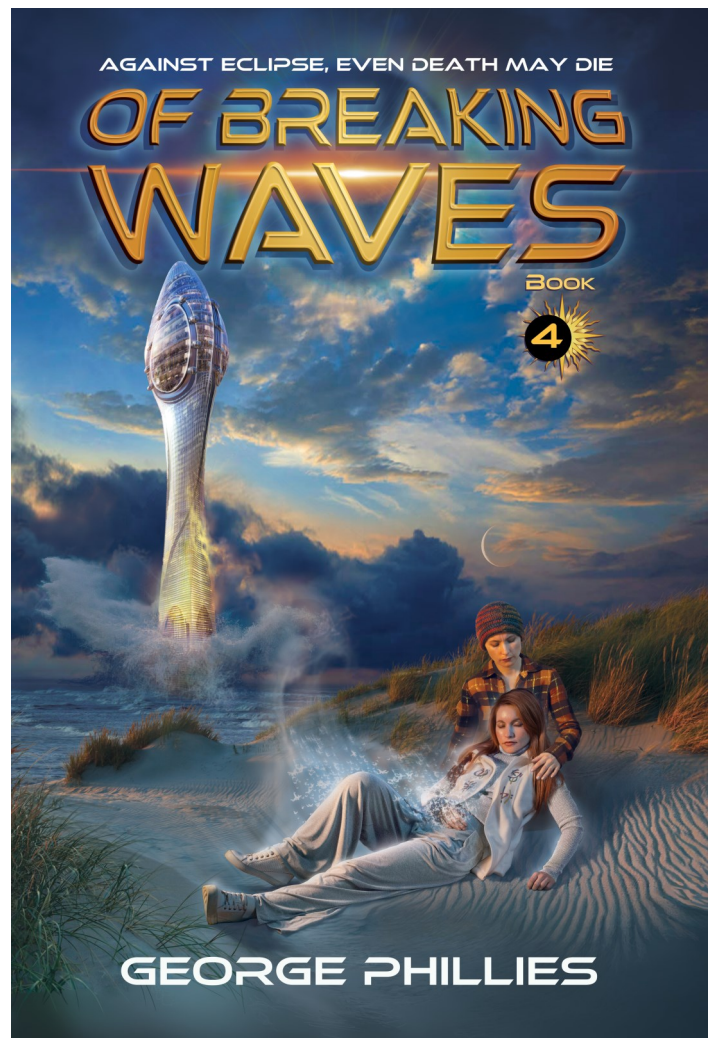
The Murdered Master Mage: This time, split the PDF file so that the blank pages will not be there!

Snow Poster Township #5 A beautiful and long fanzine from Heath Row. How did I get my novel count? Some time back I would do a list of the month's new SF/F/H/O ebooks from Smashwords, getting perhaps a hundred a month. Smashwords is considerably smaller than Amazon, and does not overlap this well with them, so I estimated another 100-200 a month from Amazon, giving us 2-3,000 SF novels per year.

Synergy 40 : As always, beautiful art.

Interesting bit on exchange students. My former university — I retired — has a foreign term abroad program, mostly for Juniors. Our normal academic year has four seven-week terms, so the kids spend seven weeks in a foreign country doing a junior-year science and society thesis. Seven weeks is a real lure, so I gather 90% of the class goes overseas. This creates a mess with source sequences so some majors, but advocates of the travel view other things as more important. However, the school has other interesting features. When I last heard a number, our completion rate for African-American students was higher than our completion rate for white students. Why? There was a local culture: Failure is NOT AN OPTION. You will work hard enough to pass and get your degree, and your peers will exert tons of peer pressure to make this so.

Continued on page 4: For reasons that man was not mean to know.



Start of the next novel. Of Breaking Waves is Book Four of the Eclipse series.

I sat, arms wrapped around knees, waiting to recover a bit more. As the darkling clouds faded into night, I could push against a wall, walk myself upright, and stagger to a door. Kitchen door. No lights inside. I rang the doorbell, then knocked once and again. No answer. I wasn't up to doing a mindscan. Null links? My null links to the three Wells children were dead. The Wells children, Comet, Star, and Aurora, weren't here. They weren't anywhere. Had they died? They might have, while I was, well, not dead, but someplace else. Or had I been dead? My physical body had been destroyed; my memetic dual survived. Now I had my body back. Okay, I had some body back. Comet and kin might be in another universe. I finally thought to try the door latch. Unlocked. I pushed on it. The door swung open. I didn't quite fall on my face again, but only because a coat sleeve snagged on the door handle. The motion detector noticed my movement and turned on the

lights. The sudden brightness hurt.

A note lay on the breakfast room table, weighted by a tea mug. I managed to reach it, catching myself on the table top so that I didn't collapse onto the floor.

"Eclipse," it began. "We're sure you died killing the Star Demons. You were Athena's Spear and Shield, just like the Wizard of Mars promised. You gave your life to save the world, when no one else could stop the Invincible Star Demons. Together we found how to beat the Tibet Doom. Maybe I should say you found it, many attacks at the same time, in the strange right directions, and we got it to work for all of us. We saved Tibet. We agreed to fly back. I said we had to leave this note for you to read. We might be wrong about you being dead. If you're alive, I know the flight back is a real killer for you. I don't know how to fix that. You could stay here. The house should run on automatic for a while. We're gone. The house is yours, if you want it. We all mourned for you. Sadly, Aurora."

There followed a note from Cloud. He wrote in High Goetic. His Goetic wasn't perfect, but his message was clear. He told me where all the money was hidden, in a language no one here and now could possibly know how to read. After all, Goetica Arcana hadn't happened here. Or yet. Or something. I compared dates on the note and the wall clock—weird that Pickering's world's electrical clocks display date as well as time. I'd been not-exactly-dead for three days. They'd be home by now.

I sat and slumped across the table, too tired to do anything. I made myself drink a large glass of water. The living room held a long couch. I dragged myself to it and fell sound asleep.

Early the next morning I drifted out of deep sleep. If I'd had dreams, I didn't remember them. *This isn't home*, I thought, *the place I'd rather be, but it's safe and warm*. Home was the keyword. My presets triggered. I called astral projection, once again taking my mind outside its mortal shall. I wished that trick would get easier with practice, but it hadn't. Leaving my body, momentarily, would break almost any mind control traps someone had implanted in me. Mind scan sifted through my

thoughts and memories, looking for things that did not belong. The scan moved with the speed of thought, but it had a lot of mind to scan. Meanwhile I floated a few inches above my face, listening to my breath, slow and shallow, and staring into my unseeing silver eyes and platinum-white locks. White? The hair dye had vanished.

Mindscan started giving warnings. What had it found? There was a mind control scheme. The scheme was no longer in my mind. It had failed to cross over when my body was destroyed. I let mindscan trace out the spider-web of holes, gaps in my thoughts where the control had been implanted. Of the mind control scheme itself, absolutely nothing remained, only the emptiness where it had lurked. My body shuddered as mindscan deleted the gaps.

What had the mind control scheme been doing? I couldn't tell. Nothing was left of it. How had I missed it? The control scheme had always been there, even looking back to memories of my first breath. It had infiltrated my mindscan gift, so I couldn't see it. Now that mind control process was gone, so I could see where the process was not. How had Mum not detected and stopped it, back when I was a toddler? That made no sense.

I thought I was brave, but I was seriously frightened. What-all might I have been compelled to do? So far as I could tell, the control scheme hadn't forced me to do something. It just kept me from knowing something. If I heard it or saw whatever it was, the mind control scheme deleted it, and papered over the gap in my awareness.

I remembered how I got here. The Well of Infinity had snapped shut. Wherever I was, the sky changed in an instant from deep twilight to bright and sunny, except there was no sun and no sky. When I looked up, I could see the meme for sky, not the sky itself, but it looked exactly like the sky. Whatever I had been wearing was gone, replaced by long flowing robes, drooping sleeves, and a hood that covered my hair and ears. I took a step; as I moved, the robes somehow flowed out of the way of my legs, so that the robe never tripped me.

"Welcome to the true world, younger daughter."
The voice was not quite directly behind me.

Synergy: Why break fandom into pieces? My issue was that only the few who read novels are possibly going to nominate for Best Novel. That's a modest fraction of our membership.

Will Mayo: As always, beautiful and strange artwork. A 'psychic fair' is certainly different. I do not recall having heard of one before. Are we in a computer simulation? How can we tell?

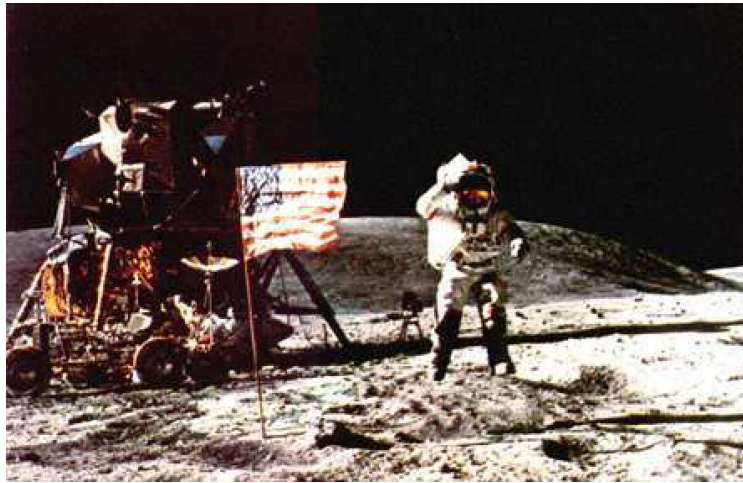
Samizdat: The War in Ukraine? The west did get involved, with massive military and financial aid. Ukraine has the advantage that Russia is an incompetent kleptocracy.

Nominate for Neffys? The Laureate Award nominations are called for in The National Fantasy Fan, usually several times. You send the TNFF Editor — currently me — your nominations.

Good point on Schmitz sending the Telzey Amberdon stories to a different publisher, but I wonder whether or not he could have found one who would accept the tales.

I hope that your projects continue to do well. Your contributions to FanActivity Gazette are most appreciated.

Double 07's. Groan. A truly horrid pun. But quite true, of course.



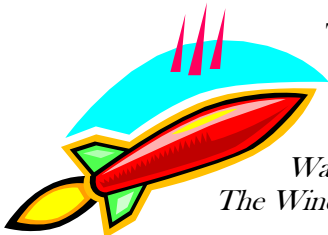
...Balticon Chair

I am the Chair of Balticon 2024. No joke. This is real. Balticon is a large regional SF convention in Baltimore, Maryland over Memorial Day weekend that attracts between 1,500 to 2,000 members (pre-Covid). Unlike Capcalve, the DC-area convention that I have run twice (and am usually on the Concom), which has only 400 or so members, Balticon has an art show, a film track/concert schedule, a full science track, a masquerade, video and anime and more of everything. This is an enormous undertaking so if I slip on some of my other stuff, I hope you understand. Of course, you are all invited and I welcome suggestions for what you think a large regional convention should do.



...LOC on N'APA 259

Intermission #121 - While the experience of Ukraine has certainly shown Russia's ability to invade European countries is not what they thought it to be, I think both Finland and Sweden will be better off in NATO than outside it. At the very least, it will make Russia think twice. I like the term ABBAstars. First trip to Mars in 1960? Ah, if only it were so! We will have to disagree about COVID-19. The data I have seen show 613.7 million infected and 6.5 million deaths, with over a million in the U.S. alone. Yes, that's minor compared to the Black Death, but certainly serious on any lesser scale. It's not just another version of the flu. (<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>) While books don't automatically get better with more words, some of the things that make modern books better, such as characterization, do require more words than the slender novels of the 1950s and 60s allowed. Good writers (and I read from outside sf/fantasy too) can create characterizations of people who are different from themselves. I admit, Heinlein rarely did but today's writers are better at characterization. I also disagree with your claim that the 2010 Hugo nominees went to the best writers, unlike now.



The 2010 Hugo nominees were *Boneshaker*, Cherie Priest (Tor)
The City & The City, China Miéville (Del Rey; Macmillan UK)
Julian Comstock: A Story of 22nd-Century America, Robert Charles Wilson (Tor)
Palimpsest, Catherynne M. Valente (Bantam Spectra)
Wake, Robert J. Sawyer (Ace; Penguin; Gollancz; Analog)
The Windup Girl, Paolo Bacigalupi (Night Shade)

I've read and enjoyed books by all of those save Cherie Priest. But I don't think that list is necessary a better reflection of the best writers of the day than the Hugos finalists I saw last week in Chicago.

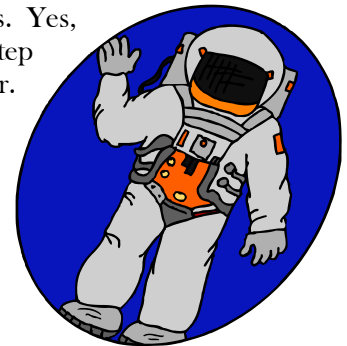
- 1) *A Desolation Called Peace*, by Arkady Martine (Tor)
- 2) *Light From Uncommon Stars*, by Ryka Aoki (Tor)
- 3) *A Master of Djinn*, by P. Djèlí Clark (Tordotcom / Orbit UK)

- 4) *The Galaxy, and the Ground Within*, by Becky Chambers (Harper Voyager / Hodder & Stoughton)
- 5) *She Who Became the Sun*, by Shelley Parker-Chan (Tor / Mantle)
- 6) *Project Hail Mary*, by Andy Weir (Ballantine / Del Rey)

It is worth noting how few nominations it would have taken to alter this list. Ada Palmer’s *Perhaps the Stars* only needed five votes to qualify for the best novel ballot. (<https://www.thehugoawards.org/content/pdf/2022-Hugo-Award-Details-Final.pdf>) So if you don’t like the Hugo selection, become a supporting member of Worldcon and nominate for the Hugos.

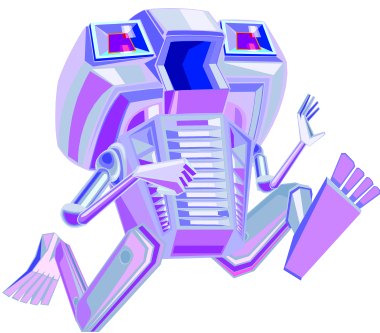
Archive Midwinter – I’m not a big fan of Jerry Pournelle, but his *The Mote in God’s Eye* with Larry Niven is one of the all-time classics. I still disagree with you about licensed comics. Walt Disney’s Comics and Stories certainly counts as licensed and it has far more issues than *Sonic*. I have to admire someone who tries to read *everything*. I cannot keep up with sf/fantasy let alone everything else. Yes, give Dave Duncan a try. He writes light, fun fantasy and is a great alternative to grim, dark. While there are tons of Trek and Star Wars novels they are built by many writers and cannot make major changes to their universe without the franchise’s permission (although I admit the pre-Disney Star Wars books did make major changes before Disney declared them all non-canon.) The *Green Lantern* movie was trying to squeeze too much into one movie.

Intermission #122 – I agree science fiction fans are all space exploration fans. Yes, support fanac.org and fanzine activities (although promoting mimeos seems a step backward). I liked your feature on Swedish-Israeli-American astronaut Jessica Meir. I’m a little worried about how growing tensions between Russia and the West will affect international space cooperation and the ISS. I agree that good intentions can lead people astray but governments are much more likely to say everything is fine than to declare emergencies that can cause panic and impose restricts that could upset voters unless they have plenty of evidence that these restrictions will benefit the public in the long run. Trump certainly did not try to seem worried about the virus, he kept saying everything was fine and the virus will magically disappear.



Ye Murdered Master Mage 259 – I’m trying to promote N3F. See my article on the Worldcon. Even the Hugos and Nebulas don’t always align. The smaller the group, the more individual tastes will affect the results.

Snow Poster Township #5 – I think it great that the Internet allows people to attend conventions remotely. I wonder why the UK would have so many more movie magazines than the U.S. Maybe they’ve all gone online? My conrunning has increased since I am now the chair of the 2024 Balticon.



Synergy 40 – I don’t understand why you would think Perdue University sending people overseas and taking in foreign students is one of the worst follies. Increasing one’s first-hand knowledge of other cultures seems to me to be a very good think (and a regret of my own college experience is that I never participated in a semester abroad program). I disagree about Dickens. Since he is long out of copyright there are tons of versions of his original work while any edited version would still be under copyright (unless edited a long time ago) so not as readily available. Yes, white and black skin colors aren’t really white and black; people have just chosen to label them that way.

Good Life July 2022 – Nice art. Interesting idea about living in a simulation.

...Trip to Chicago

I'll do my trip to Chicago separately from my Worldcon report since I left a few days earlier to do tourist things. Before I boarded my United flight, there was an announcement saying there was limited room on the plane and those in the later board groups should gate-check their larger items. So I did, not knowing that this would be the last time seeing my luggage for days. Yes, United somehow failed to load a gate-checked bag that was literally right next to the plane. I don't know how they managed that.



Aside from the lost luggage issue, I had a great trip. On my first day I went to the Museum of Science and Industry. The mirror maze was fascinating. I kept winding back at exit. I'm pretty sure I have been there on a previous trip to Chicago but only remembered the U-boat and the display with butterflies interacting with people's shadows. Still, to get the most out of the museum you really need to bring a child ages 5 -12. I don't often lament my childless state but I did feel the absence there. After that, I went to the Navy Pier for dinner and then, since my luggage seemed lost forever went shopping. I can now say I have gone clothes shopping on Chicago's Magnificent mile. Of course, being me, it was at Target for the sort of necessities one buys when one's luggage is lost.

On my second day I went to the Field Museum where I bumped into two SF fans I know from the Washington SF Association. I liked the dinosaurs, the Egyptian tomb, and the exhibit on the different civilizations of the Americas. After the museum closed, I went on an architecture river cruise. Since I was on the 6:45 trip I saw the lights on the buildings all lit up, making for an interesting trip.

The following day, Wednesday, I went to a further-away Target that I had found on the Internet that had a similar rolling duffel to the one the airline lost. I also bought shirts, shorts, and pants. Then, after depositing my shopping at my hotel, I went to a bus tour of Chicago. On my way, I got a call from the airline, they had found my luggage in DC. (I am still convinced that if I hadn't bought new luggage and clothes, they wouldn't have found mine.) After the bus tour (whose recorded tour wasn't always in sync with what we were seeing) I went to the Museum of Chicago History. While they had the expected exhibits on Chicago's great fire and skyscrapers, I was surprised to see so much attention to Lincoln until I remembered that Lincoln is from Illinois.

On Wednesday I went to the John Hancock building for their 360 degree viewing platform. It wasn't really 360 and a good chunk of the viewing space was taken up by their Tilt ride (which was an extra that I didn't pay for) but the view was still incredible. I was able to return my Target stuff and transferred to the convention hotel. I also visited the Millennium Park and saw the Bean sculpture (or whatever you call it, since you walk through it maybe it is a structure) which has a highly mirror-plated surface so it functions sort of like a funhouse mirror.

I was able to return most of purchases at Target. I didn't bother with the opened necessities (but will try to get the airline to reimburse for those). On my way back from Target I passed through Millennium Park and saw the Bean sculpture. Doing so much touring in Chicago reminded me that I have basically stopped doing things in DC. Now that Covid is mostly over (or at least everyone is pretending that it is), I'm pledging to take one day a month to go out and do something.



A word about Chicago food. Chicago style hot dogs have no ketchup and have pickles, peppers, and celery salt. Yummy. Because of all the extras one makes a decent lunch and two a dinner. Deep dish pizza is as good as they say. I was a bit disappointed by Italian beef. It did not seem that different from regular roast beef just with some added spices and pepper topping. Interestingly, I noticed that the price differentials between fast food, fast casual, and low-end

dining have all shrunk. Fast food checks are closer to \$10 than \$5, fast casual is closer to \$15 than 10. And a number of places have drastically raised the cost of soda.

...I Attend Worldcon



I saw lots of interesting panels at Chicon, the Worldcon for 2022. On Thursday I saw “Does Every Hero Have to Be Active” which contrasted different types of heroes and pointed out that male heroes in the Western tradition tend to be more active than female heroes and Asian heroes. Other panels included: Conspiracy Theories, Systems of Governance which bemoaned the number of kings and emperors in fantasy and SF, Opening ceremonies (which gave out some awards usually given out in the Hugos), Book banning, which has become all too common. Time Travel which divided the field into tourists in time and dealing with paradoxes, Hero’s Journey, Blurring Genres, Better Worlds are Possible, Dystopias Versus News (which is worse), Fairy Tales and Folklore in Urban Fantasy, Tropes as Tools, Superheroes and the Law (I’ve seen it done with more humor), SF Before SF (early SF), Morally Ambiguous Characters, The Middle Ages Weren’t Actually Bad (this was my favorite panel, Ada Palmer and the author of *The Bright Ages*, it had standing room only), Hard SF, What SF Films Get Wrong (with Catherine Asaro). And of course I did the Hugos.

I went to a few table talks including Walter Jon Williams, Karl Schroeder (a Canadian Futurist), Shelia Williams (Asimov’s editor), and Jeffrey A. Carver.

I also worked some for the convention newsletter which this year wasn’t a print newsletter or even an online pdf but a series of online posts. I did write an article about ways to continue fandom after the Worldcon, putting in a plug for N3F:

Celebrating Speculative Fiction All Year Round

Worldcon is just 5 days a year. What about the remaining 360? There are some ways you can keep the fun of Worldcon alive, all year round.

Of course, Worldcon is one of the most important conventions, but there are lots of other cons, as well. Your local area probably has at least one (or more) conventions. Take a look at the flyer racks in the exhibit space for conventions divided on the shelves geographically. And, of course, [you can find them on the internet \(Locus Magazine Convention page\)](#).

Your local area probably already has a local science fiction club. Check around large cities and college campuses. If one doesn’t exist, you can start one! Many clubs start by meeting in libraries or people’s homes.

There are also national science fiction and fantasy organizations, too. [The National Fantasy Fan Federation](#) has monthly publications and an online convention.

Your favorite authors probably have an online presence on Twitter, Facebook, and email newsletters. They would love it if you subscribed.

There are many online magazines, fanzines, and webzines online, many of which have comment sections. Check the [list of Hugo nominations](#) for a good place to start.

I also wrote a few items for the hoax posting:

Fan from 2012 Found!

A team of Star Chart roving reporters, following up on rumors from hotel staff, located a long-lost fan from Chicon 7. Keith Pavane from Chelm, Ohio had been wandering the tunnels underneath the Hyatt since the 2012 convention in search of the elusive Stagg Field room. When told the whole thing was a joke, Pavane ran off to continue his quest, yelling: “It was in print, so it has to be true!”

The Fabulous Riverwalk Transformation!

For a brief period yesterday morning, the Chicago Riverwalk turned into the Chicago Riverworld as the Fabulous Riverboat (with Mark Twain at its helm) and cruised past the Hyatt Regency hotel to wave at their spiritual successors. On board were Isaac Asimov, Andre Norton, Robert Heinlein, William Tenn, Alice Sheldon, and others. When people on the riverbank asked where they came from, Frederik Pohl said they escaped from the American Writers Museum here in Chicago.

Hill Books Takes a Year Off From Hugos

At the Chicon 8 Hugo Awards Ceremony, Mr. Howard Hill (the publisher of the eponymous Hill Books) announced that due to Hill’s dominance of the novella category, they would not take part in next year’s Hugo’s competition: “There’s a tradition in the Hugos that when an author or a publication has become too dominant in a category that they take a year off to give other people a chance.”

Hill and its hilldotcom publishing wing has not only owned the novella category, with all six of this year’s finalists, it also had four of six finalists for novel and four out of six finalists for best series. “Fans have grown so used to nominating Hill Books for everything,” continued Mr. Hill, “that we even got some nominations for Best Dramatic Presentation... and we don’t even make films! That’s when we knew it was time to take a breather.”

Hill Books will be back for the 2024 Hugo Award.

...Author Spotlight: Walter Jon Williams

At Worldcon I attended a TableTalk with Walter Jon Williams, who does not get the attention he deserves because the variety of books he writes makes him impossible to pigeon-hole. So I decided to profile him here. Williams started off writing sea adventures (*Privateers & Gentlemen*), then cyberpunk adventure (*Hardwired*, *Voice of the Whirlwind*, and *Angel Station*), comedy (*Drake Majjstrah*), near-future thrillers (*Dagmar Shaw* and *The Rift*), military-space opera (*Dread Empire’s Fall*), fantasy (*Lord Qualifier*), and the sf/fantasy hybrid *Metropolitan* and its sequel *City on Fire* (he’s promised a third book after decades of waiting).

He also writes short fiction. He has a recent collection from Subterrean, *The Best of Walter Jon Williams*, with 11 novellas and one short story. See my review at [SFRevu Review](#). This should give the reader a good taste of what his work is like – strong characters and literate writing. The ebook is a bargain at \$5.99. Then I’d recommend his *Dread Empire’s Fall: The Praxis*.

...Status of Projects

Readers of previous issues of *Samizdat* may remember that I have started a number of projects to improve my life, my mind, and my time management. Here is the latest progress report.

Project Classics - As is part of my effort to read all of Dickens, I am about 250 pages into Charles Dickens’ *David Copperfield*, arguably the most autobiographical of his works. It is impressive how Dickens portrayed the young David Copperfield as believably naïve. At this point in my reading of Dickens, I’m starting to see the same characters, under different names.

Project Trek - I watched the first episode of TOS “The Man Trap”. If I wasn’t told this was the first episode, I never would have guessed it. There is nothing in the episode that suggests starting or



beginning. It felt like a mid-season episode and a rather mediocre one at that with the focus on a shapechanging alien who kills those it embraces.

Project Netflix - I watched *Flower Drum Song* which had some good music even though both the A and B plot revolved around efforts by women to get married and the solution was something one of them saw on television. I watched *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* which was fun in a tale tale way although it didn't really need the framing device of the actors performing it without knowing that there was a real Baron. I don't think in a world where the Baron and his servants really did exist that people would forget they were real so quickly.



Project History - I finished Paul Johnson's *History of the Jews*. The last half was much more focused as it dealt with just a couple hundred years rather than a couple of millennia. It had a chapter on Emancipation in which the Jews became part of their countries, a chapter on the Holocaust, and a chapter on Israel. I would have liked something on how the Jews continued to have a history outside Israel, even after its founding, but the book doesn't really go into that.

I read *Civilisation* by Kenneth Clark based on a 1969 BBC series. It was much more of a history of art, with lots of photographs of art with occasional mentions of music, literature, and philosophy. So it wasn't at all a traditional political history. Many of the photos were b/w and I suspect would have been better in color (and even the author admits that the book cannot compare to the tv show). Still it was an interesting survey of the history of western art. Of course, a reader today would notice that he sees civilization as strictly Western. China and Japan are not mentioned.

I am about halfway through *A World Lit Only by Fire: The Medieval Mind and the Renaissance* by William Manchester, which seems so far to be typical of the Medieval is bad, Renaissance is good histories that were common until recently. The book was published in 1992 and the author admits that he is working out of his period (his other books are in the 20th century) and that "It is, after all, a slight work, with no scholarly pretensions. All the sources are secondary, and few are new; I have not mastered recent scholarship on the early 16th century."

Nothing to report on Project Shakespeare, Project Exercise, and Project CleanUp. Making a note here that I have launched Project GetOut&DoSomething, but am counting Worldcon/Chicago for September.



Happy Jewish New Year to Everyone. Please note that Samizdat is a production of Samuel Lubell who is solely responsible for its contents. Nothing here should be taken as the views of any employer, client, or organization to which I belong.